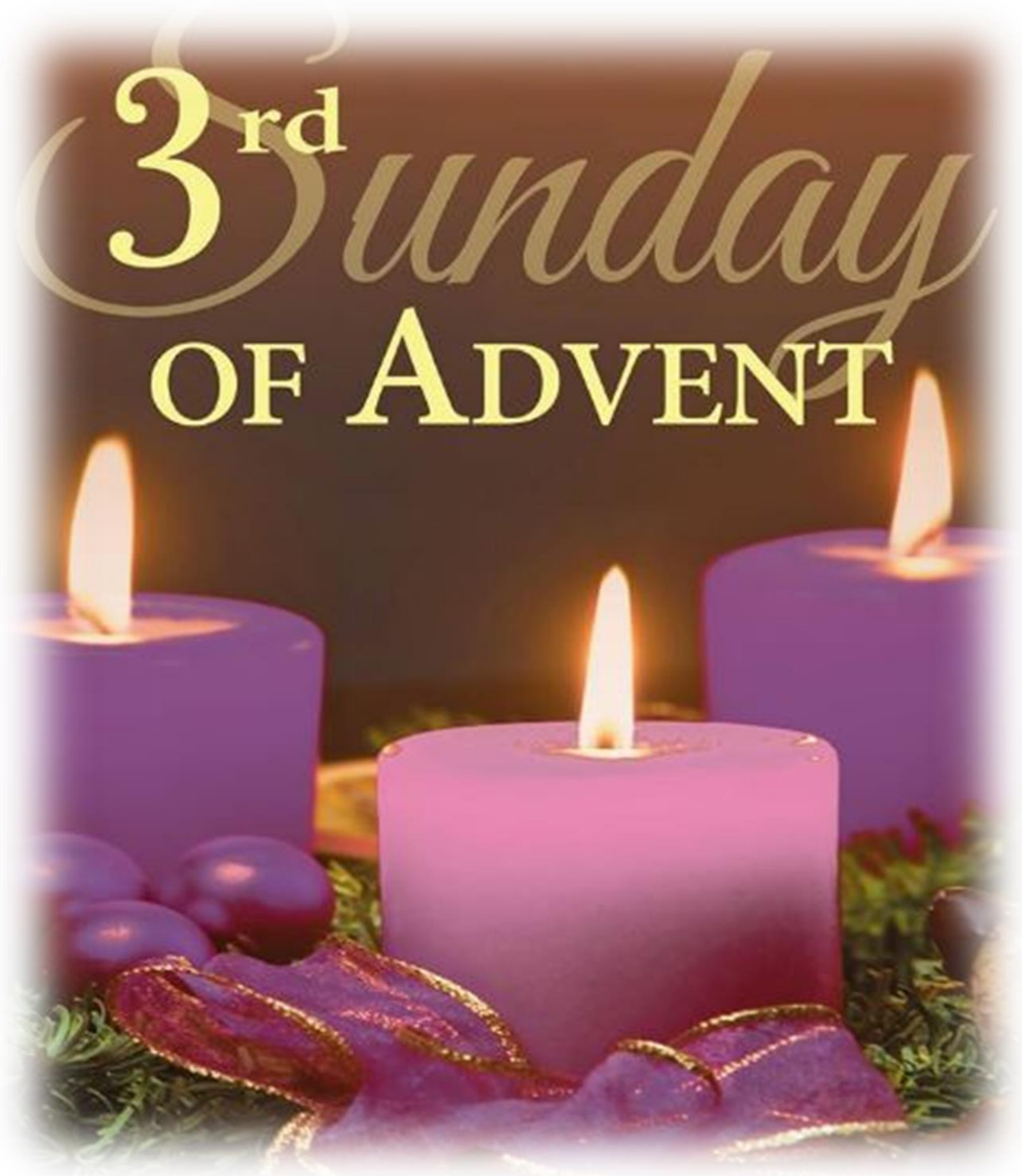




15 December 2024

Notes from Yukiko's Desk



Joy. It is the candle we light this week. **Joy** is a strange thing. It is not a word we use that often. **Joy** is something we immediately connect with smiles, happiness, pleasure, fun. Taking a moment myself, here is a small sampling of the ways I experience **joy**:

