

## PREPARING FOR NOW AND FUTURE THINGS

A sermon for the Second Sunday of Advent, Sunday, Dec 4, 2016

The Very Rev. Ken Gray - St. Paul's Cathedral, Kamloops

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### SONG

Prepare the way of the Lord  
Prepare the way of the Lord  
And all people will see  
The salvation of the Lord

### GOSPEL TEXT

*In those days John the Baptist appeared in the wilderness of Judea, proclaiming, "**Repent**, for the kingdom of heaven has come near."*

Be sorry . . . a change in mind and planned actions

Repentance includes feeling sorry for one's personal sins, but it is much more. To repent is to **take a clear-minded look at the ways in which one's life colludes with the assumptions and behaviors of the old age**, to turn away from such complicity, and to **turn towards God and the attitudes and actions of the realm of heaven.**

### LOUISE PENNY on *Still Life*

"The genesis of *Still Life* contains episodes of excited anticipation, others of disappointment, recollections of buried pain, and at the end of it all, joy . . . (Penny summarizes her books in a single word) . . . *duality*. People who seem to be one thing – good, bad, genial, nasty, kind, murderous – but turn out to be something else entirely – good, bad, genial, nasty, kind, murderous. (Her first book *Still Life* isn't about murder). **It's about the choices we make in our lives.**"

THE CHOICE AND THE STRATEGY - Bear fruit worthy of repentance.

*"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.*

In this week's study groups, some like John; others find little that appeals

- The activist in me welcomes John's blunt enthusiasm
- A popular text doing the rounds on Facebook this week:

"Do not be dismayed by the brokenness of the world.  
All things break. And all things can be mended.  
Not with time, as they say, but with intention.  
So go. Love intentionally, extravagantly, unconditionally.  
The broken world waits in darkness for the light that is you."

L. R. Knost

Feel the very real strain between **the way things are and any kind of possible and better future**

JEAN VANIER (introduction to *Dethroning Mammon: Making Money Serve Grace: The Archbishop of Canterbury's Lent Book 2017*)

"Perhaps the greatest divide today is between the poor and the rich. It is a great and terrible divide, so wide that those on either side cannot even imagine its breadth. Those of us who have cars, who easily afford a plane ticket, who frequently purchase new clothes and have our food shipped from many different continents to our plate, cannot imagine the lives of those who have none of that available to them. And yet, **our decisions, our consumption, have resounding effects upon everyone on this planet.** And some of these effects are amounting to crises. Ecological destruction, religious

extremism, violent political regimes – these all have some roots in greed and the impetus to have more and more and more . . .“

SO LET'S PREPARE, TOGETHER

**For a new way of living, a Gospel-infused economy of love, which will be challenging because it's counter-cultural, but effective, loving, visible and true**

SONG

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The salvation of the Lord