

# *Millcreek Lutheran Church*

*December 7, 2025*

## *Second Sunday of Advent & Hanging of the Greens*



Welcome to the annual tradition of Hanging of the Greens at Millcreek Lutheran Church! We appreciate your presence here today and enjoy the new and the familiar faces as we gather together. If you are a visitor and believe that Christ is your Savior and present in the Sacrament, you are welcome to receive Holy Communion with us. All children who have received Communion instruction and have been approved to receive Holy Communion either here or at another church are also welcome to commune with us. Any child may come forward for a blessing. Visitors, please sign our guest book or fill out a visitor's card in the pew rack. We're glad you're here!

**Prayer:** Merciful Father, who calls us into repentance not only with our lips, but with our lives: Direct us into a new life of righteousness through sincere repentance; that we may accept our Lord's ministry as our source of strength and salvation. In our Savior's name we pray. **Amen.**

### **Serving you this morning:**

<b>Interim Pastor,</b>	Pastor Frank Terhune
<b>Lay Leader,</b>	Jennifer Rosengrant
<b>Organist/Pianist,</b>	Debbie Tice
<b>Lay Reader,</b>	Deb Buffington
<b>Ushers/Audio,</b>	Scott Johnson & Frank Hoffman

### **The Service**

**Prelude of Entrance**

**Announcements**

**Prelude of Preparation: *Christmas is Coming*, MLC Choir**

**Advent Wreath Lighting** We are a people who seek peace. We know that God has told us to turn our weapons of war into instruments that benefit all humanity. In the name of that Child who was born long ago to become the Prince of Peace, we now light the Candle of Peace.



*Two blue candles are lit.*

**Song: "One Candle is Lit" (stanzas 1 & 2)**

128

## One Candle Is Lit

*Unison*

1. Come sure - ly, Lord Je - , sus, as dawn fol - lows night,  
 2. Come quick - ly, sha - lom, teach us how to pre - pare  
 3. Come, fes - tive - ly sing while a - wait - ing the birth,  
 4. Come, wan - der where li - on and lamb gent - ly play,  
 5. Come, lis - ten, the sounds of God - with - us ring clear,

1. our hearts long to greet you, as ros - es, the light.  
 2. for a gift that com - pels us with jus - tice to care.  
 3. join an - gels in danc - ing from heav - en to earth.  
 4. where e - vil is ban - ished and faith takes the day,  
 5. and signs of a cross in the dis - tance ap - pear.

1. Sal - va - tion, draw near us, our vi - sion en - gage.  
 2. Our spir - its are rest - less till sin and war cease.  
 3. Wave ban - ners of good news, lift high thank - ful praise.  
 4. a babe in a man - ger to fool the world's eyes.  
 5. The Word once made flesh, yet the Word ev - er near.

1. One can - dle is lit for the hope of the age.  
 2. One can - dle is lit for the reign of God's peace.  
 3. One can - dle is lit for the joy of these days.  
 4. One can - dle is lit for God's lov - ing sur - prise.  
 5. One can - dle is lit for the Christ - birth - day here.

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

Let us pray. Ever-living God, the heavens were glad and the earth rejoiced when you sent your Son, the incarnate Word, to dwell with us. Help us to proclaim your glory until the whole earth sings a new song to you, with your Son and the Holy Spirit on God, now and forever. **Amen.**

**Processional: O Come, All Ye Faithful (stanza 1)**

### **Blessing of Candles**



Let us pray. God our creator, we praise you for the gift of light that shines your blessing upon our way. Send us your Son, the tender branch of Jesse, who brings us light and life. May we eagerly welcome the true Light that never fades. All glory be yours now and forever. **Amen.**

**Placing of Candles: O Come, All Ye Faithful (stanza 2)**

### **Blessing of Poinsettia Plants**



Let us pray. Gracious and holy God, lead us from death to life, from falsehood to truth. Lead us from despair to hope, from fear to trust. Lead us from hate to love, from war to peace. Let peace fill our hearts, our world, and our universe; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Amen.**

**Placing of Poinsettia Plants: O Come, All Ye Faithful (stanza 3)**

### **Blessing of Wreaths**



Let us pray. Generous God, you have created all that is, and you provide for us in every season. Bless all that we offer to celebrate the coming of Christ, so that through these reminders of the season we celebrate your blessing of our lives and our world. In the name of Jesus, Emmanuel, we pray. **Amen.**

