Second Sunday of Advent

December 7, 2025



ST. PAUL'S

Evangelical Lutheran Church

Welcome

Welcome! We are glad you are joining our community of faith for worship today. Whether you are a long-time Lutheran, or you come from another Christian tradition, or you're wandering or wondering about faith and the church, you are welcome to participate in worship in whatever ways are comfortable for you. If you are new to St. Paul's you can request more information on our web site contact page here: www.stpaulsbrenham.org/contact

Our worship liturgy is rooted in the ancient church's practice of gathering on Sundays to celebrate the resurrection of Jesus through hearing God's Word and sharing the communion meal in the presence of Christ. We welcome all baptized Christians to receive communion. Children who are communing in other churches are invited to commune here. All who are not receiving are invited to come forward for a blessing—you may indicate you want a blessing by holding your hands together or crossing your arms in front of you.

This bulletin is a helpful guide to our worship liturgy, as are ushers and friendly people gathered here with you to worship God together.

St. Paul's Staff

Michael Coffey	Lead Pastor
Donna Krueger	Pastor of Care Ministry
Diane Garrett	Organist
Larry Smith	Choir Director
Dr. Sarah Burke	Director of Contemporary Music
Lisa Eben	Financial Director
Thomas Johnson	Communications Coordinator
Anne Briggs	Membership Coordinator
Sarah Zwahr	Director of Youth and Family
Julie Guiberteau	Media Technician
Sandra Ehlinger	Head of Christian Day School

Contact Us

St. Paul's Lutheran Church
305. W 3rd St.
Brenham, TX 77833
979.836.5522
church@stpaulsbrehnam.org
www.stpaulsbrenham.org

St. Paul's is a congregation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. Learn more at www.elca.org

Second Sunday of Advent

At the heart of our Advent preparation stands John the Baptist, who calls us to repent and make a new beginning. As the darkness increases we turn toward the approaching light of Christ. For Christians he is the root of Jesse, the righteous judge who welcomes all, especially the poor and meek of the earth. We wait with hope for that day when the wolf will dwell with the lamb, and there will be no more hurt or destruction. From the Lord's table we are sent in the spirit of John the Baptist to proclaim that in Christ the kingdom of God has come near.

Today's Flowers

The altar flowers are placed today In honor of Evan and Kate Aschenbeck's wedding.

Offering

Offering plates are on the welcome table in the narthex. Feel free to leave your offering there. The offering will be presented during the worship liturgy. You can also make an offering online at www.stpaulsbrenham.org/give

First Aid

A First Aid Kit and AED (defibrillator) are located in the closet of the usher room in the Narthex.

GATHERING

PRELUDE ***Comfort, Comfort Ye My People*** **K. Kosche**

SOUNDING OF THE BELL

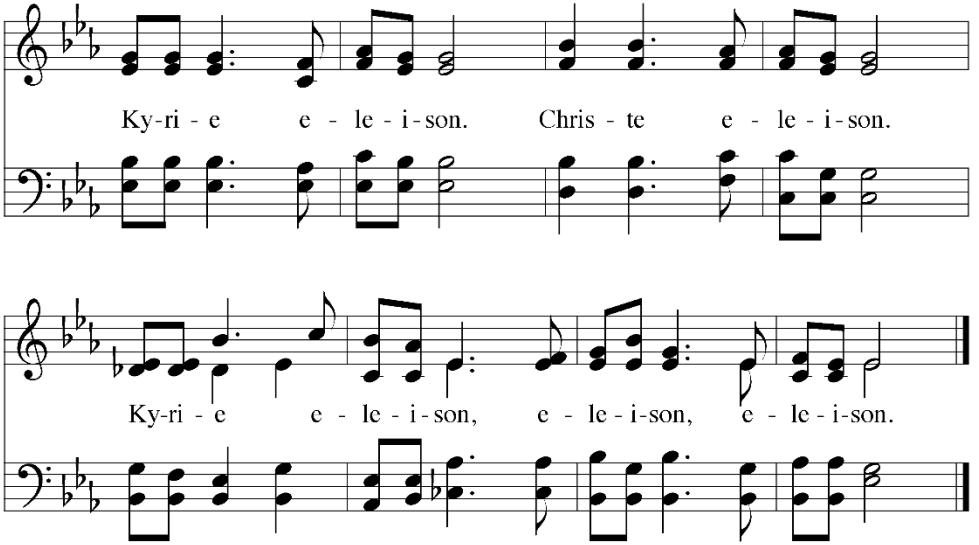
When the bell sounds, please stand as you are able and face the procession.

ADVENT DIALOGUE

The Spirit and the church cry out: **Come, Lord Jesus!**
All those who await his appearance pray: **Come, Lord Jesus!**
The whole creation pleads: **Come, Lord Jesus! May it be so.**

PROCESSION ***Kyrie Eleison***

"Kyrie eleison" means "Lord, have mercy" and is part of the traditional liturgy of the church. The assembly sings the Kyrie refrain. The cantor sings each petition, and the refrain is repeated.



Cantor:

1. For those who | wait for peace,* that you deliver the nations from warfare | and division. *Refrain*
2. For those who | wait for healing,* that you renew them in body, | mind, and spirit. *Refrain*
3. For those who | wait for you,* that you fill the world with your | holy presence. *Refrain*

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

Blessed be the holy Trinity, ☩ one God, whose home is heaven and earth,
whose salvation is sure.
Amen.
Let us confess our sin in the presence of God and of one another.

You may kneel or sit. Silence is kept for reflection.

