



**Prepare the Royal Highway:
A Midweek Series for Advent**

Overview

Standing at the crossroads

Decisions, decisions, decisions. Would Zechariah and Elizabeth doubt the angel's message, or prepare for a newborn in their advanced age? When standing at a crossroads, do you also choose the leap of faith?

Opening Dialogue

Come, let us walk in the light of the Lord.

Go through the gates, build up the highway,

clear it of stones, remove any obstacles.

Prepare the way of the Lord.

Come, let us journey to the Bethlehem manger.

Hear of God's promises, witness God's faithfulness,

sing with Mary, rejoice with Elizabeth.

Prepare our hearts for Christ's coming.

(Based on Isaiah 2:5, 57:14, 62:10)

Greeting

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all. **And also with you.**

Prayer

God of the crossroads, you stand with us at the junctures in our lives. Like Zechariah and Elizabeth we need your guiding hand and your bountiful mercy. Help us to place our trust in you, through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Old Testament Reading

Jeremiah 6:16

Thus says the Lord: Stand at the crossroads, and look, and ask for the ancient paths, where the good way lies; and walk in it, and find rest for your souls. But they said, "We will not walk in it."

New Testament Reading

Luke 1:5-15a

In the days of King Herod of Judea, there was a priest named Zechariah, who belonged to the priestly order of Abijah. His wife was a descendant of Aaron, and her name was Elizabeth. Both of them were righteous before God, living blamelessly according to all the commandments and regulations of the Lord. But they had no children, because Elizabeth was barren, and both were getting on in years. Once when he was serving as priest before God and his section was on duty, he was chosen by lot, according to the custom of the priesthood, to enter the sanctuary of the Lord and offer incense. Now at the time of the incense offering, the whole assembly of the people was praying outside. Then there appeared to him an angel of the Lord,

standing at the right side of the altar of incense. When Zechariah saw him, he was terrified; and fear overwhelmed him. But the angel said to him, “Do not be afraid, Zechariah, for your prayer has been heard. Your wife Elizabeth will bear you a son, and you will name him John. You will have joy and gladness, and many will rejoice at his birth, for he will be great in the sight of the Lord. He must never drink wine or strong drink; even before his birth he will be filled with the Holy Spirit.

Reflection followed by Silence

Hymn

Fling Wide the Door



1 Fling wide the door, un - bar the gate; the King of glo - ry
 2 He is the rock of our be - lief, the heart of mer - cy's
 3 Oh, hap - py towns and bless - ed lands that live by their true
 4 Come, Lord, our Sav - ior, Je - sus Christ; our hearts are o - pen



comes in state; the Lord of lords and King of kings, the
 gen - tle self. His king - ly crown is ho - li - ness; his
 king's com-mands. And bless - ed be the hearts he rules, the
 wide in trust. Oh, show us now your love - ly grace, up -



Sav - ior of the world who brings his great sal - va - tion
 scep - ter is his love - li - ness; he brings our sor - rows
 hum - ble plac - es where he dwells. He is the right - ful
 on our sor - rows shine your face, and let your Ho - ly



to the earth. So raise a shout of ho - ly mirth and
 to an end. Now glad - ly praise our king and friend, and
 Son of bliss who fills our lives and makes us his, cre -
 Spir - it guide our jour - ney in your grace so wide. We



praise our God and Lord, Cre - a - tor, Spir - it, Word.
 wor - ship him with song for sav - ing us from wrong.
 a - tor of the world, our on - ly strength for good.
 praise your ho - ly name, from age to age the same!

Prayers

Gracious God, send your Son into our midst.

Show us your pathways of love.

Grant that war may cease and divisions end.

Show us your pathways of peace.

Watch over all who are sick, mourning, or in special need of your care.

Show them your pathways of hope.

Fill our world with gladness at the coming of the Savior.

Show us your pathways of joy.

Lord's Prayer

Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread.
Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us.
Save us from the time of trial and deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power, and the
glory are yours, now and forever. Amen.

Blessing

May the light of Christ show you the way, the love of God be your guidepost, and the power of
the Spirit sustain your journey. **Amen.**

Dismissal

Go in peace to prepare the way. **Thanks be to God.**

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