

The Third Sunday in Advent

ST. JOHN'S EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH AND SCHOOL

P.O. Box 98, Okabena, MN 56161

A member congregation of the
Church of the Lutheran Confession

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WELCOME To all of you who are visiting our service this morning, we extend a most cordial welcome in Jesus' name. It is our hope that you will feel at home in our midst and will be blessed by our message of Christ crucified and risen for the sins of the world.

The third Sunday in Advent has historically been known as "John the Baptist" Sunday. The emphasis is not on John, but on the message he proclaimed, "*Repent! For the kingdom of God is at hand!*" Every generation needs to hear and respond to the call of John the Baptist. Without

repentance, we never really see our desperate need for the Savior who was born to redeem us, nor will we ever truly appreciate the Gift Whom God has given us.

Organist Mr. Ryan Mueller

Hymn 63 *On Jordan's Bank the Baptist's Cry*

Order of Service Page 12ff. in the Worship Supplement

Old Testament Lesson Isaiah 40:1-8 ""Comfort, yes, comfort My people!" Says your God. "Speak comfort to Jerusalem, and cry out to her, That her warfare is ended, That her iniquity is pardoned; For she has received from the LORD'S hand Double for all her sins." The voice of one crying in the wilderness: "Prepare the way of the LORD; Make straight in the desert A highway for our God. Every valley shall be exalted And every mountain and hill brought low; The crooked places shall be made straight And the rough places smooth; The glory of the LORD shall be revealed, And all flesh shall see it together; For the mouth of the LORD has spoken." The voice said, "Cry out!" And he said, "What shall I cry?" "All flesh is grass, And all its loveliness is like the flower of the field. The grass withers, the flower fades, Because the breath of the LORD blows upon it; Surely the people are grass. The grass withers, the flower fades, But the word of our God stands forever.""

Gospel Lesson Matthew 11:2-11 "And when John had heard in prison about the works of Christ, he sent two of his disciples and said to Him, "Are You the Coming One, or do we look for another?" Jesus answered and said to them, "Go and tell John the things which you hear and see: "The blind see and the lame walk; the lepers are cleansed and the deaf hear; the dead are raised up and the poor have the gospel preached to them. "And blessed is he who is not offended because of Me." As they departed, Jesus began to say to the multitudes concerning John: "What did you go out into the wilderness to see? A reed shaken by the wind? "But what did you go out to see? A man clothed in soft garments? Indeed, those who wear soft clothing are in kings' houses. "But what did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, I say to you, and more than a prophet. "For this is he of whom it is written: 'Behold, I send My messenger before Your face, Who will prepare Your way before You.' "Assuredly, I say to you, among those born of women there has not risen one greater than John the Baptist; but he who is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he."

Hymn 701 *Prepare the Royal Highway*

Sermon Galatians 5:22-23 "The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control."

The Fruit of the Spirit is: Kindness

Offering of Thankful Hearts

Choir **Just Beyond the Manger**

Just beyond the manger, I hear no lullabies,
I see no golden hay, I feel no starlight.
Just beyond the manger, I hear the hammer fall,
I see a rugged cross, I feel the chill of night.
Just beyond the manger.

Just beyond the manger, I see no swaddling clothes,
I hear no angels sing, I feel no candle glow.
Just beyond the manger, I see a lonely hill,
The Savior crying still, I hear the thunder roll.
Just beyond the manger.

Forgive us, Lord, and grant us eyes to see
In ev'ry Christmas Calvary; implant it in our hearts.
Help us recall 'mid trees of red and gold,
On another tree raised long ago we hung God's brightest star.
Just beyond the manger. I hear no lullabies,
Just beyond the manger.

Hymn 56 *Jesus Came, the Heavens Adoring*

Prayer + The Lord's Prayer

Benediction

Hymn 706 *Go, Tell it on the Mountain*

CAROLING All who are interested in caroling today are asked to meet at

the church at 4:00 o'clock. The group will be in Heron Lake, Lakefield, and Okabena. The carolers will meet at Regan and Kathy Lueck's house for supper. They will provide chili, soup, and sandwiches. You are asked to bring a salad, side dish, baked goods, or dessert.

ADVENT The final midweek Advent service of the season will be held on Wednesday evening at 7.

HOLIDAY SCHEDULE Since Christmas Eve lands on a Sunday, we will follow our regular church schedule. The children will use the Sunday School timeslot to run through the service for that evening. There will be Bible Class. During the morning service, the choir will perform a Christmas Cantata. The evening service is at 6:30.

The Christmas festival service will be held on Christmas Day at 9:30. Our New Year's Eve service, with the Lord's Supper, will be done in the morning service on December 31.

BIRTHDAY All are invited to celebrate Iona Gehrls' 90th birthday on Saturday, December 23 from 2:00-4:00. The open house will be held at the Lakeview Assisted Living entertainment room in Heron Lake. Let your presence be your gift.

CHRISTMAS HYMNS You are welcome to list your favorites on the sheet in the entryway. We will try to include them all during the Christmas season.

MHT There are now four members of St. John's who have signed up for the Mission Helper Trip: Justin Winters, Phil and Carl Strike, and Jonah Albrecht. The destination is East Africa where they will bring the Gospel to hundreds of children. Each welcomes your prayers; each funds their own trip.

CALENDARS Inspirational calendars for 2018 are available on the entryway table. The cost is \$5. See the sign above the basket for more information.

CLC NEWS Pastor Nathan Pfeiffer, Spokane, WA has returned the call to Mankato.

CLEANING (Wk 4) J. DeWall, R. DeWall, T. DeWall, J. Kazemba
D. Aden, B. Dronen, J. Thaemlitz