

December 07, 2025

SECOND SUNDAY IN ADVENT

## Here He Comes Again to Stir the Pot

During the season of Advent, we are on a journey to the incarnation; today we continue that journey toward Bethlehem. But as we make our way to the manger, we are, rather surprisingly, invited into the wilderness. Here, in Matthew's gospel, we meet John the Baptist, with his message of baptism and repentance.

However, most of us already have our Christmas trees decorated, have begun shopping for gifts, and have even started listening to Christmas music on our morning and evening commutes. We hold the familiar nativity stories in our thoughts, and this same gospel writer provides us with a large portion of that traditional Christmas story: the virgin birth, the star in the east, and wise men who come to pay homage to the Christ child with extravagant gifts are all found in Matthew. But none of that today. No, instead we get only the wilderness wanderer, John the Baptist, proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins.

John had a duty, a call, to fulfill the words of the prophet Isaiah: "The voice of one crying out in the wilderness: 'Prepare the way of the Lord; make his paths straight'" (Matt. 3:3). Yet, John's message can sound downright strange amid the rest of the story. We might find ourselves wondering, "Is *this* the way to the manger?"

At first glance, John the Baptist's call to repentance seems out of place—our message today should be about hope, peace, and joy! What does John the Baptist have to do with Christmas? Well, according to Matthew, *everything*. John's call to repentance is at the heart of who Christ is. *Repentance* simply means that we turn away from the sin that easily creeps into our lives and robs us of those very things: hope, peace, and joy. As we turn our face away from sin, we turn toward Jesus, preparing our hearts to receive this gift of salvation. Is there any message *more* filled with hope, peace, and joy than turning toward the warmth of God's Son?

The good news for us today is the same good news the original hearers received. Jesus *is* coming! Jesus continues to come to us every day, and even moment by moment. It is possible still to lean into hope, joy, and love, but remember that joy is not the same thing as happiness or festivity.

The season calls us into the "already," but a brief look at the top news stories clearly indicates the "not yet." So it is that John stands in the wilderness, beckoning us: "Prepare the way!"

First St. John Lutheran Church

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Dr. Anthony Pattin, Church Musician  
Jo-Anne Chrysochoos, Director of Music  
Cheri Sergent, Bell Choir, Director  
(\* \* \* \*), Office Manager



December 7, 2025 - 10:30 am

Called through faith; Gathered in worship; Serving the community

**December 7, 2025**

**Second Sunday in Advent**

Welcome to First St. John Lutheran Church! We offer two services with Sunday School for youth and adults and catechism (starting soon). Our regular Sunday schedule is:

8:00 am	Early Worship
9:15 am	Adult Sunday School
9:15 am	J.A.M. Sunday School
10:30 am	Late Worship
2:00 pm	Chapel Communion

*(2nd Sunday of the month)*

**LIVESTREAM AND RECORDED WORSHIP:** We livestream the service on our church website at [www.firststjohn.com](http://www.firststjohn.com). Also, the service will be recorded and published to the website

**SMILE! YOU'RE ON CAMERA:** Please remember you may be on camera during the livestream and the recording of the service.

**IMPORTANT REMINDER:** Please remember to silence your cell phone before church begins. Thanks!

**NURSERY** is provided during second service, downstairs in the basement of the church. A diaper changing table is available in the ladies restroom in the basement of the church.

**RESTROOMS** are in the church basement. Go to the Narthex (lobby) and take either set of steps to the basement hallway. The ladies room is at one end, and the men's room is at the other.

**FLOWERS:** If you would like to sign up for altar flowers, there is a book in the lounge. Or, you can call the church office during the week to check on availability.

**MEMORIALS:** If you wish to give a memorial in honor or memory of a loved one, you may mail it in or pick up a memorial card in the church office.

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***PARTICIPANTS IN TODAY'S SERVICE***

**ELDERS**

Bob Haar  
Sherri Haar

**READER**

Bob Haar

**SOUND BOARD**

Andy Hodges

**2025 POINSETTIA SALE**

SPONSORED BY THE ALTAR GUILD



Fill in the form below to place your order for poinsettias to be used during worship at Christmas time. You can place this form with payment in the offering plate or mail it in to the church office. Payment must accompany orders. Checks payable to: **First St. John**

*Deadline for placing orders is Sunday, December 14<sup>th</sup>.*

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Number of plants @ \$15.00 each \_\_\_\_\_ Enclosed: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Color (circle one)      Red                      White

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

In Loving Memory of (Deceased) \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

In Honor of (Living) \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

For thine is the kingdom, and the power,  
and the glory, forever and ever. Amen.

