

**December 5, 2021**

**Second Sunday of Advent**

Welcome to First St. John Lutheran Church! We offer two services with Sunday School for youth and adults and catechism between the services. Our Sunday schedule is:

8:00 am	Early Worship
9:15 am	Sunday School / Catechism
10:30 am	Late Worship

Covid Guidelines: If you are fully vaccinated, you do not need to wear a mask. However, if you have not been vaccinated, please continue wearing a mask. We have some available near the entryway if you don't have one.

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.

Adult Sunday School meets at 9:15 am in the lounge (middle floor of the educational building – turn right out of the door by the choir loft).

Children ages 3 through 5<sup>th</sup> grade will meet for Sunday School in the basement of the church (the JAM Room!).

Catechism Class: Class will be held from 9:15 to 10:15 am each Sunday.

Nursery is in the church basement and is currently unstaffed; you are welcome to sit with your child. 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 Narthex (lobby) by the telephone. 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 or in the Narthex (lobby) and place it in the offering plate.

## ORDER OF WORSHIP – 10:30 am

Prelude  
Ringing of the Bell *(please stand as you are able)* Dr. Pattin

Opening Hymn “O Lord, How Shall I Meet You” No. 241

### Lighting the Second Advent Candle

Isaiah 11:1-2

P: 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.

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

*(Light the second candle)*

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.

P: O people of hope, come,

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

### Confession and Forgiveness

*(All may make the sign of the cross, the sign that is marked at  
baptism)*

P: Blessed be the holy Trinity, † one God, who alone does wonders,  
who lifts up the lowly, who fills the hungry with good things.

**C: Amen.**

P: Let us confess our sin, trusting in the tender mercy of our God.

*(Silence is kept for reflection.)*

P: God for whom we wait,

**C: in the presence of one another,  
we confess our sin before you.  
We fail in believing that your good news is for us.  
We falter in our call to tend your creation.  
We find our sense of self in material wealth.  
We fear those different from ourselves.  
We forget that we are your children  
and turn away from your love.  
Forgive us, Blessed One,  
and assure us again of your saving grace. Amen.**

P: God, in Christ Jesus, has looked with favor upon you! Through  
the power of the Holy Spirit, † your sins are forgiven. You are  
children of the Most High, inheritors of the eternal promise, and  
recipients of divine mercy. God strengthens you anew to follow  
the way of peace.

**C: Amen.**

### 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 give to all the people of the world  
knowledge of your salvation; 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

#### **FIRST READING: Malachi 3:1-4**

*The Lord announces a covenant with Israel. A messenger like Malachi (his name means  
"my messenger") shall prepare a way for the sudden coming of the Lord, who will purify  
and refine God's people for the offering of pleasing sacrifices.*

See, I am sending my messenger to prepare the way before me, and the LORD  
whom you seek will suddenly come to his temple. The messenger of the  
covenant in whom you delight—indeed, he is coming, says the LORD of hosts.  
But who can endure the day of his coming, and who can stand when he  
appears?

For he is like a refiner's fire and like fullers' soap; <sup>3</sup>he will sit as a refiner  
and purifier of silver, and he will purify the descendants of Levi and refine  
them like gold and silver, until they present offerings to the LORD in  
righteousness. <sup>4</sup>Then the offering of Judah and Jerusalem will be pleasing to the  
LORD as in the days of old and as in former years.

Reader: Word of God. Word of Life.

**C: Thanks be to God.**

**PSALM: Luke 1:68-79**

*In the tender compassion of our God, the dawn from on high shall break upon us.*

Blessed be the Lord, the God of Israel;  
he has come to his people and set them free.

<sup>69</sup>**He has raised up for us a mighty Savior,  
born of the house of his servant David.**

<sup>70</sup>Through his holy prophets he promised of old  
<sup>71</sup>that he would save us from our enemies,  
from the hands of all who hate us.

<sup>72</sup>**He promised to show mercy to our fathers  
and to remember his holy covenant.**

<sup>73</sup>This was the oath he swore to our father Abraham:  
to set us free from the hands of our enemies,

<sup>74</sup>**free to worship him without fear,  
<sup>75</sup>holy and righteous in his sight  
all the days of our life.**

<sup>76</sup>You, my child, shall be called the prophet of the Most High,  
for you will go before the Lord to prepare his way,

<sup>77</sup>**to give his people knowledge of salvation  
by the forgiveness of their sins.**

<sup>78</sup>In the tender compassion of our God  
the dawn from on high shall break upon us,

<sup>79</sup>**to shine on those who dwell in darkness and the shadow of death,  
and to guide our feet into the way of peace.**

**SECOND READING: Philippians 1:3-11**

*Paul exhorts Christians to experience love that grows "richer in knowledge and insight of every kind" until the day of Christ Jesus. On that day, the good work begun in them will be flawless, a "full harvest of righteousness."*

I thank my God every time I remember you, <sup>4</sup>constantly praying with joy in every one of my prayers for all of you, <sup>5</sup>because of your sharing in the gospel from the first day until now. <sup>6</sup>I am confident of this, that the one who began a good work among you will bring it to completion by the day of Jesus Christ. <sup>7</sup>It is right for me to think this way about all of you, because you hold me in your heart, for all of you share in God's grace with me, both in my imprisonment and in the defense and confirmation of the gospel. <sup>8</sup>For God is my witness, how I long for all of you with the compassion of Christ Jesus. <sup>9</sup>And this is my prayer, that your love may overflow more and more with knowledge and full insight <sup>10</sup>to help you to determine what is best, so that in the day of Christ you may be pure and blameless, <sup>11</sup>having produced the harvest of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ for the glory and praise of God.

Reader: Word of God. Word of life.

