

The Second Sunday of Advent

Reader: The Redeemer shall come (Is. 59:20).

All: A Light to lighten a world in darkness

Reader: This week we light the candle that symbolizes **repentance**.

The designated person lights two candles

Reader: John the Baptist compels us to make ready the way of the Lord. Confess the Christ who came humbly, a babe in a manger. Proclaim Jesus the Christ, who is the merciful and just one, the light of righteousness. Jesus comes among us and invites us to repent, to ask the light of righteousness to shine into our hearts so that we may become aware of our errant ways, confess them and be forgiven. As we look forward to vindication from evil, we must change our ways or we will live in total darkness. A terrible day is levied when we follow the illusion of darkness and try to bargain our way back to God through ritual and gifts. One way exists to heal our broken relationships, the way of light, truth and justice.

God sent a messenger, John the Baptist, to call us back to God so that we are prepared to recognize Christ. What opportunities have you had to see Christ, but instead have chosen not to see; to hear Christ, but instead have chosen not to hear; to minister with compassion, but instead have chosen to take offence at someone's unlovable qualities? As watchers for Jesus, we are asked to examine our behaviour: when we wilfully chose to be blind, deaf, lame or in prison. Name an occasion when you refused to see Christ because you were locked into your own busyness and selfishness. Repent. The two lit candles on the Advent wreath are visual aids: the first, the watch candle, prompts us to see, and the second, the candle of repentance, helps us to see more clearly. Let the growing light remind you to watch for opportunities to see, hear and love yourself and others. Let the light remind you to turn to God **now** and to prepare your heart for Jesus' arrival.

Reader: Let us pray. God our light, quiet our minds that we may watch for you, and, expose our sins that we may repent and prepare for you; make our lamps shine and proclaim to the world that darkness is ended; that there is Light for those who seek it and love for all people. Amen! Come, Lord Jesus! Jesus is the Light of the world.

All: Come and save us God of light!

The Service continues with the Eucharist on page 101 BCP.

(Adapted from Teach us to number our Days, Barbara Dee Baumgarten, 1999)