

DECEMBER 10, 2017  
SECOND SUNDAY  
OF ADVENT



*Now is the time to prepare the way of the Lord.*

### DAILY BIBLE READINGS

These passages are related to the Lectionary texts for this Sunday.

<b>Sunday</b>	<b>Mark 1:1-8</b>	<b>The beginning of the good news</b>
<b>Monday</b>	<b>Isaiah 40:1-11</b>	<b>Comfort my people</b>
<b>Tuesday</b>	<b>2 Peter 3:8-15a</b>	<b>Promise of the Lord's coming</b>
<b>Wednesday</b>	<b>1 John 4:16-21</b>	<b>God is love</b>
<b>Thursday</b>	<b>1 Timothy 1:12-17</b>	<b>Gratitude for God's mercy</b>
<b>Friday</b>	<b>Malachi 3:1-4</b>	<b>God promises a messenger</b>
<b>Saturday</b>	<b>Psalms 85:1-2, 8-13</b>	<b>A prayer for God's peace</b>
<b>Sunday</b>	<b>John 1:6-8, 19-28</b>	<b>John's witness to the light</b>

### SCRIPTURE VERSE FOR THIS WEEK

A voice cries out: "In the wilderness prepare the way of the Lord, make straight in the desert a highway for our God." **Isaiah 40:3 (NRSV)**

### PRAYERS AND BLESSING

#### **A Prayer for the Week:**

Lord God, make us ready to be your messengers of comfort, love, and forgiveness through Christ our Lord. Amen.

#### **Mealtime Prayer:**

God our Savior, thank you for this food and all who prepared it. Help us to prepare the way for you. Amen.

#### **A Blessing to Give:**

May the God of love and comfort, fill you with the good news of Jesus Christ and give you peace.



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### HYMN OF THE WEEK

*Comfort, Comfort  
Now My People*



### CARING CONVERSATIONS

Discuss in your home or small group:

- Talk about how you have been comforted during a time of need.
- Tell about a time you have felt God's comfort in your life.
- Mark 1:1 speaks of the beginning of the good news of Jesus Christ. Reflect on how this good news is filled with the comfort of God's love and forgiveness.

### DEVOTIONS

December 10 is the second Sunday in Advent. Continue to use an Advent wreath with four blue or purple candles and a white center candle. Light the first and second candles, and use the following words:

*Say:* The second candle on our Advent wreath is the love candle because God's love comes to all through the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Good Shepherd who comforts, feeds, leads, and loves the sheep. [Light the first and second candles.]

*Read:* Mark 1:1-3 and Isaiah 40:1-3, 11. The gospel of Mark starts with the theme for the whole book: "The beginning of the good news of Jesus Christ, the Son of God." Isaiah 40 begins a new section in the larger book of Isaiah. Both emphasize a new era of God's love that has overcome judgment with forgiveness.

*Pray:* **Lord God, like a shepherd caring for the sheep, you come to us full of love and comfort with the good news of your Son. Fill us with the love you have for us through our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.**

### SERVICE

1 John 4:20 states, "We love because [God] first loved us." God's passion and love for us leads to acts of comfort, love, and forgiveness of others. Talk about or make a list of acts of kindness offered by you and others during the week. Give thanks to God for the good news of Jesus Christ that leads you to love the world that God so loves.

### RITUALS AND TRADITIONS

Setting up a Christmas tree in our home is a tradition and a Christian symbol reminding us of God's love. The evergreen tree reminds us of the ever-present love of God. The lights symbolize the light of Christ. The shape of an evergreen tree serves as an arrow that points to heaven. As you reflect on the symbolism of the Christmas tree, offer the following prayer:

**Dear God, we thank you for this tree as a reminder of your loving and saving presence in our lives and world. May the good news of Jesus Christ light up our hearts with your love, joy, and peace, and may the gifts placed under it remind us of the great gift of your Son Jesus Christ. Amen.**



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