

Gathering Prayer

Almighty God,
purify our hearts and minds,
that when your Son Jesus Christ comes
again as
judge and saviour
we may be ready to receive him,
who is our Lord and our God.

Old/Original Testament: Isaiah 11:1-10

A shoot shall come out from the stump of Jesse, and a branch shall grow out of his roots. The spirit of the LORD shall rest on him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and the fear of the LORD. His delight shall be in the fear of the LORD. He shall not judge by what his eyes see or decide by what his ears hear, but with righteousness he shall judge for the poor and decide with equity for the oppressed of the earth; he shall strike the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips he shall kill the wicked. Righteousness shall be the belt around his waist and faithfulness the belt around his loins. The wolf shall live with the lamb; the leopard shall lie down with the kid; the calf and the lion will feed together, and a little child shall lead them. The cow and the bear shall graze; their young shall lie down together; and the lion shall eat straw like the ox. The nursing child shall play over the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall put its hand on the adder's den. They will not hurt or destroy on all my holy mountain, for the earth will be full of the knowledge of the LORD as the waters cover the sea. On that day the root of Jesse shall stand as a signal to the peoples; the nations shall inquire of him, and his dwelling shall be glorious.

Psalm 72:1-7, 18-19

Give the king your judgements, O God, ♦
and your righteousness to the son of a king.
**Then shall he judge your people
righteously ♦
and your poor with justice.**
May the mountains bring forth peace, ♦
and the little hills righteousness for the people.
**May he defend the poor among the
people, ♦
deliver the children of the needy and
crush the oppressor.**
May he live as long as the sun and moon
endure, ♦
from one generation to another.
**May he come down like rain upon the
mown grass, ♦
like the showers that water the earth.**
In his time shall righteousness flourish, ♦
and abundance of peace
till the moon shall be no more.
**Blessed be the Lord, the God of Israel, ♦
who alone does wonderful things.**
And blessed be his glorious name for ever. ♦
May all the earth be filled with his glory.
Amen. Amen.

New Testament: Romans 15:4-13

For whatever was written in former days was written for our instruction, so that by steadfastness and by the encouragement of the scriptures we might have hope. May the God of steadfastness and encouragement grant you to live in harmony with one another, in accordance with Christ Jesus, that together you may with one voice glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. Welcome one another, therefore, just as Christ has welcomed you, for the glory of God. For I tell you that Christ has become a servant of the circumcised on behalf of the truth of God in order that he might confirm the promises given to the ancestors and in order that the gentiles might glorify God for his mercy. As it is written, "Therefore I will

confess you among the gentiles, and sing praises to your name"; and again he says, "Rejoice, O gentiles, with his people"; and again, "Praise the Lord, all you gentiles, and let all the peoples praise him"; and again Isaiah says, "The root of Jesse shall come, the one who rises to rule the gentiles; in him the gentiles shall hope." May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that you may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.

The Holy Gospel: ***Matthew 3:1-12***

In those days John the Baptist appeared in the wilderness of Judea, proclaiming, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven has come near." This is the one of whom the prophet Isaiah spoke when he said, "The voice of one crying out in the wilderness: 'Prepare the way of the Lord; make his paths straight.'" Now John wore clothing of camel's hair with a leather belt around his waist, and his food was locusts and wild honey. Then Jerusalem and all Judea and all the region around the Jordan were going out to him, and they were baptized by him in the River Jordan, confessing their sins. But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees coming for his baptism, he said to them, "You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the coming wrath? Therefore, bear fruit worthy of repentance, and do not presume to say to yourselves, 'We have Abraham as our ancestor,' for I tell you, God is able from these stones to raise up children to Abraham. Even now the axe is lying at the root of the trees; therefore every tree that does not bear good fruit will be cut down and thrown into the fire." "I baptize you with water for repentance, but the one who is coming after me is more powerful than I, and I am not worthy to carry his sandals. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. His winnowing fork is in his hand, and he will clear his threshing floor and will gather

his wheat into the granary, but the chaff he will burn with unquenchable fire."

Postcommunion Prayer

Father in heaven,
who sent your Son to redeem the world
and will send him again to be our judge:
give us grace so to imitate him
in the humility and purity of his first coming
that, when he comes again,
we may be ready to greet him
with joyful love and firm faith;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

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Advanced Service dates

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| 20/12 | 2 pm, Christmas Carols, Saham Toney |
| 21/12 | 6 pm, Christmas Carols, Ovington |
| 21/12 | 4 pm, Christmas Carols, Ashill |
| 24/12 | 6 pm First Mass of Christmas,
Ovington |
| 24/12 | 11.30 pm, Midnight Mass, Saham Toney |
| 25/12 | 9.30 am Holy Communion for
Christmas Day, Ashill |
| 28/12 | 10.30 am Group Service for the Feast
of St John the Evangelist,
Ovington
(no service in Ashill or Saham Toney) |
| 04/01/26 | 9.30 am Epiphany Holy
Communion, Merton |

Events.

Dec 12th 7 for 7.30pm Church Quiz - Wells Cole Community Centre. Teams of 6 £5.00 per head for more information please ring Andy Johnson 01953 885026