

The Second Sunday of Advent, 8th December 2024

Theme: *Prepare a way for our God*



Light the second candle, on the Advent Wreath with the words, Prepare the way! God calls us as individuals and as community, to prepare for Christ coming among us.

Baruch 5: 1-9 The collective memory of living in exile for 70 years created a homesickness in the exiles, a longing to go home. All the while in exile, God, in his compassion waits for them as they struggle with their longing to be back home chastened by the memories of living in slavery.

Every Valley

**Ev'ry valley shall be exalted
and ev'ry hill made low.
And all God's people
shall see together
the glory of the Lord.**

A voice cries out in the wilderness:
"Prepare the way of the Lord.
Make straight in the desert a highway,
A highway for our God."

Stand upon the mountain top;
Lift up your voice to the world.
Sing joyfully Jerusalem.
Behold, behold your God.



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Reflection: Gospel: Luke 3:1-6

Imagine John the Baptist is talking to us about the inner landscape of our lives, how we relate to ourselves and to one another. He's asking us to risk confronting ourselves and to see how to "prepare the way of the Lord?" The valleys, mountains and hills, crooked paths and rough ways are descriptive of our state of being within ourselves in need of healing.

Think about the low places in your life.

What gets you there and what keeps you there? Maybe it's judgements and criticisms you make of yourself. Sometimes we live in the valley of grief and loss, guilt, regrets, failures. Maybe you have lived less than who you know yourself to be truly?

What about those mountains and hills in your life?

Think about the ways in which you try to control or coerce your own life or another's life. In what ways are you motivated by power, control, success, reputation, need for approval or to be right? What about those times when you considered yourself better than or superior to others? Our inflated ego gives the impression that we are full of ourselves... we are climbing the mountain.

What's crooked in your life today?

Notice when your words and actions are not in sync with the values you claim to hold and value? When we are dishonest with ourselves or others, we are on a crooked path. Every time you and I give another reason to doubt the trustworthiness of our words or actions, we are living crooked. What is the shape of your life these days?

What are the rough ways in your life today?

Do you ever experience in your life that you are out of balance, lacking harmony and meaning? What's missing? What patterns of behaviour have you developed to keep people out? Welcome the opportunity in the second week of Advent to experience "What marvels the Lord works for us, indeed we are glad" Ps. 125 (126)

Have you not heard his silent steps?
He comes, comes, ever comes.
Every moment and every age,
every day and every night
he comes, comes, ever comes.
Many a song have I sung
in many a mood of mind,
but all their notes have always proclaimed,
"He comes, comes, ever comes." ... *Rabindranath Tagore*



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