

Before a king made a journey to a distant country, the roads he would travel were improved. Similarly, preparation for the Messiah was made in a moral and spiritual way by the ministry of John the Baptist, which focused on repentance and forgiveness and the need for a savior.

Luke 3:4-6 is such a familiar text! It mirrors the Scripture of Isaiah 40:3-5, as a powerful reminder that God is one whose salvation reaches into every corner of our world and our being. John's wilderness words are a reminder and call for us to repent, to "turn around" so that we can live into the forgiveness of our sins that comes from the hands of God. Even now, as we perceive the many ways we have participated in brokenness, we are reminded that every obstacle to God's love will be made low, that every path no matter how winding will lead directly to Him. *"And the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all mankind together will see it."* (Isaiah 40:5) This is the promise we are holding onto during Advent; this is at the heart of our anticipation.

A good friend offered the following verse at our St. Matthew Prayer Group last month: *"When my way grows drear, Precious Lord, linger near, When my light is almost gone, hear my cry, hear my call. Hold my hand lest I fall: Take my hand precious Lord, lead me home."* (Thomas Dorsey, 1932)

Dear Father, be with us in our wandering; help us to feel your love drawing us more deeply toward you. When the way gets rough, remind us to place our trust in You...that You are always there beside us, leading us in the way of Your salvation. Amen.

Beth Johnson