



St George's Anglican Church | Malvern

**Second Sunday of Advent**

**6 December 2015**

**Sentence**

By the tender mercy of our God, the dawn from on high will break upon us, to give light to those who sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of peace.

*Luke 1.78-79*

**Collect of the day.**

Lord of the wilderness way, whose word scours our smooth evasions:

take us on the unbending road to the raw centre of our world  
with a cry of invitation and the call of sudden grace;  
through Jesus Christ, the one who is to come. **Amen.**

**A reading from the book of the prophet Malachi**

*The dominant theme of Malachi is fidelity to the covenant God has made with God's people. This passage speaks of God coming to refine and judge and of the messenger who will come to prepare the way; note the question and answer form which is typical of Malachi.*

Thus says the Lord God: See, I am sending my messenger to prepare the way before me, and the Lord whom you seek will suddenly come to his temple. The messenger of the covenant in whom you delight—indeed, he is coming, says the LORD of hosts. But who can endure the day of his coming, and who can stand when he appears? For he is like a refiner's fire and like fullers' soap; he will sit as a refiner and purifier of silver, and he will purify the descendants of Levi and refine them like gold and silver, until they present offerings to the LORD in righteousness. Then the offering of Judah and Jerusalem will be pleasing to the LORD as in the days of old and as in former years. Then I will draw near to you for judgment; I will be swift to bear witness against the sorcerers, against the adulterers, against those who swear falsely, against those who oppress the hired workers in their wages, the widow, and the orphan, against those who thrust

aside the alien, and do not fear me, says the LORD of hosts. For I the LORD do not change; therefore you, O children of Jacob, have not perished. Ever since the days of your ancestors you have turned aside from my statutes and have not kept them. Return to me, and I will return to you, says the LORD of hosts. But you say, 'How shall we return?'

Will anyone rob God? Yet you are robbing me! But you say, 'How are we robbing you?' In your tithes and offerings! You are cursed with a curse, for you are robbing me—the whole nation of you! Bring the full tithe into the storehouse, so that there may be food in my house, and thus put me to the test, says the LORD of hosts; see if I will not open the windows of heaven for you and pour down for you an overflowing blessing. I will rebuke the locust for you, so that it will not destroy the produce of your soil; and your vine in the field shall not be barren, says the LORD of hosts. Then all nations will count you happy, for you will be a land of delight, says the LORD of hosts. You have spoken harsh words against me, says the LORD. Yet you say, 'How have we spoken against you?' You have said, 'It is vain to serve God. What do we profit by keeping his command or by going about as mourners before the LORD of hosts?'

*Malachi 3.1-4*

**Reader** Hear the word of the Lord

**ALL** Thanks be to God

**for the Psalm:** *The Song of Zechariah* APBA, p425 @10am sung by Choir

*This is the song that old Zechariah sings after he has named his son John as instructed by the angel before his birth which was announced to Zechariah in the Temple. Everyone would have expected the boy to be named after his father according to custom, but his parents were obedient to the promise made to them.*

**A reading from the letter of Paul to the Philippians.**

*Paul wrote this letter from prison and he writes powerfully and appealing of the quality of life Christians are to share in the Body of Christ. They faced some kind of opposition and Paul is concerned to bring them together and overcome any threat from internal disharmony.*

Paul and Timothy, servants of Christ Jesus, to all the saints in Christ Jesus who are in Philippi, with the bishops and deacons: Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. I thank my God every time I remember you, constantly praying with joy in every one of my prayers for all of you, because of your sharing in the gospel from the first day until now. I am confident of this, that the one who began a good work among you will bring it to completion by the day of Jesus Christ. It is right for me to think this way about all of you, because you hold me in your heart, for all of you share in God's grace with me, both in my imprisonment and in the defence and confirmation of the gospel. For God is my witness, how I long for all of you with the compassion of Christ Jesus. And this is my prayer, that your love may overflow more and more with knowledge and full insight to help you to determine what is best, so that on the day of Christ you may be pure and blameless, having produced the harvest of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ for the glory and praise of God. *Phil. 1.1-11*

**Reader** May your word live in us

**ALL** **And bear much fruit to your glory**

### **Gospel Acclamation**

**ALL** **Alleluia, alleluia.**

“Prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight.  
and all flesh shall see the salvation of God.”

