

**Advent 2 (6<sup>th</sup> December, 2020)**

**Pastor Peter Ghalayini**

*M:* John said: 'After me will come one more powerful than I,

*All:* **the thongs of whose sandals I am not worthy to stoop down and untie.**

*M:* I baptise you with water,

*All:* **but he will baptise you with the Holy Spirit.'**

*M:* In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

*C:* **Amen.**

**Lighting of the Advent Candle**

Micah 5:2-5a

*M:* Let us pray:

Lord, thank you for the gift of peace in knowing that I am loved by a loving God and Saviour.

*All:* **Amen.**

**Opening Hymn – On Jordan's bank**

**the Baptist's cry** *LH 13*

- 1. 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.**
- 2. Then cleansed be every life from sin;  
make straight the way for God within;  
and let us all our hearts prepare  
for Christ to come and enter there.**
- 3. We hail Thee as our Saviour, Lord,  
our refuge and our great reward;  
without Thy grace we waste away  
like flowers that wither and decay.**

4. Lay on the sick Thy healing hand,  
and make the fallen strong to stand;  
show us the glory of Thy face  
till beauty springs in every place.
5. All praise, eternal Son, to Thee  
whose advent sets Thy people free,  
Whom with the Father we adore  
and Holy Spirit evermore.

*Music: Melody adapted by William Henry Havergal 1793-1870  
from  
a chorale in the 'Musikalisches Hand-Buch,' Hamburg 1690;  
Words: Charles Coffin 1676-1749, Tr. John Chandler, 1806-76 alt.  
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*M:* “the voice of one crying out in the wilderness:  
‘Prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight’”,  
Therefore let us confess our sins to God our Father and ask him in the  
name of our Lord Jesus Christ to forgive us;

*C:* **We confess to you, almighty God,  
before the whole company of heaven, and to each other,  
that we have sinned in thought, word and deed, by our own fault.  
Have mercy on us, for Jesus’ sake, forgive us all our sins,  
and bring us to eternal life.  
Amen.**

*M:* As a called and ordained servant of the Word I announce the grace of  
God to all of you. On behalf of my Lord Jesus Christ, and by his  
command, I forgive you all your sins, in the name of the Father, and of  
the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

*All:* **Amen.**

*M:* You have been gracious to your land, O Lord, Lord have mercy,

*All:* **Lord have mercy,**

*M:* you have restored the good fortune of Jacob. Christ have mercy,

*All:* **Christ have mercy.**

*M:* You have forgiven the iniquity of your people, Lord have mercy

*All:* **Lord have mercy.**

*M:* The Lord be with you,

*All:* **And also with you.**

*M:* Let us pray that we are ready for Christ's coming.

*All:* **Merciful God,  
you sent your messengers to preach repentance and prepare the way  
for our salvation. Turn us away from our sins, so that we greet our  
coming redeemer, Jesus Christ, with joy.  
For he lives with you  
and the Holy Spirit,  
one God, now and forever.**

**Amen.**

### **First Reading – Isaiah 40:1-11**

*Prepare the way of the Lord*

<sup>1</sup> Comfort, comfort my people, says your God.

<sup>2</sup> Speak tenderly to Jerusalem, and proclaim to her that her hard service has been completed, that her sin has been paid for, that she has received from the Lord's hand double for all her sins. <sup>3</sup> A voice of one calling: "In the wilderness prepare the way for the Lord; make straight in the desert a highway for our God. <sup>4</sup> Every valley shall be raised up, every mountain and hill made low; the rough ground shall become level, the rugged places a plain. <sup>5</sup> And the glory of the Lord will be revealed, and all people will see it together. For the mouth of the Lord has spoken." <sup>6</sup> A voice says, "Cry out."

And I said, "What shall I cry?" "All people are like grass, and all their faithfulness is like the flowers of the field. <sup>7</sup> The grass withers and the flowers fall, because the breath of the Lord blows on them.

Surely the people are grass. <sup>8</sup> The grass withers and the flowers fall, but the word of our God endures forever." <sup>9</sup> You who bring good news to Zion, go up on a high mountain. You who bring good news to Jerusalem, lift up your voice with a shout, lift it up, do not be afraid; say to the towns of Judah, "Here is your God!" <sup>10</sup> See, the Sovereign Lord comes with power, and he rules with a mighty arm.

