



GODALMING UNITED CHURCH
(Methodist & United Reformed)

SERVICE FOR SUNDAY DECEMBER 9th 2018 and notices for the coming week

Today's readings, the first from the last book of the Old Testament and the second from the immediately following Gospels complement each other in that they both refer to a messenger, one who is to come, and is John the Baptist - and the Hebrew meaning of Malachi's name is also 'My messenger'. Malachi wrote this book at a difficult waiting time, delusion had set in, times were hard, the people were poor, ground down by foreign powers. The people were beginning to doubt the words of the prophets, feeling that God had forgotten them and had let them down. There was an increasingly casual attitude to worship and the standards God had set. Malachi, in our reading, speaks of purification and judgement.

Dietrich Bonhoeffer, the German pastor and theologian executed in the last months of the Second World War, preached on Malachi's words in an Advent sermon in 1928:

"It is remarkable that we face the thought that God is coming, so calmly, whereas previously peoples trembled at the day of God... We have become so accustomed to the idea of divine love and of God's coming at Christmas that we no longer feel the shiver of fear that God's coming should arouse in us. We are indifferent to the message, taking only the pleasant and agreeable out of it and forgetting the serious aspect, that the God of the World draws near to the people of our little earth and lays claim to us. The coming of God is truly not only glad tidings, but first of all frightening news for everyone who has a conscience.

"Only when we have felt the terror of the matter can we recognise the incomparable kindness. God comes into the very midst of evil and death, and judges the evil in us and in the world. And by judging us, God cleanses and sanctifies us, comes to us with grace and love."

Apt words on this Advent season, God is coming.

Alan

Today's stewards are

Vestry Steward Nicola Garriock

Duty Steward Peter Radcliffe

(stewards are the people to ask, if you need help before, during or after a service)

9.00-10.15am eMerge (Fairtrade Sunday breakfast)

PRAYER FOR THE WEEK

Lord God, we thank you for the unflagging witness of prophets and martyrs, unafraid to speak your truth even in the face of death; and for the words of Isaiah: 'The people walking in darkness have seen a great light... for to us a Child is born... and he will be called Wonderful Counsellor, Mighty God, Prince of peace.' Bless all who are oppressed, kept down by tyranny; may they find new hope through the witness and caring of your Church.

Our CLOSED LOOP SYSTEM requires hearing aids to be switched to the telephone or T programme. Recordings of our services are available through the church website, or a CD copy can be provided on request – please ask a Steward.

The Church operates a system of covenanted, planned giving (details of which may be obtained from Nicola Garriock).

There is a children's area available at the rear of the Church which parents and their young children may use during the service.

10.30am MORNING WORSHIP

	Led by	Rev Peter Hills
Music:		Candela
Hosts:		Maggie Maile and Shirley Williams
Sound System:		John Drake
Projection steward:		Julie Rowling

WELCOME & CALL TO WORSHIP

Salvation is nearer to us now than when we became believers.
May your love overflow more and more, so that in the day of Christ you may be pure and blameless, having produced the harvest of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ for the glory and praise of God.

HYMN (StF) 608 **All praise to our redeeming Lord, who joins us by his grace** *during which the two candles are lit*

AN ADVENT COLLECT

God of all time and space, who are we, that you should come to us? Yet you have visited your people and redeemed us in your Son. As we prepare to celebrate his birth, make our hearts leap for joy at the sound of your word and move us by your Spirit to bless your wonderful works. We ask this through him whose coming is certain, whose day draws near, even your Son, Jesus Christ our Saviour. **Amen.**

PRAYERS OF ADORATION, CONFESSION & THANKSGIVING

HYMN (StF) 264 Make way, Make way; for Christ the King in splendour arrives *The children leave*

FIRST READING Malachi 3.1-4 (p.961) read by Kath Benny

NEW TESTAMENT CANTICLE The Song of Zechariah **(STF 792)**

SECOND READING Luke 3.1-6 (p.1029) read by Nicola Garriock

HYMN (StF) 182 On Jordan's bank the Baptist's cry announces that the Lord is nigh

SERMON

HYMN (StF) 693 Beauty for brokenness, hope for despair

INTERCESSIONS

COLLECT OF THE DAY

God of all holiness, your promises stand unshaken through all generations and you lift up all who are burdened and brought low: renew our hope in you, as we wait for the coming in glory of Jesus Christ, our Judge and our Saviour, who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, world without end. **Amen.**

THE LORD'S PRAYER

OFFERING AND PRAYER OF DEDICATION

HYMN (StF) 188 There's a light upon the mountains, and the day is at the spring

BLESSING & DISMISSAL

Go now; take off the garment of your sorrow, and put on forever the beauty of the glory from God; for God has ordered that every high mountain and the everlasting hills be made low, so that his people may walk safely in the glory of God. We go, to walk in his way.

Everyone is welcome to join us for coffee or tea or a drink of squash in the River Room after the service.

Carollers are needed – please stay after the service to practise an item for the Carol Service next Sunday.

Today 2.30pm Pantomime rehearsal

This Christmas, we invite you to 'Give the Gift of Sight'

Greetings cards (made by Weysiders, Rainbows, Brownies and the Conquest Art Club) are available in the foyer. Please use one of these to write your message and put your card on the Christmas tree. Any donations received will go towards our Cataract Project in The Gambia.

DIARY FOR THE WEEK UP TO SUNDAY 16th DECEMBER 2018

- Tues 11th 5.00pm Brownies (*Alison tel: 422841*)
- Wed 12th 10.00am Godaltots (*Jacky <tel:423768>*)
12.15 for 12.30pm Lunch Fellowship at the Jack Phillips
8.00pm Church Council Meeting
- Thurs 13th
12.15 for 12.30pm Advent Reflections at St. Mary's, Guildford
WAITING - Nick Edwards
followed by a bread and soup lunch
4.30pm Rainbows (*Julie tel: 428701*)
5.45pm Cubs (*cubs@guc.org.uk*)
7.30pm Scouts (*scouts@guc.org.uk*)
- Fri 14th 10.30am–2.00pm Church open for private prayer
2.00pm Hobbies & Games Group
12 – 1.30pm Lunches
6.00pm Music Kids - (*Barbara tel: 421268*)
- Sat 15th 7.00pm Godalmiing Band and Godalming Youth Band
concert at GUC
- Sunday 16th December
9.00 – 10.15am Fairtrade Sunday Breakfast
10.30am Morning Worship – led by Rev Norman Edsall
6.00pm Candlelit Carol Service

ADVANCE NOTICES

Tues 18th 2.45pm Ladies Fellowship – Christmas Traditions

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION ABOUT THE CHURCH PLEASE CONTACT:

Minister	Rev Paul Hulme	01483 414 709
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