**ALL** **Alleluia, alleluia.**

Reader The Lord be with you

**ALL** **And also with you**

Reader A reading from the holy gospel according to Luke.

**ALL** **Glory to you Lord Jesus Christ**

*Today's gospel reading focuses on John the Baptist who is the messenger of the Lord's coming in the person of Jesus Christ. As with the prophet Malachi, John makes clear that God's coming brings a new relationship with God but first it brings judgment which means seeing ourselves in the light of God, as God sees us. God's judgment is never without God's compassion and love being expressed towards you as we see ourselves from God's perspective.*

In the fifteenth year of the reign of Emperor Tiberius, when Pontius Pilate was governor of Judea, and Herod was ruler of Galilee, and his brother Philip ruler of the region of Ituraea and Trachonitis, and Lysanias ruler of Abilene, during the high-priesthood of Annas and Caiaphas, the word of God came to John son of Zechariah in the wilderness. He went into all the region around the Jordan, proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins, as it is written in the book of the words of the prophet Isaiah, 'The voice of one crying out in the wilderness: "Prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight. Every valley shall be filled, and every mountain and hill shall be made low, and the crooked shall be made straight, and the rough ways made smooth; and all flesh shall see the salvation of God."' ' *Luke 3.1-6*

**Reader** For the Gospel of the Lord  
**ALL** **Praise to you Lord Jesus Christ.**

**BIBLE READINGS NEXT SUNDAY** **Third Sunday of Advent Yr C**  
Zephaniah 3.14-20 *A Song of Isaiah* APBA, p 391 Phil. 4.4-7  
Luke 3.7-18

**The Rt Revd Genieve Blackwell** will be with us next Sunday, Bp Genieve is our new area bishop and this will be her first visit to St George's, so please make every effort to be present to welcome her, meet her and receive her ministry.

**COMMISSIONING of Parish Council & Incumbency Committee 8am & 10am NEXT SUNDAY.**

### **PRAYER FOR THE WEEK**

God our deliverer, whose approaching birth still shakes the foundations of our world: may we so wait for your coming with eagerness and hope that we embrace without terror the labour pangs of the new age. Amen. from Janet Morley, *All Desires Known*, p. 67.

**Pray for the Faithful Departed** We remember before God:

Colin Lachlan McInnes, Peter Reid, Maurice Street, Frederick Davis,  
Vera Estaugh, Harriet Hood, Janette Mary Ray, Colin Prain  
*whose anniversaries occur this week.*

**COMMEMORATIONS OF THE WEEK. December 7 Ambrose of Milan** (c.339-397). One of the greatest of the early bishops. Famous as a preacher and influential in the conversion of St Augustine of Hippo. Champion of orthodoxy and the independence of the church from the civil power. Stimulated the development of church music (the 'Ambrosian Chant' is named after him).

**December 8 The Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary.** The Gospels tell us nothing about the early life of Mary, and this is a traditional feast. December 8 Richard Baxter (1615-1691). Puritan divine and spiritual writer. He wrote over 200 works, the best known being his devotional classic, "*The Saints' Everlasting Rest*".

**Pray for the Faithful Departed**

*We remember before God:* Edith Pearson, Elsie Casey, Mary Newton, Hazel Dean, Keith Garden, Phyllis Reynolds-Gill, Erina Bedford Standish, Thomas Mitchel Felgate MBE, Dorothy Wedlake, Myrtle Glasson, Harold Robinson, Ella Cornish, John Glover, Frederick King,

Arthur Dickens and Peter Hooper *whose anniversaries occur this week.*

**COMMEMORATIONS OF THE WEEK.**

**October 28 Simon and Jude, Apostles and martyrs.**

Simon the Zealot perhaps previously belonged to the radical Jewish sect, using guerrilla tactics to obtain the independence of Israel from Roman occupation. Jude was probably the brother of our Lord (Mk.6.3) and the author of the Letter of Jude (Jude 1.1). Nothing is known of their later lives.

**October 31 Martin Luther (1483-1546) and the other Continental**

Reformers. The more radical reformation in Europe differed

significantly to the English reformation. Luther's German translation of the Bible is one of the masterpieces of German literature.