

Prepare the way of the Lord

MARK 1:3



The Second Sunday of Advent

Saturday, December 5, 2020

Sunday, December 6, 2020

John calls people to repent, to clear the decks, to completely reorder their lives so that nothing gets in the way of the Lord's coming. The reading from Isaiah gives the context for this radical call: the assurance of forgiveness that encourages us to repent; the promise that the coming one will be gentle with the little ones. Isaiah calls us all to be heralds with John, to lift up our voices fearlessly and say, "See, your God is coming!" We say it to one another in worship, in order to say it with our lives in a world in need of justice and peace.

GATHERING

WELCOME/ANNOUNCEMENTS

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

Blessed be God, Father, † Son, and Holy Spirit, whose forgiveness is sure and whose steadfast love endures forever.

Amen.

Together let us honestly and humbly confess that we have not lived as God desires.

Silence is kept for reflection.

Loving and forgiving God,

we confess that we are held captive by sin. In spite of our best efforts, we have gone astray. We have not welcomed the stranger; we have not loved our neighbor; we have not been Christ to one another.

Restore us, O God. Wake us up and turn us from our sin. Renew us each day in the light of Christ.

Amen.

People of God, hear this glad news: by God's endless grace your sins are forgiven, and you are free— free from all that holds you back and free to live in the peaceable realm of God. May you be strengthened in God's love, † comforted by Christ's peace, and accompanied with the power of the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

OPENING MEDITATION HYMN "Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus"



1 Come, thou long - ex - pect-ed Je - sus, born to set thy peo - ple free;
2 Born thy peo - ple to de - liv - er, born a child, and yet a king;



from our fears and sins re - lease us; let us find our rest in thee.
born to reign in us for - ev - er, now thy gra - cious king - dom bring.

(Continued on the next page.)



Is - rael's strength and con - so - la - tion, hope of all the earth thou art,
By thine own e - ter - nal Spir - it rule in all our hearts a - lone;



dear de - sire of ev - 'ry na - tion, joy of ev - 'ry long - ing heart.
by thine all - suf - fi - cient mer - it raise us to thy glo - rious throne.

Text: Charles Wesley, 1707-1788
Music: JEFFERSON, W. Walker, *Southern Harmony*, 1835
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GREETING

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.
And also with you.

LIGHTING THE ADVENT WREATH: Advent 2

Blessed are you, O Lord our God, ruler of the universe. John the Baptist calls all people to prepare the Lord's way for the kingdom of heaven is near. Bless us as we light the candles on this wreath. Baptize us with the fire of your Spirit, that we may be a light shining in the darkness welcoming others as Christ has welcomed us, for he is our light and our salvation. Blessed be God forever.

Amen.

ADVENT LIGHTING HYMN "Light One Candle to Watch for Messiah" vv. 1 & 2



- 1 Light one can - dle to watch for Mes - si - ah: let the light ban - ish dark - ness.
- 2 Light two can - dles to watch for Mes - si - ah: let the light ban - ish dark - ness.
- 3 Light three can - dles to watch for Mes - si - ah: let the light ban - ish dark - ness.
- 4 Light four can - dles to watch for Mes - si - ah: let the light ban - ish dark - ness.



He shall bring sal - va - tion to Is - ra - el, God ful - fills the prom - ise.
He shall feed the flock like a shep - herd, gent - ly lead them home - ward.
Lift your heads and lift high the gate - way for the King of glo - ry.
He is com - ing, tell the glad tid - ings. Let your lights be shin - ing!

Text: Wayne L. Wold, b. 1954
Music: TIF IN VELDELE, Yiddish folk tune
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PRAYER OF THE DAY

Stir up our hearts, Lord God, to prepare the way of your only Son. By his coming strengthen us to serve you with purified lives; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Amen.

ANTHEM

“Lo, How a Rose E’er Blooming”

FIRST READING: Isaiah 40:1-11

A reading from Isaiah.

¹Comfort, O comfort my people,
says your God.

²Speak tenderly to Jerusalem,
and cry to her
that she has served her term,
that her penalty is paid,
that she has received from the LORD’s hand
double for all her sins.

³A voice cries out:

“In the wilderness prepare the way of the LORD,
make straight in the desert a highway for our God.

⁴Every valley shall be lifted up,
and every mountain and hill be made low;
the uneven ground shall become level,
and the rough places a plain.

⁵Then the glory of the LORD shall be revealed,
and all people shall see it together,
for the mouth of the LORD has spoken.”

