

7th December 2025



What does Advent mean to you? For me, Advent is like a precious stone—full of different facets that catch the light in unique ways. As we journey through this season, our Sunday sermons are exploring four aspects inspired by Isaiah's prophecy. Yet, the thread that binds them all together, for me, is hope. Hope, if it's only a feeling, can sometimes seem insubstantial—like mist that slips through our fingers. When we look at the world, it's easy to feel overwhelmed by conflict, the rising cost of living, climate change, and social breakdown. With so many voices clamouring for our attention—mainstream media, social media platforms, and countless other online sources—hope can feel drained of its strength. But what a blessing to read today's Psalm 33 which offers a different perspective: *"the word of the Lord is right and true"* (v4). Here is someone we can trust and rely on. God's word provides a solid foundation for hope, even when everything seems out of control and we're unsure how to make things better. It reminds us that we are not in charge; God holds everything together. This is his creation, watched over with a plan and purpose, and most of all, it is *"full of his unfailing love"* (v5).

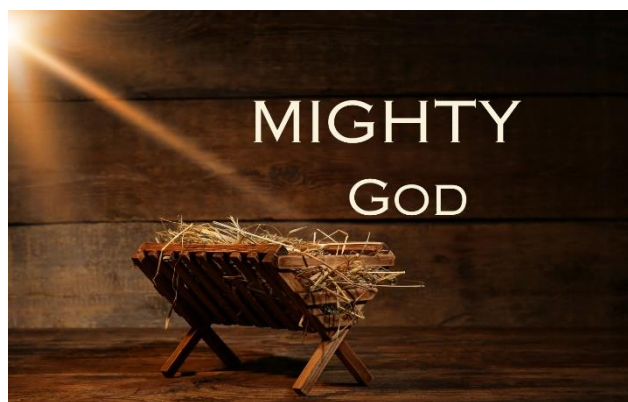
As I read the psalm, the phrase *"unfailing love"* stood out to me. It appears three times—in verses 5, 18, and 22—reminding us again and again of God's steadfast care. This assurance inspires us to praise and worship our mighty, and loving, God.

My prayer is that, as we move through Advent amid all the excitement and clamour of the modern Christmas season, we will rediscover and renew our hope. Putting aside all the other voices, let us hold on to the truth of God's unfailing love. Perhaps, each day, we could pause and look for signs of God's love in action around us. I am sure we will find them. Do share with me if there's something you notice, or share with someone else, as this Advent, *"we wait and hope for the Lord"*.

Rod

Church Social

A huge thank you to everyone who came and helped at our recent social. We had a great time and raised £1,011.31 for the organ fund.



Please pray for...



Rachel (a member of our Thursday congregation); Sue Norman; Hazel Haskayne; Brian McClellan; John Panter; Joe McPhee; Ben Robinson; Jack Cade; Finley Parton; John and Ray Reynolds; Tony Morris; Hilary Talbot's friend Kelly, Pam Clarke who is currently in hospital. We also pray for those who have recently lost loved ones, including the families and friends of Eric White and Timothy Haywood.

Please let the Church Office know if you would like your name added or removed from this list. The list will be routinely reviewed every few months.

Christmas Choir & Carol Singing

Singers and friends needed to join carol singing in December:

Tuesday 9th 10.30am at Joules Place

Monday 15th 11am at Woodcroft

Wednesday 17th 4pm at Tunstall Hall

Monday 22nd 7pm at Mercian Court

'Christmas Choir' practices for St Mary's Carol service on 21st December continue at 7.30pm on Thursdays for harmony and tune singers.

Everyone is welcome to all these events.



Mothers' Union



Our branch Christmas lunch, with enrolments, is on Monday, 8th December at 12.30 in the Parish Rooms. Cost £5. We look forward to seeing our members there, Barbara and Carol.

Games Café

The next Games café is on **Tuesday 9th December at 2.00pm** in the Parish Rooms. Come along and join an afternoon of fun with board games, coffee and good company! Feel free to bring your own games or just turn up to join in the fun. Bring your friends and find warmth and a welcome this Winter! Entrance fee of £1



Services

Services are in St Mary's Church unless otherwise indicated.

Sunday 7th December

9.00am BCP Holy Communion

10.30am CW Holy Communion

Readings Psalm 33 Luke 8.22-25

The 10.30 service will also be on Zoom.

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85337124930?pwd=NFdMTzRMR2JXbXRoSctVRS9PSkZXdz09>

Meeting ID: 853 3712 4930 Password: 867888

Wednesday Morning Prayer 9.00am ZOOM

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89943278704?pwd=RytPQ3RmOG5yYlBpUWpoWWkxWGFEZz09>

Meeting ID: 899 4327 8704 Password: 730701

Thursday Holy Communion 10.00am

Sunday Sermons

These are available on our website:

<https://www.stmarysmarketdrayton.org.uk/media>

Gift Service



We shall be accepting gifts for the Women's Refuge on **Sunday 14th December**. If you are able to donate items such as toiletries, chocolates, hats, scarves and gloves for women, and any toys or treats for children, these would be very gratefully received. Please bring them along to the services on the 14th.

Christmas and New Year Services

Sunday 21st December

9.00am BCP Holy Communion

No 10.30am Service

7.00pm Carol Service

Christmas Eve

5.00pm Christingle Service

11.15pm Holy Communion

Christmas Day

No 9.00am Service

10.00am Family Communion Service

Sunday 28th December

No 9.00am Service

10.30am Songs of Praise Service

Please let Catherine know if you have a favourite hymn or worship song you'd like us to sing.



Phoenix Group (for those bereaved)

Meeting Friday 12th December at 10.30am in Festival Drayton for coffee, cake and chat.

Foodbank Items

Needed

Stock Items urgently required:

Rice Pudding; Cartons of Long-Life Fruit Juice; Jam; Sponge Pudding/cake; Laundry Washing Tabs/Pods; Washing-up Liquid; Christmas Pudding/Cake; Mince Pies; Christmas Lunch Accompaniments

We have plenty of:

Cereal; pasta; rice; tea; baked beans.

The trolley at the back of church is now in use and donations are gratefully received.

Can You Help?

There has been an overwhelming response for volunteers for this year's Christmas Services

We only need a couple of welcomers for the midnight service on Christmas Eve. If you can help please let Helen in the office know. Thank you so much to everyone who has come forward to help, you really are so appreciated.

Refreshments after the Carol Service

We would like mince pies (either made or bought) for the refreshments after the Carol Service on the 21st Dec. There will be a signing sheet on the table at the back of the church. Any queries please talk to Pat Fox.



Staying in Touch

Please either leave a message or send an email and we will get back to you as soon as possible.

Church Administrator: Helen Hughes

Phone: 01630 653505

E-mail: stmarysmarketdrayton@gmail.com

Website: www.stmarysmarketdrayton.org.uk

Facebook: @StMarysMarketDrayton

Parish Rooms FB: @TheParishRoomsMD

Operations Manager: Elaine Cook

Phone: 07454 441943

E-mail: opsmanagerofstmarys@gmail.com

Vicar: Revd Catherine McBride

Phone: 01630 656943

E-mail: vicarofstmarys@gmail.com

Donations can be made by scanning the QR codes:



General fund



Organ fund



Security fund