

# The Diocesan Sunday School Teacher



## Second Sunday of Advent: Year C December 5, 2021 Volume 2: Issue 2

### Welcome

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Greetings My Sisters and Brothers in Christ:

Our theme for this week is: Preparing the Way of the Lord

In today's readings, we are reminded to prepare ourselves to receive the hope and restoration that God promises through Jesus Christ.

Baruch wrote words of encouragement to the exiles in Babylon, encouraging them to hear God's words of hope. However, they needed to prepare themselves to receive God's promise of restoration. This preparation required them to put aside wrong living; to seek after God's ways and to be obedient to God.

Paul also prayed for the followers in Philippi. He knew that they were a work in progress, and he prayed that through the outpouring of God's love and God working in them, they would be prepared to receive God on the last day.

John the Baptist received God's message to prepare persons to receive the Messiah who was coming into the world. He obeyed God's call to go out to tell persons to prepare themselves through baptism and repentance.

Today, God continues to send messengers to tell us to prepare ourselves to receive Christ. Are we obedient to these calls?

God has much peace to pour into our lives, but we too must play our part to prepare ourselves, our lives and our hearts to receive Christ at Christmas, and at his second coming. May we heed their calls today.

Blessings,  
The Sunday School Team



#### Memory Verses: St. Luke 3:3-4

John 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.

#### Collect & Readings

Merciful God, who sent your messengers the prophets to preach repentance and prepare the way for our salvation: Give us grace to heed their warnings and forsake our sins, that we may greet with joy the coming of Jesus Christ our Redeemer; who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever.  
*Amen.*

Baruch 5:1-9  
Philippians 1:3-11  
Luke 3:1-6

Canticle 4/16:  
The Song of Zechariah  
(Benedictus)

## The First Lesson: Baruch 5:1-9



Take off the garment of your sorrow and affliction, O Jerusalem, and put on forever the beauty of the glory from God.

Put on the robe of the righteousness that comes from God; put on your head the diadem of the glory of the Everlasting; for God will show your splendor everywhere under heaven.

For God will give you evermore the name, "Righteous Peace, Godly Glory."

Arise, O Jerusalem, stand upon the height; look toward the east, and see your children gathered from west and east at the word of the Holy One, rejoicing that God has remembered them.

For they went out from you on foot, led away by their enemies; but God will bring them back to you, carried in glory, as on a royal throne.

For God has ordered that every high mountain and the everlasting hills be made low and the valleys filled up, to make level ground, so that Israel may walk safely in the glory of God.

The woods and every fragrant tree have shaded Israel at God's command.

For God will lead Israel with joy, in the light of his glory, with the mercy and righteousness that come from him.

Baruch wrote a note of encouragement to the exiles in Babylon telling them that God was preparing to rescue them. However, they needed to prepare themselves by seeking God's righteousness.

### Questions:

Where were the Israelites in exile?

What was God's promise to them?

How were they to prepare themselves to receive God's restoration and ultimate peace in their lives?

### Bible Study: Baruch 5:1-9

Baruch the scribe, wrote to the Israelites who were in exile in Babylon. They were very sad because their homeland had been captured in a war with the Babylonians and they had been forced to leave their country and to move to Babylon – a very strange and different land. They missed their homes and the lives that they lived in Israel.

Today, Baruch encouraged them to put aside the sadness and to hear God's words of hope. God was promising to restore the people back to their land in Israel. However, the people needed to prepare themselves, by putting aside their bad ways, and to seek after God's ways, God's beauty and God's glory. They needed to straighten out their lives, to make way for God to enter. Then they would experience God's peace in their lives.

### Activity:

Write a letter to a friend who is sad and encourage them to have hope in God.

## Canticle 4/16: The Song of Zechariah (Benedictus)



Blessed are you, Lord the God of Israel\* You have come to your people and set them free.  
You have raised up for us a mighty Saviour\* born of the house of your servant David.  
Through your holy prophets  
You promised of old to save us from our enemies\* from the hands of all that hate us,  
To show mercy to our forebears,\* and to remember your holy covenant.  
This was the oath you swore to our father Abraham:\* to set us free from the hands of our enemies,  
Free to worship you without fear:\* holy and righteous before you all the days of our life.  
And you, child, shall be called the prophet of the Most High:\* for you will go before the Lord to prepare the way,  
To give God's people knowledge of salvation:\* by the forgiveness of their sins.  
In the tender compassion of our God:\* the dawn from on high shall break upon us,  
To shine upon those who dwell in darkness and the shadow of death:\* and to guide our feet into the way of peace.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son:\* and to the Holy Spirit;  
as it was in the beginning is now: and shall be forever. Amen.

