

# December 4, 2022: Second Sunday of Advent

*“Prepare the Way of the Lord”*

**FORT COLLINS MENNONITE FELLOWSHIP**

300 E. Oak Street, Ft. Collins, CO 80524

**Worship:** 10:00 AM

**Pastor:** Steve Ramer

**Cell:** 970-412-7510



**ADVENT THEME:** Advent means “coming” and it is an active season. The primary actor is God, born in human likeness, into a real world. But the created world has its share of action with dramatic stories of angel visits, forced relocation, homelessness, and harrowing life and death escapes. We too are active as we long for light, seek hope, and try to restore a broken world. Together we cry out for restoration, watch for this restoration to take place, and join in God’s restorative process with all creation.

## 1. GATHERING

### Musical Prelude (John)

### An Advent Prayer of Hope (based on Psalm 72:1-7, 18-19)

Give our nations’ leaders who truly hunger for your justice, O God, and may we all seek to emulate your righteousness.

May our judges be truly righteous and may they provide justice to the poor.

May those chosen to lead, defend the cause of the poorest, deliver to the needy what they need and ruin the plans of those who seek to oppress.

May these kind of folks guide our world throughout all coming generations.

In that great Day of the Lord’s Jubilee, which we all long for, righteousness will flourish, justice will abound and peace will become the default setting!

Blessed be the LORD, the God of Israel, who alone does wondrous things.

Blessed be God’s glorious name forever; for one day the glory of God’s will fill the universe!

Amen and Amen



## Call to Worship (based on Isaiah 11:1-10)

**Leader:** The desires of God can never be destroyed. But just like a clear cut forest, shoots will spring forth and branches shall grow because of the roots that remain deep underground.

**People:** The spirit of the LORD will never leave those who seek God.

**Leader:** Those who's delight it is to follow the LORD, seek right relationships with the poor, seek equal protection of all the creatures of the earth and they will stand firm against any wickedness that seeks to oppress God's creation.

## Opening Song (Cathy & John)

### Welcome and Passing of the Peace:

- **Leader:** May the peace of Christ be with you.
- **People:** And also, with you.
- **All:** Let us offer one another signs of peace, reconciliation, and love.

**People:** When the fullness of the Lord's justice comes, the wolf shall live with the lamb, the leopard shall lie down in the field with the kid goats, the baby calves and the lions will graze together and a little child will lead the parade.

**Leader:** Folks will no longer want to hurt or destroy each other, for the earth will finally, fully understand and live out God's ways.

**All:** On that day, when the ram's horn of Jubilee sounds every nation shall seek to know the way of God and to walk in that path.

*"There is no road too long to the man who advances deliberately and without undue haste; there are no honors too distant to the man who prepares himself for them with patience." — Jean de la Bruyere*

## 2. HEARING GOD'S WORD

**Scriptures:** Matthew 3:1-4 and 11, Leviticus 25:1-4,8-14

**Matthew 3:1** In those days John the Baptist appeared in the wilderness of Judea, <sup>2</sup> proclaiming, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven has come near." <sup>3</sup> This is the one of whom the prophet Isaiah spoke when he said, "The voice of one crying out in the wilderness: 'Prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight.'" <sup>4</sup> Now John wore clothing of camel's hair with a leather belt around his waist, and his food was locusts and wild honey.

**Leviticus 25:1** The Lord spoke to Moses on Mount Sinai, saying: <sup>2</sup> Speak to the people of Israel and say to them: When you enter the land that I am giving you, the land shall observe a sabbath for the Lord. <sup>3</sup> Six years you shall sow your field, and six years you shall prune your vineyard, and gather in their yield; <sup>4</sup> but in the seventh year there shall be a sabbath of complete

rest for the land, a sabbath for the Lord: you shall not sow your field or prune your vineyard...

<sup>8</sup> You shall count off seven weeks of years, seven times seven years, so that the period of seven weeks of years gives forty-nine years. <sup>9</sup> Then you shall have the trumpet sounded loud; on the tenth day of the seventh month—on the day of atonement—you shall have the trumpet sounded throughout all your land.

<sup>10</sup> And you shall hallow the fiftieth year and you shall proclaim liberty throughout the land to all its inhabitants. It shall be a jubilee for you: you shall return, every one of you, to your property and every one of you to your family...

<sup>14</sup> When you make a sale to your neighbor or buy from your neighbor, you shall not cheat one another.

### SERMON: "Prepare the Way of the Lord!" (Steve)

In a world where power holds sway, Jesus will judge differently. We are called to prepare the way for this new kind of ruler. This calls for repentance and truth-telling.

What do you need to clean or discard as you prepare for this different kind of king?



## 3. RESPONDING TO GOD'S WORD

**Congregational Singing (Cathy & John)**

**Response (everyone)**

**Joys and Concerns (everyone)**

**Offering & Music (John)**

**Sending (all)**

*"My coming to faith did not start with a leap but rather a series of staggers from what seemed like one safe place to another. Like lily pads, round and green, these places summoned and then held me up while I grew. Each prepared me for the next leaf on which I would land, and in this way I moved across the swamp of doubt and fear." — Anne Lamott*