



St. John Evangelical Lutheran Church

December 4 at 5:56 PM · 🌐



Bulletin for Sunday, December 6

Sunday, December 6, 2020 2nd Sunday of Advent St. John Lutheran
Introduction to the Day

John calls people to repent, to clear the decks, to completely reorder their lives so that nothing gets in the way of the Lord's coming. The reading from Isaiah gives the context for this radical call: the assurance of forgiveness that encourages us to repent; the promise that the coming one will be gentle with the little ones. Isaiah calls us all to be heralds with John, to lift up our voices fearlessly and say, "See, your God is coming!" We say it to one another in worship, in order to say it with our lives in a world in need of justice and peace.

We welcome you to worship this morning and thank you for joining us.

Lighting of the Advent Wreath Week 2

We praise you, O God, for this circle of light
that marks our days of preparation for Christ's advent.
As we light the candles on this wreath,
kindle within us the fire of your Spirit,
that we may be light shining in the darkness.
Enlighten us with your grace,
that we may welcome others as you have welcomed us.
Grant this through Christ our Lord,
whose coming is certain and whose day draws near.
Amen.

Light two candles.

Light two candles to watch for Messiah:
let the light banish darkness.
He shall feed the flock like a shepherd,

gently lead them homeward.

Litany for Advent:

The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light.

Stir up your power, O Lord, and bring your light to dwell among us.

For unto us a child is born; unto us a Son is given.

Stir up your power, O Lord, and make us run to you with the eagerness of children.

A voice cries in the wilderness, prepare you the way of the Lord.

Stir up your power, O Lord, and grant us the courage to raise our voices for those who are voiceless.

And the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together, for the mouth of the Lord has spoken it.

Stir up your power, O Lord, so that we may shine the light of your glory to all we encounter.

Have you not known? Have you not heard? Has it not been told you from the beginning?

Stir up your power, O Lord, and open our ears to the cries of the poor and oppressed among us.

They shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run and not be weary, they shall walk and not faint.

Stir up your power, O Lord, and grant us strength and endurance for the race we must run.

Sing to the Lord a new song, his praise from the ends of the Earth.

Stir up your power, O Lord, and open our hearts to sing your praise in all that we say and do.

And He will come to Zion as redeemer, to those in Jacob who turn from transgression.

Stir up your power, O Lord, and turn us from transgression to redemption.

Arise, shine, for your light has come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon you.

Stir up your power, O Lord, that we may live as light in the darkness. The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me, because the Lord has anointed me to bring good news to the poor.

Stir up your power, O Lord, that we may feel your spirit resting upon us; and grant us a heart for the poor.

For behold, I create new heavens and a new earth.

Stir up your power, O Lord, that we may help bring about a new earth in your name.

Stir up your power, O Lord, and come. Come, Lord Jesus! Amen.

GREETING

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

C: And also with you.

Prayer of the Day

Stir up our hearts, Lord God, to prepare the way of your only Son. By his coming strengthen us to serve you with purified lives; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

First Reading: Isaiah 40:1-11

In grand, flowing, poetic lines, the prophet announces that the exile of God's people in Babylon is over. God will deliver Israel and will care for her as a shepherd cares for the sheep. This word can be trusted, because the only enduring reality in life is the word of God.

1 Comfort, O comfort my people

1 Comfort, O comfort my people,
says your God.

2 Speak tenderly to Jerusalem,
and cry to her
that she has served her term,
that her penalty is paid,
that she has received from the LORD's hand
double for all her sins.

3 A voice cries out:

"In the wilderness prepare the way of the LORD,
make straight in the desert a highway for our God.

4 Every valley shall be lifted up,
and every mountain and hill be made low;
the uneven ground shall become level,
and the rough places a plain.

5 Then the glory of the LORD shall be revealed,
and all people shall see it together,
for the mouth of the LORD has spoken."

6 A voice says, "Cry out!"

And I said, "What shall I cry?"

All people are grass,
their constancy is like the flower of the field.

7 The grass withers, the flower fades,
when the breath of the LORD blows upon it;
surely the people are grass.

8 The grass withers, the flower fades;
but the word of our God will stand forever.

9 Get you up to a high mountain,
O Zion, herald of good tidings;
lift up your voice with strength,
O Jerusalem, herald of good tidings,
lift it up, do not fear;
say to the cities of Judah,

“Here is your God!”

10 See, the Lord GOD comes with might,
and his arm rules for him;
his reward is with him,
and his recompense before him.

11 He will feed his flock like a shepherd;
he will gather the lambs in his arms,
and carry them in his bosom,
and gently lead the mother sheep.

Psalm: Psalm 85:1-2, 8-13

Righteousness shall prepare a pathway for God. (Ps. 85:13)

1 You have been gracious to your | land, O LORD;
you have restored the good for- | tune of Jacob.

2 You have forgiven the iniquity | of your people
and blotted out | all their sins.

8 I will listen to what the LORD | God is saying;
for you speak peace to your faithful people and to those who turn
their | hearts to you.

9 Truly, your salvation is very near to | those who fear you,
that your glory may dwell | in our land. R

10 Steadfast love and faithfulness have | met together;
righteousness and peace have | kissed each other.

11 Faithfulness shall spring up | from the earth,
and righteousness shall look | down from heaven.

12 The LORD will indeed | grant prosperity,
and our land will | yield its increase.

13 Righteousness shall go be- | fore the LORD
and shall prepare for | God a pathway. R

Second Reading: 2 Peter 3:8-15a

This short letter deals with pressing concerns regarding the final advent of Jesus, especially concerns that could arise over its apparent delay. The author of the letter calls on Christians to anticipate the promised coming of the Lord through conduct dedicated to God.

