

DECEMBER 9, 2018
SECOND SUNDAY
OF ADVENT



Prepare the way of the Lord.

DAILY BIBLE READINGS

These passages are related to the Lectionary texts for this Sunday.

Sunday	Luke 3:1-6	Prepare the way of the Lord
Monday	Malachi 3:1-4	The promised messenger
Tuesday	Luke 1:68-79	Zechariah praises the Lord
Wednesday	Isaiah 35:3-7	God changes everything
Thursday	Philippians 1:3-11	Peace to God's people
Friday	Isaiah 40:1-11	A voice in the desert
Saturday	Psalms 126	Harvest of joy
Sunday	Luke 3:7-18	One more powerful is coming

SCRIPTURE VERSE FOR THIS WEEK

[John the Baptist] 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.'" **Luke 3:3-4 (NRSV)**

PRAYERS AND BLESSING

A Prayer for the Week:

Dear God, prepare your way in us. Set us straight where we are crooked and make us smooth where we are rough. Amen. (Luke 3:4-5)

Mealtime Prayer:

Lord, bless this meal and our home this Advent as we prepare for your coming. Amen.

A Blessing to Give:

May the Lord direct your ways so that the crooked path be made straight and the rough ways be made smooth. (Luke 3:5)



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HYMN OF THE WEEK



*Prepare the Royal
Highway*



CARING CONVERSATIONS



Discuss in your home, small group, or use for personal reflections:

- To repent means "to turn around." Tell or think about a time you were going in the wrong direction.
- John the Baptist's call to repentance is a call to turn in a direction that relies not on our own human powers (including personal, political, or even religious powers) but to a direction that relies on God. How is this good news?
- God does not come to us and leave us unchanged. How does God's love shown in Jesus change you?

DEVOTIONS



Read: Luke 1:68-79.

Usually we expect an Old Testament psalm as one of the readings. In the Second Sunday of Advent, we have a New Testament psalm, the psalm (or song) of Zechariah. He is prophesying, meaning he is giving us a Spirit-filled message (v. 67), revealing the fulfillment of God's promise of salvation that is now going to happen. The psalm is a beautiful testimony to "the tender mercy of our God" (v. 78) that will bring joy to the world. The promise of a messenger to prepare the way of the Lord (Malachi 3:1-4) is being fulfilled with the birth of Zechariah's and Elizabeth's son, John the Baptist. Reread Luke 1:68-79 and pause to feel the joy and exultation of Zechariah's song that has lifted people's hearts ever since.

Pray: Merciful God, you have prepared us for a joy we cannot fully imagine. Bless us now and always with the light of Christ to guide our feet into the way of peace. Amen. (Luke 1:79)

SERVICE



Make Christmas cards or ornaments for a Christmas tree using various craft materials (cardboard, colored paper, glue, glitter, etc.). Give them to those who are receiving care or are home alone. Take time to visit with them, pray with them, and bless them.

RITUALS AND TRADITIONS



The second candle on the Advent wreath is the candle of preparation and peace. Discuss or think about what it means to you to prepare the way of the Lord Jesus. Read Isaiah 40:3-5 and then after lighting the first candle of expectation and hope and the second candle of preparation and peace on your Advent wreath, say the following:

Leader: John the Baptist fulfills 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.'" (Luke 3:4)

All: Thank you Lord Jesus, for preparing us for your coming. Amen.



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