

# SECOND SUNDAY IN ADVENT

December 5, 2021

*I am sending my messenger...I am sending you*

"Hark! A Thrilling Voice Is Sounding" (LSB 345) is a cherished Advent hymn. That thrilling voice is that of John the Baptist crying out in the wilderness, "The Savior is near! The kingdom of God is near! Repent, and live out your new life in Christ! Produce fruits worthy of repentance!" In many ways, we still live in the wilderness. Our nation continues to polarize, causing us to lose friends and feel as though we are alone in the world. Many of us walk through the wilderness of serious disease, job loss, or watching our children or grandchildren walk away from faith. There is also the self-created wilderness of our own sin—the damage we have done in relationships with others. But John's thrilling words bring us hope. While we are powerless to make it through the wilderness ourselves, God is powerful and sees us through. By the gift of repentance in turning to Him in our desperation and pain, God restores a right relationship to us and then sets us free to bear fruit worthy of repentance. We are not stuck. God can change and restore us! A thrilling voice indeed!

**+ PREPARATION +**

**OPENING HYMN:** #345 - [Hark! A Thrilling Voice Is Sounding](#)

## INVOCATION

**Pastor:** In the name of the Father and of the + Son and of the Holy Spirit.

**People:** **Amen.**

## LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT WREATH

*Two Advent candles are lit.*

**Pastor:** Let us pray.

O Lord, let the lighting of these candles signify that You are the light that shines in all the darkness of our lives. As we wait, watch, hope, and pray, guide us all to reflect Your light and let it shine; through Jesus Christ, our Lord.

**People:** **Amen.**

**OPENING SENTENCES** *Malachi 3:1, 6; Luke 3:4; Philippians 1:6, adapt.*

**Pastor:** The LORD says, "Prepare the way of the Lord."

**People:** **We thank You, O Lord!**

Pastor: The LORD says, "The messenger of the covenant in whom you delight, behold, He is coming."

**People: We adore You, O Lord!**

Pastor: The LORD says, "I the LORD do not change; therefore you are not consumed."

**People: We praise You, O Lord!**

Pastor: The LORD who began a good work in you will bring it to completion at the day of Jesus Christ.

**People: We worship You, O Lord!**

### **CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION** *Psalm 25:6–7*

Pastor: Having emerged from the waters of Baptism as God's new creation in Christ, we confess our sins to God and one another.

*A time of silence is observed.*

Pastor: We confess to You, O Lord, that we are captive to sin in thought, word, and deed. We have not borne fruit worthy of repentance. We have sinned against You and our neighbors.

**People: Remember Your mercy, O LORD, and Your steadfast love, for they have been from of old.**

Pastor: Remember not the sins of my youth or my transgressions;

**People: according to Your steadfast love remember me, for the sake of Your goodness, O LORD!**

Pastor: Almighty God in His mercy has given His Son to die for you and for His sake forgives you all your sins. As a called and ordained servant of Christ, and by His authority, I therefore forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the + Son and of the Holy Spirit.

**People: Amen.**

**+ WORD +**

### **PSALM** *Psalm 66:1–12; antiphon: v. 12b*

Pastor: You have brought us out to a place of abundance.

**People: Shout for joy to God, all the earth;**

Pastor: sing the glory of His name;  
give to Him glorious praise!

**People: Say to God, "How awesome are Your deeds!  
So great is Your power that Your enemies come cringing to You.**

Pastor: All the earth worships You  
and sings praises to You;  
they sing praises to Your name."

**People: Come and see what God has done:  
He is awesome in His deeds toward the children of man.**

Pastor: He turned the sea into dry land;  
they passed through the river on foot.

**People: There did we rejoice in Him,  
who rules by His might forever,  
whose eyes keep watch on the nations—  
let not the rebellious exalt themselves.**

Pastor: Bless our God, O peoples;  
let the sound of His praise be heard,

**People: who has kept our soul among the living  
and has not let our feet slip.**

Pastor: For You, O God, have tested us;  
You have tried us as silver is tried.

