

# The Order of Service for Home Worship

## THE SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT



### Hymn 1: 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.

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.

**Father of glory, holy and eternal, look upon us now in power and mercy. May your strength overcome our weakness, your radiance transform our blindness, and your Spirit draw us to that love shown and offered to us by your Son, our Saviour Jesus Christ. 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 prophet Isaiah

11. 1-10

A shoot shall come out from the stock of Jesse, and a branch shall grow out of his roots. The spirit of the LORD shall rest on him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and the fear of the LORD. His delight shall be in the fear of the LORD. He shall not judge by what his eyes see, or decide by what his ears hear; but with righteousness he shall judge the poor, and decide with equity for the meek of the earth; he shall strike the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips he shall kill the wicked. Righteousness shall be the belt around his waist, and faithfulness the belt around his loins. The wolf shall live with the lamb, the leopard shall lie down with the kid, the calf and the lion and the fatling together, and a little child shall lead them. The cow and the bear shall graze, their young shall lie down together; and the lion shall eat straw like the ox. The nursing child shall play over the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall put its hand on the adder's den. They will not hurt or destroy on all my holy mountain; for the earth

will be full of the knowledge of the LORD as the waters cover the sea. On that day the root of Jesse shall stand as a signal to the peoples; the nations shall inquire of him, and his dwelling shall be glorious.

This is the Word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

**Psalms 72. 1-7 Response: May all nations be blessed in him.**

Give the king your justice, O God: and your righteousness to a king's son.  
May he judge your people with righteousness: and your poor with justice.  
May the mountains yield prosperity for the people and the hills righteousness.  
May he defend the cause of the poor of the people:  
give deliverance to the needy and crush the oppressor. (R)

May he live while the sun endures, and as long as the moon,  
throughout all generations.

May he be like rain that falls on the mown grass, like showers that water the earth.  
In his days may righteousness flourish  
and peace abound until the moon is no more. (R)

**A reading from Paul's letter to the Romans**

15. 4-13

For whatever was written in former days was written for our instruction, so that by steadfastness and by the encouragement of the scriptures we might have hope. May the God of steadfastness and encouragement grant you to live in harmony with one another, in accordance with Christ Jesus, so that together you may with one voice glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. Welcome one another, therefore, just as Christ has welcomed you, for the glory of God. For I tell you that Christ has become a servant of the circumcised on behalf of the truth of God in order that he might confirm the promises given to the patriarchs, and in order that the Gentiles might glorify God for his mercy. As it is written, 'Therefore I will confess you among the Gentiles, and sing praises to your name'; and again he says, 'Rejoice, O Gentiles, with his people'; and again, 'Praise the Lord, all you Gentiles, and let all the peoples praise him'; and again Isaiah says, 'The root of Jesse shall come, the one who rises to rule the Gentiles; in him the Gentiles shall hope.' May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that you may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.

This is the Word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

**The Gospel Acclamation:**

**Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!**

Open our hearts, O Lord, to prepare the way for the coming of your Son.

**Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!**

**Listen to the Gospel of Christ according to St. Matthew.**

**3. 1-12**

**Glory to you, O Lord.**

In those days John the Baptist appeared in the wilderness of Judea, proclaiming, 'Repent, for the kingdom of heaven has come near.' This is the one of whom the prophet Isaiah spoke when he said, 'The voice of one crying out in the wilderness: "Prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight." ' Now John wore clothing of camel's hair with a leather belt around his waist, and his food was locusts and wild honey. Then the people of Jerusalem and all Judea were going out to him, and all the region along the Jordan, and they were baptized by him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins. But when he saw many Pharisees and Sadducees coming for baptism, he said to them, 'You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the wrath to come? Bear fruit worthy of repentance. Do not presume to say to yourselves, "We have Abraham as our ancestor"; for I tell you, God is able from these stones to raise up children to Abraham. Even now the axe is lying at the root of the trees; every tree therefore that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. 'I baptize you with water for repentance, but one who is more powerful than I is coming after me; I am not worthy to carry his sandals. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. His winnowing-fork is in his hand, and he will clear his threshing-floor and will gather his wheat into the granary; but the chaff he will burn with unquenchable fire.'

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 the prophet Malachi spoke when he said, "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 by 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 come 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 we 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 ministry area; may the Church, following the example of John the Baptist and the prophets, in speaking the Word of God, draw all people to into his flock..

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; May the leaders of the Nations strive to bring peace and reconciliation between their people's that all may live safe and secure lives.

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; May we bring the hope that only Christ can give to all who we meet each day.

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 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:**

Jesus said, Peace I bequeath to you; my own peace I give you; a peace the world cannot give, this is my gift to you.

The peace of the Lord be with you and with all those whom you love.

**And also with you.**

#### **Let us pray:**

**God of our pilgrimage, you have willed that the gate of mercy should stand open for those who trust in you: look upon us with your favour that we who follow the path of your will may never wander from the way of life; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.**

#### **The Blessing:**

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

The peace of God which passes all understanding keep your hearts in the knowledge and love of God and of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord 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 2: 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.**