

COLLECT

O Lord Jesus Christ,
who at your first coming sent your
messenger
to prepare your way before you:
grant that the ministers and stewards of
your mysteries
may likewise so prepare and make
ready your way
by turning the hearts of the disobedient
to the wisdom of the just,
that at your second coming to judge
the world
we may be found an acceptable people
in your sight;
for you are alive and reign with the
Father
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever.

FIRST READING Isaiah 35:1-10

A reading from the book of the prophet Isaiah.

The wilderness and the dry land shall be glad, the desert shall rejoice and blossom; like the crocus it shall blossom abundantly, and rejoice with joy and singing. The glory of Lebanon shall be given to it, the majesty of Carmel and Sharon. They shall see the glory of the LORD, the majesty of our God. Strengthen the weak hands, and make firm the feeble knees. Say to those who are of a fearful heart, "Be strong, do not fear! Here is your God. He will come with vengeance, with terrible recompense. He will come and save you." Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf unstopped; then the lame shall leap like a deer, and the tongue of the speechless sing for joy. For waters shall break forth in the wilderness, and streams in the desert; the burning sand shall become a pool, and the thirsty ground springs of water; the haunt of jackals shall become a swamp, the grass shall become reeds and rushes. A highway shall be there, and it shall be called the Holy Way; the unclean shall not travel on it, but it shall be for God's people; no traveller, not even fools, shall go astray. No lion shall be there, nor shall any ravenous beast come up on it; they shall not be found there, but the redeemed shall walk there. And the ransomed of the LORD shall return, and come to Zion with singing; everlasting joy shall be upon their heads; they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.

PSALM OR CANTICLE

Either Psalm 146:4-10

R *Happy are they who have the God of Jacob for their help.*

or

R *Come, Lord, and save us.*

Happy are they who have the God of Jacob for their help!
Whose hope is in the Lord their God;
Who made heaven and earth, the seas,
and all that is in them;
who keeps his promise for ever;
Who gives justice to those who are oppressed,
and food to those who hunger. **R**

The Lord sets the prisoners free;
the Lord opens the eyes of the blind;
the Lord lifts up those who are bowed down;

The Lord loves the righteous;
the Lord cares for the stranger;
he sustains the orphan and widow,
but frustrates the way of the wicked. **R**

The Lord shall reign for ever,
your God, O Zion, throughout all generations.

Alleluia! **R**

Or Luke 1:46b-55 (Magnificat)

R *My spirit rejoices in God my Saviour.*

My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord;
My spirit rejoices in God my Saviour,
For he has looked with favour on his lowly servant;
from this day all generations will call me blessed.
The Almighty has done great things for me,
and holy is his name. **R**

He has mercy on those who fear him in every generation.
He has shown the strength of his arm;
he has scattered the proud in their conceit. **R**

He has cast down the mighty from their thrones
and has lifted up the lowly.
He has filled the hungry with good things
and the rich he has sent away empty. **R**

He has come to the help of his servant, Israel,
for he has remembered his promise of mercy.
The promise he made to our forebears:
to Abraham and his children for ever. **R**

SECOND READING James 5:7-10

A reading from the letter of James.

Be patient, beloved, until the coming of the Lord. The farmer waits for the precious crop from the earth, being patient with it until it receives the early and the late rains. You also must be patient. Strengthen your hearts, for the coming of the Lord is near. Beloved, do not grumble against one another, so that you may not be judged. See, the Judge is standing at the doors! As an example of suffering and patience, beloved, take the prophets who spoke in the name of the Lord.

GOSPEL Matthew 11:2-11

Hear the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Matthew.

When John heard in prison what the Messiah was doing, he sent word by his disciples and said to Jesus, "Are you the one who is to come, or are we to wait for another?" Jesus answered them, "Go and tell John what you hear and see: the blind receive their sight, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the poor have good news brought to them. And blessed is anyone who takes no offence at me." As they went away, Jesus began to speak to the crowds about John: "What did you go out into the wilderness to look at? A reed shaken by the wind? What then did you go out to see? Someone dressed in soft robes? Look, those who wear soft robes are in royal palaces. What then did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, I tell you, and more than a prophet. This is the one about whom it is written, 'See, I am sending my messenger ahead of you, who will prepare your way before you.' Truly I tell you, among those born of women no one has arisen greater than John the Baptist; yet the least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he."

POST COMMUNION

We give you thanks, O Lord, for these heavenly gifts;
kindle in us the fire of your Spirit
that when your Christ comes again
we may shine as lights before his face;
who is alive and reigns now and for ever.

St. Mary's Scottish Episcopal Church, Gatehouse of Fleet
14th December 2025
Third Sunday of Advent
Celebrant and Preacher: Rev'd Alison Hudson

Please pray for Joyce and Rob Thacker, Laura Durling, Sally-Anne and Peter Madeley, Carol Ducker, Rowan Huggitt, Barbara Graham, Sonia Perry and Dee DuRose

In remembrance and with thanksgiving for the life of Bishop Gregor Duncan.

Our Advent candle prayer

God of joy, it is in your love that we find lasting joy. Keep us from seeking happiness in things that will not last, for we brought nothing into this world and can take nothing out of it. Teach us instead to find joy in the gift of your Son, who came into this world with nothing, yet gave us everything. May his joy bubble up in our hearts and overflow to all we meet this Advent season. *Amen*

An Advent Course is on the theme of 'Hope' The next and final meeting will take place on Wednesday 17th December from 9.30-10.30am in Church. We will incorporate our 'Pause for Prayer' into this and conclude with refreshments.

Gift Day Today Unwrapped gifts collected will be taken to the Salvation Army in Dumfries and distributed to children who may not receive other gifts at Christmas. Thank you.

Please do invite family, friends and neighbours to our special Christmas services -

Christmas Eve 4.00 pm Family Carol Service

Christmas Day 9.30am Holy Communion Service

Epiphany Party 6th January 2026 at 6pm: Sue Davies has kindly invited members of St.Mary's and Greyfriars congregation to a bring and share supper at Belmont, Burnside Loaning. Please sign up on the invitation on the noticeboard, or let Sue know if you are coming and what you will be contributing, by 5th January. Tel:01557 339171 or 07841377436.

Gift Aid and Giving If you are a visitor or come occasionally to St.Mary's, and you are a tax payer, you may want to complete one of the green envelopes in the pew (not forgetting to include your name and address) in order that we can reclaim the tax. If you would rather give a regular amount, either by standing order or by weekly envelope, please speak to the treasurer David Hart. David can be contacted by email at david21@icloud.com or phone 01557 814294

Christmas Stamps There is a jar in the porch for used stamps which will be sent to RNIB.

Website our new updated website is now up and running, please do look through and let Revd Alison have any feedback, as well as any good quality photographs you are willing to share. The address is the same as before - www.greyfriarsstmarys.org.uk We also have a Facebook page – St Mary's Church, Gatehouse of Fleet. If you use Facebook, please do follow and share any posts from this page.

Rev'd Alison's contact details:

18, Castledykes Road, Kirkcudbright, DG6 4AN Tel: 07725 467246

email: kirkgatepriest@gmail.com Rest days: Monday and Saturday

Website: www.greyfriarsstmarys.org.uk