See, his reward is with him, and his recompense accompanies him. <sup>11</sup> He tends his flock like a shepherd: He gathers the lambs in his arms and carries them close to his heart; he gently leads those that have young.

*R:* This is the Word of the Lord.

*All:* **Thanks be to God.**

**Psalm 85:1,2,8-13** (*Spoken responsively*)

*M:* <sup>1</sup>You, Lord, showed favour to your land;  
you restored the fortunes of Jacob.

*All:* <sup>2</sup>**You forgave the iniquity of your people  
and covered all their sins.**

*M:* <sup>8</sup>I will listen to what God the Lord says;  
he promises peace to his people, his faithful servants— but let them not  
turn to folly.

*All:* <sup>9</sup>**Surely his salvation is near those who fear him, that his glory may  
dwell in our land.**

*M:* <sup>10</sup>Love and faithfulness meet together;  
righteousness and peace kiss each other.

*All:* <sup>11</sup>**Faithfulness springs forth from the earth, and righteousness looks  
down from heaven.**

*M:* <sup>12</sup>The Lord will indeed give what is good,  
and our land will yield its harvest.

*All:* <sup>13</sup>**Righteousness goes before him  
and prepares the way for his steps.**

**Second Reading – 2 Peter 3:8-15a**

*The day of the Lord*

<sup>8</sup>But do not forget this one thing, dear friends: With the Lord a day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years are like a day. <sup>9</sup>The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness. Instead he is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance. <sup>10</sup>But the day of the Lord will come like a thief. The heavens will disappear with a roar; the elements will be destroyed by fire, and the earth and everything done in it will be laid bare. <sup>11</sup>Since everything will be destroyed in this way, what kind of people ought you to be? You ought to live holy and godly lives <sup>12</sup>as you look forward to the day of God and speed its coming. That day will bring about the destruction of

the heavens by fire, and the elements will melt in the heat. <sup>13</sup> But in keeping with his promise we are looking forward to a new heaven and a new earth, where righteousness dwells. <sup>14</sup> So then, dear friends, since you are looking forward to this, make every effort to be found spotless, blameless and at peace with him. <sup>15</sup> Bear in mind that our Lord's patience means salvation, just as our dear brother Paul also wrote you with the wisdom that God gave him.

*R:* This is the Word of the Lord.

*All:* **Thanks be to God.**

*M:* Alleluia, alleluia.  
A voice cries out in the desert:

*All:* **Prepare the way of the Lord, and make his paths straight.**

**Alleluia.**

### **Gospel Reading – Mark 1:1-8**

*(Spoken)* **Glory to you, O Lord**

*John the Baptist prepares the way*

<sup>1</sup>The beginning of the good news about Jesus the Messiah, the Son of God, <sup>2</sup>as it is written in Isaiah the prophet: "I will send my messenger ahead of you, who will prepare your way" — <sup>3</sup>"a voice of one calling in the wilderness, 'Prepare the way for the Lord, make straight paths for him.'" <sup>4</sup>And so John the Baptist appeared in the wilderness, preaching a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. <sup>5</sup>The whole Judean countryside and all the people of Jerusalem went out to him. Confessing their sins, they were baptized by him in the Jordan River. <sup>6</sup>John wore clothing made of camel's hair, with a leather belt around his waist, and he ate locusts and wild honey. <sup>7</sup>And this was his message: "After me comes the one more powerful than I, the straps of whose sandals I am not worthy to stoop down and untie. <sup>8</sup>I baptize you with water, but he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit."

*M:* This is the Gospel of the Lord.

*All:* *(Spoken)* **Praise to you, O Christ.**

**Thank you, Lord Jesus,  
for sending John the Baptist**

to announce your coming to save people.  
Help us to repent and believe in you.

Amen.