**People: You brought us into the net;  
You laid a crushing burden on our backs;**

Pastor: You let men ride over our heads;  
we went through fire and through water;  
yet You have brought us out to a place of abundance.

**People: Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit;  
as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be forever. Amen.**

Pastor: You have brought us out to a place of abundance.

## **KYRIE**

Pastor: In peace let us pray to the Lord.

**People: Lord, have mercy.**

Pastor: For the peace from above and for our salvation let us pray to the Lord.

**People: Lord, have mercy.**

Pastor: For the peace of the whole world, for the well-being of the Church of God,  
and for the unity of all let us pray to the Lord.

**People: Lord, have mercy.**

Pastor: For this holy house and for all who offer here their worship and praise let us  
pray to the Lord.

**People: Lord, have mercy.**

Pastor: Help, save, comfort, and defend us, gracious Lord.

**People: Amen.**

### **SALUTATION and PRAYER OF THE DAY**

Pastor: The Lord be with you.

**People: And also with you.**

Pastor: Let us pray.

You are in our midst, mighty to save. You rejoice over us as our loving Father. When we wonder if Jesus is truly the One, You come to us in Your Word and refresh our souls. When we wander from You, You remain strong and never give up on us, coming to us again and again in Word and Sacrament. Fill us with joy in You, that our lives radiate Your goodness to all the world; through Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

**People: Amen.**

### **OLD TESTAMENT READING** *Malachi 3:1–7b*

*(Malachi declares the coming of a messenger, which would be fulfilled in John the Baptist.)*

<sup>1</sup>Behold, I send my messenger and he will prepare the way before me. And the Lord whom you seek will suddenly come to his temple; and the messenger of the covenant in whom you delight, behold, he is coming, says the LORD of hosts. <sup>2</sup>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 sons of Levi and refine them like gold and silver, and they will bring offerings in righteousness to the LORD. <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.

<sup>5</sup>"Then I will draw near to you for judgment. I will be a swift witness against the sorcerers, against the adulterers, against those who swear falsely, against those who oppress the hired worker in his wages, the widow and the fatherless, against those who thrust aside the sojourner, and do not fear me, says the LORD of hosts.

<sup>6</sup>"For I the LORD do not change; therefore you, O children of Jacob, are not consumed. <sup>7</sup>From the days of your fathers you have turned aside from my statutes and have not kept them."

Lector: This is the Word of the Lord.

**People: Thanks be to God.**

**GRADUAL** *Zechariah 9:9; Psalm 118:26, alt.*

**Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion.**

**Shout aloud, O daughter of Jerusalem.**

**Behold, your king is coming to you;**

**righteous and having salvation.**

**Blessèd is he who comes in the name of the Lord.**

**From the house of the Lord we bless you.**

**EPISTLE** *Philippians 1:2–11*

*(Paul encourages that the Church be filled with the fruit of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ.)*

<sup>2</sup>Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

<sup>3</sup>I thank my God in all my remembrance of you, <sup>4</sup>always in every prayer of mine for you all making my prayer with joy, <sup>5</sup>because of your partnership in the gospel from the first day until now. <sup>6</sup>And I am sure of this, that he who began a good work in you will bring it to completion at the day of Jesus Christ. <sup>7</sup>It is right for me to feel this way about you all, because I hold you in my heart, for you are all partakers with me of grace, both in my imprisonment and in the defense and confirmation of the gospel. <sup>8</sup>For God is my witness, how I yearn for you all with the affection of Christ Jesus. <sup>9</sup>And it is my prayer that your love may abound more and more, with knowledge and all discernment, <sup>10</sup>so that you may approve what is excellent, and so be pure and blameless for the day of Christ, <sup>11</sup>filled with the fruit of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ, to the glory and praise of God.

Lector: This is the Word of the Lord.

**People: Thanks be to God.**

**VERSE** *Luke 3:4b, 6*

**People: Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia! Prepare the way of the Lord, make His paths straight; all flesh shall see the salvation of God. Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!**

**HOLY GOSPEL**     *Luke 3:1–14 (15–20)*

*(John the Baptist urges everyone to repent, and he points to Jesus.)*

Pastor:        The Holy Gospel according to St. Luke, the third chapter.

