

# Second Sunday of Advent

## December 6<sup>th</sup> 2020

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### Welcome & Announcements

#### Ring of the Bell

Prelude O Lord, How Shall I Meet You

## Gathering Around the Word

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**Lighting the Advent Candles** *Addison King & Kate Yeast*

### Call to Worship

John the Baptist said, "Prepare the way."

Let us prepare our minds for worship by letting go of busy thoughts and making space for God to speak.

Let us prepare our hearts for worship by blessing *all* our emotions and feelings, opening ourselves up to be moved.

Let us prepare our bodies for worship by take in the sights, sounds, and scents around us. Breathe in God's mercy, and exhale God's love.

Let us prepare our souls for worship by bringing our full selves into this time.

By wearing our hearts on our sleeves, and trusting that even now, God is here.

Family of faith, what we practice in worship, we must live out in our daily lives.

So prepare the way. Let us worship Holy God.

**Hymn** "On Jordan's Bank the Baptist's Cry"

*On Jordan's bank the Baptist's cry announces that the Lord is nigh;  
awake and hearken, for he brings glad tidings of the King of kings!*

### Call to Confession

God desires relationship and connection with us, not fear and distance. Through Christ there is only forgiveness and mercy, never condemnation. Let us confess our sin before God and one another, allowing nothing to stand between us, because God's salvation is at hand. Join in our prayer of confession.

### Prayer of Confession

Holy God,

We wish that peace was something we could buy.

We wish that it could be ordered from a catalog,  
found on a map, downloaded to our phones, or voted for in a ballot.

We wish that peace was easy, like a one-time choice when we are feeling our best.

Yet we have found that peace involves everyday decisions over and over,  
whether or not we feel up to it.

So we confess to our struggles. We need your help in this Advent season.

Prepare the way within our hearts for greater peace, teaching us how to be a part of it. Through Christ we pray, Amen.

### **Assurance of Pardon**

Sisters and brothers, salvation is at hand for all who turn to God. So may God's guiding hand surround you. May you know comfort, and may you know peace. Carry with you this good news:

**All: In Jesus Christ, we are forgiven. Thanks be to God!**

### **Response 581**

*Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost;  
as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be,  
world without end. Amen, amen.*

## Listening to the Word

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### **Prayer for Illumination**

Mighty God, send your Holy Spirit to speak peace to our hearts, that the good news may be proclaimed through your word, which stands forever. Amen.

### **First Reading—Isaiah 40:1-11**

Comfort, comfort my people! says your God. <sup>2</sup>Speak compassionately to Jerusalem, and proclaim to her that her compulsory service has ended, that her penalty has been paid, that she has received from the Lord's hand double for all her sins! <sup>3</sup>A voice is crying out: "Clear the Lord's way in the desert! Make a level highway in the wilderness for our God! <sup>4</sup>Every valley will be raised up, and every mountain and hill will be flattened. Uneven ground will become level, and rough terrain a valley plain. <sup>5</sup>The Lord's glory will appear, and all humanity will see it together; the Lord's mouth has commanded it." <sup>6</sup>A voice was saying: "Call out!" And another said, "What should I call out?" All flesh is grass; all its loyalty is like the flowers of the field. <sup>7</sup>The grass dries up and the flower withers when the Lord's breath blows on it. Surely the people are grass. <sup>8</sup>The grass dries up; the flower withers, but our God's word will exist forever. <sup>9</sup>Go up on a high mountain, messenger Zion! Raise your voice and shout, messenger Jerusalem! Raise it; don't be afraid; say to the cities of Judah, "Here is your God!" <sup>10</sup>Here is the Lord God, coming with strength, with a triumphant arm, bringing his reward with him and his payment before him. <sup>11</sup>Like a shepherd, God will tend the flock; he will gather lambs in his arms and lift them onto his lap. He will gently guide the nursing ewes.

**Anthem** "People Look East"

### **Second Reading—Mark 1:1-8**

<sup>1</sup>The beginning of the good news about Jesus Christ, God's Son, <sup>2</sup>happened just as it was written about in the prophecy of Isaiah: *Look, I am sending my messenger before you. He will prepare your way,* <sup>3</sup>*a voice shouting in the wilderness:* "Prepare the way for the Lord; make his paths straight." <sup>4</sup>John the Baptist was in the wilderness calling for people to be baptized to show that they were changing their hearts and lives and wanted God to forgive their sins. <sup>5</sup>Everyone in Judea and all the people of Jerusalem went out to the Jordan River and were being baptized by John as they confessed their sins. <sup>6</sup>John wore

clothes made of camel's hair, with a leather belt around his waist. He ate locusts and wild honey. <sup>7</sup> He announced, "One stronger than I am is coming after me. I'm not even worthy to bend over and loosen the strap of his sandals. <sup>8</sup> I baptize you with water, but he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit."

**Sermon**— Preparing the Way For Peace

## Responding to the Word

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**Hymn** "Comfort, Comfort Now My People"

*"Comfort, comfort now my people; tell of peace!" so says our God.  
"Comfort those who sit in darkness mourning under sorrow's load.  
To my people now proclaim that my pardon waits for them!  
Tell them that their sins I cover, and their warfare now is over."*

**Sharing our Prayers**

**Prayers of the People**

**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 debts, as we forgive our debtors; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.*

**The Doxology 606**

*Praise God, from whom all blessings flow; Praise Him, all creatures here below;  
Praise Him above, ye heavenly host; Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.*

**Prayer of Dedication**

*from Psalm 85:10*

Lord, we give you thanks that in the coming of Christ your steadfast love and faithfulness have met and your righteousness and peace have kissed. May the gifts we offer this day lift up those in need and prepare the way of your salvation. **Amen.**

**Charge & Benediction**

**Blessing** "Come Now, O Prince of Peace"

*Come now, O Prince of Peace; make us one body. Come, O Lord Jesus; reconcile all people.  
Come now, O God of love; make us one body. Come, O Lord Jesus; reconcile all people.  
Come now and set us free, O God, our Savior. Come, O Lord Jesus; reconcile all people.  
Come, hope of unity; make us one body. Come, O Lord Jesus; reconcile all people.*

**Postlude** "Creator of the Stars at Night"

Today's liturgist is Hannah Vaught  
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