

All-age service and baptism of Ivy Stokes 6th Dec. 2020

Notice: Just to remind you, that we are allowed to worship in our lovely church if we follow the rules. This means that we must not chat to each other inside the building either before or after the service. If you see someone you would like to talk to, please phone them when you get home! We cannot join in the singing – however I have placed some percussion instruments around which you are welcome to play during the songs or please feel free to clap your hands in an act of worship! (the Music Group was recorded before lockdown).

Call to worship:

Isaiah 40 verse 3

“Listen! It’s the voice of someone shouting,
‘Clear the way through the wilderness for the Lord!
Make a straight highway through the wasteland for our God!’”

Prayers including the Lord’s prayer:

Dear God,

You have brought us all here this morning to worship you, to hear your word and learn about you. We also come together as a church family both those listening at home and those here, to celebrate the new life given to Charlotte and Richard. Bless us as we worship you, as we listen to your words and as we welcome baby Ivy. In your name Lord God, Amen.

The Lord’s prayer:

Our Father in heaven hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us. Save us from the time of trial and deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours now and for ever. Amen

Song: Like a candle flame (music from the Music Group on cd, no singing).

Like a candle flame
Flickering small in our darkness
Uncreated light
Shines through infant eyes

God is with us, alleluia (Men)
God is with us, alleluia (Women)
Come to save us, alleluia (Men)
Come to save us (Women)
Alleluia! (All)

Stars and angels sing
Yet the earth sleeps in shadows
Can this tiny spark
Set a world on fire?

God is with us, alleluia (Men)
God is with us, alleluia (Women)
Come to save us, alleluia (Men)
Come to save us (Women)
Alleluia! (All)

Lighting of candle one

We light a candle for hope, sending prayers high into the inky heavens and dreams deep into the human soul. We light a candle for hope. May it light the way.

and two. In this second week of Advent, as the waiting and expectation heighten, deepen our desire for peace.

Like the wise called to journey in those early dawning days, may we seek, strive, search for peace. Like the prophets old and new, may we cry out for its coming. We light a candle for peace. May it light the way.

Bible reading 1: Mark 1 verses 1-8

This is the good news about Jesus the Messiah, the Son of God. It began just as the prophet Isaiah had written:

“Look, I am sending my messenger ahead of you, and he will prepare your way. He is a voice shouting in the wilderness, Prepare the way for the Lord’s coming! Clear the road for him.”

This messenger was John the Baptist. He was in the wilderness and preached that people should be baptised to show that they were sorry for the wrong they had done and turned to God to be forgiven. All of Judea, including all the people of Jerusalem, went out to see and hear John. And when they confessed their sins, he baptised them in the Jordan river. His clothes were woven from coarse camel hair, and he wore a leather belt around his waist. For food he ate locusts and wild honey.

John announced: “Someone is coming soon who is greater than I am – so much greater that I’m not even worthy to stoop down like a slave and untie the straps of his sandals. I baptise you with water, but He will baptise you with the Holy Spirit!”

Talk 1:

(Whilst wrapping up a largeish box). We are currently in the season of Advent, where we are waiting and preparing. It’s a funny thing, isn’t it waiting? We wait four weeks in December before we celebrate Christmas, when Jesus was born. There is lots of preparation to do, baking, buying presents, wrapping presents, decorating. Charlotte and Richard have waited a long time for baby Ivy, she has been growing for nine months before she was born. They had to make preparations too, getting ready for a new person to join their family, making room in their lives and making sure they were ready. Do we like waiting and preparing?

God’s people had the longest wait though. Throughout the Old testament, they had been waiting for Jesus to be born. Now that’s a long time!

Way back in Genesis 12, God was preparing one of Jesus’ descendants - Abraham. Abraham had no children, but at the age of 100, God told him, he and his wife Sarah, that they would

have children that would become a great nation. We can read about Jesus descendants in Matthew 1. Abraham was born over 2100 years before Jesus Christ!

And we can find many more references to Jesus's birth, ministry, life, death, rising from death and ascending to heaven all over the old testament, which was written hundreds of years before Jesus was born. So, you see, God's people were expecting Jesus for a very long time and were waiting in anticipation. But more of that later.

