

The Order of Service for Home Worship

THE SECOND SUNDAY of ADVENT



Hymn: Come, thou long-expected Jesus.

1. Come, thou long-expected Jesus,
Born to set thy people free;
From our fears and sins release us;
Let us find our rest in thee.
2. Israel's strength and consolation,
Hope of all the earth thou art;
Dear desire of every nation,
Joy of every longing heart.
3. Born thy people to deliver;
Born a child and yet a king;
Born to reign in us for ever;
Now thy gracious Kingdom bring.
4. By thine own eternal Spirit,
Rule in all our hearts alone:
By thine all-sufficient merit,
Raise us to thy glorious throne.

In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**
Grace and peace be with you from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

Heavenly Father, all hearts are open to you. No secrets are hidden from you. Purify us with the fire of your Holy Spirit that we may love and worship you faithfully, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

As we come into the presence of our heavenly Father let us seek his forgiveness of our sins that we may know his peace is our hearts.

Lord Jesus, you came to gather the nations into your kingdom of peace.

Lord, have mercy.

Lord Jesus, you come in word and sacrament to strengthen us in holiness.

Christ, have mercy.

Lord Jesus, you will come in glory to judge the living and the dead.

Lord, have mercy.

May almighty God have mercy upon us, forgive us our sins and bring us to everlasting life. **Amen.**

Collect: Father in heaven, who sent your Son to redeem the world and will send him again to be our judge: give us grace so to imitate him in the humility and purity of his first coming that, when he comes again, we may be ready to greet him with joyful love and firm faith; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who is alive and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen.

A reading from the book of Malachi

3. 1-4

See, I am sending my messenger to prepare the way before me, and the Lord whom you seek will suddenly come to his temple. The messenger of the covenant in whom you delight – indeed, he is coming, says the LORD of hosts. But who can endure the day of his coming, and who can stand when he appears? For he is like a refiner's fire and like fullers' soap; he will sit as a refiner and purifier of silver, and he will purify the descendants of Levi and refine them like gold and silver, until they present offerings to the LORD in righteousness. Then the offering of Judah and Jerusalem will be pleasing to the LORD as in the days of old and as in former years.

This is the word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Canticle: Benedictus (Luke 1. 68-79)

Response: He has raised up for us a mighty saviour.

'Blessed be the Lord God of Israel,
for he has looked favourably on his people and redeemed them.
He has raised up a mighty saviour for us
in the house of his servant David, (R)

as he spoke through the mouth of his holy prophets from of old,
that we would be saved from our enemies and from the hand of all who hate us.
Thus he has shown the mercy promised to our ancestors,
and has remembered his holy covenant, (R)

the oath that he swore to our ancestor Abraham,
to grant us that we, being rescued from the hands of our enemies,
might serve him without fear, in holiness and righteousness
before him all our days. (R)

And you, child, will be called the prophet of the Most High;
for you will go before the Lord to prepare his ways,
to give knowledge of salvation to his people
by the forgiveness of their sins. (R)

By the tender mercy of our God,
the dawn from on high will break upon us,
to give light to those who sit in darkness and in the shadow of death,
to guide our feet into the way of peace.' (R)

A reading from Paul's letter to the Philippians

1. 3-11

I thank my God every time I remember you, constantly praying with joy in every one of my prayers for all of you, because of your sharing in the gospel from the first day until now. I am confident of this, that the one who began a good work among you will bring it to completion by the day of Jesus Christ. It is right for me to think this way about all of you, because you hold me in your heart, for all of you share in God's grace with me, both in my imprisonment and in the defence and confirmation of the gospel. For God is my witness, how I long for all of you with the compassion of Christ Jesus. And this is my prayer, that your love may overflow more and more with knowledge and full insight to help you to determine what is best, so that on the day of Christ you may be pure and blameless, having produced the harvest of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ for the glory and praise of God.
This is the word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

The Gospel Acclamation:

Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia! Prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight.
Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!

**Listen to the Gospel of Christ according to Saint Luke
Glory to you, O Lord.**

3. 1-6

In the fifteenth year of the reign of Emperor Tiberius, when Pontius Pilate was governor of Judea, and Herod was ruler of Galilee, and his brother Philip ruler of the region of Ituraea and Trachonitis, and Lysanias ruler of Abilene, during the high-priesthood of Annas and Caiaphas, the word of God came to John son of Zechariah in the wilderness. He went into all the region around the Jordan, proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins, as it is written in the book of the words of the prophet Isaiah, 'The voice of one crying out in the wilderness: "Prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight. Every valley shall be filled, and every mountain and hill shall be made low, and the crooked shall be made straight, and the rough ways made smooth; and all flesh shall see the salvation of God."

