



St. John's Lutheran Church

Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

God's work. Our hands.



Icon of John the Baptist c. 1300 – Museum of Russian Icons

1st Sunday after Epiphany

January 12, 2025 10:30 Service of the Word

John the Baptist prepares the way for the coming of Jesus. John does not mince words. He bluntly calls people to repentance. He knows that God's inbreaking kingdom is challenging everything in the world. But John is not angry for anger's sake. He is passionate that people not miss the God's grace and love.

Welcome to worship today!

If you are visiting with us we invite you to sign the Guest Book in the back of the sanctuary.

Large print bulletins are available on the usher's stand.

The Zoom feed for this service is shown in the nursery.

† GATHERING †

Prelude and Announcements

Confession and Forgiveness

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

C: Amen.

P: Almighty God, to whom our hearts are open, all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hid: Cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love you and worthily magnify your holy name, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

C: Amen.

P: If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. But if we confess our sins, God who is faithful and just will forgive our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

Silence for reflection and self-examination

P: Most merciful God,

C: we confess that we are in bondage to sin and cannot free ourselves. We have sinned against you in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done and by what we have left undone. We have not loved you with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. For the sake of your Son, Jesus Christ, have mercy on us. Forgive us, renew us, and lead us, so that we may delight in your will and walk in your ways, to the glory of your holy name. Amen.

P: In the mercy of almighty God, Jesus Christ was given to die for you, and for his sake God forgives you all your sins. To those who believe in Jesus Christ he gives the power to become the children of God and bestows on them the Holy Spirit.

C: Amen.

Gathering Hymn As with Gladness Men of Old
(For music turn to Hymn 302 in the Red Hymnal)

1. As with gladness men of old
did the guiding star behold;
as with joy they hailed its light,
leading onward, beaming bright;
so, most gracious Lord, may we
evermore be led by thee.

2. As with joyful steps they sped,

Savior, to thy lowly bed,
there to bend the knee before
thee, whom heav'n and earth adore;
so may we with willing feet
ever seek thy mercy seat.

3. As they offered gifts most rare
at thy cradle, rude and bare,
so may we with holy joy,
pure and free from sin's alloy,
all our costliest treasures bring,
Christ to thee, our heav'nly king.

4. Holy Jesus, ev'ry day
keep us in the narrow way;
and when earthly things are past,
bring our ransomed souls at last
where they need no star to guide,
where no clouds thy glory hide.

5. In the heav'nly country bright
need they no created light;
thou its light, its joy, its crown,
thou its sun which goes not down;
there forever may we sing
alleluias to our King.

Text: William C. Dix, 1837-1898, alt. Music: Conrad Kocher, 1786-1872

Greeting (2 Corinthians 13:13)

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.

Gathering Dialog (John 1)

A: In the beginning was the Word,

C: and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

A: In the Word was life,

C: and the life was the light of all people.

A: The Word became flesh and lived among us,

C: and we have seen his glory, full of grace and truth.

Prayer of the Day

A: Let us pray...

Holy God, creator of light and giver of goodness, your voice moves over the waters. Immerse us in your grace, and transform us by your Spirit, that we may follow after your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C: Amen.

† WORD †

First Reading Amos 5:10-15

B:¹⁰They hate the one who reproves in the gate,
and they abhor the one who speaks the truth.

¹¹Therefore because you trample on the poor
and take from them levies of grain,

you have built houses of hewn stone,
but you shall not live in them;

you have planted pleasant vineyards,
but you shall not drink their wine.

¹²For I know how many are your transgressions,
and how great are your sins—

you who afflict the righteous, who take a bribe,
and push aside the needy in the gate.

¹³Therefore the prudent will keep silent in such a time;
for it is an evil time.

¹⁴Seek good and not evil,
that you may live;

and so the Lord, the God of hosts, will be with you,
just as you have said.

¹⁵Hate evil and love good,
and establish justice in the gate;

it may be that the Lord, the God of hosts,
will be gracious to the remnant of Joseph.

After the reading the reader may say: The Word of the Lord

C: Thanks be to God.

Scripture Poetry Psalm 51:14-19 (Read responsively)

D: Save me, bring back my joy,
support me, strengthen my will.

**C: Then I will teach your way
and sinners will turn to you.**

D: Help me, stop my tears,
and I will sing your goodness.

**C: Lord, give me words
and I will shout your praise.**

D: When I offer a burnt offering,
the gift does not please you.

**C: So I offer my shattered spirit;
a changed heart you welcome.**

Second Reading 1 John 3:18-29

E: ¹⁸Little children, let us love, not in word or speech, but in truth and action. ¹⁹And by this we will know that we are from the truth and will reassure our hearts before him²⁰ whenever our hearts condemn us; for God is greater than our hearts, and he knows everything. ²¹Beloved, if our hearts do not condemn us, we have boldness before God; ²²and we receive from him whatever we ask, because we obey his commandments and do what pleases him.

