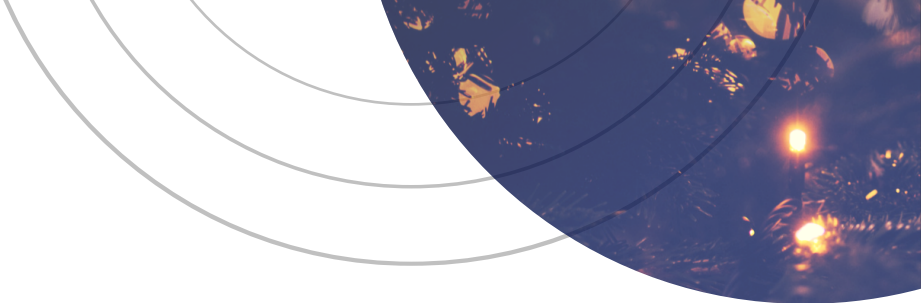


WEEK 2:
DEC 4 - DEC 10



ADVENT

READINGS &
REFLECTIONS



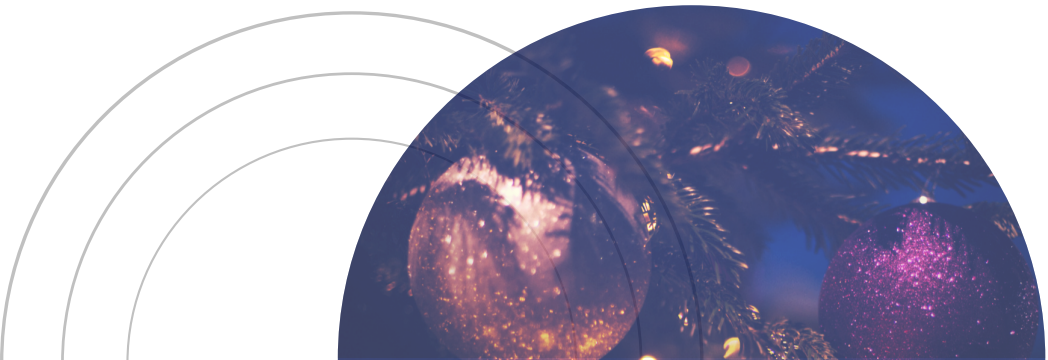
DEVOTIONAL

WEEK 2

FIRST READING

Isaiah 40: 1-11 | Comfort for God's People

1 Comfort, comfort my people, says your God. 2 Speak tenderly to Jerusalem, and proclaim to her that her hard service has been completed, that her sin has been paid for, that she has received from the LORD's hand double for all her sins. 3 A voice of one calling: "In the desert prepare the way for the LORD; make straight in the wilderness a highway for our God. 4 Every valley shall be raised up, every mountain and hill made low; the rough ground shall become level, the rugged places a plain. 5 And the glory of the LORD will be revealed, and all mankind together will see it. For the mouth of the LORD has spoken." 6 A voice says, "Cry out." And I said, "What shall I cry?" "All men are like grass, and all their glory is like the flowers of the field. 7 The grass withers and the flowers fall, because the breath of the LORD blows on them. Surely the people are grass. 8 The grass withers and the flowers fall, but the word of our God stands forever." 9 You who bring good tidings to Zion, go up on a high mountain. You who bring good tidings to Jerusalem, lift up your voice with a shout, lift it up, do not be afraid; say to the towns of Judah, "Here is your God!" 10 See, the Sovereign LORD comes with power, and his arm rules for him. See, his reward is with him, and his recompense accompanies him. 11 He tends his flock like a shepherd: He gathers the lambs in his arms and carries them close to his heart; he gently leads those that have young.





SECOND READING

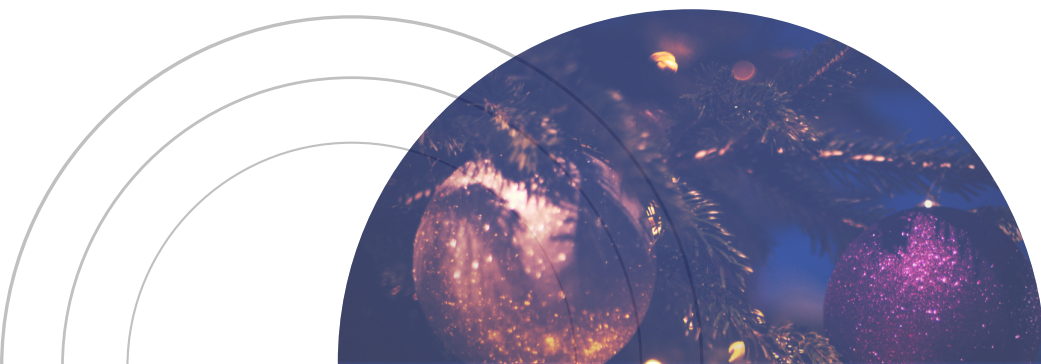
Mark 1: 1-8 | The Preaching of John the Baptist

1 The beginning of the good news about Jesus the Messiah, the Son of God, 2 as it is written in Isaiah the prophet: "I will send my messenger ahead of you, who will prepare your way" - 3 "a voice of one calling in the wilderness, 'Prepare the way for the Lord, make straight paths for him.'" 4 And so John the Baptist appeared in the wilderness, preaching a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. 5 The whole Judean countryside and all the people of Jerusalem went out to him. Confessing their sins, they were baptized by him in the Jordan River. 6 John wore clothing made of camel's hair, with a leather belt around his waist, and he ate locusts and wild honey. 7 And this was his message: "After me comes the one more powerful than I, the straps of whose sandals I am not worthy to stoop down and untie. 8 I baptize you with water, but he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit."

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

1. In light of the Isaiah reading, how does God bring comfort to the people of Israel? How can God bring you comfort in this Christmas season?

2. Read Isaiah 40 verses 7 and 8 again. Do these verses bring comfort? Why or why not?





REFLECTION QUESTIONS CONT.

3. Reread verses 10 and 11 in Isaiah. Are these verses more comforting? According to these verses, does God care whether we wither or not? How do you know?

4. Why do you think John the Baptist lives the life that he does? Does his lifestyle add to his ministry? If so, in what ways?

5. How might you recognize a modern day John the Baptist and where might you recognize a prophetic word being spoken today?

