



5-11 December 2021 • Faith 24/7

The great leveller


 **Luke 3.1-6**

John the Baptist, Jesus' cousin, preaches the word of God in the land surrounding the river Jordan. John preaches a baptism for changed hearts and lives, in order to make way for Jesus and fulfil the prophecy as spoken by the prophet Isaiah, 'prepare the way of the Lord'. Isaiah shows that Jesus' message is one of equality – not just for certain people.

Now read **Luke 3.1-6** see p.2 for text.

A note on the passage

As John prepares the hearts and lives of the crowds around him for Jesus' coming, we are also in a time of preparation for Christmas. This time of Advent is of course about preparing for the festivities, but this passage reminds us it is also about preparing for the true meaning of Christmas, and the message of love and hope and equality which Jesus brings. How can you bring that meaning into your preparations?



GIFT GIVING

John tells us that Jesus is to be the great leveller, meaning Jesus will bring equality. If you are buying or making Christmas gifts this week, could you also buy for someone less fortunate than yourself? Try and buy an extra toy or create a box of goodies for a local children's charity, so that we too can become levellers in our communities this Christmas.



Create a Christingle using a large orange to represent the world, a red ribbon tied around it to show Jesus' love poured out, sweets on four cocktail sticks as the four corners of the world, and a candle in the centre of the orange, to symbolise Jesus as the light of the world. Put equal amounts of sweets on the sticks, to show how Jesus came to bring equality for all. Light the candle, and pray for any areas of the world which are in need of Jesus' love and light this Christmas.



Ask yourself: How might this image help us explore 'Jesus is for all'?



Christmas MESSAGE

Create your own Christmas cards this year. Include within them your favourite Bible verse or an encouraging message from Scripture, to tell others about Jesus the great leveller and all he has done for you.



How often do we find silence and calm in the month of December? Does it feel like the busiest month to you? Can it sometimes feel like we are too busy to spend time with God? Try to be still and spend some time in silent prayer. Light a tall candle, and watch and wait as it begins to melt. Do this every night during Advent as we await Jesus' birth. How do you think Mary felt that first Christmas, waiting for Jesus? How do you think John felt, waiting for Jesus? How do you feel, waiting for Jesus?



In our passage this week, we hear about the wilderness where John is preaching. Wrap up warm and take a walk in your local area. You could create a nature tick list, checking off things from the passage which you experience along the way, such as a path and/or valley, and when you are treading on rough or smooth ground. As you walk, take time to consider some paths in your life: What do they look like? Are there ups and downs/rough and smooth?



ATIC Toy Service

At our ATIC service **next week** rather than asking you to buy toys we will be asking for cash donations. These will be given to the Food Bank who will distribute gift vouchers for Toy Shops. This will enable parents to select suitable toys for their children themselves. A separate plate will be available on the day – please do give generously.



Winners from the November draw: No. 3 Fay Rogers. No. 12 Sian Atkinson – congratulations! It will soon be renewal time for the 100 club and existing members will receive a letter. New members are always welcome. The cost is £1 a month with half the subscription used as prize and the other half into church funds. See Julia or Penny for details

Just a thought... Many will remember Captain Sir Tom, who in 2020 (for his 100th birthday) walked to raise millions of pounds for the NHS. Some may also remember hearing about Kevin Sinfield, who ran seven marathons in seven days in support of his former rugby league teammate Rob Burrow, who has motor neurone disease. Neither of them needed to do what they did, but they were compelled to do so by their love and compassion for others. John the Baptizer didn't need to go into the wilderness as he did – or did he? Perhaps love and compassion compelled him, too. Perhaps, having experienced God's love and compassion for himself, he wanted to help others to see that, despite their sinful nature, God loved them with all and wanted them to know life in all its fullness. What about us – do we have love and compassion for our friends and family, and for our neighbours, and for the people we work with, spend leisure time with – enough to let them know about Jesus?

Christmas services 2021

Sunday 19th December 4.00 p.m. at the Community Centre - Nine Lessons and Carols.

Christmas Eve 11.30 p.m. **(Online only)** Midnight Mass for the Worcester South East Team – please let Rob know if you would like joining instructions.

Christmas Day 10.00 a.m. at the Community Centre – Christmas Communion.

The service on Sunday 26th December will be a Team service at St Martin's at 10.00 a.m. There is no service at Ronkswood that day.

Daily Readings for week commencing 6 th December 2021		
Monday	Isaiah 30: 1-18	Matthew 14: 1-12
Tuesday	Isaiah 30: 19-end	Matthew 14: 13-end
Wednesday	Isaiah 31	Matthew 15: 1-20
Thursday	Isaiah 32	Matthew 15: 21-28
Friday	Isaiah 33: 1-22	Matthew 15: 29-end
Saturday	Isaiah 35	Matthew 16: 1-12

Pray for those in need... Sally, Tristan, Mark, Katie-Louise, Pam, Sue, Bryn, Evelyn, Shane, Pat, Heather, Dorothy, Mandy, Joyce, Ian, Pamela, Juliette and Nicki. **Please remember those who mourn the loss of loved ones at this time...** Pete, Rosina and Carole.