

## Second Sunday of Advent

08 December 2024

### Sentence

By the tender mercy of our God, the dawn from on high will break upon us, to give light to those who sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of peace. Luke 1.78–79

### Collect

God of our salvation,  
you straighten the winding ways of our hearts  
and smooth the paths made rough by sin:  
keep our hearts watchful in holiness,  
and bring to perfection the good you have begun in us.  
We ask this through him whose coming is certain,  
whose Day draws near, your Son, our Lord Jesus Christ,  
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

### 1st Reading

#### Ezekiel 34:11-16

**11** “For this is what the Sovereign LORD says: I myself will search for my sheep and look after them.

**12** As a shepherd looks after his scattered flock when he is with them, so will I look after my sheep. I will rescue them from all the places where they were scattered on a day of clouds and darkness.

**13** I will bring them out from the nations and gather them from the countries, and I will bring them into their own land. I will pasture them on the mountains of Israel, in the ravines and in all the settlements in the land.

**14** I will tend them in a good pasture, and the mountain heights of Israel will be their grazing land. There they will lie down in good grazing land, and there they will feed in a rich pasture on the mountains of Israel.

**15** I myself will tend my sheep and have them lie down, declares the Sovereign LORD.

**16** I will search for the lost and bring back the strays. I will bind up the injured and strengthen the weak, but the sleek and the strong I will destroy. I will shepherd the flock with justice.

## **Psalm**

### **Psalm 23**

**1** The LORD is my shepherd, I lack nothing.

**2** He makes me lie down in green pastures, he leads me beside quiet waters,

**3** he refreshes my soul. He guides me along the right paths for his name's sake.

**4** Even though I walk through the darkest valley, I will fear no evil, for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me.

**5** You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies. You anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows.

**6** Surely your goodness and love will follow me all the days of my life, and I will dwell in the house of the LORD forever.

## **2nd Reading**

### **1 Peter 2:21-25**

**21** To this you were called, because Christ suffered for you, leaving you an example, that you should follow in his steps.

**22** "He committed no sin, and no deceit was found in his mouth."

**23** When they hurled their insults at him, he did not retaliate; when he suffered, he made no threats. Instead, he entrusted himself to him who judges justly.

**24** "He himself bore our sins" in his body on the cross, so that we might die to sins and live for righteousness; "by his wounds you have been healed."

**25** For "you were like sheep going astray," but now you have returned to the Shepherd and Overseer of your souls.

## Gospel

### John 10:1-18

**1** "Very truly I tell you Pharisees, anyone who does not enter the sheep pen by the gate, but climbs in by some other way, is a thief and a robber.

**2** The one who enters by the gate is the shepherd of the sheep.

**3** The gatekeeper opens the gate for him, and the sheep listen to his voice. He calls his own sheep by name and leads them out.

**4** When he has brought out all his own, he goes on ahead of them, and his sheep follow him because they know his voice.

**5** But they will never follow a stranger; in fact, they will run away from him because they do not recognize a stranger's voice."

**6** Jesus used this figure of speech, but the Pharisees did not understand what he was telling them.

**7** Therefore Jesus said again, "Very truly I tell you, I am the gate for the sheep.

**8** All who have come before me are thieves and robbers, but the sheep have not listened to them.

**9** I am the gate; whoever enters through me will be saved. They will come in and go out, and find pasture.

**10** The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full.

**11** "I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep.

**12** The hired hand is not the shepherd and does not own the sheep. So when he sees the wolf coming, he abandons the sheep and runs away. Then the wolf attacks the flock and scatters it.

**13** The man runs away because he is a hired hand and cares nothing for the sheep.

**14** "I am the good shepherd; I know my sheep and my sheep know me—

**15** just as the Father knows me and I know the Father—and I lay down my life for the sheep.

**16** I have other sheep that are not of this sheep pen. I must bring them also. They too will listen to my voice, and there shall be one flock and one shepherd.

**17** The reason my Father loves me is that I lay down my life—only to take it up again.

**18** No one takes it from me, but I lay it down of my own accord. I have authority to lay it down and authority to take it up again. This command I received from my Father.”