²³And this is his commandment, that we should believe in the name of his Son Jesus Christ and love one another, just as he has commanded us. ²⁴All who obey his commandments abide in him, and he abides in them. And by this we know that he abides in us, by the Spirit that he has given us.

After the reading the reader may say: The Word of the Lord

C: Thanks be to God.

Gospel Acclamation (1 John 3:11)

C: Alleluia. Let us love, not in word or speech, but in truth and action. Alleluia.

Gospel Reading Luke 3:1-20

The gospel is announced:

P: The Holy Gospel according to St. Luke the 3rd chapter.

C: Glory to you O Lord.

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, ²during the high priesthood of Annas and Caiaphas, the word of God came to John son of Zechariah in the wilderness. ³He went into all the region around the Jordan, proclaiming a baptism of

repentance for the forgiveness of sins, ⁴as 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. ⁵Every 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;⁶and all flesh shall see the salvation of God.’”

⁷John said 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? ⁸Bear fruits worthy of repentance. Do not begin 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. ⁹Even now the ax is lying at the root of the trees; every tree therefore that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire.”

¹⁰And the crowds asked him, “What then should we do?” ¹¹In reply he said to them, “Whoever has two coats must share with anyone who has none; and whoever has food must do likewise.” ¹²Even tax collectors came to be baptized, and they asked him, “Teacher, what should we do?”¹³He said to them, “Collect no more than the amount prescribed for you.”¹⁴Soldiers also asked him, “And we, what should we do?” He said to them, “Do not extort money from anyone by threats or false accusation, and be satisfied with your wages.”

¹⁵As the people were filled with expectation, and all were questioning in their hearts concerning John, whether he might be the Messiah, ¹⁶John answered all of them by saying, “I baptize you with water; but one who is more powerful than I is coming; I am not worthy to untie the thong of his sandals. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. ¹⁷His winnowing fork is in his hand, to clear his threshing floor and to gather the wheat into his granary; but the chaff he will burn with unquenchable fire.”

¹⁸So, with many other exhortations, he proclaimed the good news to the people. ¹⁹But Herod the ruler, who had been rebuked by him because of Herodias, his brother’s wife, and because of all the evil things that Herod had done, ²⁰added to them all by shutting up John in prison.

After the reading:

P: The gospel of the Lord

C: Praise to you O Christ.

Children’s Sermon

Sermon

Hymn of the Day Arise, Your Light Has Come
For music turn to Hymn 314 in the Red Hymnal

1. Arise, your light has come!
The Spirit's call obey;
show forth the glory of your God
which shines on you today.
2. Arise, your light has come!
Fling wide the prison door;
proclaim the captive's liberty,
good tidings to the poor.
3. Arise, your light has come!
All you in sorrow born,
bind up the broken hearted ones
and comfort those who mourn.
4. Arise, your light has come!
The mountains burst in song!
Rise up like eagles on the wing,
God's pow'r will make us strong.

Text: Ruth Duck, b. 1947. Music: William H. Walter, 1825-1893. Text copyright 1992 GIA Publications, Inc.

Response to the Word

P: In Christ you have heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation.

C: We believe in him and are marked with the seal of the promised Holy Spirit.

P: Living together in trust and hope, we confess our faith.

**C: I believe in God, the Father almighty,
creator of heaven and earth.**

**I believe in Jesus Christ, God's 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 to the dead.
On the third day he rose again;
he ascended into heaven,
he is seated at the right hand of the Father,
and he will come to judge the living and the dead.**

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

A: Build yourselves up on your most holy faith;

C: pray in the Holy Spirit. (Jude 20)

A: Keep yourselves in the love of God;

C: look forward to the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ. (Jude 21)

A: If anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation:

**C: Everything old has passed away;
behold, everything has become new!** (2 Corinthians 5:17)

Peace

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

C: And also with you.

P: Let us share that peace with one another.

The congregation may greet one another with a sign of Christ's peace.

‡ THANKSGIVING ‡

Gathering of Prayers and Offerings

You are invited to write a prayer concern on the small blank slip of paper in your worship bulletin. This slip will be collected by the ushers in the offering plates. The concerns raised will be prayed for later in the service.

Special Music

Offering Prayer

P: Let us pray: Merciful God,

C: in the mystery of the Word made flesh, you embrace our lives with your great love for humanity. With joy and gladness we ask that these gifts may be for many a sign of that love, and that we may continue to share in your divine life, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Prayers of Intercession

P: With the whole people of God in Christ Jesus, let us pray for the church, those in need, and all of God's creation.