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

Meditation: On this second Sunday of Advent we are introduced, in our gospel reading today, to John the Baptist. John cries out in the wilderness, "prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight." John is the messenger of whom Malachi speaks in our first reading when he says, "See, I am sending my messenger to prepare the way before me." John is that messenger. On this second Sunday of Advent we honour the prophets, the likes of Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Malachi and others. Those who spoke to the word of God to the people of Israel. One thing that the prophets seem to have in common is that they each echo the same message. Throughout the Old Testament God raised the prophets when the people moved away from God when they began to neglect His ways, when they were under attack, when they were taken into exile in Babylon. At such times. God raised the prophets who called on the people to repent and return to God. This call to repentance is one made my John as he begins to prepare the way for the coming of Jesus. John is in many ways the last of the Old Testament prophets. He echoes their message and yet his mission is more urgent for he knows that the advent, the coming, of the Messiah is imminent. John is alerting the people to the fact that Jesus the Messiah, his cousin, is about to begin his ministry. In listening to the call of John his words comes down to us through the ages. His words resonate with us today. As Disciples of Christ we are called to work with him in preparing the way for him to enter the lives of all we encounter day by day. In answering John's call to repentance we look to remove all in our own lives which keep us from giving ourselves and our lives more wholly to the service of God and his

people. In preparing to celebrate the birth of Christ at Bethlehem we help alert the world around us to his continued presence in our lives and the life of the whole world. In alerting the world around us to his presence he help prepare the way for him to come to those in need, to bring the hope and peace which only he can give to those who live in fear and despair. The ministry of John in preparing the way for Jesus to come among his people, among us, is our shared ministry today, a ministry we are called to embrace afresh today. Amen.

Intercessions:

In the power of the Holy Spirit and in union with Christ let us bring our prayers for the Church and for the world to our heavenly Father.

We pray for the Church throughout the world, for the leaders of the Church among them Mary our Bishop. We pray for the clergy and people of our diocese and for our own parish; may the Church witness faithfully to your Word keeping us in his way until the coming of the Lord.

Lord in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

We pray for the people of the world, for the victims of violence and oppression, for all suffering the effects of natural disaster and for those suffering from famine or drought; Come in power and bring peace and joy and the good news of your salvation to all peoples and nations.

Lord in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

We pray for our own community, for our families, friends and neighbours. We give thanks for all who serve the needs of the vulnerable; strengthen us to live in your love and purify us from all that holds us back from you.

Lord in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

We pray for all who are in need, for those who are sick, for those who are bereaved, for the lonely and isolated and for all in any kind of need. We hold in our hearts before God those known to us who are in need at this time and all whose names are recorded in our parish intercession books; may they be strengthened by the Holy Spirit and consoled with the love of Christ.

Lord in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

We pray for all who have died. We remember before God our own departed loved ones and we pray for the recently departed and those whose anniversary of death falls at this time. May they share the eternal glory of heaven in the company of all the saints.

Lord in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

We bring all our prayers to our heavenly Father as we pray together:

**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,
The power and the glory,
for ever and ever. Amen.**

The Peace:

In the tender compassion of our God the dawn from heaven will break upon us, to shine on those who live in darkness, under the shadow of death, and to guide our feet into the way of peace. The peace of the Lord be with you and with all those whom you love.

And also with you.

Let us pray:

God, our deliverer, awaken our hearts to prepare the way for the advent of your Son; that, with minds purified by the grace of his coming, we may serve you faithfully all our days; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

The Blessing:

The Lord be with you. **And also with you.**

Christ the sun of righteousness shine on you and scatter the darkness from before you and the blessing of God almighty, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit be among you and remain with you always. **Amen.**

Let us go in peace to love and serve the Lord.

In the name of Christ. Amen.

Hymn: Hark! A herald voice is calling.

- 1. Hark! A herald voice is calling:
“Christ is nigh!” it seems to say;
“Cast away the dreams of darkness,
O ye children of the day.**
- 2. Startled at the solemn warning,
Let the earthbound soul arise;
Christ, her sun, all sloth dispelling,
Shines upon the morning skies.**
- 3. Lo, the Lamb, so long expected,
Comes with pardon down from heaven;
Let us haste, with tears of sorrow,
One and all to be forgiven.**
- 4. So when next he comes with glory,
Wrapping all the earth in fear,
May he then, as our defender,
On the clouds of heaven appear.**
- 5. Honour, glory, virtue, merit,
To the Father and the Son,
With the co-eternal Spirit,
While unending ages run.**

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