⁶A voice says, “Cry out!”

And I said, “What shall I cry?”

All people are grass,
their constancy is like the flower of the field.

⁷The grass withers, the flower fades,
when the breath of the LORD blows upon it;
surely the people are grass.

⁸The grass withers, the flower fades;
but the word of our God will stand forever.

⁹Get you up to a high mountain,
O Zion, herald of good tidings;
lift up your voice with strength,
O Jerusalem, herald of good tidings,
lift it up, do not fear;

say to the cities of Judah,
“Here is your God!”

¹⁰See, the Lord GOD comes with might,
and his arm rules for him;
his reward is with him,
and his recompense before him.

¹¹He will feed his flock like a shepherd;
he will gather the lambs in his arms,
and carry them in his bosom,
and gently lead the mother sheep.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

PSALM: Psalm 85:1-2, 8-13

¹You have been gracious to your land, O LORD;
you have restored the good fortune of Jacob.

²**You have forgiven the iniquity of your people
and blotted out all their sins.**

⁸I will listen to what the LORD God is saying;
for you speak peace to your faithful people and to those who turn their hearts to you.

⁹**Truly, your salvation is very near to those who fear you,
that your glory may dwell in our land.**

¹⁰Steadfast love and faithfulness have met together;
righteousness and peace have kissed each other.

¹¹**Faithfulness shall spring up from the earth,
and righteousness shall look down from heaven.**

¹²The LORD will indeed grant prosperity,
and our land will yield its increase.

¹³**Righteousness shall go before the LORD
and shall prepare for God a pathway.**

SECOND READING: 2 Peter 3:8-15a

A reading from Second Peter

⁸Do not ignore this one fact, beloved, that with the Lord one day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years are like one day. ⁹The Lord is not slow about his promise, as some think of slowness, but is patient with you, not wanting any to perish, but all to come to repentance. ¹⁰But the day of the Lord will come like a thief, and then the heavens will pass away with a loud noise, and the elements will be dissolved with fire, and the earth and everything that is done on it will be disclosed.

¹¹Since all these things are to be dissolved in this way, what sort of persons ought you to be in leading lives of holiness and godliness, ¹²waiting for and hastening the coming of the day of God, because of which the heavens will be set ablaze and dissolved, and the elements will melt with fire? ¹³But, in accordance with his promise, we wait for new heavens and a new earth, where righteousness is at home.

¹⁴Therefore, beloved, while you are waiting for these things, strive to be found by him at peace, without spot or blemish; ^{15a}and regard the patience of our Lord as salvation.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL: Mark 1:1-8

The holy gospel according to Mark.

Glory to you, O Lord.

¹The beginning of the good news of Jesus Christ, the Son of God.

²As it is written in the prophet Isaiah,
“See, I am sending my messenger ahead of you,
who will prepare your way;

³the voice of one crying out in the wilderness:

‘Prepare the way of the Lord,
make his paths straight.’”

⁴John the baptizer appeared in the wilderness, proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. ⁵And people from the whole Judean countryside and all the people of Jerusalem were going out to him, and were baptized by him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins. ⁶Now John was clothed with camel’s hair, with a leather belt around his waist, and he ate locusts and wild honey. ⁷He proclaimed, “The one who is more powerful than I is coming after me; I am not worthy to stoop down and untie the thong of his sandals. ⁸I have baptized you with water; but he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit.”

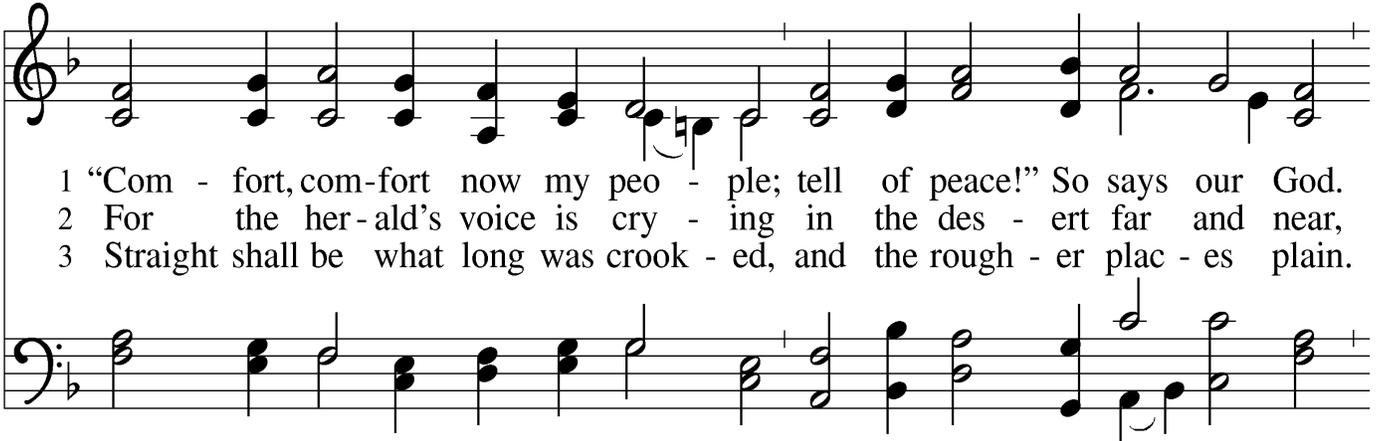
The gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