**Blessing**

P: May God who comes among us, Father, (+) Son, and Holy Spirit,  
grant you patience in waiting, peace in the darkness, and good news  
to share today and always..

C: Amen.

**Closing Hymn**

*"Once In Royal David's City"*

No. 269

**Dismissal**

P: God sends us in mission to the world

C. Thanks be to God.

**Postlude**

*Dr. Anthony Pattin*

\* \* \* \* \*



***ORDER OF WORSHIP—10:30 am***

**Prelude**

Dr. Anthony Pattin, Church Musician

**Ringing of the Bell**

**Opening Hymn** *"Come Thou Long Expected Jesus"* No. 254

**Invocation**

*All may make the sign of the cross, the sign marked at baptism, as the presiding minister begins.*

P: In the name of the Father, and the Son, (+) and the Holy Spirit.

C: Amen.

**Second Sunday in Advent Candle: Peace**

P: Hear the Old Testament prophecy from Isaiah 11:1-2:  
"A shoot shall come out from the stump of Jesse, and a  
branch shall grow out of his roots. <sup>2</sup>The spirit of the LORD  
shall rest on him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding,  
the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and  
the fear of the LORD."

**C: Blessed are you god of hope, for you promise to  
bring forth a shoot from the stump of Jesse who will  
being justice to the poor, who will deliver the needy  
and crush the oppressor, who will stand as a signal  
of hope for all people.**

P: As we light these candles, turn our wills to bear the fruit  
of repentance, transform our hearts to live in justice and  
harmony with one another, and fix our eyes on the root of  
Jesse, Jesus Christ, the hope of all nations.

*(Light the second candle of Peace)*

**P: As we light these candles,**

**C: turn our wills to bear the fruit of repentance,  
transform our hearts to live in justice and harmony  
with one another, and fix our eyes on the root of  
Jesse, Jesus Christ, the peace of all nations.**

P: O people of hope, come,

**C: let us rejoice in the faithfulness of the Lord.**

**Hymn**

*"O Come, O Come Emmanuel"* v. 3-4

No. 257

O come, O come, O Lord of might,  
as to your tribes on Sinai's height  
in ancient times you gave the law

in cloud, and majesty, and awe.

Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel  
shall come to you, O Israel.

2 O come, O Branch of Jesse, free  
your own from Satan's tyranny;  
from depths of hell your people save,  
and give them vict'ry o'er the grave.

Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel  
shall come to you, O Israel.

### **Confession and Forgiveness**

P: Blessed be the holy Trinity, ✚ one God, whose home is  
heaven and earth, whose salvation is sure.

**C: Amen.**

*Silence for reflection and self-examination.*

P: Long-expected God,

**C: we confess that we look to ourselves for the peace and  
security only you can provide. We reach for swords and  
spears, reluctant to release our grip on the ways of war. We  
become impatient while waiting and weary of keeping awake.  
Free us from self-reliance, and teach us to live in harmony with  
our neighbors. Increase our trust in God's timing, and awaken  
us to your advent among us, that we may abound in the hope  
you have promised. Amen.**

P: God judges us not as we deserve, but according to God's own  
righteousness. ✚ You are freed and forgiven, saved by grace, and  
ready to welcome the Savior.

**C: Amen.**

P: The peace of the Lord be with you all.

**C: And also with you.**

P: Let us share the peace of the Lord.

*The congregation may greet one another by shaking hands, fist  
bumping, or any other form of greeting with the words, "Peace be  
with you." We conclude the sharing of the peace by singing:*

***Our hope and expectation, O Jesus, now appear;  
arise, O Sun so longed for, o'er this benighted sphere.  
With hearts and hands uplifted, we plead, O Lord, to see  
the day of earth's redemption that sets your people free!***

*- Rejoice, Rejoice, Believers, ELW 244 (verse 4)*

he suffered death and was buried.  
On the third day he rose again  
in accordance with the scriptures;  
he ascended into heaven  
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.  
He will come again in glory to judge the living and the  
dead,  
and his kingdom will have no end.