**Gospel Hymn – Prepare the royal highway LH 737**

1. Prepare the royal highway,  
the King of kings is near;  
let every hill and valley  
a level road appear.  
Then greet the king of glory  
foretold in sacred story:

*Hosanna to the Lord  
for he fulfills God's Word!*

2. God's people, see him coming:  
your own eternal king!  
Palm branches strew before him;  
spread garments; shout and sing.  
God's promise will not fail you;  
no more shall doubt assail you:

*Hosanna to the Lord  
for he fulfills God's Word!*

3. Then fling the gates wide open  
to greet your promised king;  
your king, yet every nation  
its tribute too should bring.  
All lands, bow down before him;  
all nations now adore him:

*Hosanna to the Lord  
for he fulfills God's Word!*

4. His is no earthly kingdom;  
it comes from heaven above.  
His rule is peace and freedom,

and justice, truth, and love.  
So let your praise be sounding  
for kindness so abounding:

*Hosanna to the Lord  
for he fulfills God's Word!*

<p><i>Music: Swedish folk tune 17<sup>th</sup> Century; Words: Frans Mikael Franzen 1772-1847 In the public domain</i></p>
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## Sermon

*All:* I believe in God, the Father almighty,  
maker of heaven and earth.  
And in Jesus Christ,  
his only Son, our Lord,  
who was conceived by the  
Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary,  
suffered under Pontius Pilate,  
was crucified, dead, and buried.  
He descended into hell.  
The third day he rose again  
from the dead.  
He ascended into heaven,  
and sits at the right hand of God,  
the Father almighty,  
from thence he will come to judge  
the living and the dead.  
I believe in the Holy Spirit,  
the holy Christian church,  
the communion of saints,  
the forgiveness of sins,  
the resurrection of the body,  
and the life everlasting.  
  
Amen.

Offering Hymn- God has spoken by his prophets *LHS 822*

1. God has spoken by his prophets,  
spoken his unchanging word,  
each, from age to age proclaiming  
God, the one, the righteous Lord.

**In the world's despair and turmoil  
one firm anchor still holds fast:  
God is king, his throne eternal,  
God the first, and God the last.**

- 2. God has spoken by Christ Jesus,  
Christ, the everlasting Son,  
brightness of the Father's glory,  
with the Father ever one;  
spoken by the Word incarnate,  
God, before all time began,  
Light of Light, to earth descending,  
man, revealing God to Man.**
- 3. God is speaking by his Spirit,  
speaking to the hearts of men,  
in the age-long word expounding  
God's own message, now as then,  
through the rise and fall of nations  
one sure faith is standing fast;  
God abides, his Word unchanging,  
God the first, and God the last.**

*Music: Ad. from Ludwig van Beethoven;  
Words: George W. Briggs, 1875-1959  
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*M:* Let us pray:

Lord, lead us to show in our lives,  
by our repentance and faith,  
that we are your people.  
As you have made us holy,  
help us to live holy lives,  
dedicated to you,  
preparing the way for your coming.

*All:* **Amen.**

### **Prayer of the church**

*M:* Lord, teach us to pray:

*All:* **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.  
Lead us not into temptation,  
but deliver us from evil.  
For the kingdom,  
the power,  
and the glory are yours,  
now and forever.  
Amen.**

*M:* Christ, the Sun of Righteousness, shine on you and make you ready to meet him when he comes in glory.  
Go in peace, joyfully preparing the way for the Lord.

*All:* **Thanks be to God.  
Amen.**

*M:* The Lord bless you and keep you.  
The Lord make his face shine on you  
and be gracious to you.  
The Lord look upon you with favour,  
† and give you peace.

*All:* **Amen.**

**Closing Song – Come, Lord Jesus, come**      *LH 731*

**1. Wars have come and wars have gone;  
Come, Lord, come!  
Still the cry goes up, “How long?”  
Come, Lord, come!**

*Chorus: Come, Lord Jesus, come  
into this weary world.  
O, how we long for you  
to come, Lord, come.*

**2. Hearts are breaking, tears fall down;  
Come, Lord come!**

**Come and free us, we are bound.  
Come, Lord come!**

*Chorus: Come, Lord Jesus, come  
into this weary world.  
O, how we long for you  
to come, Lord, come.*

**3. Darkness grows as night wears on;  
Come, Lord come!  
Will we live to see the dawn?  
Come, Lord come!**

*Chorus: Come, Lord Jesus, come  
into this weary world.  
O, how we long for you  
to come, Lord, come.*

**4. Nations rise and nations fall;  
Come, Lord come!  
God is with us through it all.  
Come, Lord come!**

*Chorus: Come, Lord Jesus, come  
into this weary world.  
O, how we long for you  
to come, Lord, come.*

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