**C: Thanks be to God.**

**Alleluia Verse** (please stand)

*Lord, let my heart be good soil,  
Open to the seed of your word.*

*Lord, let my heart be good soil,  
Where love can grow  
And peace is understood.*

**Gospel Acclamation**

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

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

**GOSPEL: Luke 3:1-6**

*Luke places John in secular history. Yet John's arrival also heralds a new age of salvation. John refers to the words of the prophets, but with a vigorous immediacy: Now is the time to prepare for Christ through a "baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins."*

In the fifteenth year of the reign of Emperor Tiberius, when Pontius Pilate was governor of Judea, and Herod was ruler of Galilee, and his brother Philip ruler of the region of Ituraea and Trachonitis, and Lysanias ruler of Abilene, <sup>2</sup>during the high priesthood of Annas and Caiaphas, the word of God came to John son of Zechariah in the wilderness. <sup>3</sup>He went into all the region around the Jordan, proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins, <sup>4</sup>as it is written in the book of 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.'

<sup>5</sup>Every valley shall be filled,  
and every mountain and hill shall be made low,  
and the crooked shall be made straight,  
and the rough ways made smooth;

<sup>6</sup>and all flesh shall see the salvation of God.' "

**Gospel Response**

**P:** This is the Gospel of the Lord.

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

**MESSAGE**

Message Song

Deacon Laura Scherer  
"On Jordan's Bank the Baptist's Cry" No. 249

v. 1 - 4

(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;  
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** *(We are now passing the offering plates.)*

**Musical Offertory**      *"Still, Still, Still"*      arr. Berry  
FSJ Chancel Choir

*(Please stand)*

**Offering Prayer**

P: God of our waiting and watching, we offer the gifts of our hearts  
and our lives to the service of all your people. Prepare the way  
before us as we meet you in the lives of our neighbors in need,  
through Christ Jesus, our pathway and our peace.

**C: Amen.**

**Intercessory Prayer** *(following each petition)*

P: Lord in your mercy,

**C: hear 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.  
For thine is the kingdom, and the power,  
and the glory, forever and ever. Amen.

**Blessing**

P: The God of hope fill us with all joy and peace in believing, so that  
we may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit, through  
Christ Jesus for whom we wait.

**C: Amen.**

**Dismissal**

P: Go in peace. Christ is near.

**C: Thanks be to God.**

Closing Song  
Postlude

*"Joy to the World"*

No. 267  
Dr. Pattin

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

**ELDERS**

Darold Henninger, Kevin Ruedy

**SOUND BOARD**

Mark Ackerman

**ACOLYTE**

Cam Schumaker

Your 2022 offering envelopes are ready for pick up in the lounge. They are in alphabetical order reading from top to bottom, left to right. Envelopes are prepared for confirmed and contributing members of First St. John and friends who worship with us (upon request).

**NOTE:** If a husband and wife share offering envelopes, only the husband's name will appear on the envelope box. The computer will allow only one name per number.

If you cannot find your offering envelope box or if there is a correction or change in address or name, please call the church office at 419-691-7222.

**PLEASE TAKE A MOMENT TO PICK UP YOUR OFFERING ENVELOPES AS SOON AS POSSIBLE.**

**EVEN IF YOU HAVE YOUR OFFERING DEDUCTED FROM YOUR BANK ACCOUNT, SPECIAL ENVELOPES ARE IN THE BOXES FOR HOLIDAY OFFERINGS AND OTHER SUPPORT TO GENACROSS LUTHERAN SERVICES AND BENEVOLENCES.**

***Reminder: Do not use your 2022 offering envelopes until January 2, 2022. Thank You.***

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**REMINDER**

**If you want a contribution included on your 2021 financial statement, please turn it in by Sunday, December 26, 2021. NOTE: If you plan on mailing your last offering, please mail early in the week to make sure it gets here by Friday, December 24th. Offering that arrives after December 31st will be credited to your 2022 statement.**

**2021 POINSETTIA SALE**  
 SPONSORED BY THE ALTAR GUILD



It's time to order your Christmas poinsettias that will decorate the church on Christmas Eve. Fill out the order blank below and place it in the offering plate or mail it to the church office by Sunday, December 5<sup>h</sup>. Payment must accompany your order. Make checks to: **First St. John Lutheran**

***Deadline for placing orders is Sunday, December 5<sup>th</sup>.***

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Number of plants @ \$12.00 each \_\_\_\_\_ Enclosed: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Color (circle one)    Red                      White

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

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

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

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

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

*December 5, 2021*

*SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT*

**Time and Place**

Before John appears against the backdrop of a barren wilderness, the gospel writer sets the stage. Luke provides great detail about who ruled the administrative districts of Palestine in the first century and when. Only after this narrative is fastened to a specific moment in history does Luke tell us that the word of God came to John in the wilderness.

So what? Why does Luke care that we know exactly what time it is? Because Jesus' advent is once for all. It was rooted in history, yet he continues to come to us anew each day. When John appears on the scene proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins, it signals a new age of salvation. Now, nothing will ever be the same again. The promised messiah is near, and John's task is to get people ready to meet him.

On this side of John's testimony, we continue what began in his proclamation. Having heard and believed the good news of God's salvation, we bear God's creative and redeeming word to all the world. Rooted in this place, in our own unique contexts, we announce hope to those who live in fear and despair. We are the present-day messengers in a long line of faithful witnesses who pointed to Jesus, the one whose coming ushered in a brand new history for them and for us.

When that new history is obscured by crooked paths and rough ways, we might remember that the word of God came to John in the *wilderness*. John's base of operation was not a political, military, or religious stronghold, but the desert. Our own barren landscapes of doubt, discouragement, or lack of enthusiasm will not keep God from finding us. Our deserts, like John's, are made holy by God's presence. Now, in this time and place, God prepares us to be both recipients and messengers of good news.