- watching my dog sleeping peacefully on my knees
- watching a family of ducklings walking together
- Babies in our Space programme smiling at me

From my more extensive list, I came to realise that **Joy** can certainly be found in simple things anytime and anywhere and can be profoundly simple. And, as Henri Nouwen insightfully writes, “**Joy does not simply happen to us. We have to choose joy and keep choosing it every day.**”

I am also mindful that there is much sorrow and ache that often encompasses this season. The missing of a loved one lost, the ache of loneliness, broken relationships and shattered dreams fill so many of our stories and seem to be so much more poignant at Christmas. How can we find joy in such stations? I like what Pierre Teilhard de Chardin, French philosopher and scientist, says, “**Joy is the infallible sign of the presence of God.**”

On the third Sunday of Advent, we are all called to **rejoice**. We **rejoice** because Christmas is near. We **rejoice** because we know that Christ has already come. We **rejoice** because he comes to us in the Eucharistic table, he comes to us in the poor, and he will come again at the end of time to judge the living and the dead. **Joy** truly is the “**infallible sign of the presence of God.**” So let us rejoice in word and deed.

Joyfully in Christ,
Yukiko

News & upcoming events



This week, we did a messy play. Next week will be our final session.



Settler's Morning Tea:

Next meeting: **18 December** Wednesday at **10 am** at Settler's Lounge. This will be last morning tea for the year. Beginning again Wednesday February 19th 2025.

Advent Study Group@ Holy Cross

Our final session will be held on **17 December at 10: 30 am-12 pm**. All are welcome!

Auckland City Mission:

Please consider making special food donations on this Sunday for the City Mission. Donated items should be non-perishable items such as canned food, spread, and pasta. Also, it would be nice for the food parcels to include treat food such as Christmas mince pies, biscuits, and nuts. I will take whatever we have collected to the City Mission office on the 19th December.

We pray for

- peace in Syria, that the cycle of violence would cease, that there would be no spirit of vengeance against anyone
- People who are lonely, hungry, bereaved or distressed as Christmas approaches. May they find kindness, welcome and support in the season, and get some glimpse of being seen and loved by God. May we in the Church discover how to be communities of compassion and practical care for those who need it this Christmas.

This Week's Question

What teachings did John the Baptist give tax collectors?

Advent Quiz

Traditionally, on an Advent wreath with four candles,
each candle represents

A: 40 years B: Jesus' birthday cake C: 1000 years D: 40 days

Readings

15th December

22nd December

1st Reading: Zeph 3:14-20

Psalm Isa 12:2-6

2nd Reading: Phil 4:4-7

Gospel: Luke 3:7-18

This week's summary:

1st
Reading: Zephaniah, a prophet with royal connections, lived around the 7th century BC. Despite foreign threats he believes that Jerusalem, under God's protection, will survive.

2nd
Reading: Paul encourages the Philippians with joyful hope.

Gospel: John the Baptist preaches an uncompromising message of social responsibility and reminds the people of the coming one.

Sentence

Do not fear. The Lord, your God, is in your midst, a warrior who gives victory; he will rejoice over you with gladness, he will renew you in his love.

Zephaniah 3:16–17

Collect of the Day

**God our strength and our hope,
grant us the courage of John the Baptist,
constantly to speak the truth,
boldly to rebuke vice and patiently to suffer for the truth's sake;
in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.**

This Week's Service Songs at Holy Cross (Stephanie and Yukiko)

Opening:	Joy to the World
Gospel:	O Come All Ye Faithful
Offertory:	Silent Night
Recession:	Away in a Manger

Rosters

Holy Cross

	<u>15th December</u>	<u>22nd December</u>
Sacristan	Dorothy Shultz	
Welcomer	Dorothy Shultz	Ria Gormley
1 Readings	Alison Thompson	
2 Readings	Trish Duncan	
Presiding	Yukiko	Yukiko
Prayers	Dorothy Meyer	
TV Setup & Slides	Graham Wood	Patrick Harris
Morning Tea	Dorothy M & Ria	Alison T & Trish
Flowers	Diana Harris	Ria Gormley

St Michaels

	<u>15th December</u>	<u>22nd December</u>
Welcome & Prayers	Bruce Goertz	Bruce Goertz
Readings	Brian Simpson	Bruce Goertz
Presiding	Les	Bruce Goertz

