

## 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: 5<sup>th</sup> December 2021, Second Sunday of Advent**

**Old Testament: Baruch 5: 1-9**

**Psalm: Benedictus: The Story of Zechariah**

**New Testament: Philippians: 1;3-11**

**Gospel: Luke 3: 1-6**

### **Reflection on the Gospel reading, written by Revd. Alastair Wheeler**

This Sunday we're 30 years on from Jesus' birth, with his cousin John the Baptist preparing the way for Jesus' ministry.

In the Jordan valley, below Jerusalem, in the semi desert border country on the edge of the Roman Empire, John calls on people - "get ready". Even those who were Jews by birth needed to wash themselves clean by baptism – a new idea at the time - to be ready to meet their King coming in purity, fire, judgement. Individual behaviour is as important as being one of the chosen people.

John promised that a new king in Jerusalem will kick out the Romans and unbelievers, and bring in a reign of prosperity, peace and renewed worship.

Was the world Empire of Rome about to end? Was this the promised time?

Yes! Messiah's already here, you'll meet him soon – get ready! The promises of Isaiah would be fulfilled, that the rough times that had been endured for so long by people will be smoothed out, and everyone, everywhere will see God's King, God's son, bringing in his new kingdom.

In Jesus that fulfilment of Isaiah's promise really was begun – although in a much more loving, forgiving and gracious way than John had prophesied. And it is the love of God reaching out to us in Jesus that we celebrate at Christmas.

While in Advent we get ready – for Christmas, and for the end of the world, but within the kingdom of God - which has already begun, but is not yet fulfilled!

### **collect for the Second Sunday of Advent**

O Lord, raise up, we pray, your power and come among us, and with great might succour us; that whereas, through our sins and wickedness we are grievously hindered in running the race that is set before us, your bountiful grace and mercy may speedily help and deliver us; through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord,  
to whom with you and the Holy Spirit, be honour and glory, now and for ever.

**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.



### **Worship to enjoy at home**

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