

DECEMBER 4, 2022
SECOND SUNDAY
OF ADVENT



God of judgement, mercy, and peace.

DAILY BIBLE READINGS

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

Sunday	Matthew 3:1-12	Prepare the way of the Lord
Monday	Isaiah 11:1-10	The peaceful kingdom
Tuesday	Romans 15:4-13	Good news for Jews and Gentiles
Wednesday	Psalms 96	Praise to God who comes in judgment
Thursday	Psalms 149	Praise for God's goodness to Israel
Friday	James 3:13-18	Two kinds of wisdom
Saturday	Psalms 72:1-7, 18-19	A prayer for guidance for the king
Sunday	Matthew 11:2-11	Jesus and John the Baptist

SCRIPTURE VERSE FOR THIS WEEK

For whatever was written in former days was written for our instruction, so that by steadfastness and by the encouragement of the scriptures we might have hope. Romans 15:4 (NRSV)

PRAYERS AND BLESSING

A Prayer for the Week:

Dear God, help us to see in your judgment the cleansing power that frees us to bear the fruit of the new life in Christ Jesus our Savior and Lord. Amen.

Mealtime Prayer:

God of peace and love, we thank you for this food and ask that all people have food on their tables and a roof over their heads. Amen.

A Blessing to Give:

May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing. (Romans 15:13)



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HYMN OF THE WEEK

Come Now, O Prince of Peace



WEEKLY MILESTONES

Take a moment to tell or think about a recent mountain high and/or valley low in your life.

CARING CONVERSATIONS



Discuss in your home, small group, or use for personal reflections:

- When you think of God as judge, what do you imagine?
- Have you ever felt judged because of your faith in God? Explain.

DEVOTIONS



Read: Matthew 3:1-12.

In the Gospel of Matthew, no one gets a free pass. Pharisees and Sadducees are severely chastised. The masses are shown following almost anyone at any given moment. The disciples display their own shortcomings throughout the Gospel. John the Baptist questions if Jesus really is the anticipated Messiah (Matthew 11:2-3). Jesus' own righteousness gets betrayed, even by those closest to him. It is clear that God's rule needs divine judgment. It's not a judgment that desires punishment but one that brings truth to misunderstanding and cleansing and humility to offset self-righteousness. God's judgment is about correction and new beginnings, not threats. God's judgment finds all of us coming up short and in need of a Savior, in the need of Jesus. John the Baptist prepared the way for Jesus and baptized him. Jesus' baptism with the Holy Spirit cleanses to create a changed life. The result is a people set free to bear fruit in Jesus' name.

Discuss: In what ways have you been set free to bear fruit in Jesus' name?

Pray: **God of judgment and mercy, cleanse our hearts by the power of the Holy Spirit that we may trust in you and bear the fruit of peace, joy, and love for all through Christ Jesus. Amen.**

SERVICE



Jesus calls us to serve our neighbor in love. Based on the Daily Bible Readings for this week, how might you serve the poor and needy with fairness and compassion rather than judgement?

RITUALS AND TRADITIONS



During the four weeks of Advent, we prepare our hearts and minds for the coming of Jesus Christ. For this second week of Advent, light the first candle of hope and a second candle of peace on the Advent wreath. This week, we focus on the peace that Jesus brings us to set aside our differences and trust in God's promise.

Say: **Come, let us walk in the light of the Lord, the light of Christ that gives us hope and peace.**



In addition to *Taking Faith Home*, celebrate milestones in your daily life as an effective faith formation tool. Go to: www.milestonesministry.org