

Advent 2025

Newcastle Central and East Circuit

During Advent, we invite you visit some of the significant places in the North East. You might travel to visit some of them in person. You might go through your memories, or visit with the aid of the images included, or ones that you find on-line or in your own photo albums. Through this Advent season, as we visit each of the five places, and hear passages from the Bible, we invite you to wonder.

What does this place make me think about?
What does this passage say about God?
What is God saying to me?



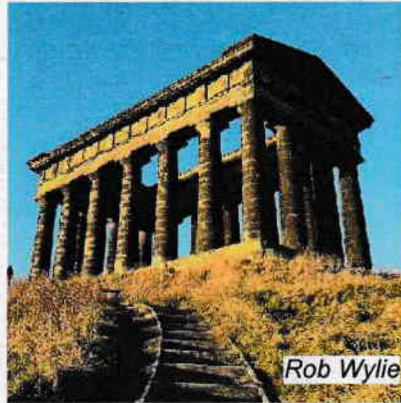
John Stuart www.stushieart.com

ADVENT 1 30TH NOVEMBER

Advent Candles are ready to be lit - a sign that we are starting our journey towards Christmas.

The Penshaw Monument - a sign of where we are on our journey. Nearly home if we're heading north up the A1; just setting out if we're heading south.

As we set out on our journey towards Christmas, our readings invite us to travel to the house of the Lord, to go up the holy mountain.



Some verses from Isaiah 2:1-5 and refrain from Psalm 122:1

In days to come

the mountain of the Lord's house
shall be established as the highest of the mountains
and shall be raised above the hills;
all the nations shall stream to it.

**I was glad when they said to me,
"Let us go to the house of the Lord!"**

Many peoples shall come and say,
"Come, let us go up to the mountain of the Lord,
to the house of the God of Jacob,
that he may teach us his ways
and that we may walk in his paths."

**I was glad when they said to me,
"Let us go to the house of the Lord!"**

For out of Zion shall go forth instruction
and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem.

**I was glad when they said to me,
"Let us go to the house of the Lord!"**

He shall judge between the nations
and shall arbitrate for many peoples;
they shall beat their swords into plowshares
and their spears into pruning hooks;
nation shall not lift up sword against nation;
neither shall they learn war any more.

**I was glad when they said to me,
"Let us go to the house of the Lord!"**

O house of Jacob,
come, let us walk in the light of the Lord!

Light first candle

Prayer

As we start our journey to Bethlehem this year
Advent God: **lead us on.**

As we look at familiar places and hear again familiar words
Advent God: **lead us on.**

As we listen for your word in prophets, psalms and Gospel
Advent God: **lead us on.**

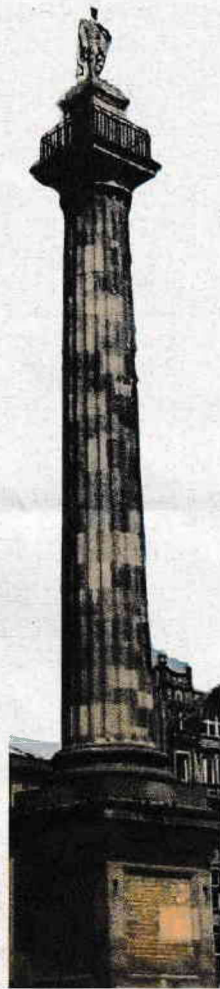
O people of God,
come, let us walk in the light of the Lord!
Advent God: **lead us on.**
Amen.

ADVENT 2 7TH DECEMBER

Today's reading points to righteousness and justice. The imagery paints a picture of an alternative way of being alongside each other. Those who once might have been in conflict will leave peacefully together. Justice will reign. This is a hopeful depiction of God's Kingdom. But we are far off realising it. Prophetic acts are still necessary in today's world if we are to move closer to this divine image. The monument in our city centre has become a gathering place for those who imagine, and commit themselves to, a different future. The monument was built in honour of Earl Grey who was Prime Minister during the passing of the Slavery Abolition Act in 1833, which abolished slavery throughout the British Empire. Monuments such as this are certainly not without their problems, however, this advent may it serve as a reminder that positive change is possible in this world through the prophetic imagination and courageous action, often seen in the most unlikely candidates.

Isaiah 11:6-9

- ⁶The wolf will live with the lamb,
the leopard will lie down with the goat,
the calf and the lion and the yearling together;
and a little child will lead them.
- ⁷The cow will feed with the bear,
their young will lie down together,
and the lion will eat straw like the ox.
- ⁸The infant will play near the cobra's den,
and the young child will put its hand into the viper's nest.
- ⁹They will neither harm nor destroy
on all my holy mountain,
for the earth will be filled with the knowledge of the Lord
as the waters cover the sea.



Light second candle

Prayer

Advent God: **Who changed the world with a child**

Stir in us: **a hunger for justice,
a commitment to peace
and the instinct to love.**

Remind us dear God that the least likely can be leaders
and although prophets often pay a great price,
new life is not possible without their imagination.