We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life,  
who proceeds from the Father and the Son,\*  
who with the Father and the Son is worshiped and  
glorified,  
who has spoken through the prophets.  
We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic church.  
We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.  
We look for the resurrection of the dead,  
and the life of the world to come. Amen.

*(Please be seated)*

### **The Offering**

#### **Musical Offertory**

*FSJ Chancel Choir*

Jo-Anne Chrysochoos, Director of Music  
Dr. Anthony Pattin, Church Musician

*(Please stand)*

#### **Offering Prayer**

P: God of mercy and grace, the eyes of all wait upon you, and you  
open your hand in blessing. Fill us with good things by the powerful  
presence of your Spirit, so that we may come to the help of all in  
need, through Jesus Christ, our redeemer and Lord.

**C: Amen.**

#### **Pastoral Prayer** *(Each petition concludes with this response)*

P: God of grace,

**C: receive our prayer.**

#### **The Lord's Prayer** *(prayed by all)*

Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name,  
thy kingdom come,  
thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.  
Give us this day our daily bread;  
And forgive us our trespasses,  
as we forgive those who trespass against us;  
And lead us not into temptation,  
but deliver us from evil.

make his paths straight.’ ”  
<sup>4</sup> Now John wore clothing of camel’s hair with a leather belt around his waist, and his food was locusts and wild honey. <sup>5</sup> Then Jerusalem and all Judea and all the region around the Jordan were going out to him, <sup>6</sup> and they were baptized by him in the River Jordan, confessing their sins.

<sup>7</sup> But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees coming for his baptism, he said to them, “You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the coming wrath? <sup>8</sup> Therefore, bear fruit worthy of repentance, <sup>9</sup> and do not presume to say to yourselves, ‘We have Abraham as our ancestor,’ for I tell you, God is able from these stones to raise up children to Abraham. <sup>10</sup> Even now the ax is lying at the root of the trees; therefore every tree that does not bear good fruit will be cut down and thrown into the fire.

<sup>11</sup> “I baptize you with water for repentance, but the one who is coming after me is more powerful than I, and I am not worthy to carry his sandals. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. <sup>12</sup> His winnowing fork is in his hand, and he will clear his threshing floor and will gather his wheat into the granary, but the chaff he will burn with unquenchable fire.”

### **Gospel Response**

P: This is the Gospel of the Lord.

**C: Praise to you, O Christ.**

*(Please be seated)*

### **SERMON**

Pastor Rayl

### **Sermon Hymn**

“On Jordon’s Banks”

No. 249

*(Please stand)*

### **Nicene Creed**

We believe in one God,  
the Father, the Almighty,  
maker of heaven and earth,  
of all that is, seen and unseen.  
We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ,  
the only Son of God,  
eternally begotten of the Father,  
God from God, Light from Light,  
true God from true God,  
begotten, not made,  
of one Being with the Father;  
through him all things were made.

For us and for our salvation  
he came down from heaven,  
was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the virgin Mary  
and became truly human.  
For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate;

### **The Greeting and Prayer**

P: The Lord be with you all.

**C: And also with you.**

### **Prayer of the Day**

*P: Let us pray.* Stir up our hearts, Lord God, to prepare the way of your only Son. By his coming nurture our growth as people of repentance and peace; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

**C: Amen.**

*(Please be seated)*

### **Announcements**

#### **Introduction**

At the heart of our Advent preparation stands John the Baptist, who calls us to repent and make a new beginning. As the darkness increases we turn toward the approaching light of Christ. For Christians he is the root of Jesse, the righteous judge who welcomes all, especially the poor and meek of the earth. We wait with hope for that day when the wolf will dwell with the lamb, and there will be no more hurt or destruction. From the Lord’s table we are sent in the spirit of John the Baptist to proclaim that in Christ the kingdom of God has come near.

