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Scripture, Reflection, Church news and up-to-date info

**8<sup>th</sup> December 2024**

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**Second Sunday of  
advent**

The lead up to the  
birth of Jesus

**This week**

St Barnabas -  
Eucharist  
9:30 am

Holy Trinity -  
Eucharist

11 am

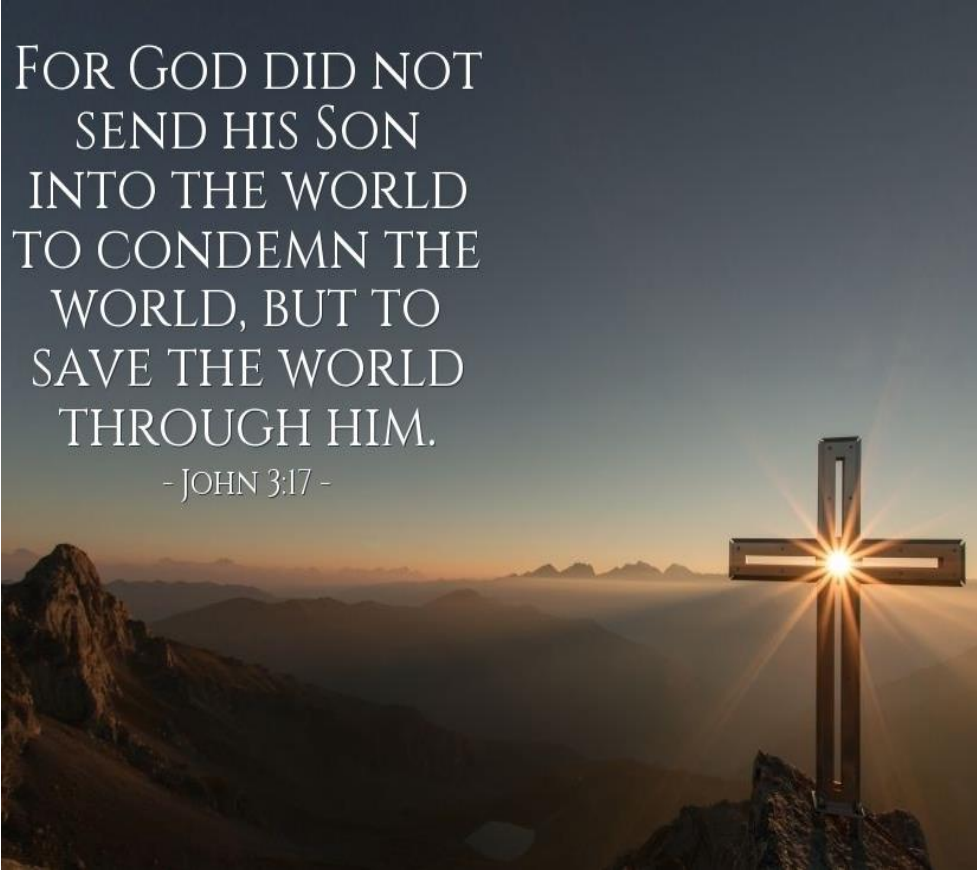
Bible Study (St  
Barnabas)  
Wednesday

10 am

Worship on  
Wednesday

Holy Trinity  
(WOW)

7 pm



FOR GOD DID NOT  
SEND HIS SON  
INTO THE WORLD  
TO CONDEMN THE  
WORLD, BUT TO  
SAVE THE WORLD  
THROUGH HIM.

- JOHN 3:17 -

## Collect

Blessed Lord,  
you have given us your Holy Scriptures for our learning.  
May we so hear them,  
read, learn, and take them to heart,  
that being strengthened and comforted by your holy Word,  
we may cling to the blessed hope of everlasting life,  
through Jesus Christ, our Lord,  
who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,  
one God, now and forever.

## **Old Testament Malachi 3:1-4**

“I will send my messenger, who will prepare the way before me. Then suddenly the Lord you are seeking will come to his temple; the messenger of the covenant, whom you desire, will come,” says the Lord Almighty.