Let's hear another song, and this one has been chosen by Charlotte and Richard;

One more step along the world I go. Music group and Thora

One more step along the world I go,
One more step along the world I go;
From the old things to the new,
Keep me travelling along with you:
*And it's from the old I travel to the new;
Keep me travelling along with you.*

As I travel through the bad and good,
Keep me travelling the way I should.
Where I see no way to go,
You'll be telling me the way, I know.
*And it's from the old I travel to the new;
Keep me travelling along with you.*

Round the corners of the world I turn,
More and more about the world I learn;
All the new things that I see
You'll be looking at along with me.
*And it's from the old I travel to the new;
Keep me travelling along with you.*

Give me courage when the world is rough,
Keep me loving though the world is tough;
Leap and sing in all I do,
Keep me travelling along with you:
*And it's from the old I travel to the new;
Keep me travelling along with you.*

The Baptism – Rev. Naomi

Words of introduction and explanation.

Whether we are children or adults, baptism marks the beginning of our lives as Christians and as members of the Church. In baptism we are called to take up the Cross and follow Christ in the company of all God's people from all times and places. Because we cannot do this without help, we receive the gift of the Holy Spirit to enable us to live as God's people and to serve God's purposes in the world. We acknowledge one baptism, in obedience to Christ. After his rising from the dead, Jesus said to his disciples:

All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you.

Charlotte and Richard, you have come for the baptism of Ivy in response to the call of Christ and the leading of the Holy Spirit. Let us hear that you confess your faith in Christ.

Do you believe and trust in one God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, maker of heaven and earth, giver of life, redeemer of the world?

We do.

Blessed are you, Lord God of all creation.
In your goodness you give us water to sustain our life and renew the earth.
May it be for Ivy the water of new birth.
Blessed be God forever. Amen

Parents and minister put masks on.

Ivy Joyce Stokes, I baptize you in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. **Amen**
I sign you with the Cross, the sign of Christ. **Amen**

Step back from font, masks may be removed.

Ivy Joyce, child of God, God receives you by baptism into the one, holy, catholic and apostolic Church. **Amen**

The Lord bless you and keep you; the Lord make his face to shine upon you, and be gracious to you, the Lord lift up his countenance upon you, and give you peace. Amen

The Promises

Parents:

From early times the Church has received the children of believers by baptism so that with help and support they may grow up in Christ, and by the grace of God serve Christ all their days.

This child belongs to God in Christ. Tell her of her baptism that she may know she is baptized and may come to make her own response of faith and love.

Do you promise to teach Ivy the love of God and bring her up in the life and worship of the Church?

We do with God's help.

Godparents:

Do you promise to pray for Ivy and her home and family, and to support them as you are able, showing Christ's love? **We do with God's help.**

Congregation – please stand

As a community of faith, representing the whole Church, do you welcome Ivy and promise to share with her what you yourselves have received, the gift of God's love revealed in Christ?

We do with God's help.

Please clap or wave your welcome to Ivy.

In the name of Christ we welcome you.

May we grow together in unity, and be built up into the body of Christ in love, to the glory of God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Amen.

Baptismal candle and certificate are presented to the parents.

Song: May God's blessing – Music Group and Sandy.

May God's blessing be upon you now
May you know of his great love for you
May god's blessing be upon you now
Right where you are.

Let's have our prayers of intercession, where we pray for others:

And I'm going to use the present I have wrapped up to help us pray for others.

Dear God, we thank you for our church and we ask that you will help us to grow closer to each other and closer to you. Let's think of the people sitting on either side of us and ask that God will be especially close to them.

We also remember those people who are not with us today, perhaps through illness or because they are listening from home. Let's remember them in our own prayers now.

Dear God, we thank you for the town where we live and we ask that you will help us to spread your love to our friends and neighbours. Let's think of one or two particular friends and ask that God will help us tell them the Good News.

Dear God, we thank you for the time we have spent together and we ask that you will be with us throughout the rest of the day. Let's think of the things that we are going to do later today and bring them before God now.

Dear God, bless all who are sad, or ill or lonely or very old, and those who do not know you. Be with those who are hungry, cold, and need our help.

