



Circuit Contact

Welcome to our Circuit Worship for

22nd December 2024 Prepared by Deacon Peter Ogle

**Worship in the following locations:**

Wellspring Methodist Church, Cheadle - At 10:30pm - Dr Lynne Bradbury

Endon Methodist Church - At 10:00am With Mr Dennis Johnson

Ipstones Methodist Church - At 10:30am With Rev Julie Hassall/ Rev Jane Held with St Leonards- Carols

Onecote Methodist Church - At 19:30pm - Rev Julie Hassall and Mr Roger Cutts with Onecote CE - Carols

Rudyard Methodist Church - At 11:00am - Local Arrangement

The Gathering At St Andrews, Cheddleton - at 16:00pm

Trinity, Leek - At 10.30am - With Rev Denise Williamson - Holy Communion

Waterhouses Methodist Church- At 14:30pm - Rev Julie Hassall/Rev Jane Held - Carols with Waterfall CE

Wetley Rocks Methodist Church - At 14:30am - With Rev Joyce Smith - With St Johns - Carols

**Sunday 29<sup>th</sup> December – Worship at Wellspring Tean – At 10:30am With Rev Julie Hassall**



**Call to Worship**

O Lord, the Scripture says, 'there is a time for silence and a time for speech.' Saviour, teach me the silence of humility, the silence of wisdom, the silence of love, the silence of perfection, the silence that speaks without words, the silence of faith.

Lord, teach me to silence my own heart that I may listen to the gentle movement of the Holy Spirit within me and sense the depths which are of God.

(Frankfurt Prayer-16<sup>th</sup> century)

Hymn Advent Candles tell their story

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=z8id\\_dKiUjI](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=z8id_dKiUjI)

**Prayer**

Almighty and merciful God, the fountain of all goodness, who knows every thought of our hearts, we bring our sins before you, sins of commission and omission. Those things we did, said and thought about others and things we should have done for you but didn't. We thank you that in your mercy and grace, you have provided us with the opportunity to bring our sins in the name of Jesus, who died for the sin of the world

on a cross outside the city walls of Jerusalem. You have promised that when we bring our sins in his name you will to forgive and forget them. Thank you, Amen

**Reading: Luke Chapter 1 verses 46b-55** [Luke 1:46-55 NIV - Mary's Song - And Mary said: "My - Bible Gateway \\*](#)

46 And Mary said: "My soul glorifies the Lord

47 and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior,

48 for he has been mindful of the humble state of his servant. From now on all generations will call me blessed,

49 for the Mighty One has done great things for me— holy is his name.

50 His mercy extends to those who fear him, from generation to generation.

51 He has performed mighty deeds with his arm; he has scattered those who are proud in their inmost thoughts.

52 He has brought down rulers from their thrones but has lifted up the humble.

53 He has filled the hungry with good things but has sent the rich away empty.

54 He has helped his servant Israel, remembering to be merciful

55 to Abraham and his descendants forever, just as he promised our ancestors."

**Hymn: Tell out my soul** - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=srkfvhANW7Y>

## Reflection

### Adventure

I wonder if you have been on an adventure this year? I have been privileged to go on two. The first to Scotland on a coach trip and the second a visit to Croatia, with my brother Robert, sister Pam and brother-in-law Dave. Each adventure began with some preparation. What shall I pack, have I got the right clothes, will I get them all in the case? The list was endless. Many years ago, I knew a couple who when they went away, got out their cases and inside was a spreadsheet of the things they needed to take with them. On the spreadsheet was a column that was to be ticked when each item was put into the case. Those who know me well, know that I do not work like that, sometimes I wish I did, it would be a lot less stressful.

As we work towards the end of Advent, do you feel like you've been on a journey with the prophets, Elizabeth and Zechariah, Mary and Joseph and the many others who have contributed to the fulfilment of God's promise of the coming of the Messiah or has it been same old, same old.?

Today we focus on Mary, a young woman, who is pledged to be married to Joseph, both residents of Nazareth in Galilee. We can only imagine the excitement of Mary as she plans for her wedding. Her hopes and dreams, will she have a family, what will Joseph be like to live with?

Into this excitement and preparation comes the angel Gabriel, with a message from God. Perhaps bombshell would be a better word for what comes next. For Mary has been chosen to be the mother of the Messiah, Jesus. Wow!!! "Do not be afraid, Mary said the angel" Probably being afraid would only be one of the emotions I would be going through, if I were visited by an angel.

The next thing that Gabriel said to Mary must have caused an absolute shockwave through her. She is to conceive and give birth to a son and call him Jesus.

Wait a minute, she is not married, has not been intimate with Joseph, if she had, she could have been stoned to death for adultery, so how can it happen.

Gabriel explains what will happen, Joseph won't be the father, so there's no problem with adultery. The Holy Spirit will come upon her, and she will conceive. I would have loved to have been a fly on the wall when Mary told Joseph that she was pregnant, and he wasn't the father. Still, that's for later.

Mary's response to this bombshell is found in verse 38 **"I am the Lord's servant, may your word to me be fulfilled."** The passage goes on to record that Mary went to visit her cousin Elizabeth. We may speculate why, but it was probably to get away for a while and to share time with an older woman who herself was pregnant, having been chosen to be the mother of John the Baptist. To get used to the enormity of what was going to happen.

During this visit, Luke records Mary composing a song that we have come to know as the Magnificat. The penultimate 2 verses remind us why this event is to take place. "He has helped his servant Israel, remembering to be merciful to Abraham and his descendants forever, **just as he promised our ancestors.**"

To conclude:

Thank you, Mary, thank you Joseph, thank you to the many others throughout history, who enable God to fulfil his promise of the coming of the Messiah that we celebrate at Christmas. As we remember the first coming of Jesus, let us continue the **adventure** as we await the promise that Jesus will come again. AMEN

### **Prayer**

Gracious God we bring before you our prayers of intercession, that time when we bring people and situations before you, knowing that you already know all about them.

(Please spend a few moments bringing those people and situations God has placed on your heart)

Gracious God we bring all these prayers to you in the name of Jesus. **Amen**

Hymn 208 Let earth and heaven agree

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=To-r39461X0>

Grace

May the Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with us all, now and forever more Amen

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