**We are filled with knowledge of the Lord
and as we wait to mark his birth,
we recommit to follow Christ's humble and brave example.
Amen.**

ADVENT 3 14TH DECEMBER

The primary role of a lighthouse is to act as a navigational aid, guiding ships safely through dangerous waters by emitting a bright distinctive light and sometimes sound signals.

St Mary's Lighthouse was built in 1898 to guide boats and warn them of the dangers of the North-East coastline. Although no longer operational today St Mary's is an iconic reminder of the need for those at sea to follow the safe path.

John the Baptist came to warn people of the dangers of being on the wrong path. His voice cried out in the wilderness for people to turn from their wicked ways.

The sea can be a destructive, dangerous place but also a place of beauty, adventure and healing.

John baptised with water, for repentance and the cleansing of sin, but also foretold of one coming far greater, who would baptise with the Holy Spirit.



Rob Wylie

Matthew 3:1-3

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.' "

Light 3rd candle

Prayer

Advent God: **Shine through us today**

Give us the courage to stand firm on the rock
and speak truth into situations we find ourselves in.
When we have seen God's light, heard his truth
help us to share it with others.

Advent God: **Shine through us today**

For those who find their lives in turmoil, overwhelmed with the
pressures of work or family life, help us to share the light of Christ
that we have encountered. In our sorrows and joys, in faith we trust
that those we share with, will glimpse the light of God and be saved.

Advent God: **Shine through us today**

Advent God, we may feel unworthy, insignificant,
too old, too young,

to share your extraordinary message.

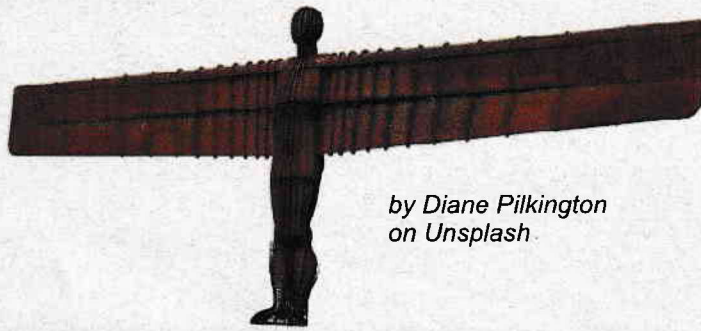
Who will listen to us?

Re-energise us this advent season
with the power of your Holy Spirit
that our lives may reflect your glory
bringing hope and peace and joy
to those who find themselves "at sea" .

Amen

ADVENT 4 21ST DECEMBER

The creator of
The Angel of the
North, Antony
Gormley said, "It
is important to me
that the Angel is
rooted in the
ground - the
complete



*by Diane Pilkington
on Unsplash*

antithesis of what an angel is, floating about in the ether. It has an air of mystery".

There is mystery about the angels that visit at Christmas. In today's reading from Matthew, the angel visits Joseph in a dream. That's very mysterious. But what isn't a mysterious is the clarity of the message brought by the angel. That angel is not a vision 'floating in the ether', of no earthly use. Like the Angel of the North, the angel that appears in Joseph dream has a message that is grounded and rooted in the real circumstances of Joseph's life. 'Do not be afraid' As we make our advent journey may we hear again the message of Hope that says we do not need to be afraid. A message that come to us grounded in the circumstances we face and the challenges that are ours. We can celebrate because we need not be afraid. God is with us.

The Angel said "Joseph son of David do not be afraid to take Mary home as your wife.

She will give birth to a son and you will give him the name Jesus
As the prophets said The virgin will conceive and give birth to a son
And they will call him Immanuel which means God is with us.

Lighting of the fourth candle...

Prayer

Advent God, Thank you that the angel's message of Hope comes to us, grounded in the reality of our lives. Help us to not be afraid, because you are with us. Amen

CHRISTMAS DAY

The Newcastle Hospitals special care baby unit is located in Ward 35, at the RVI. It provides specialist care for premature babies and those with other complex health needs. The unit includes intensive care, and is a regional centre for neo-natal care in the North of England.



On this day when we celebrate the gift to us of the Christ child we remember the anxiety and vulnerability of Mary and Joseph as their son is born in a cold and damp stable. We remember all mothers this Christmas whose births have been traumatic. We pray for them, for their child and for the nursing staff supporting them today on the Special Care Baby Unit.

Lighting of the final candle...

Joseph went to be registered in Bethlehem with Mary who was expecting a child. While they were there, the time came for her to give birth.

**Mary gave birth to her firstborn son,
wrapped him in bands of cloth,
and laid him in a manger,
because there was no place for them in the inn.**

Prayer.

Incarnate God, we thank You for the gift of Your Son,
Jesus, our Saviour,
and for the hope He brings to a weary world.
Fill our hearts with Your peace
and help us share that peace with others this season,
especially with those who are most vulnerable
this Christmas time.
Incarnate God: we thank you. Fill us with your peace.