



**Diocese
of Salisbury**
Making
Jesus Known

The Wylde and Till Valley Benefice



**Berwick St James, Great Wishford, Little Langford, South Newton
and Stoford, Stapleford, Steeple Langford, Stockton, Winterbourne
Stoke and Wylde with Fisherton de la Mere**

<https://www.wyldeandtillvalleybenefice.org/>

<https://www.wyldeandtillvalleybenefice.org/sermons>

Sunday 8th December – Second Sunday of Advent

Malachi 3.1-4; Philippians 1.3-11; Luke 3.1-6

9:30am	Winterbourne Stoke	Advent Holy Communion (CW)
11:00am	Steeple Langford	Advent Holy Communion (CW)
6:00pm	Great Wishford	Advent Evening Prayer

Dear Friends,

Israel maybe under Roman occupation but their road system was poor as an outskirts of the Empire. Even so, John the Baptist uses the words of Isaiah to call to mind a very different *symbolic* road. For Isaiah, his words were a source of comfort to the exiled, a promise: Yahweh was headed back to Jerusalem and their exile would end.

John the Baptist preached his *baptism of repentance*, and the situation is similar yet different. The Jewish people are not in exile, but under foreign subjugation. Things are different yet similar for the road being prepared is still the work of God, still a road of redemption, but instead of the people getting their homeland back, they are meant to be making *themselves* the home for God.

John was doing a new thing. The baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins called for a new life by *turning away* from previous sinful ways. This is not about national religious or ethnic identity but *personal responsibility* and *accountability*. No matter who you were, rich or poor, you can still prepare the way for the Messiah who will overturn everything and establish a new heaven and new earth. John's baptism was both a prayer and a commitment to act, to withstand the temptations and struggles that surrounded us in our daily lives.

During Advent, we remember that even though we face hardships as we wait for the Messiah to return, we are not without hope or a plan of action. As one writer put it: in Advent *we hear the call to make room for, prepare our hearts for, and to bear Christ in our lives. Repentance is preparation that makes space for more of God's will to be done in each of us, as it is in heaven. In doing so we are surely becoming that very Kingdom here on earth, agents of peace and reconciliation for the Prince of Peace and King of kings.*
Amen.

Please pray for

The long-term need for prayer	Angela and David Baldwin (South Newton), Joyce Binder (Steeple Langford), Thea Chalke; Pat Considine (Steeple Langford), Anton Funnell; Louisa Halliday (Great Wishford) June Howes (Wylde), Richard Moulding (South Newton), Valerie Palmer, Sheena Pratt (Stapleford), Pam Twitchett (Wylde)
The urgent sick	
The Departed	
Those being baptized	John Christopher White at Little Langford on Saturday and for his parents John and Amy, and Godparents Clare, Ese, Chloe and Charlie
Weddings	

From the Benefice Prayer Sheet

8	<p>Second Sunday of Advent We pray for the church and village community of Stockton and their Churchwarden Claudia James</p>
9	<p>Creator God, you reveal yourself to us as Father, Son and Holy Spirit, so come amongst us, and help us to discern your Spirit in this place. Let us find joy in the world that you created. Help us to worship you with all our being, and to hear and receive your word and your gifts. Amen</p>
10	<p>We pray for the church and village community of Winterbourne Stoke and their Churchwarden Dee Montagu-Pollock.</p>
11	<p>Give us, O God, the vision which can see Your love in the world in spite of human failure. Give us the faith to trust Your goodness in spite of our ignorance and weakness. Give us the knowledge that we may continue to pray with understanding hearts. And show us what each one of us can do to set forward the coming of the day of universal peace. Amen.</p>
12	<p>We pray for the church and village community of Wylye and for their Churchwarden Roger Liddiard and the local church council.</p>
13	<p>Creator God, you have generously blessed us with an abundance of gifts in this, your world. Help us to share in that generosity by living in a way that ensures that your gifts will continue to be available for future generations. Amen.</p>
14	<p>John of the Cross: O Blessed Jesus, give me stillness of soul in You. Let Your mighty calmness reign in me. Rule me, O King of Gentleness, King of Peace. Amen.</p>
15	<p>Third Sunday of Advent O Lord, how majestic is your name in all the earth! When we see the work of your hands – the earth, the heavens, the moon, the stars, the beauty of your creation, we praise and worship you alone, almighty God. We thank you for all your creation and for your people throughout the world in all their differing cultures and environments. Amen.</p>

Sunday 15th December – Third Sunday of Advent

09:30am	Great Wishford	Holy Communion (CW)
11:00am	Wylye	Holy Communion (BCP)
6:00pm	Berwick St James	Traditional candle-lit Carol Service Carol Service
6:00pm	Stapleford	Traditional candle-lit Carol Service Carol Service

Monday 16th December

6:30pm	Wylye	Carols around the village
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Thursday 19th December

6:30pm	Stockton	Carols and Barrels in The Carriers, Stockton
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Friday 20th December

5:00pm	Steeple Langford	Community Procession and Crib Blessing
6:00pm	Fisherton de la Mere	Traditional candle-lit Carol Service Carol Service

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