Dear God, we think about people in other parts of the world, help us to do what we can to help where help is needed.

And we pray for governments both here and in other parts of the world. May they make good decisions for their people and for your world.

Lord, thank you that you listen to all our prayers spoken and unspoken. Amen.

A story:

'Hurry up, he's nearly here,' said Dad.

Everyone in the house was on red alert for tidying, cleaning, polishing and washing. The local newspaper had called to say that someone really important had arranged to visit the family in their home. They didn't know who it could be and so they were tidying, cleaning, polishing and washing. Everything had to be ready for their visitor.

They peered out of the window, watching and waiting. There was no sign of anyone.

'Hurry up, he's nearly here,' shouted Dad.

They dashed outside to do the final bit of clearing up...the pathway to the house.

Blocking the pathway was a skateboard, a pram, a pair of football boots, a scooter, two bikes and the remains of a go-kart that had lost three of its wheels.

'Hurry up, he's nearly here,' shrieked Dad.

They finally crammed everything from the pathway into the shed and turned round to see their famous visitor arrive. He had a football under his arm and a broad grin on his face.

'Just enough room for a game of football,' he said, as he glanced round the garden.

It's a great day when someone so special comes to visit.

I wonder who the very special person was?

Who would you like to welcome to your home?

All this month we are getting ready for Jesus. Make a straight pathway, clear out all the things that don't belong. Jesus is on his way.

It's a very special day when Jesus comes to visit us.

Song: Joy to the World (2 verses) Music Group and Thora

Joy to the world, the Saviour reigns!
Let all their songs employ;
while fields and floods, rocks, hills and
plains
repeat the sounding joy.

He rules the world with truth and grace
and makes the nations prove
the glories of his righteousness
and wonders of his love.

Talk 2

Now you remember I said, "God's people were expecting Jesus for a very long time and were waiting in anticipation". Well, in our bible reading from Mark 1, we hear about John the Baptist. It has been 400 years between the last prophecy in the old testament and the coming of John the Baptist, who fulfilled the prophecy in Malachi 3, where it says: "Look I am sending my messenger, and he will prepare the way before me". John the Baptist wasn't telling them to get ready for the birth of Jesus, no, that had already happened. He was asking them to prepare for Jesus' ministry. All through the old testament we have prophecies telling us about God's son. In Micah 5 we learn that he will be born in Bethlehem, in Isaiah 7, that he will be born to a virgin, in Hosea, that they will flee to Egypt, in Psalm 78 that he will teach in parables. In Zechariah 9, that he will ride into Jerusalem on a donkey, in Psalm 41 that he will be betrayed by a close friend, in Psalm 16 and 49 that he will rise from the dead and Psalm 68 that he will ascend to heaven. In fact, there are more than 48 prophecies which are fulfilled by Jesus in the Old testament. (unveil chart).

So, you can see that God had prepared his people throughout the old testament, but they had had to wait a long time for Jesus to come.

What are we waiting for? Are we waiting for Santa as my Sundayclub group told me last week? Are we waiting for Christmas, for Christ's birthday, or maybe we are waiting, as Christians around the world are, for Jesus' second coming? Are you ready?

Now, shall we open the box and see what's inside – or do you think we should wait for Christmas day? No, we're going to wait and Rev. Naomi can open it on Christmas day!

Let us pray:

Lord God, from the farthest star to the newest baby, we ask you to come among us and bless us today. Make us kind and loving, and help us to know you. We thank you for all your good gifts, and for homes filled with your love during this season of advent.

Lord Jesus,

John the Baptist spoke up and made a straight path so that people were ready to welcome you. May we speak up and make straight paths for people to meet you.

Amen.

And the blessing: Naomi

Follow, where the Spirit of Hope leads you

Listen, as the child of Peace cries for you

Rejoice, as the Love of God embraces you

and go now, with Hope, Peace and Love in your hearts

and the blessing of Creator, Child and Spirit for ever with you. Amen

And we'd like to remind you that before you leave that everyone needs to leave without stopping to chat to people while in the building. Thankyou.

Song: O little town of Bethlehem - to see everyone out.