

Advent Week 2: The Sunday of PEACE



Prayer of the Day

Stir up our hearts, Lord God, to prepare the way of your only Son. By his coming give to all the people of the world knowledge of your salvation; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

Hymns:

Hymn 1: "Prepare the Royal Highway" ELW 265 by Frans Mikael Franzen

Listen here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jD-fmRA196Q>

Lyrics

1 Prepare the royal highway;
The King of kings is near!
Let ev'ry hill and valley
A level road appear!
Then greet the King of Glory
Foretold in sacred story:
(Refrain) Hosanna to the Lord,
For He fulfills God's Word!

2 God's people, see Him coming:
Your own eternal king!
Palm branches strew before Him!
Spread garments! Shout and sing!
God's promise will not fail you!
No more shall doubt assail you! (Refrain)

3 Then fling the gates wide open
To greet your promised king!
Your king, yet ev'ry nation
Its tribute too should bring.
All lands, bow down before Him!
All nations, now adore Him! (Refrain)

4 His is no earthly kingdom;
It comes from heav'n above.
His rule is peace and freedom

Interesting note: The hymn begins with allusions to Isaiah with the highway for the king, then the king is welcomed with gates wide open as in psalm 24:7-10, and then it moves to Palm Sunday with Jesus arrival in Jerusalem (Matthew 21:1-9; Mark 11:1-10 and Luke 19:28-38) and then reflects the peace, truth, justice, love, freedom, and praise of Isaiah 40 and beyond.

Author note: Frans Mikael Franzen was a Swede but born in Finland, was professor of literature, a librarian, and finally ordained a pastor. He served in Stockholm and became the bishop of the area which included Lapland.

Hymn 2: "On Jordan's Bank" ELW 249 by Charles Coffin

Listen here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vhYwhQMmYhw>

Lyrics

1 On Jordan's bank the Baptist's cry
announces that the Lord is nigh;
awake and harken, for he brings
glad tidings of the King of kings!

2 Then cleansed be ev'ry life from sin;
make straight the way for God within,
and let us all our hearts prepare
for Christ to come and enter there.

3 We hail you as our Savior, Lord,
our refuge and our great reward;
without your grace we waste away
like flow'rs that wither and decay.

4 Stretch forth your hand, our health restore,
and make us rise to fall no more;
oh, let your face upon us shine
and fill the world with love divine.

5 All praise to you, eternal Son,
whose advent has our freedom won,
whom with the Father we adore,
and Holy Spirit, evermore.

Author information: Charles Coffin was born at Buzaney (Ardennes) in 1676, died in 1749, was principal of the college at Beauvais in 1712, and made rector of the University of Paris in 1718.

Interesting note John the Baptist's announcement, "Prepare the way for the Lord" (Matt. 3:3, a quote from Isa. 40:3) is the primary basis for this Advent hymn. Stanzas 1 and 2 apply that message to people today, stanza 3 is a confession by God's people of their need for salvation, stanza 4 is a prayer for healing and love, and stanza 5 is a doxology. This much-loved Advent text is laced with various scriptural phrases.