



**Church at Home**  
**Second Sunday of Advent**  
**Sunday 6<sup>th</sup> December 2020**

**"Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace to those on whom his favour rests." – Luke 2:14**

In some traditions the second Sunday of Advent is "Peace". One of the hallmarks of the Christmas story is when the angels appear to the shepherds and proclaim, "Peace on earth," in Luke 2:14.

Jesus brought about peace, in unexpected ways, when he arrived. The Jews, particularly the zealots, wanted a rebellion. They wanted their Saviour to overturn the oppressive rule of the Romans and bring about peace in a violent way.

But Jesus had something else in mind. Jesus brings us peace in a number of ways. He gives us inner peace. Because of his work on the cross, we have a chance to receive salvation and be filled with the Holy Spirit. This grants us an inner peace (John 14:27). Not only do we have the peace that comes from our assurance of salvation, but we also have the peace of mind knowing God will heal this broken world and will come again. We have peace with others. We put aside our conflicts especially those with other believers, because we belong to the same family. We have the same purpose: to let others know about the peace of Christ.

**This Sunday's Bible readings include:**

**Isaiah 40:1-11** – We're journeying with the prophet Isaiah as he points us to the coming Christ, in this Advent season.



**2 Peter 3:8-15** - The believers to whom Peter writes have, in his view, two interrelated problems: they doubt the coming of Christ and immoral living.

**Mark 1:1-8** - The gospel of Mark is the beginning of the good news of Jesus Christ. The words of this gospel break into our lives with the good news, the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God.

**Psalms 85:1-2, 8-15** - The psalm expands on the motif of restoration. In v. 1, the psalm recalls that God had "restored the fortunes of Jacob" in the past. In v. 4 it renews the plea, "Restore us again, O God of our salvation."

**Suggested hymns; [O come, o come, Emmanuel;](#) [Songs for Advent - Lord Jesus Come;](#) [Waiting Here for You ...](#)**

**Advent Two – Prayer for Peace.**

Heavenly Father, You are the God who gives peace. This second week of Advent causes us to remember that because of Jesus we can experience a Christmas free from turmoil and chaos. Regardless of our circumstances or our situations, you offer us peace that passes all understanding.

That first Christmas, when you sent your Son, You exalted Him and gave him a name above all names. We are able to have the fullness of peace in our hearts on Christmas day, and every day, because that same Jesus sits at your right hand in heaven and makes intercession for us. Father, this second week of Advent, keep us

in perfect peace as our mind is stayed on the truth of your powerful love. Thank you for your mighty, sovereign hand. Help us to trust fully in you and rest in the peace that you offer. It's in the precious name of Jesus we pray. Amen.

**Suggested hymns:** [Let there be peace](#); [Let there be Peace on Earth](#); [Make Me a Channel of Your Peace](#)

### **Some thoughts on today's Gospel: (Also see the Reflection)**

Mark begins with Jesus, but before Jesus there was John, and before John, there was Isaiah.

In Mark's Gospel, John the Baptist is basically an Old Testament figure. His clothing is based on descriptions of Elijah in 2 Kings 1:8. However, the most important scripture for understanding John is Isaiah 40:1-11, which is one of today's readings. The passage announces God's intention to visit, God says, "Prepare the way! I am coming to my people, whether they are ready or not."

John the Baptist is one of God's agents preparing the way for the Lord to come. He offers a baptism of repentance as a means of "getting ready."

So, the basic Advent theme sounded throughout this text is that the time of promise is drawing near. For John the Baptist, of course, it was the coming of Israel's long-awaited Messiah.

The announcement is gracious, with only the dimmest echo of warning. Neither Isaiah, nor John, nor Mark intended to say, "God will come to those who are ready; those who are not, will be left out."

God is coming to us! This is fantastic news! So, what can we do to get ready? Confess your sins, John suggests. Get baptized. Repent. Later, Jesus will add, "and believe in the good news!" (Mark 1:15).

God will come and fulfil all of His promises whether or not we do any of these things — but knowing God is on the way, why wouldn't we want to do them?

So, when Advent comes around every year, we are reminded that God is coming to find us. We have our ways of hiding. But on Advent 2, when John the Baptist shouts, "Prepare the way of the Lord!" it is as though God has just called, "Ready or not, here I come!" And we remember: this is the God who always finds us.

**For our prayers**, let us remember:

- our political leaders and the difficult decisions about what is happening next and in particular plans for Christmas
- our hospital staff treating patients suffering from COVID 19 and relatives waiting anxiously unable to visit
- employers and employees on furlough, worried about the security of their jobs and businesses
- those known to us who are ill, in hospital, awaiting treatment, anxious or who have been bereaved
- Add any other particular people and situations that The Holy Spirit brings to your mind as you have been praying and then say and reflect on, **The Lord's Prayer**.

**A final hymn:** [Hark the glad sound!](#)

Say the **The Grace** with open hands and eyes, include all the people you know that they may be Christ lead at **Christmas**.

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