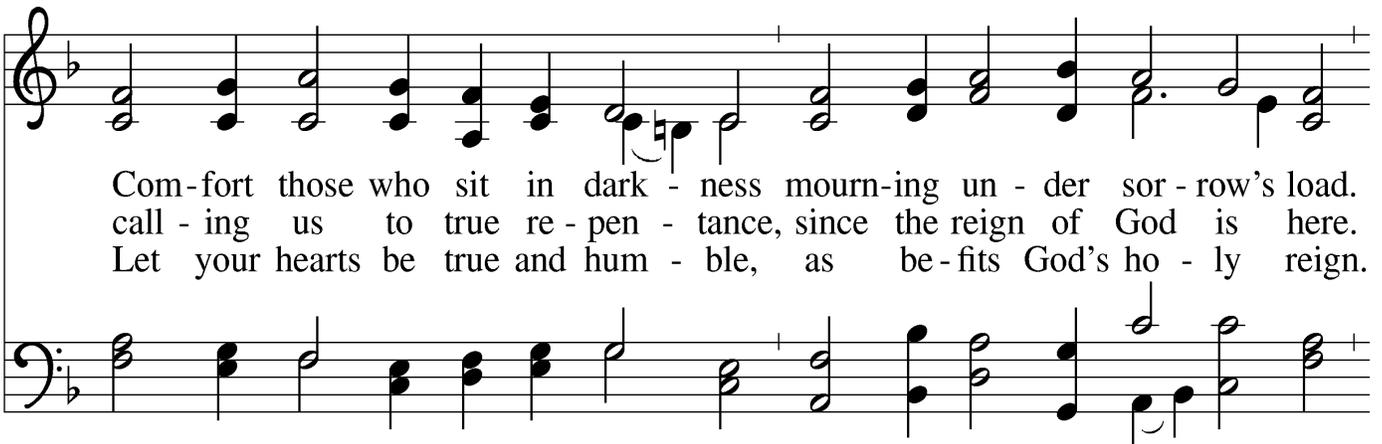
SERMON

HYMN OF MEDITATION

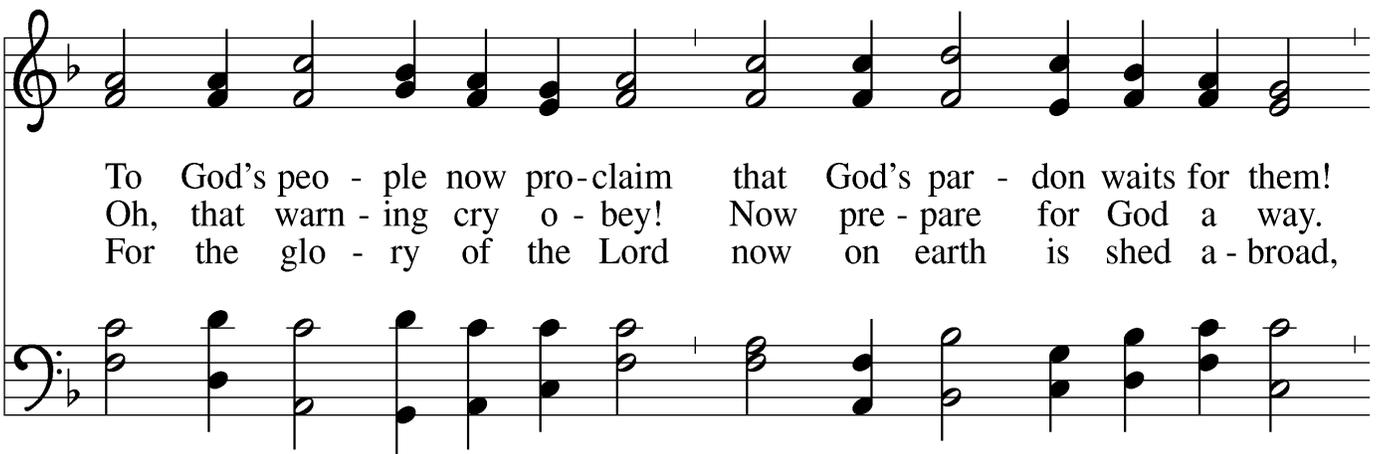
“Comfort, Comfort Now My People”