**Wreath Song: O Come, All Ye Faithful (stanza 4)**

### **Blessing and Lighting of the Tree**



Let us pray. Be praised, O God, for the blessings around us that point to you. Be praised, O God, for the signs of this holy season that awaken in us wonder. Praise for the steadfast green of this tree, like your love, enduring all seasons. Praise for the light that illumines our darkness, like Christ, who brings light to the world. Join our voices with those of the trees and of all creation, who sing at your coming. **Glory to God in the highest, and peace to God's people on earth. Amen.**

## Blessing of Ornaments



Let us pray. Blessed be your name, O God; you are the source of every blessing. From your hand we receive the good gifts of life, health, and salvation. As we share these ornaments, bless us with hearts

thankful for the gift of your Son and lead us to share from our abundance with those in need. We ask this through Christ our Savior. **Amen.**

## Placing of Ornaments: O Come, All Ye Faithful (additional stanza)

Lord, make us happy,  
as we bring these trimmings.  
Now let this church of ours be filled with thy peace,  
green things remind us,  
of thy love eternal  
O come, let us adore him,  
O come, let us adore him,  
O come, let us adore him,  
Christ the Lord!

Let us pray. Loving God, you have gathered and enlightened us, and you give us the gift of creativity. We give you our thanks and praise for this community of faith and ask your blessing on our witness in the world. May this space and our lives be invitations to others to experience the love you have so freely shared with us. We pray in the name of the babe of Bethlehem, our Lord Jesus. **Amen.**

## Prayer of the Day (read in unison)

**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. Amen.**

## Children's Anthem

## Children's Sermon

## \*Gospel: Matthew 3:1-12

The Holy Gospel according to St. Matthew, the third chapter.

**Glory to you, O Lord.**

<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;  
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.”

The Holy Gospel of our Lord. **Praise to you, O Christ.**

## **The Sermon**

### **Hymn of the Day**

**LBW (green) #26**

***Prepare the Royal Highway (verses 1 & 4 only)***

### **\*The Prayers**

In our waiting and watching, we come to you in prayer, O God, trusting your promise to renew the church, the nations, and the whole creation.

*A brief silence.*

With wisdom and understanding, inspire the faithful around the world. Unite hearts and minds in work to address poverty, access to housing, and equity among peoples. God of grace, **hear our prayer.**

With counsel and might, move us to care for creation. As we dream of the day when all creatures will flourish alongside one another, guide us in ways humanity and all creation will mutually thrive. God of grace, **hear our prayer.**

With righteousness and faithfulness, encourage nations to live in harmony with one another. We pray for international student and teacher exchanges, for our partner churches, and for the shared mission of Lutheran World Relief and Lutheran Disaster Response. God of grace, **hear our prayer.**

With steadfastness and encouragement, strengthen those who have lost hope in the face of grief, depression, or disease (*especially*). Renew the spirits of those recovering from surgery and medical procedures. God of grace, **hear our prayer.**

With welcome and hospitality, embolden us in our shared ministry to overcome all that divides. In acts of repentance, reconciliation, and reparation, may we serve in the way of Christ. God of grace, **hear our prayer.**

*Here other intercessions may be offered.*

With joy and peace, we remember our ancestors in the faith (*especially Ambrose, Bishop of Milan, whom we commemorate today*). Fill us with the hope of the Holy Spirit now and into the ages of ages. God of grace, **hear our prayer.**

Draw near to us, O God, as we commend all for whom we pray, trusting in your mercy through Jesus Christ, Emmanuel. **Amen.**

**The Great Thanksgiving (spoken) Page 68**

**\*The Preface Page 68**

**\*The Sanctus: *Holy, Holy, Holy* Page 69**

**\*Words of Institution Page 69**

**\*The Lord's Prayer Page 71**

**Communion of the Faithful**

**\*Communion Blessing Page 72**

**\*Post-Communion Canticle, *Thank the Lord* Page 72**

**\*Post-Communion Prayer Page 74**

**\*Blessing:**

May you be filled with the wonder of Mary, the obedience of Joseph, the joy of the angels, the eagerness of the shepherds, and the everlasting peace of Jesus who is Savior, Christ, and Lord.

