



ENTER God's presence

Luke 1:68-79

"Praise be to the Lord, the God of Israel,
because he has come to his people and redeemed them.

⁶⁹ He has raised up a horn of salvation for us
in the house of his servant David

⁷⁰ (as he said through his holy prophets of long ago),

⁷¹ salvation from our enemies
and from the hand of all who hate us—

⁷² to show mercy to our ancestors
and to remember his holy covenant,

⁷³ the oath he swore to our father Abraham:

⁷⁴ to rescue us from the hand of our enemies,
and to enable us to serve him without fear

⁷⁵ in holiness and righteousness before him all our days.

⁷⁶ And you, my child, will be called a prophet of the Most High;

for you will go on before the Lord to prepare the way
for him,

⁷⁷ to give his people the knowledge of salvation
through the forgiveness of their sins,

⁷⁸ because of the tender mercy of our God,
by which the rising sun will come to us from heaven

⁷⁹ to shine on those living in darkness
and in the shadow of death,

to guide our feet into the path of peace."

- **Pray Together:** God in this season suspended between hope and fulfillment, help us to never forget what you have done. May we be overwhelmed by your mercy, which flows in wave after wave. May we be honest about the darkness within us, and perceptive of the light around us. May we hear the voice of you calling us and obedient to go where you send us. May we make straight the path for the Lord, that together we may see God's glory revealed. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.



SHARE life together

1. **Share your highs and lows?**
2. **Who has been the most significant/important person that you have ever met in life?**
3. **Advent is a time of preparation. What are the traditions/rituals you have in your home to help prepare for Christmas?**

Week beginning:
Sunday 4th December 2022

Worship series:
Experience Christmas
#2 Hear the Voice



VERSE for the week
Every valley shall be filled in,
every mountain and hill
made low.

The crooked roads shall
become straight,
the rough ways smooth.
⁶ And all people will see God's
salvation.'

Luke 3:1-6



REMEMBER this week
**God speaks through
the ordinary, not the
newsworthy! The first
and most important
part of preparing for
Jesus is hearing and
responding to the call
of his voice.**



LISTEN attentively

Read Luke 3:1-6 in your own Bible or online at Bible Gateway [here](#)

4. **Retell this passage in your own words.**
5. **What is this passage about?**
6. **What do you think is the significance of verses 1 & 2?**
7. **Why didn't the Word of God come to the important people?**
8. **What do you think is the significance of it coming to John in the wilderness?**
9. **What is challenging and/or confusing about this text?**



GROW deeper

10. **What prophecy does John fulfill from Isaiah 40? How did this also fulfill the words of the angel (Luke 1:16-17) and the prophecy of Zacharias (Luke 1:76-79)?**
11. **What do you understand by the word 'repentance' and what does it have to do with preparation for Christmas?**

Advent is a time of self-reflection and self-examination. It's a beautiful time that is supposed to run counter culturally to what we normally experience at this time of the year in terms of busyness and living life at a frantic pace. The word of God did not come to the palaces and main offices of the powers that be. It came in the wilderness. It did not come to the emperor, the governor, the rulers, or the high priests. It came to a wild man, a prophet, a voice crying in the wilderness. Perhaps when we are so busy preparing to live our own lives we are deaf to hearing the voice of God that speaks to us.

12. **What voices are you listening to or to put it in another way, "what have you let lay claim on your heart' at this time? Share.**
13. **What are the valleys in your life today, the low places that get you down?**
14. **What are the mountains and hills in your life today, where you are climbing for success/success, motivated by power or reputation, or where you consider yourselves superior to others? Share**
15. **What's crooked in your life today, where your words and actions are not consistent with the values you claim to hold?**
16. **What are the rough ways in your life, perhaps where your life is lacking order or where you have been too rough/harsh in a relationship or there are behaviours/habits that are making your road bumpy?**



LIVE purposefully

MAKE IT REAL:

17. **God uses ordinary people to speak his Word and prepare the way for him to enter hearts. How might God be wanting to use you this Advent to speak his hope, peace, joy and love into the lives of others? How can you prepare your heart to listen to his voice? Write down one or two things.**

- a. _____
- b. _____

Who will you share the peace of Jesus with? Name them here and pray for them this week.

- Name: Pray for them each day
- Name: Pray for them each day
- Name: Pray for them each day

Plan your weekly devotions or [download the Church Central app](#) for the daily **LifeWay Devotions**



PRAY intentionally

- **Praise God** for choosing to use ordinary people to announce his coming, his arrival and his activity in this world. **Thank Jesus** that his presence with us, smooths the rough places, levels the mountains and valleys, and straightens the journey in our lives. **Ask the Holy Spirit** to remove everything that hinders you from hearing the voice of God in your life.
- **Pray for all those stumbling over rough ground in their life around us** that God would us to walk with them and be his presence to them in their journey.
- **Pray for the upcoming carols event in North Epping.** Pray that God would use it to bind the community together and fill them with hope.
- **Pray for the Spirit to reveal** the names of those he might be asking you to invite to really “Experience Christmas” this year together with you and give you ears to hear and respond to that call.
- **Pray for each other and the needs that have been shared.**



BLESS one another

You might like to address one person in your group and make the sign of the cross on their forehead or on the palm of their hand as you say...

[Name], God will do the impossible in this world through you! Amen.