1 “Com - fort, com-fort now my peo - ple; tell of peace!” So says our God.
2 For the her-ald’s voice is cry - ing in the des - ert far and near,
3 Straight shall be what long was crook - ed, and the rough - er plac - es plain.



Com-fort those who sit in dark - ness mourn-ing un - der sor - row’s load.
call - ing us to true re - pen - tance, since the reign of God is here.
Let your hearts be true and hum - ble, as be-fits God’s ho - ly reign.



To God’s peo - ple now pro-claim that God’s par - don waits for them!
Oh, that warn - ing cry o - bey! Now pre - pare for God a way.
For the glo - ry of the Lord now on earth is shed a - broad,

(Continued on the next page.)

Tell them that their war is o - ver; God will reign in peace for - ev - er.
 Val - leys, rise to greet the Sav - ior; hills, bow down in hum - ble fa - vor.
 and all flesh shall see the to - ken that God's word is nev - er bro - ken.

Text: Johann G. Olearius, 1635–1711; tr. Catherine Winkworth, 1827–1878, alt.
 Music: FREU DICH SEHR, *Trente quatre pseauxes de David*, Geneva, 1551

CREED

We confess our faith.

**I believe in God, the Father almighty,
 creator of heaven and earth.**

**I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord,
 who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
 born of the virgin Mary,
 suffered under Pontius Pilate,
 was crucified, died, and was buried;
 he descended to the dead.
 On the third day he rose again;
 he ascended into heaven,
 he is seated at the right hand of the Father,
 and he will come to judge the living and the dead.**

**I believe in the Holy Spirit,
 the holy catholic church,
 the communion of saints,
 the forgiveness of sins,
 the resurrection of the body,
 and the life everlasting. Amen**

PRAYERS OF THE CHURCH

SHARING OF THE PEACE

(Service continues with the hymn on the next page)

HYMN OF MEDITATION

“Prepare the Royal Highway”

1 Pre - pare the roy - al high - way; the King of kings is near!
 2 God's peo - ple, see him com - ing: your own e - ter - nal king!
 3 Then fling the gates wide o - pen to greet your prom - ised king!
 4 His is no earth - ly king - dom; it comes from heav'n a - bove.

Let ev - 'ry hill and val - ley a lev - el road ap - pear!
 Palm branch - es strew be - fore him! Spread gar - ments! Shout and sing!
 Your king, yet ev - 'ry na - tion its trib - ute too may bring.
 His rule is peace and free - dom and jus - tice, truth, and love.

Then greet the King of glo - ry, fore - told in sa - cred sto - ry:
 God's prom - ise will not fail you! No more shall doubt as - sail you!
 All lands will bow be - fore him; their voic - es join your sing - ing:
 So let your praise be sound - ing for kind - ness so a - bound - ing:

Refrain

Ho - san - na to the Lord, for he ful - fills God's word!

OFFERING

We give thanks to God for the gifts that God provides, and for the gifts that you share with the church. Offerings to the church may be placed in the box on the table near the entrance to worship or be sent through the mail, through automatic withdraw, or through the [Tithe.ly](#) app on our website.

OFFERTORY PRAYER

Generous God, you have created all that is, and you provide for us in every season. Bless all that we offer, that through these gifts the world will receive your blessing. In the name of Jesus, Emmanuel, we pray.

Amen.

THE GREAT THANKSGIVING

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

It is indeed right, our duty and our joy, that we should at all times and in all places give thanks and praise to you, almighty and merciful God, through our Savior Jesus Christ. You comforted your people with the promise of the Redeemer, through whom you will also make all things new in the day when he comes to judge the world in righteousness. And so, with all the choirs of angels, with the church on earth and the hosts of heaven, we praise your holy name.

PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

Holy God, the Beginning and the End, our Salvation and our Hope, we praise you for creating a world of order and beauty.

When we brought on chaos, cruelty and despair, you sent the prophets to proclaim your justice and mercy.

At the end of the ages your Son, Jesus, came to bring us your love and to heal all the suffering world.

In the night in which he was betrayed, our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks; broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying: Take and eat; this is my body, given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me.

Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it for all to drink, saying: This cup is the new covenant in my blood, shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin. Do this for the remembrance of me.

Remembering, therefore, his life, death and resurrection, we await his coming again in righteousness and peace. Send your Spirit on us and on this bread and wine we share: strengthen our faith increase our hope, and bring to birth the justice and joy of your Son.

Through him all glory and honor is yours, Almighty Father, with the Holy Spirit, in your holy Church, both now and forever.

Amen.

THE LORD'S PRAYER

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever and ever. Amen.

INVITATION TO COMMUNION

Even as we watch and wait, Christ is here. Come, eat and drink.

DISTRIBUTION OF THE ELEMENTS

Believing in the real presence of Christ, we invite all present to participate in the Sacrament of Holy Communion. All who are baptized and believe that Jesus Christ is present in the gifts of bread and wine are welcome at the Lord's table. Those who do not wish to receive communion and children who are not yet receiving communion will receive a blessing.

Communion is will be received at your seats. Having received the elements as you entered worship, you will take the chalice, and when directed by the pastor, you will remove the bottom cover to receive the bread. The pastor will say "Body of Christ given for you," and you will eat the bread. When directed by the pastor, you will remove the top cover to receive the wine or juice. The pastor will say, "Blood of Christ shed for you," and you will drink the wine or juice.

POST-COMMUNION BLESSING

The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen us and keep us in his grace.

Amen.

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Gracious and abundant God, you have done great things for us, and we rejoice. In this bread and cup you give us life forever. In your boundless mercy, strengthen us and open our hearts to the world's needs, for the sake of Jesus Christ, our Lord.

Amen.

BLESSING

The Creator of the stars bless your Advent waiting, the long-expected Savior fill you with love, the unexpected Spirit guide your journey, + now and forever.

Amen.

SENDING HYMN OF MEDITATION "He Came Down"

The musical notation consists of two staves: a treble clef staff on top and a bass clef staff on the bottom. Both staves are in the key of D major (one sharp) and 7/8 time. The melody in the treble staff begins with a quarter note G4, followed by a quarter rest, then a quarter note A4, and a quarter note B4. The next measure contains a triplet of eighth notes: G4, A4, and B4. This is followed by a quarter note G4, a quarter note F#4, and a quarter note E4. The final measure of the treble staff has a quarter note D4, a quarter note C4, and a quarter note B3. The bass staff begins with a quarter note G3, followed by a quarter note F#3, and a quarter note E3. The next measure contains a triplet of eighth notes: G3, F#3, and E3. This is followed by a quarter note D3, a quarter note C3, and a quarter note B2. The final measure of the bass staff has a quarter note A2, a quarter note G2, and a quarter note F#2. There are fermatas over the final notes of both staves.

1 He came down that we may have love; he came down that we may have love;
2 He came down that we may have light; he came down that we may have light;
3 He came down that we may have peace; he came down that we may have peace;
4 He came down that we may have joy; he came down that we may have joy;

(Continued on the next page.)

he came down that we may have love;
 he came down that we may have light; hal - le - lu - jah for - ev - er - more.
 he came down that we may have peace;
 he came down that we may have joy;

Text: Cameroon traditional
 Music: HE CAME DOWN, Cameroon traditional; arr. John L. Bell, b. 1949
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DISMISSAL

Go in peace. Prepare the way of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

<i>Lord, Hear Our Prayer</i>	Trusting that God hears our prayers, we keep these people and all who are in need in our prayers.	
Cindy Staebel	June Dierks	Sherri Westemeier
Arnie Lindaman	Jill Hegdal	Craig
Carol Judge	Oda Anderson	Gary
Michelle Weltzin- Trainor	Ann Kuehl	Lois
	Jensen Spencer	Bob
Ron McFate	Michael Schafer	Algean
Dale Moore	Karen Muetzel	
Sue Oetzman	Dixie Smith	
Pat Hoffman	Peyton Langebartles	