Issues raised by the congregation are prayed for.

The prayer concludes:

P: Into your hands, gracious God, we commend all for whom we pray, trusting in your mercy; through Jesus Christ our Savior.

C: Amen.

Lord's Prayer

P: Lord remember us in your kingdom and teach us to pray:

**C: 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.**

✠ SENDING ✠

Blessing

P: The Lord bless you and keep you.

The Lord make his face shine upon you
and be gracious to you.

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

C: Amen.

Sending Hymn I'll Fly Away

(For music see Hymn 96 in the Songbook Binder)

**1. Some bright morning when this life is o'er
I'll fly away,
to that home on God's celestial shore
I'll fly away.**

Refrain I'll fly away (O glory).
I'll fly away (in the morning).
When I die, Hallelujah by and by,
I'll fly away.

2. When the shadows of this life have gone
I'll fly away,
Like a bird from prison bars has flown
I'll fly away. *Refrain*

3. Oh, how glad and happy when we meet
I'll fly away,
No more cold iron shackles on my feet
I'll fly away. *Refrain*

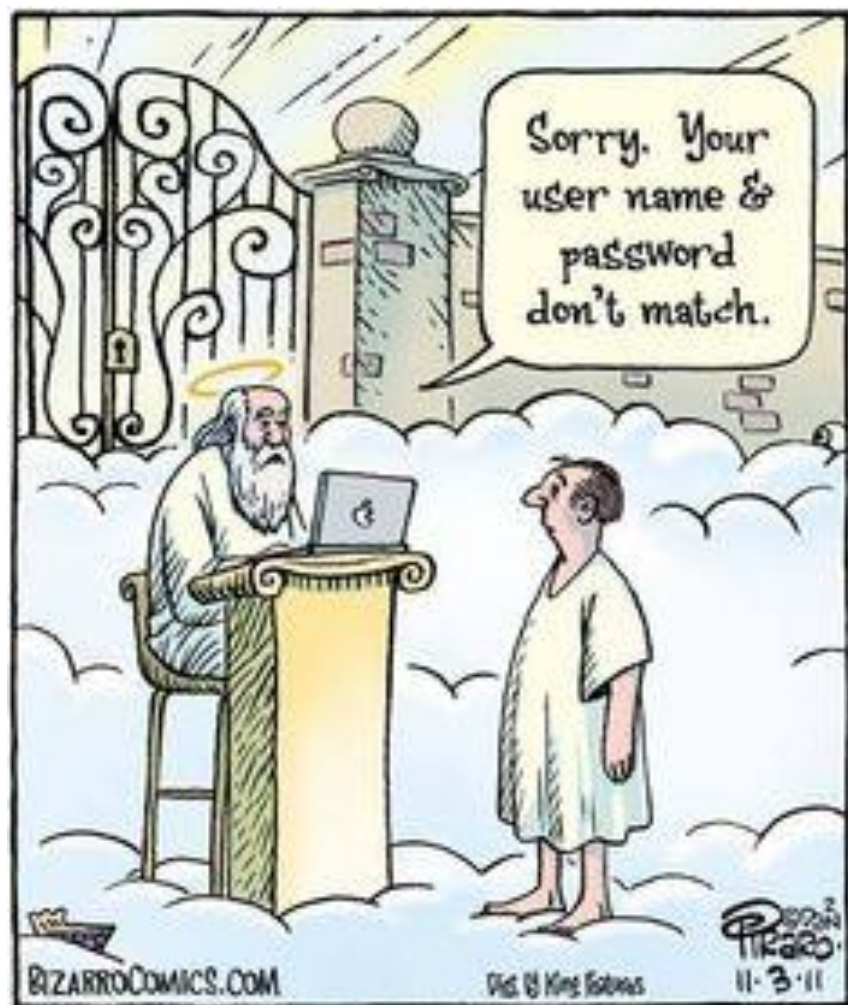
4. Just a few more weary days and then
I'll fly away,
Just a few more weary days and then
I'll fly away. *Refrain*

Text and music: American Traditional

Dismissal

P: Go in peace. Serve the Lord.

C: God's Work. Our Hands.



Worship assistants TODAY:

Greeters and Ushers Helen Crown
Acolyte Charlotte Stroup
Counters Michele Myers and Anne Stromstad
Coffee Hour

Worship assistants for next Sunday, January 19

Greeters and Ushers Linda Flood
Acolyte Elijah Young
Altar Care
Communion Assistant Linda Flood
Counters Greg and Mary Zuege
Coffee Hour Annual Meeting - Sandwiches

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