

Wherever love is announced, you are there.
In you is such longing for your creation, and for
humanity, and we thank you for that presence of
you, in Spirit, in people, renewing, calling, and
saving.

In that knowledge, and in our simple faith, we
bring our prayers for your creation and for the
people of this world.

•O Christ we open ourselves in prayer for:
[Silence for personal prayer or invite others to open
prayer in between each]

Your creation ...
Silence

For others we have heard about throughout our
world..
Silence

For other people we know and are close to ...
Silence

For our church and our wider community ...
Silence

For ourselves ...
Silence

Closing Responses & Blessing

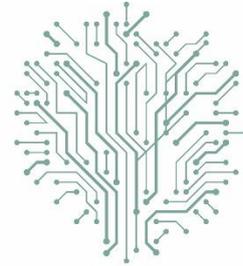
God of the eternal,
Prepare us,
Prepare our communities,
Prepare our world,
For your ways of love and peace.

Announce once more to your creation,
As one crying out in the wilderness,
“Prepare the way of the Lord”.

Bless us all as we go from this place today.
Bless us and the people we meet along the way.

Father,
Son
and Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

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Saltbush Community Ministers



SALTBUSH
UNITING THE SCATTERED COMMUNITY

Simple worship for the scattered Christian community

Second Week of Advent
Matthew 3: 1-12

Welcome

An opportunity to welcome people to the
gathering

Lighting of Advent Candle

You are invited to arrange 5 candles for Advent and
Christmas Day. This week we light the second candle.

We light this candle on the second week of Advent
as people preparing. We remember all who
prepare for life and death, for the coming and
going, for things present and eternal.

Light the second candle.

Responses & Gathering Prayer

Let us hear a voice crying out in the wilderness,
“Prepare the way of the Lord...”

**Prepare our hearts Lord to open ourselves to you
in this time of Christian community together.**

Let us hear a voice crying out in the wilderness,
“Prepare the way of the Lord...”

**Prepare our minds Lord for new things, for
change, for the presence of your Spirit, for your
coming to us.**

Let us hear a voice crying out in the wilderness,
“Prepare the way of the Lord...”

**Prepare our souls Lord, for your word and way,
spoken and lived through Jesus Christ.**

As those who heard the voice of John cry out in the wilderness, open our ears in these days and times, so that we may hear once more and prepare the way of the Lord.

We pray.

Amen.

Music for Reflection

Suggested song: [Revealing the Holy](https://johncoleman.bandcamp.com/track/revealing-the-holy)
<https://johncoleman.bandcamp.com/track/revealing-the-holy>

John Coleman © Revealing the Holy

Passing the Peace

The peace of the Lord be with you.

And also with you.

You are invited to turn to those around you and offer them a word of greeting and peace.

The Word around the Bush

Matthew 3: 1-12

In those days John the Baptist appeared in the wilderness of Judea, proclaiming, 2 “Repent, for the kingdom of heaven has come near.” 3 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.’”

4 Now John wore clothing of camel’s hair with a leather belt around his waist, and his food was locusts and wild honey. 5 Then the people of Jerusalem and all Judea were going out to him, and all the region along the Jordan, 6 and they were baptized by him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins.

7 But when he saw many Pharisees and Sadducees coming for baptism, he said to them, “You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the wrath to come? 8 Bear fruit worthy of repentance. 9 Do not presume to say to yourselves, ‘We have Abraham as our ancestor’; for I tell you, God is able from these stones to raise up children to Abraham. 10 Even now the axe is lying at the root of the trees; every tree therefore that does not

bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. 11 “I baptize you with water for repentance, but one who is more powerful than I is coming after me; I am not worthy to carry his sandals. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. 12 His winnowing fork is in his hand, and he will clear his threshing floor and will gather his wheat into the granary; but the chaff he will burn with unquenchable fire.”

The Message

From your Scattered Community Minister or another leader within your gathering.

Questions for conversation

- I wonder what you have heard and thought from the Word today?
- I wonder what you heard in the Word for our church?
- What one action can you or your church take in response to the Word today?

Silence in Two Ways

Spend some time in silence sitting still (suggested 5 minutes). Close your eyes lightly. Sit relaxed but alert.

- You may like to say the prayer phrase “Mar-an-ath-a” (which means come Lord). Say this as four syllables. Do not try to think or imagine anything. If thoughts or distractions come simply return to saying the word.
- Or you may like “sitting with God” — a silent time in which we focus all our mind, heart and soul on the presence of God without trying to create it. Simply be still and open to God.

Prayers for Others

Eternal God, in this season of Advent, we bring our prayers for others.

Where there is hope, you are there.
Where there is compassion and the desire for wholeness, you are there.
Where there is the struggle for peace, you are there.

Where the hungry are fed, and the poor empowered, you are there.
Where there is delight in the trees of the land, or the depths of the seas, you are there.