**People:        Glory to You, O Lord.**

<sup>1</sup>In the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Caesar, Pontius Pilate being governor of Judea, and Herod being tetrarch of Galilee, and his brother Philip tetrarch of the region of Ituraea and Trachonitis, and Lysanias tetrarch of Abilene, <sup>2</sup>during the high priesthood of Annas and Caiaphas, the word of God came to John the son of Zechariah in the wilderness. <sup>3</sup>And 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 Isaiah the prophet,

“The voice of one crying 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 become straight,  
and the rough places shall become level ways,

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

<sup>7</sup>He said therefore to the crowds that came out to be baptized by him, “You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the wrath to come? <sup>8</sup>Bear fruits in keeping with repentance. And do not begin to say to yourselves, ‘We have Abraham as our father.’ For I tell you, God is able from these stones to raise up children for Abraham. <sup>9</sup>Even now the axe is laid to the root of the trees. Every tree therefore that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire.”

<sup>10</sup>And the crowds asked him, “What then shall we do?” <sup>11</sup>And he answered them, “Whoever has two tunics is to share with him who has none, and whoever has food is to do likewise.” <sup>12</sup>Tax collectors also came to be baptized and said to him, “Teacher, what shall we do?” <sup>13</sup>And he said to them, “Collect no more than you are authorized to do.” <sup>14</sup>Soldiers also asked him, “And we, what shall we do?” And he said to them, “Do not extort money from anyone by threats or by false accusation, and be content with your wages.”

<sup>15</sup>As the people were in expectation, and all were questioning in their hearts concerning John, whether he might be the Christ, <sup>16</sup>John answered them all, saying, "I baptize you with water, but he who is mightier than I is coming, the strap of whose sandals I am not worthy to untie. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and with fire. <sup>17</sup>His winnowing fork is in his hand, to clear his threshing floor and to gather the wheat into his barn, but the chaff he will burn with unquenchable fire."

<sup>18</sup>So with many other exhortations he preached good news to the people. <sup>19</sup>But Herod the tetrarch, who had been reproved by him for Herodias, his brother's wife, and for all the evil things that Herod had done, <sup>20</sup>added this to them all, that he locked up John in prison.

Pastor: The Gospel of the Lord.

People: **Praise to You, O Christ.**

**HYMN OF THE DAY:** #344 - [\*On Jordan's Bank the Baptist's Cry\*](#)

**SERMON – I am sending my messenger, I am sending you!**

#### **APOSTLES' CREED**

**I believe in God, the Father Almighty,  
maker of heaven and earth.**

**And in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord,  
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,  
born of the virgin Mary,  
suffered under Pontius Pilate,  
was crucified, died and was buried.  
He descended into hell.  
The third day He rose again from the dead.  
He ascended into heaven  
and sits at the right hand of God the Father Almighty.  
From thence He will come to judge the living and the dead.**

**I believe in the Holy Spirit,  
the holy Christian Church,  
the communion of saints,  
the forgiveness of sins,  
the resurrection of the body,  
and the life + everlasting. Amen.**

#### **PRAYER OF THE CHURCH**

*After each petition:*

Pastor: ... we pray:

**People: hear us, coming Lord.**

*At conclusion:*

Pastor: ... in the name of Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

**People: Amen.**

### **LORD'S PRAYER** *Matthew 6:9–13*

**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.**

### **CLOSING PRAYER**

Pastor: Let us pray.

Stir up our hearts, O Lord, to make ready the way of Your only-begotten Son, that by His coming we may be enabled to serve You with pure minds; through the same Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

**People: Amen.**

### **BENEDICTION** *Philippians 1:6; Numbers 6:24–26*

Pastor: He who began a good work in you will bring it to completion at the day of Jesus Christ.

The Lord bless you and keep you.

The Lord make His face shine on you and be gracious to you.

The Lord look upon you with favor and + give you peace.

**People: Amen.**

### **DISMISSAL**

Pastor: Go in peace! Serve the Lord!

**People: Thanks be to God.**

**CLOSING HYMN:** #343 – [\*Prepare the Royal Highway\*](#)

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