Almighty God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, bless you and keep you now and forever. **Amen**

O Wisdom...**Come, Lord Jesus!**

O Lord of might...**Come, Lord Jesus!**

O Branch of Jesse...**Come, Lord Jesus!**

O Key of David...**Come, Lord Jesus!**

O Dayspring...**Come, Lord Jesus!**

O King of Nations...**Come, Lord Jesus!**

O Emmanuel...**Come, Lord Jesus!**

Go in Peace. Christ is coming soon. **Thanks be to God!**

**\*Closing Hymn LBW (green) #39**

*Joy to the World*

**Moments of Meditation (seated)**

**\*Dismissal Page 74**

**Postlude**

*The flowers & bulletins are given in honor & glory of God  
and in honor of Celia Bender's 10<sup>th</sup> birthday.*



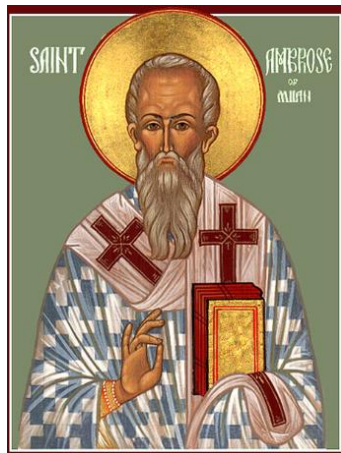
### **Commemoration**

When we are baptized, we are baptized into the body of Christ. We understand this body to be the communion of saints, a diverse witness of men & women across time and space. Throughout its history, the church has sought to lift up Christians who have been unique, exemplary people of faith. Today we recognize Bishop Ambrose of Milan.

Born in Treves, Gaul and educated at Rome, Ambrose was appointed consular prefect for Upper Italy in 370, at which time he moved to Milan. Four years later, the bishop of the city died, causing a fight between the Arian and orthodox parties of the city. As magistrate, Ambrose was there to maintain peace, and the people turned to him and elected him to the position. His election was ratified by emperor Valentinian and he was baptized and consecrated a Bishop.

After becoming a bishop, Ambrose became known for his defense of the orthodox faith and for his firm stand on Scripture against both paganism and the Arian heresy which was so prevalent during his years.

His writings consist mostly of sermons. Especially near the end of his life he emphasized celibacy, voluntary poverty, and even the martyr's death. He also did quite a bit of work in the development of church music, writing hymns and liturgies for his congregation in Milan. Ambrose introduced the practice of antiphonal chanting, and began the work of organizing the use of music in the church. Three of his hymns can be found in our hymnal: 95 - *Savior of the Nations, Come*; 550 - *O Splendor of God's Glory Bright*; and 564 - *O Trinity, Most Blessed Light*.



## Oh, Come, All Ye Faithful

1 Oh, come, all ye faith - ful, Joy - ful and tri - um - phant! Oh,  
 2 The high - est, most ho - ly, Light of light e - ter - nal,  
 3 Sing, choirs of an - gels, Sing in ex - ul - ta - tion,  
 4 Yea, Lord, we greet thee, Born this hap - py morn - ing;

come ye, oh, come . . ye to Beth - le - hem;  
 Born of a vir - gin, a mor - tal he comes;  
 Sing, all ye cit - i - zens of heav - en a - bove!  
 Je - sus, to thee . . be . . glo - ry giv'n!

Come and be - hold him Born the king of an - gels:  
 Son of the Fa - ther Now in flesh ap - pear - ing!  
 Glo - ry to God . . the high - est:  
 Word of the Fa - ther, Now in flesh ap - pear - ing;

*Refrain*  
 Oh, come, let us a - dore him, Oh, come, let us a - dore him,

Oh, come, let us a - dore him, Christ the Lord!



# Prepare the Royal Highway

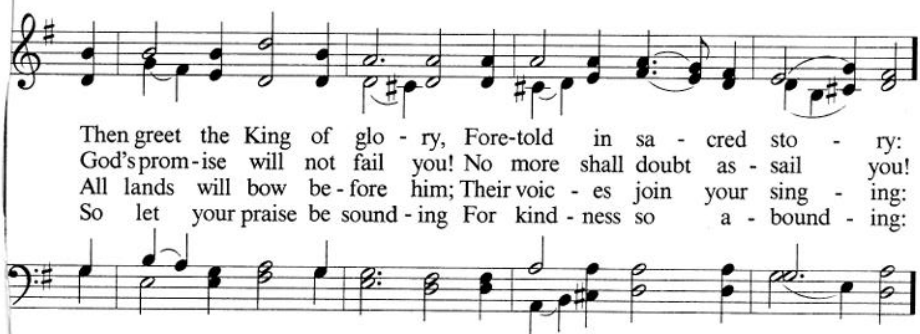
26



1 Pre - pare the roy - al high - way; The King of kings is near!  
 2 God's peo - ple, see him com - ing: Your own e - ter - nal king!  
 3 Then fling the gates wide o - pen To greet your prom - ised king!  
 4 His is no earth - ly king - dom; It comes from heav'n a - bove.