8Do not ignore this one fact, beloved, that with the Lord one day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years are like one day. 9The Lord is not slow about his promise, as some think of slowness, but is patient with you, not wanting any to perish, but all to come to repentance. 10But the day of the Lord will come like a thief, and then the heavens will pass away with a loud noise, and the elements will be dissolved with fire, and the earth and everything that is done on it will be disclosed.

11Since all these things are to be dissolved in this way, what sort of persons ought you to be in leading lives of holiness and godliness, 12waiting for and hastening the coming of the day of God, because of which the heavens will be set ablaze and dissolved, and the elements will melt with fire? 13But, in accordance with his promise, we wait for new heavens and a new earth, where righteousness is at home.

14Therefore, beloved, while you are waiting for these things, strive to be found by him at peace, without spot or blemish; 15and regard the patience of our Lord as salvation.

Children's Sermon: The Legend of St. Nicholas

Gospel: Mark 1:1-8

The Gospel of Mark does not begin with a story of Jesus' birth but with the voice of one crying out in the wilderness: Prepare the way of the Lord.

1The beginning of the good news of Jesus Christ, the Son of God.

2As it is written in the prophet Isaiah,

"See, I am sending my messenger ahead of you,
who will prepare your way;

3the voice of one crying out in the wilderness:

'Prepare the way of the Lord,
make his paths straight,' "

4John the baptizer appeared in the wilderness, proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. 5And people from the whole Judean countryside and all the people of Jerusalem were going out to him, and were baptized by him in the river Jordan, confessing their

him, and were baptized by him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins. 6Now John was clothed with camel's hair, with a leather belt around his waist, and he ate locusts and wild honey. 7He proclaimed, "The one who is more powerful than I is coming after me; I am not worthy to stoop down and untie the thong of his sandals. 8I have baptized you with water; but he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit."

Sermon "The Good News of the Gospels"

Prayers of Intercession

God of power and might, comfort your people and come quickly to this weary world. Hear our prayers for everyone in need.

A brief silence.

Faithful God, you teach us to wait for you with faithfulness and patience. Sustain and support us in our doubts and questions. Nurture our faith as we discern and enact your mission. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Loving God, you set the stars in the sky and breathe life into the earth. Renew the face of creation where it is in need of your healing touch. Mend the wounds of environmental damage and restore balance to ecosystems so that all creation can declare your praise. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Steadfast God, you never tire of seeking justice. Where people suffer from discrimination, judgment, and injustice, speak words of truth and comfort. We pray especially for . . . (current local, national, or international issues of peace or justice may be named). Lead us toward a world where faithfulness will sprout underfoot and righteousness rain down from above. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Leading God, you ask us to make uneven ground smooth. Make even the disparities between your people. Sustain and support people with physical and intellectual disabilities. Accompany disability advocates who work for a world accessible to all. Teach us to celebrate the great diversity in our midst. Hear us, O God.

.. . . .

Your mercy is great.

Tender God, you know sorrow and joy alike. We pray for those in our families and congregation who are not joyful in this holiday season. Comfort those who grieve, be a companion to all who are lonely, tend those who are sick or struggling with depression, and gather all people in your healing embrace. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Here other intercessions may be offered.

Eternal God, we give thanks for the saints who have prepared your way in the wilderness and taught us to continue their faithful work (especially Nicholas of Myra). Make their generous lives an example for all. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Draw near to us, O God, and receive our prayers for the sake of your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

LORD'S PRAYER

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

Blessing

The Creator of the stars bless your Advent waiting,
the long-expected Savior fill you with love,
the unexpected Spirit guide your journey,
✠ now and forever.

Amen.

Dismissal

Go in peace. Prepare the way of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

Your offerings and tithes to the ministries of St. John Lutheran are greatly appreciated. They can be given electronically or mailed to St. John Lutheran, 229 South Broad Street, Jersey Shore PA 17740

Nicholas, Bishop of Myra, died around 342

Little is known about Nicholas, except that he was a bishop in present-day Turkey. According to legend, he was famous for his giving to the poor, and so has become a symbol of anonymous gift-giving.

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Susquehanna University will offer its annual Christmas Eve service virtually next Tuesday, December 8 at 7:00 p.m. The link is:

<https://www.susqu.edu/candlelight>

Sight and Sound offering a Christmas Special

Voices of Christmas will be offered on December 11 and 18 at 7:00 p.m. \$15. Total running time 80 minutes. Internet connection required. Type in [Sight&Sound.com](#) on the internet.

Bible Study - Due to the pandemic we are suspending Bible study. Please continue studying the Advent study: A Wonderful Life that we handed out earlier.

Giving Plus+ Download the "Giving Plus+" app from your app store for your cell phone. This feature is also available on our web site. Enter your email, make up a password, and walk through the choices to give the church an electronic donation by check or debit/credit card.

People were asking if they could give electronically by debit/credit card. Now this feature is available. If you have any questions, contact Pastor Aucker.

Give+ Text: Simply send a text message to 570-865-1101 with the amount you would like to contribute. Within a few minutes, you'll be sent a text with a link to register. Click on the link and enter your cardholder name and credit or debit card information. Once your registration is complete, you will receive a text verification and a receipt of your donation via email.

Advent Vespers from Wartburg Theological Seminary

<https://www.facebook.com/events/400866411098546/>

Join Wartburg Seminary this Sunday by Internet or Facebook at 6:00 p.m. to celebrate Advent Vespers. Type the above address into your Internet Browser if you do not have Facebook or go to Wartburg Theological Seminary on Facebook if you do have a Facebook account.