

Beaminster Area Team

God our Father, renew our hope. By the Holy Spirit's power, strengthen us to pray readily serve joyfully and grow abundantly rejoicing in Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Week: 28 November 2021, First Sunday of Advent

Old Testament: Jeremiah 33. 14-16

Psalm: Psalm 25. 1-9

New Testament: 1 Thessalonians 3. 9-13

Gospel: Luke 21. 25-36

Reflection on the Gospel reading, by Sarah Keen

Today's passage from Luke brings out the paradox of Advent. Whilst we wait to celebrate the joy of Christ's birth, we have to contend with the ills of the world as it is today. This paradox is visibly demonstrated by the Church's use of the colour purple in the Advent season, a colour that symbolises both suffering and repentance but also the regal glory of Christ as King.

In the passage, Jesus tells us to be alert and make ourselves ready for his coming. So how may we do that? Five actions spring to mind. First, *telling the truth*, being honest about the need to call out injustice and be able to express our own pain and bewilderment; second, *yearning*, being aware of the darkness and cold but letting ourselves long for the light and warmth of God's love; third, *waiting*, finding time away from the Christmas shopping rush to read the familiar Bible passages, sing carols and enjoy the excitement and anticipation; four, *noticing*, paying attention to God's work in the world; and five, *imagining*, holding the paradox but taking the longer view of the wonderful redemption that Jesus will bring for us.

So, with these in mind, let's revel in the four weeks ahead of us, living our best lives in joyful anticipation of Christ's coming.

Collect for First Sunday of Advent

Almighty God, give us grace to cast away the works of darkness and to put on the armour of light, now in the time of this mortal life, in which your Son Jesus Christ came to us in great humility; that on the last day, when he shall come again in his glorious majesty to judge the living and the dead, we may rise to the life immortal; through him who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever.

Worship to enjoy at home

BBC Radio 4, 8.10am, Sunday Worship; Songs of Praise BBC1 1.15pm

A Useful Telephone Link from The Church of England. This is a free number where you can listen to prayers, reflections and hymns and join in worship with others.