Let ev - 'ry hill and val - ley A lev - el road ap - pear!  
 Palm branch - es strew be - fore him! Spread gar - ments! Shout and sing!  
 Your king, yet ev - 'ry na - tion Its trib - ute too may bring.  
 His rule is peace and free - dom And jus - tice, truth, and love.



Then greet the King of glo - ry, Fore - told in sa - cred sto - ry:  
 God's prom - ise will not fail you! No more shall doubt as - sail you!  
 All lands will bow be - fore him; Their voic - es join your sing - ing:  
 So let your praise be sound - ing For kind - ness so a - bound - ing:

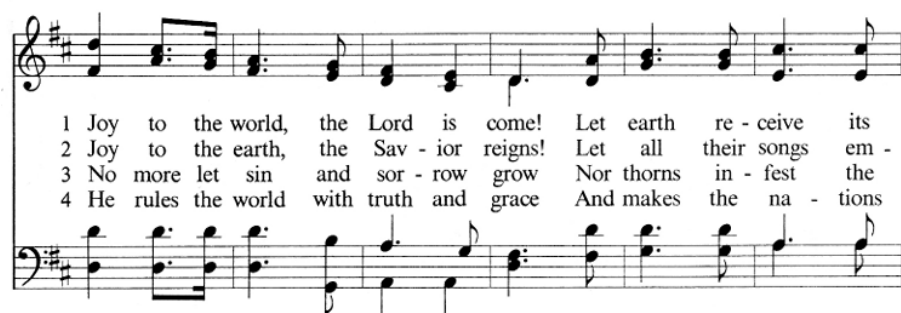
*Refrain*



Ho - san - na to the Lord, For he ful - fills God's Word!

## Joy to the World

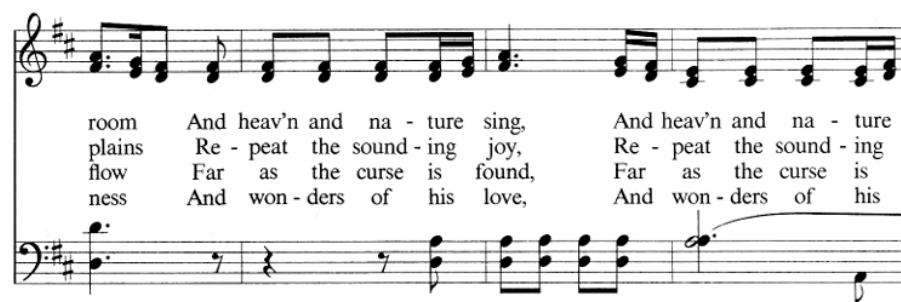
39



1 Joy to the world, the Lord is come! Let earth re - ceive its  
 2 Joy to the earth, the Sav - ior reigns! Let all their songs em -  
 3 No more let sin, and sor - row grow Nor thorns in - fest the  
 4 He rules the world with truth and grace And makes the na - tions



King; Let ev - 'ry heart pre - pare him  
 ploy, While fields and floods, rocks, hills, and  
 ground; He comes to make his bless - ings  
 prove The glo - ries of his righ - teous -



room And heav'n and na - ture sing, And heav'n and na - ture  
 plains Re - peat the sound - ing joy, Re - peat the sound - ing  
 flow Far as the curse is found, Far as the curse is  
 ness And won - ders of his love, And won - ders of his



sing, And heav'n, and heav'n and na - ture sing.  
 joy, Re - peat, re - peat the sound - ing joy.  
 found, Far as, far as the curse is found.  
 love, And won - ders, won - ders of his love.



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**Our Mission:**  
Helping God restore & renew our community,  
our congregation, & ourselves.

