



# Readings for Sunday 17<sup>th</sup> December 2017

## COLLECT

O Lord Jesus Christ, who at your first coming sent your messenger to prepare your way before you: grant that the ministers and stewards of your mysteries may likewise so prepare and make ready your way by turning the hearts of the disobedient to the wisdom of the just, that at thy second coming to judge the world we may be found an acceptable people in your sight, for you are alive and reign with the Father in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever.

## 1 THESSALONIANS 5.16-24

**Paul is drawing toward the conclusion of his letter. He has just exhorted the Thessalonian Christians regarding personal conduct and their relations within the community. Now he turns to spiritual matters**

Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks to all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you. Do not quench the Spirit. Do not despise the words of the prophets, but test everything; hold fast to what is good; abstain from every form of evil.

May the God of peace himself sanctify you entirely; and may your spirit and soul and body be kept sound and blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. The one who calls you is faithful, and he will do this.

## JOHN 1.6-8, 19-28

**John tells us about the Word, what God says and accomplishes in creation. Now the Word enters creation, and a prophet appears to bear witness to this cosmic event in our midst.**

There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. He came as a witness to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him. He himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light.

This is the testimony given by John when the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, 'Who are you?' He confessed and did not deny it, but confessed, 'I am not the Messiah.' They asked him, 'What then? Are you Elijah?' He said, 'I am not.' Are you the prophet?' He answered, 'No'. Then they said to him, 'Who are you? Let us have an answer for those who sent us. What do you say about yourself?' He said, 'I am the voice of one crying out in the wilderness, "Make straight the way of the Lord" ', as the prophet Isaiah said.

Now they had been sent from the Pharisees. They asked him, 'Why then are you baptizing if you are

neither the Messiah, nor Elijah, nor the prophet?' John answered them, 'I baptize with water. Along you stands one whom you do not know, the one who is coming after me; I am not worthy to untie the thong of his sandal.' This took place in Bethany across the Jordan where John was baptizing.

## POST COMMUNION

We give you thanks, O Lord, for these heavenly gifts; kindle in us the fire of your Spirit that when your Christ comes again we may shine as lights before his face; who is alive and reigns now and for ever.

## PRAYER LIST

**St Nicholas** – Caroline Pope, Tom Battell, Minnie, Archie Butler, Christian Schumacher. **St Stephens** - Mona Watkins, Claire McFetridge, Elaine Childs, Ron Harradine, David Snell, Jennifer & Gerry Marks, Barry Slade **St Johns** – Hugh Hunter, Julie & Jo Charlton, Daphne & Peter Reed, Janice Reed, Claire Taylor. **The Benefice link with Rutendo in Zimbabwe.**

PLEASE HOLD IN YOUR PRAYERS, THOSE WHO HAVE DIED

**Philip Demonte**

**Joy Bray**

**Ruth Bonnell**

**Valerie Millar**

**Tony Westall**

**Caroline Webster**

