

Cross of Christ and Cannon River
Lutheran Churches
Faithful Through Generations
December 6, 2020



John calls people to repent, to clear the decks, to completely reorder their lives so that nothing gets in the way of the Lord's coming. The reading from Isaiah gives the context for this radical call: the assurance of forgiveness that encourages us to repent; the promise that the coming one will be gentle with the little ones. Isaiah calls us all to be heralds with John, to lift up our voices fearlessly and say, "See, your God is coming!" We say it to one another in worship, in order to say it with our lives in a world in need of justice and peace.

Welcome and Announcements

HYMN *"Light One Candle to Watch for Messiah"* (Verse 1 & 2) **ELW #240**

BLESSING OF THE ADVENT WREATH

L: Bless us as we light the candles on this wreath.

C: Baptize us with the fire of your Spirit, that we may be a light shining in the darkness welcoming others as Christ has welcomed us, for he is our light and our salvation. Blessed be God forever. Amen.

OPENING HYMN *"Rejoice, Rejoice, Believers"* (Verses 1 & 4) **ELW #244**

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

L: Blessed be God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, whose forgiveness is sure and whose steadfast love endures forever. **Amen.**

L: Together let us honestly and humbly confess that we have not lived as God desires.

Silence is kept for reflection.

L: Loving and forgiving God, we confess that we are held captive by sin. In spite of our best efforts, we have gone astray. Restore us, O God. Wake us up and turn us from our sin. Renew us each day in the light of Christ. Amen.

L: People of God, hear this glad news: by God's endless grace your sins are forgiven, and you are free— free from all that holds you back and free to live in the peaceable realm of God. May you be strengthened in God's love, comforted by Christ's peace, and accompanied with the power of the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

GREETING

L: The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all. **C: And also with you.**

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Stir up our hearts, Lord God, to prepare the way of your only Son. By his coming strengthen us to serve you with purified lives; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

THE FIRST READING

Isaiah 40:1-11

Comfort, O comfort my people,
says your God.

²Speak 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.

³A voice cries out:
"In the wilderness prepare the way of
the Lord,
make straight in the desert a highway
for our God.

⁴Every 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.

⁵Then the glory of the Lord shall be
revealed,
and all people shall see it together,
for the mouth of the Lord has

spoken."

⁶A voice says, "Cry out!"
And I said, "What shall I cry?"
All people are grass,
their constancy is like the flower of
the field.

⁷The grass withers, the flower fades,
when the breath of the Lord blows
upon it;
surely the people are grass.

⁸The grass withers, the flower fades;
but the word of our God will stand
forever.

⁹Get 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!"

¹⁰See, the Lord God comes with might,
and his arm rules for him;
his reward is with him,

and his recompense before him.
¹¹He 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.

The Word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

THE SECOND READING

2 Peter 3:8-15a

Do not ignore this one fact, beloved, that with the Lord one day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years are like one day. ⁹The Lord is not slow about his promise, as some think of slowness, but is patient with you, not wanting any to perish, but all to come to repentance. ¹⁰But the day of the Lord will come like a thief, and then the heavens will pass away with a loud noise, and the elements will be dissolved with fire, and the earth and everything that is done on it will be disclosed.

¹¹Since all these things are to be dissolved in this way, what sort of persons ought you to be in leading lives of holiness and godliness, ¹²waiting for and hastening the coming of the day of God, because of which the heavens will be set ablaze and dissolved, and the elements will melt with fire? ¹³But, in accordance with his promise, we wait for new heavens and a new earth, where righteousness is at home.

¹⁴Therefore, beloved, while you are waiting for these things, strive to be found by him at peace, without spot or blemish; ^{15a}and regard the patience of our Lord as salvation.

The Word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

GOSPEL

Mark 1:1-8

The holy gospel according to Mark. **Glory to you, O Lord.**

The beginning of the good news of Jesus Christ, the Son of God.

²As it is written in the prophet Isaiah,

“See, I am sending my messenger ahead of you,
who will prepare your way;

³the voice of one crying out in the wilderness:

‘Prepare the way of the Lord,
make his paths straight.’ ”

⁴John the baptizer appeared in the wilderness, proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. ⁵And 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. ⁶Now John was clothed with camel’s hair, with a leather belt around his waist, and he ate locusts and wild honey. ⁷He 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. ⁸I have baptized you with water; but he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit.”

The gospel of the Lord. Praise to you, O Christ.

SERMON

Deacon Todd Portinga

HYMN OF THE DAY “*Prepare the Royal Highway*” (Verses 1 & 4) **ELW#264**

*PRAYERS OF THE CHURCH (Lord in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**)

*The Peace of the Lord be with you always. **And also with you.**

*LORD’S PRAYER: **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, and the power, and the glory, forever and ever. Amen.**

*BENEDICTION: May God bless you and keep you. May God’s face shine on you and be gracious to you. May God look on you with favor and give you peace. **C: Amen.**

*L: Go in Peace. Serve the Lord. **C: Thanks be to God.**