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**Interim Pastor:** Rev. Frank Terhune  
Cell: 610-751-5472

Email: [frankterhune@gmail.com](mailto:frankterhune@gmail.com)

**In Office:** Tues. & Fri. 9am-12pm

[www.millcreeklutheran.com](http://www.millcreeklutheran.com)

**Secretary:** Jennifer Miller Email: [secretary@millcreeklutheran.com](mailto:secretary@millcreeklutheran.com)

**Lay Leader:** Jennifer Rosengrant

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### Sunday, November 30, 2025

You can **listen to the worship service** over the phone patch at **10:15 AM**. Just dial **717-628-0125**. You will hear a message welcoming you to Millcreek. At that point you are connected to our church sound system, so just stay on the line. You may also watch the service later on You Tube.



### Helping God Restore and Renew our Community

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**ADVENT FOOD COLLECTION:** Advent is fast approaching. We are bringing back our Reverse Advent Calendar. This time of year, we think about getting. This calendar is all about giving. You can pick one up in the narthex. There is one food item mentioned every day. Completed boxes can be brought during Christmas week to be distributed to local Food pantries to replenish their shelves following the Christmas demand. The need this year is great. We can help feed the hungry. Take the Advent challenge. Together. We can live out Jesus' command to love one another.

**CAN TAB UPDATE:** Aluminum can tabs are no longer being collected.

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### Helping God Restore and Renew our Congregation

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**TREASURER'S REPORT: Sunday, November 30, 2025:** Current Offerings- \$750, Plate- \$105, Christmas- \$100 **Total- \$1,455**  
Attendance- 49 Sunday School- 8

**FLOWER AND BULLETIN SIGNUP SHEETS** for 2026 are available on the bulletin board in the narthex. If you would like to sponsor flower and/or bulletin for Dec. 28<sup>th</sup>, the last Sunday in 2025, please contact Jen M. . Flowers-\$30, Bulletins- \$10. Thank you for all your willingness to sponsor flowers and bulletins each Sunday!

**CHRISTMAS GIFT BAGS:** Starting Sunday November 16<sup>th</sup>, the table will be set up in the narthex with the gift bags. There are 12 shut-ins currently on our list. Please have all cards and items in the bags by Sunday, Dec. 14<sup>th</sup> to allow time for bags to be delivered by Christmas. There will be a sign-up sheet to deliver the bags on the table. Any questions or if someone needs added to the list, please tell Nikki Johnson. Thank you.

**LESSONS & CAROLS WITH MLC ENSEMBLE:** Calling all musicians to join MLC musical ensemble to play Sunday, December 21 at 10:15am service.

Rehearsals will be:

Saturdays, Dec. 6, Dec. 13, and Dec. 20 @ 11:00

If you are available or have any questions, email or text Julie Strickler at 610 207 9650.  
Thanks for your consideration!

**BIBLE STUDY:** Pastor Terhune will begin a weekly adult Bible study for Advent this year and will continue Bible study into 2026. There is a sheet in the Narthex to sign up. We are asking for your preferred time in addition to topics you have an interest in. We may have multiple days and times based upon schedules.

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**Helping God Restore and Renew Our Selves**

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**THIS WEEK WE REMEMBER THE FOLLOWING PERSON(S) WITH CARDS & PRAYERS:**

Liz Leibig  
34 W. Park Ave.  
Newmanstown, PA 17073

**PRAYER LIST:** Please make requests to Jen M. by noon Wed. each week: [secretary@millcreeklutheran.com](mailto:secretary@millcreeklutheran.com) or call: 610-589-2570. *Please provide updates when our prayers have been answered, so this list can be kept current.*

**MILLCREEK MEMBERS:**

Peg Auman	Bryan Breidigam	Joe Buffington
Debbie Hartman	Violet Hepler	Frank Hoffman
Liz Leibig	Barbara Potteiger	Brian Ream
Norm Sharp	Gerry Strickler	Stewart Wolf
Aaron Yiengst	Devon Yiengst	Michael Yiengst, Jr.
Greer Zellers		

**NON-MEMBERS:**

Mike Nelson, friend of Kristin Bender  
Gary Beatty,, friend of Debbie Hartman  
JoAnn Deahl, Brandy Gahres’ mother  
Linda McMullan, sister in law of Greta McMullan  
Candy Hibshman, friend of Rachel Mock  
Jennifer Clinton, daughter of Renee & Layne Strickler  
Mitch Keath, relative of Mary Ream & Deb Buffington  
Louise Hainley, cousin of Debbie Tice  
Rich Leinweber, friend of Rachel