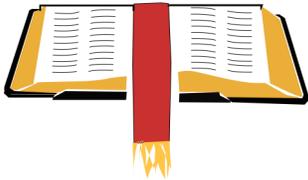
When Zechariah's son John was born, he was freed from his temporary muteness. He expressed his joy in all that God was about to do for God's people. God was about to restore good, and right in the world, feed the hungry and bring justice and peace. He prophesied about John's role in preparing the way for the Messiah.



## The Second Lesson: Philippians 1:3-11

Paul expresses thanksgiving and hope to the Philippians for their relationship with Christ Jesus and he expresses the belief that there is still greater to come from this relationship.

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 defense 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 in 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.



**Questions:**

Where were the followers to whom Paul was writing?

What gave him joy when he thought about them?

What was he praying that God would do in their lives to further prepare them to receive Christ?

How is God helping us to prepare to receive Christ today?

**Bible Study:**

Paul expressed his joy and thanks to God that the followers in Philippi had come into a relationship with Christ.

He knew that God was still working on them, preparing them so that they would be ready at the last day, when Christ returned.

He prayed that through the generous outpouring of their love, and with the insight that they would be given by the Holy Spirit, they would make the right choices, be obedient to God and live holy lives. Through these actions and God working in them, and on them, he was confident that they would produce a harvest of right-living for God's honour and glory.

**Activity:**

Take a sheet of paper and write at the top: *Work in Progress.*

Then write all the things that you want God to help you to do to become the child that God desires.

Decorate it and place it on your wall to remind yourself, that you are God's handiwork, and God is still working on you



## St. Luke 3:1-6

God chose John the Baptist to share the Good News that the Messiah was coming into the world. John heard and obeyed God. He began to tell persons to prepare themselves through baptism and repentance.

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.'"

# St. Luke 3:1-6 Cont.



## Bible Study: Luke 3:1-6

As we read the list of important persons who God could have chosen to proclaim the coming of the Messiah, we find that God chose none of them. Instead, God chose John, a simple man who had retreated to the desert.

There in that deserted place, where there were no distractions, John was prepared to hear the voice of God. When God spoke, John heard the message, and he obeyed. He went out across the countryside telling persons that their redemption was coming. They needed to prepare themselves by repentance and baptism.



### Activity: Word Search Luke 3:1-6

R	Y	S	U	I	T	N	O	P	P	W
R	E	A	D	I	N	A	L	I	I	N
O	L	P	H	L	L	H	O	N	L	I
D	L	R	E	W	L	I	O	V	L	E
Q	A	I	H	N	E	I	N	J	I	I
N	V	R	O	J	T	S	I	P	H	N
P	T	I	S	A	B	A	T	P	P	W
T	I	S	V	T	I	P	N	E	O	E
R	K	L	N	A	M	L	O	C	N	N
E	A	E	A	N	S	E	P	I	E	O
S	T	E	S	T	E	H	P	O	R	P
E	A	L	V	I	E	C	O	V	I	P
D	N	I	K	N	A	M	A	L	S	O
C	A	L	P	E	H	T	E	M	A	N
A	B	A	P	T	I	S	M	L	I	E
C	L	G	D	N	I	L	B	A	A	N
O	N	A	D	R	O	J	T	A	H	T

Voice    Salvation    Galilee    Phillip    Desert  
 Pilate    Repentance    John    Valley    Baptism  
 Pontius    Mankind    Prophet    Isaiah    Jordan

### Questions:

How does God speak to us?

Are we prepared to listen to God, or do we want only to tell God what we want?

Are we prepared to be obedient and do what God tells us?

### Activity:

John the Baptist Colouring Pages

<http://www.anglicandioceseja.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/12/John-the-Baptist-Colouring-Page-1-2nd-Sunday-of-Advent.pdf>

We hope you found this newsletter informative and useful.

Please feel free to share it with others.

We extend our thanks to all the persons who assisted in the preparation of this newsletter.

Please send comments to:

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