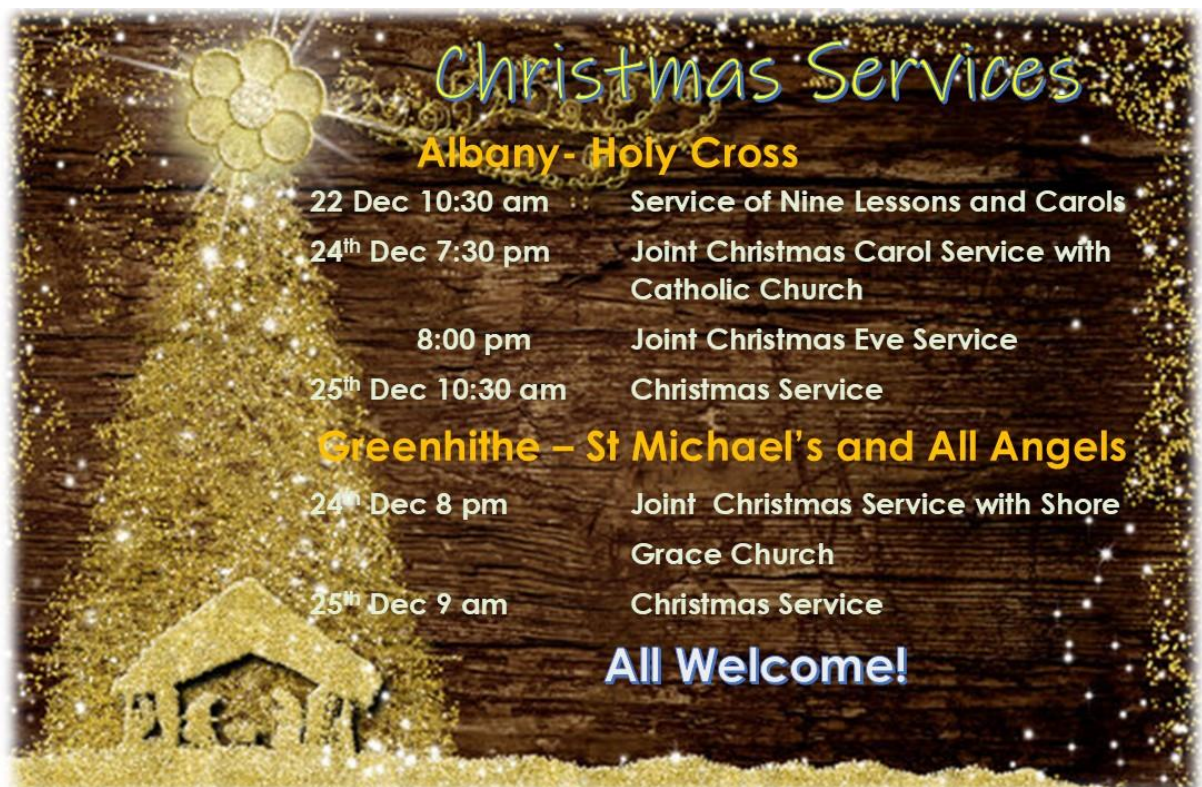
This Week's Answer:

He told them to give alms to the poor from the riches they had amassed.

Answer for Advent Quiz

C

Liturgical Colour: Purple



Christmas Services

Albany - Holy Cross

22 Dec 10:30 am : Service of Nine Lessons and Carols

24th Dec 7:30 pm : Joint Christmas Carol Service with Catholic Church

8:00 pm : Joint Christmas Eve Service

25th Dec 10:30 am : Christmas Service

Greenhithe – St Michael's and All Angels

24th Dec 8 pm : Joint Christmas Service with Shore Grace Church

25th Dec 9 am : Christmas Service

All Welcome!

A quote for Advent Season

"A prison cell, in which one waits, hopes – and is completely dependent on the fact that the door of freedom has to be opened from the outside, is not a bad picture of Advent"
– Dietrich Bonhoeffer, *God is in the Manger*

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Feedback welcome: If you have feedback on any aspect of our church activities, please do contact the wardens, Beatrix & Trish – contacts as above – or via the office at the email above.

Albany Greenhithe Anglican Church

www.agac.org.nz

Bank details: ASB – 12-3136-0041622-00