**CARD SHOWER:** Elaine Hemperly is turning 90 years old on Dec. 20<sup>th</sup>! Her family has requested the congregation to shower her with cards for her special day:

Elaine Hemperly  
Linden Village, Stoy Cottage  
100 Tuck Street  
Lebanon, PA 17042

## UPCOMING SERVICE SCHEDULE & EVENTS:

- Sunday December 7– 2nd Advent communion service with Hanging of the Greens – bring an ornament for the tree, children will sing. Service is followed by a light lunch of sandwiches & Christmas cookies.
- Sunday December 14 – 3rd Advent – Children’s Program – The Shepherd’s Story – see the Christmas Story thru the eyes of the shepherds! (multi-purpose room)
- Sunday December 21 – 4th Advent – Lessons & Carols – A very simple but special service with special readings and music.
- Sunday December 21 – 5 pm – Quiet Christmas – we have traditionally been doing this service on the night of the Winter Solstice. A very simple service with communion and candlelight. It is especially geared to those who may have suffered a loss in the past year and do not want to face the standard Christmas services.
- Wednesday December 24 @ 10 pm –candlelight communion service filled with music, candles, and joy!
- Sunday December 28 – Christmas continues with our regular worship service. There will be no Sunday School on this date.

### **Advent Bible Study A Clear View of the Birth of Jesus Tuesdays, 1:00 pm & 7 pm**

The Manger and the Inn	November 25
Ancestors, Joseph, & Herod	December 2
Salvation and the Magi	December 9
Atrocity and Welcome	December 16

Take some time to prepare the way  
for the Christmas celebration of Jesus’ birth.  
We’ll share traditions, Bible study, and faith  
as we focus on this meaningful time of getting  
ready for Christ.

*God's Gift of Love*



# Ready for the Christ of Christmas

In those days John the Baptist came, preaching in the wilderness of Judea and saying, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven has come near." Matthew 3:1-2 (NIV)

Based on Matthew 3:1-12



JOHN THE BAPTIST  
Matthew 3

W L U Z M H V J O J Q V Q S U  
I Y V S L O G N K M D B H A K  
K C T X T N M R H K Y T E X X  
C I X J T E Z Y J T A E S L E  
P N N Y Y Y A S L P P T R Z T  
R B M G J W I L D G S U E S Q  
E D A H D H A I R U X G P T C  
P Z O P Y O U S C E N U E R F  
A T O Q T W M O H I N J N A F  
R Z S G N I L O H L R L T I M  
E Z J N P O Z C P N E P Y G P  
E S P O A E A E H M N N Z H C  
L O R D H E M T A F T Q X T Y  
J W K K R N J C U Y C T Q T U  
I X E P F N M H L D Z D E N I

LORD  
BAPTIZE  
REPENT

PREPARE  
STRAIGHT  
LOCUSTS

KINGDOM  
PATHS  
HONEY

JOHN  
PREACHING  
CAMEL

HAIR  
WILD  
BELT

## Turning and Mending (Again)

Being on the receiving end of sharp language can be heartbreaking. Indeed, words can wound—or worse. John the Baptizer, a key figure in our Advent narratives, finds himself at odds with other religious leaders of the time, and uses the tool he has (language) to call attention to their broken relationship. It's unclear what exactly led to this prickly, pointed exchange between John and the Pharisees and Sadducees, but there is a growing chasm between them.

“Prepare the way of the Lord,” John cries out in the wilderness, echoing the prophet Isaiah. Isaiah cried out in his own day centuries prior, testifying to God’s desire to mend the world (though the world seemed to be at an end). Perhaps John repeats Isaiah’s plea in order to remind the people of his day of God’s intent for all things: for the world to be mended, healed, made right; for the reign of heaven to be revealed on earth, here and now. Often, however, mending brokenness requires honesty first about the wounds that have been inflicted and the death that has been wrought. With John’s painful honesty, his strained relationship with other leaders of his time takes a step toward healing, toward justice, so that a new beginning might take hold. This is a starting point, as difficult as it may be.

Every Advent, as the church year begins again, we hear the familiar call: *Repent. Turn back to God.* Repentance is no easy thing, but thankfully, God draws us back to this imperative, year after year, day after day, hour after hour. With infinite mercy, once again God invites us to turn toward healing, toward justice, toward the righting of the world, one relationship at a time.