

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: 20th March 2022, Third Sunday of Lent

Old Testament: Isaiah 55: 1-9

Psalm: Psalm 63: 1-9

New Testament: 1 Corinthians 10: 1-13

Gospel: Luke 13: 1-9

Reflection on the Gospel reading, written by Sarah Keen

This week we reach roughly half way on our journey through Lent. These are dark days not just in terms of changeable weather but more importantly in terms of grim world events. It's hard not to wonder if we have somehow brought all this on ourselves. But that is not what Jesus is saying here. Drawing on a couple of examples that still have strong resonance today, he states that far from people caught up in disasters being more sinful than others, awful things can happen to any of us. However, through confession and faith in God, we can all gain eternal life. Hence his message is not only one of warning but of hope.

Jesus goes on to tell the parable of the barren fig tree. Here we can spot God as the vineyard owner who threatens to cut down the fig tree when he doesn't see signs of people coming to faith and Jesus as the gardener who intercedes on our behalf and pleads for more time. This will be a familiar story to anyone involved in mission who wonders if new initiatives will ever bear fruit. Jesus' message here is that we should all have patience and faith. He always has faith in us so we should always have faith in him. This is the path that leads to eternal life.

collect for the Third Sunday of Lent

Almighty God, whose most dear Son went not up to joy but first he suffered pain, and entered not into glory before he was crucified: mercifully grant that we, walking in the way of the cross, may find it none other than the way of life and peace; through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord, who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, 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