

Opening Hymn: Lo, in the wilderness a voice

Lo, in the wilderness a voice
‘Make straight the way’ is crying:
when men are turning from the light,
and hope and love seem dying,
the prophet comes to make us clean:
‘There standeth one you have not seen,
whose voice you are denying’.

God, give us grace to hearken now
to those who come to warn us;
give sight and strength, that we may kill
the vices that have torn us;
lest love professed should disappear
in creeds of hate, contempt, and fear,
that crush and overturn us.

When from the vineyard cruel men
cast out the heavenly powers,
and Christendom denies its Lord,
the world in ruin cowers.
Now come, O God, in thy great might!
unchanged, unchanging is thy right,
unswayed thy justice towers.

Lindeman 170ii NEH

The Advent Wreath: Advent 2 – The Prophets

People of God: be glad!
Your God delights in you, giving you joy for sadness
and turning the dark to light.
Be strong in hope therefore; for your God comes to save.

Let us pray:
God our Father,
you spoke to the prophets of old of a Saviour who would bring peace.
You helped them to spread the joyful message of his coming kingdom.
Help us, as we prepare to celebrate his birth,
to share with those around us the good news of your power and love.
We ask this through him who is the light coming into the world,
the same Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.

The Collect

O Lord, raise up, we pray, your power and come among us,
and with great might succour us;
that whereas, through our sins and wickedness
we are grievously hindered in running the race that is set before us,
your bountiful grace and mercy may speedily help and deliver us;
through Jesus Christ your Son, our Lord,
to whom with you and the Holy Spirit,
be honour and glory, now and for ever.
Amen.

The New Testament Reading

A reading from the letter of St Paul to the Philippians.
My brothers and sisters, I thank my God every time I remember you, constantly praying with joy in every one of my prayers for all of you, because of your sharing in the gospel from the first day until now. I am confident of this, that the one who began a good work among you will bring it to completion by the day of Jesus Christ. It is right for me to think this way about all of you, because you hold me in your heart, for all of you share in God’s grace with me, both in my imprisonment and in the defence and confirmation

Hymns, Readings, and Collect

of the gospel. For God is my witness, how I long for all of you with the compassion of Christ Jesus. And this is my prayer, that your love may overflow more and more with knowledge and full insight to help you to determine what is best, so that on the day of Christ you may be pure and blameless, having produced the harvest of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ for the glory and praise of God. This is the word of the Lord.

Philippians 1: 3–11

Thanks be to God.

Gospel Acclamation: Wait for the Lord

Wait for the Lord, whose day is near.

Wait for the Lord: be strong, take heart!

Taizé Community

The Gospel

Alleluia. Alleluia.

Prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight,
and all flesh shall see the salvation of God.

Alleluia.

cf Isaiah 40: 3–5

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Hear the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to St Luke.

Glory to you, O Lord.

In the fifteenth year of the reign of Emperor Tiberius, when Pontius Pilate was governor of Judea, and Herod was ruler of Galilee, and his brother Philip ruler of the region of Ituraea and Trachonitis, and Lysanias ruler of Abilene, during the high-priesthood of Annas and Caiaphas, the word of God came to John son of Zechariah in the wilderness. He went into all the region around the Jordan, proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins, as it is written in the book of the words of the prophet Isaiah,

‘The voice of one crying out in the wilderness:

“Prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight.

Every valley shall be filled,

and every mountain and hill shall be made low,

and the crooked shall be made straight,

and the rough ways made smooth;

and all flesh shall see the salvation of God.” ’

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

St Luke 21: 25–36

Praise to you, O Christ.

The Creed:

Let us declare our faith in the living God.

We believe in God the Father, from whom every family in heaven and on earth is named.

We believe in God the Son, who lives in our hearts through faith, and fills us with his love.

We believe in God the Holy Spirit, who strengthens us with power from on high.

We believe in one God; Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Amen.

Offertory Hymn: Long ago, prophets knew

Long ago, prophets knew
Christ would come, born a Jew.

Come to make all things new;
bear his people's burden,
freely love and pardon.

Ring, bells, ring, ring, ring!
Sing, choirs, sing, sing, sing!
When he comes, when he comes,
who will make him welcome?

God in time, God in man,
this is God's timeless plan:
he will come, as a man,
born himself of woman,
God divinely human:

Mary, hail! Though afraid,
she believed, she obeyed.
In her womb God is laid,
till the time expected,
nurtured and protected:

Journey ends: where afar
Bethlem shines, like a star,
stable door stands ajar.

Unborn Son of Mary,
Saviour, do not tarry!

Ring, bells, ring, ring, ring!
Sing, choirs, sing, sing, sing!
Jesus comes! Jesus comes!
We will make him welcome!

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The Anthem: How beautiful upon the mountains

How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings,
that publisheth peace; that publisheth salvation; that saith unto Zion, Thy God reigneth!

John Stainer (1840–1901)
Isaiah 52: 7

Hymn: Hark! a herald voice is calling

Hark! a herald voice is calling:
'Christ is nigh,' it seems to say;
'Cast away the dreams of darkness,
O ye children of the day!'

Startled at the solemn warning,
let the earth-bound soul arise;
Christ, her Sun, all sloth dispelling,
shines upon the morning skies.

Lo! The Lamb, so long expected,
comes with pardon down from heaven;
let us haste, with tears of sorrow,
one and all to be forgiven;

so when next he comes in glory,
and earth's final hour draws near,
may he then as our defender
on the clouds of heaven appear.

Honour, glory, virtue, merit,
to the Father and the Son,
with the co-eternal Spirit,
while unending ages run. Amen.

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