But who can endure the day of his coming? Who can stand when he appears? For he will be like a refiner’s fire or a launderer’s soap. He will sit as a refiner and purifier of silver; he will purify the Levites and refine them like gold and silver. Then the Lord will have men who will bring offerings in righteousness, and the offerings of Judah and Jerusalem will be acceptable to the Lord, as in days gone by, as in former years.

## **Epistle - Philippians 1:3-11**

I thank my God every time I remember you. In all my prayers for all of you, I always pray with joy because of your partnership in the gospel from the first day until now, being confident of this, that he who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus.

It is right for me to feel this way about all of you, since I have you in my heart and, whether I am in chains or defending and confirming the gospel, all of you share in God’s grace with me. God can testify how I long for all of you with the affection of Christ Jesus.

And this is my prayer: that your love may abound more and more in knowledge and depth of insight, so that you may be able to discern what is best and may be pure and blameless for the day of Christ, filled with the fruit of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ—to the glory and praise of God

## **The Gospel - luke 3:16-21**

For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him. Whoever believes in him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe stands condemned already because they have not believed in the name of God's one and only Son. This is the verdict: Light has come into the world, but people loved darkness instead of light because their deeds were evil. Everyone who does evil hates the light and will not come into the light for fear that their deeds will be exposed. But whoever lives by the truth comes into the light, so that it may be seen plainly that what they have done has been done in the sight of God.

## **Reflection by Robin Wilding**

John 3:16

### **1. Planned from the beginning**

God has a plan and an agenda. It's not all accident or random or chaos but purpose.

Promise to Abraham - promise of eternal blessing from his descendants Gen 17:7

Promise to Judah - promise of individual to come Gen 49:10

Promised to Bethlehem - Micah 5:2

Promise of light in darkness when the child comes. Is 9

### **2. Love for the world**

God's motivation, why should he bother? He loves and cares for us

John 1:12 - for all who received him, and John 3:16 - not just for Israel but for all men

Love that sees rebellion and seeks to end it  
Love that sees pain and seeks to alleviate it  
Love that sees broken and wounded hearts and seeks to heal them  
Love that intends relationship with all and seeks to establish it  
And all at great cost

### **Gravity** by Mark Greene

The apple, unlike Adam, had no choice but to fall  
Speeding to fulfil its creator's call.  
But what force drew him down to us?  
He, with a starlit infinity to explore,  
He, who could peer into a neutron's core,  
He, who had spoken a thousand-million times  
And known the sulphuric spit of our self-vaunting crimes  
He, who we called murderer, liar, thief  
And left for dead with enlightened relief.

What force drew him down from above  
To reap the grim harvest of rebel pride,  
Hammered with nails of truth denied?  
What force drew him down from above?  
What force but this: the gravity of love.

### **3. Love for the unlovely**

The wonder of it is we have given him no compelling reason to care for us, we the sinners, the failures, the broken, the unlovely.

1 John 4:9,10

This is the heart of the wonder of the coming of Jesus.  
It's understandable to love where there is established relationship - family, children. Or where there is attraction and affection - friend, lover. That is not how God loves. God steps into our world - and we have shown NO love or care about him - quite the opposite we've wished him dead or elsewhere (Parable of the Prodigal). Jesus steps in to experience and take on our weakness, our woundedness, our very humanity that these things might no longer be a stumbling block between us and God.

And indeed his coming is the SHOUT of God to the world - I am here, I am not disinterested or uncaring, you matter so much to me that I come to show you love and to give all that I can that you might know light in your darkness, love in your hurt and need, and life in all newness.

He says to us: Will you accept my love?

## Notices

15/12/24 @ 6pm: **Annual Carol Service** @ St Barnabas  
18/12/24 @ 7pm: **Annual Carol Service** @ Holy Trinity  
24/12/24 @ 4pm: **Christingle Service** @ Holy Trinity  
24/12/24 @ 11.30pm: **Midnight Mass** @ Holy Trinity  
25/12/24 @ 9.30am: **Christmas Service** @ St Barnabas

## Useful Contacts

### Lay Readers:

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### Wardens:

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