



Sermon Notes

[Second Sunday of Advent](#) [Philippians 1:3-11](#) [Luke 3:1-6](#)

John stands in the wilderness and in a big voice calls to the people proclaiming in the prophetic tradition that God salvation is coming. He offers a baptism, submersion into the river Jordan for the forgiveness of sin. And what is this sin? The people are being called out on their not caring for their neighbor, He wants the people to choose life giving relationships. The prophets in the Old Testament have always called the people back to God as they have strayed away to follow false Gods of greed and power. John raised as a prophet since he was a child now cries out in the wilderness and people come to hear him.

This Second Sunday of Advent, as we approach the longest night of the year in the Northern Hemisphere, we are being reminded that it is God's own self who is preparing the way for us—Even the roads, will be clear enough to walk, the paths will not be hard to follow—something is happening.

Preparing our own hearts to hear is a hard thing with the busyness of getting ready for Christmas; it is challenging when we are trying to please others and not paying attention to how the Spirit is moving in our community. The Church reminds us to use the simple discipline of prayer to remind us of what is really important. At home we have opportunities for daily check-ins during advent; we have candles, calendars, meditations, Scripture, decorations, and friends We listen to the music that points our hearts toward praise and sharing God's love. Are we ready as a people, as a nation, as a world, to let the rocks that stand as barriers to living well in the power of Christ fall down? Can we, in simple things, let go and hear the simple power of being forgiven and starting the powerful work of living well in the grace of the Holy Spirit? Day by day can we find our heart more ready to receive more than we can understand or explain "the parade of God's salvation". The Message

Pastor Susan

Steve Garnaas-Holmes, Unfolding Light Daily Reflection, Dec 5, 2018

*Prepare the way for Love,
make straight a path for the Holy One —Luke 3.4*

*Enough of your junk drawer clutter
bucket of old used punctuation
heartthrob amusement ride of distraction.
Prayer is a snow shovel.
You plow it all aside. All of it.
Clear a space.
Admit it: your heart is a hoarder.
Clean out your piety's basement.
You don't build the way, don't accrue it.
You empty it.
Rough made smooth, crooked made straight,
busy made empty.*

Empty it all.

*Silence the noise, the chorus, the committee,
the crowd.*

The empty place is not long, stretching away.

It's just right there, around you,

a circle of light,

empty air,

silence—not what you hear,

but how you listen,

what you practice.

Silence.

Now there's a way.

Wait.

For the Coming One,

who speaks silence,

who blesses the emptiness,

the Presence

who is the negative space itself

where you've made room

