



SEASON OF ADVENT
WEEK TWO
6 DECEMBER 2020

*“We wait for a new heavens
and a new earth,
where righteousness is at home.”*

—2 Peter 3:13

We are waiting for you
Knowing that you always abide
We are waking to your presence
And our hearts are open wide, open wide, open wide

Words and music by Christopher Grundy

Opening Prayer

Loving God,
help us listen deeply for your voice this day
for we long to hear
a message of comfort and peace.
May we be faithful people
always turning and returning to you
amidst all that would distract, confuse and disturb us.
So, make a clear path to our hearts.
Bring down in us all that resists your love.
Come, Lord Jesus, come...

Fill in the valleys of despair.
Lift up our weary souls.
Come, Lord Jesus, come...

Smooth the hardened edges.
Eliminate the obstacles between us.
Come, Lord Jesus, come...

We lay our lives open before you.
Make us ready to receive your Spirit.
Come, Lord Jesus, come. Amen.

ENCOUNTERING THE LIVING WORD

Reading from the Prophet Isaiah 40:1–11

Comfort, O comfort my people,
says your God.

Speak 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.

A voice cries out: "In the wilderness
prepare the way of the LORD,
make straight in the desert
a highway for our God.

Every 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.

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

A voice says, "Cry out!"
And I said, "What shall I cry?"

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

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

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

Get 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!"
See, the Lord GOD comes with might,
and his arm rules for him;

his reward is with him,
and his recompense before him.
He 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.

Advent Hymn

"Comfort, comfort all my people"

Comfort, comfort all my people
with the comfort of my word.
Speak it tender to my people:
All your sins are taken away.

1. Though your tears be rivers running,
though your tears be an ocean full,
though you cry with the hurt of living,
comfort, comfort.

Every valley shall be lifted,
every mountain shall be low,
every rough place will be smoother:
comfort, comfort.

2. Though your eyes see only darkness,
though your eyes can see no light,
though your eyes see pain and sorrow:
comfort, comfort.

Every night will have its morning,
every pain will have an end,
every burden will be lightened:
comfort, comfort.

Reading from the Gospel According to Mark 1:1–8

The beginning of the good news of Jesus Christ, the Son of God. As it is written in the prophet Isaiah, "See, I am sending my messenger ahead of you, who will prepare your way; the voice of one crying out in the wilderness: 'Prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight,'" John the baptizer appeared in the wilderness, proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins.

And 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. Now John was clothed with camel's hair, with a leather belt around his waist, and he ate locusts and wild honey. He 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. I have baptized you with water; but he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit."



May your word live in us
and bear much fruit to your glory.

Reflection on the Word and Silence

“Give us hearts to know you, God”

Give us hearts to know you, God, to know who you are.
We will be your people, and you our God, and you our God.

Give us hearts to love you, God, to love who you are.
We will be your people, and you our God, and you our God.

Give us hearts to serve you, God, to serve who you are.
We will be your people, and you our God, and you our God.

Give us hearts to praise you, God, to praise who you are.
We will be your people, and you our God, and you our God.

RESPONDING WITH OUR LIVES

Prayers of Intercession

God who hears the cry of the poor, in confidence and trust we hold open before you our worries, our stresses, our deepest yearnings for the world, those we love and ourselves. Draw near to our pain and sorrow. Touch us with your healing Spirit. Lift from us our burdens. Renew us and enable us to receive and give your love lavishly and freely. Hear us now as we pray...

RESPONSE: In your mercy, ***hear our prayer.***

*(You are invited to offer your prayer(s), simply and in your own words.
This will be followed by the lighting of candles.)*

The Disciple's Prayer

***Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come,
your will be done,
on earth as in heaven.***

Give us today our daily bread.

***Forgive us our sins
as we forgive those who sin against us.***

***Save us from the time of trial
and deliver us from evil.***

***For the kingdom, the power and the glory are yours,
now and forever. Amen.***

Blessing

"For you, deep stillness"

For you, deep stillness of the silent inland.

For you, deep blue of the desert skies.

For you, flame red of the rocks and stones.

For you, sweet water from hidden springs.

From the edges seek the heartlands
and when you're burnt by the journey
may the cool winds of the hovering Spirit
soothe and replenish you.

In the name of Christ...