#### **FIRST READING: Isaiah 11:1-10**

*Isaiah describes the coming of a future, ideal ruler who will renew David’s royal line (the stump of Jesse). Gifted by the spirit of God, this ruler will reign with perfect justice. Enmity and danger will be restored to harmony and peaceful coexistence.*

- 1 A shoot shall come out from the stump of Jesse,  
and a branch shall grow out of his roots.
- 2 The spirit of the Lord shall rest on him,  
the spirit of wisdom and understanding,  
the spirit of counsel and might,  
the spirit of knowledge and the fear of the Lord.
- 3 His delight shall be in the fear of the Lord.  
He shall not judge by what his eyes see  
or decide by what his ears hear,
- 4 but with righteousness he shall judge for the poor  
and decide with equity for the oppressed of the earth;  
he shall strike the earth with the rod of his mouth,  
and with the breath of his lips he shall kill the wicked.
- 5 Righteousness shall be the belt around his waist  
and faithfulness the belt around his loins.
- 6 The wolf shall live with the lamb;  
the leopard shall lie down with the kid;  
the calf and the lion will feed together,  
and a little child shall lead them.

7 The cow and the bear shall graze;  
 their young shall lie down together;  
 and the lion shall eat straw like the ox.  
 8 The nursing child shall play over the hole of the asp,  
 and the weaned child shall put its hand on the adder's den.  
 9 They will not hurt or destroy  
 on all my holy mountain,  
 for the earth will be full of the knowledge of the Lord  
 as the waters cover the sea.  
 10 On that day the root of Jesse shall stand as a signal to the peoples;  
 the nations shall inquire of him, and his dwelling shall be glorious.

Reader: Word of God. Word of Life.

**C: Thanks be to God.**

**PSALM: Psalm 72:1-7, 18-19 (Congregation responds in BOLD.)**

1 Give the king your justice, O God,  
 and your righteousness to the king's son;  
**2 that he may rule your people righteously  
 and the poor with justice;**  
 3 that the mountains may bring prosperity to the people,  
 and the hills, in righteousness.  
**4 Let him defend the needy among the people,  
 rescue the poor, and crush the oppressor.**  
 5 May he live as long as the sun and moon endure,  
 from one generation to another.  
**6 Let him come down like rain upon the mown field,  
 like showers that water the earth.**  
 7 In his time may the righteous flourish;  
 and let there be an abundance of peace till the moon shall be no  
 more.  
**18 Blessed are you, Lord God, the God of Israel;  
 you alone do wondrous deeds!**  
 19 And blessed be your glorious name forever,  
 and may all the earth be filled with your glory. Amen. Amen.

**SECOND READING: Romans 15:4-13**

*God's promise to include Gentiles within the circle of God's blessed people has been fulfilled in Jesus Christ. Christians live out their unity by welcoming and encouraging each other just as Christ has welcomed them into God's family.*

4 Whatever was written in former days was written for our instruction, so that by steadfastness and by the encouragement of the scriptures we might have hope. 5 May the God of steadfastness and encouragement grant you to live in harmony with one another, in accordance with Christ Jesus, 6 so that together you may with one voice glorify the God and Father of our

Lord Jesus Christ.

7 Welcome one another, therefore, just as Christ has welcomed you, for the glory of God. 8 For I tell you that Christ has become a servant of the circumcised on behalf of the truth of God in order that he might confirm the promises given to the ancestors 9 and that the gentiles might glorify God for his mercy. As it is written,

“Therefore I will confess you among the gentiles  
 and sing praises to your name”;

10 and again he says,

“Rejoice, O gentiles, with his people”;

11 and again,

“Praise the Lord, all you gentiles,  
 and let all the peoples praise him”;

12 and again Isaiah says,

“The root of Jesse shall come,  
 the one who rises to rule the gentiles;  
 in him the gentiles shall hope.”

13 May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that you may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.

Reader: Word of God. Word of Life.

**C: Thanks be to God.**

*(Please stand)*



**Gospel Announcement**

P: The Gospel according to St. Luke, Chapter 3.

**C: Glory to you, O Lord.**

**GOSPEL: Matthew 3:1-12**

*Just before Jesus begins his public ministry, John the Baptist appears, calling people to mend their ways and speaking of a powerful one who is to come.*

<sup>1</sup> In those days John the Baptist appeared in the wilderness of Judea, proclaiming, <sup>2</sup> “Repent, for the kingdom of heaven has come near.” <sup>3</sup> This is the one of whom the prophet Isaiah spoke when he said,

“The voice of one crying out in the wilderness:

‘Prepare the way of the Lord;