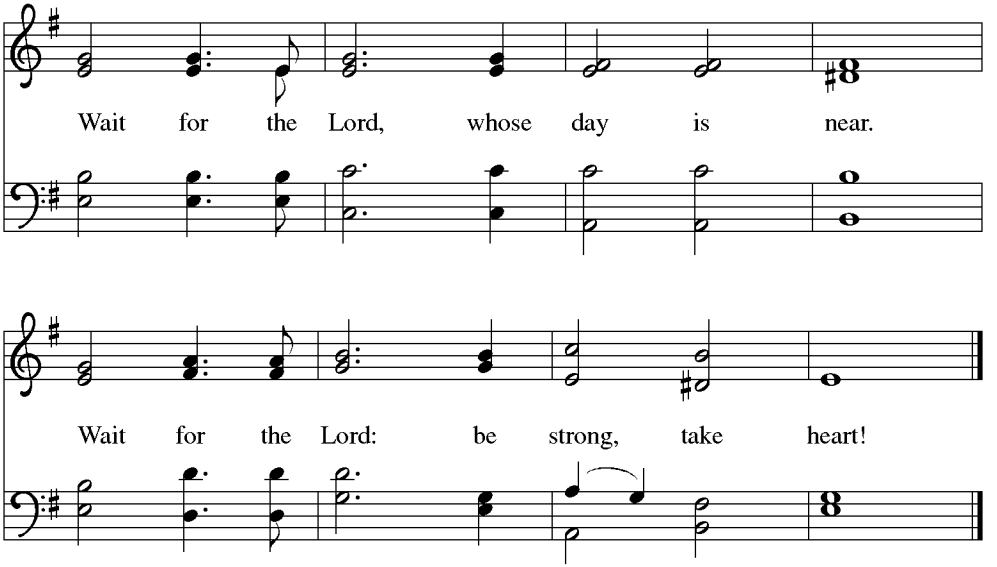
Long-expected God,
we confess that we look to ourselves
for the peace and security only you can provide.
We reach for swords and spears,
reluctant to release our grip on the ways of war.
We become impatient while waiting,
and weary of keeping awake.
Free us from self-reliance,
and teach us to live in harmony with our neighbors.
Increase our trust in your timing,
and awaken us to your advent among us,
that we may abound in the hope you have promised. Amen.

God judges us not as we deserve, but according to God's own righteousness.
☩ You are freed and forgiven, saved by grace, and welcomed by Jesus the Savior.
Amen.

Please stand as you are able.

LIGHTING THE ADVENT WREATH **ELW 262 *Wait for the Lord***

The refrain is sung three times as the advent wreath is lighted.
During the second time the cantor sings the verse.



Verse: Prepare the way for the Lord. Make a straight path for God. Prepare the way for the Lord.

GREETING
From the one who was, who is, and who is to come: Grace and peace be with you all.
And also with you.

GATHERING SONG **ELW 256 *Comfort, Comfort Now My People***

PRAYER OF THE DAY

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.

Please be seated.

WELCOME

(10:30) DISMISSAL FOR CHILDREN'S CHURCH

WORD

FIRST READING **Isaiah 11:1-10**

Isaiah describes the coming of a future, ideal ruler who will renew David's royal line (the stump of Jesse). Gifted by the spirit of God, this ruler will reign with perfect justice. Enmity and danger will be restored to harmony and peaceful coexistence.

1 A shoot shall come out from the stump of Jesse,
and a branch shall grow out of his roots.
2 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.
3 His delight shall be in the fear of the LORD.

He shall not judge by what his eyes see
or decide by what his ears hear,
4 but with righteousness he shall judge for the poor
and decide with equity
for the oppressed of the earth;
he shall strike the earth with the rod of his mouth,
and with the breath of his lips
he shall kill the wicked.
5 Righteousness shall be the belt around his waist
and faithfulness the belt around his loins.

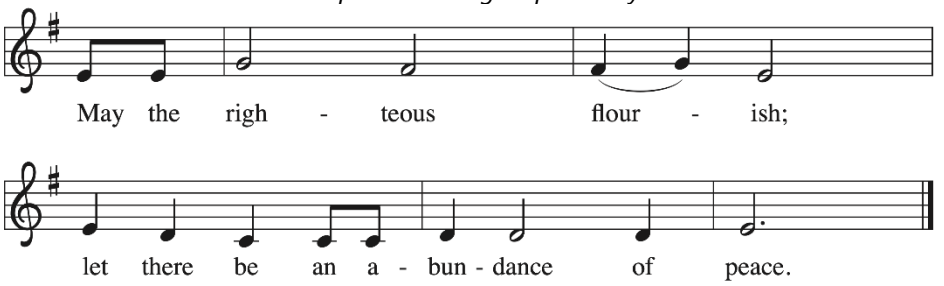
6 The wolf shall live with the lamb;
the leopard shall lie down with the kid;
the calf and the lion will feed together,
and a little child shall lead them.
7 The cow and the bear shall graze;
their young shall lie down together;
and the lion shall eat straw like the ox.
8 The nursing child shall play over the hole of the asp,
and the weaned child shall put its hand
on the adder's den.
9 They will not hurt or destroy
on all my holy mountain,
for the earth will be full of the knowledge of the LORD
as the waters cover the sea.

10 On that day the root of Jesse shall stand as a signal to the peoples; the nations shall inquire of him, and his dwelling shall be glorious.

The word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

PSALM **Psalm 72:1-7, 18-19**

The cantor sings the refrain, and the congregation repeats it.
The psalm is sung responsively.



1 Give the king your jus- | tice, O God,
and your righteousness to | the king's son;
2 **that he may rule your | people righteously**
and the | poor with justice;
3 that the mountains may bring prosperity | to the people,
and the | hills, in righteousness.
4 **Let him defend the needy a- | mong the people,**
rescue the poor, and crush | the oppressor. ***Refrain***
5 May he live as long as the sun and | moon endure,
from one generation | to another.
6 **Let him come down like rain upon | the mown field,**
like showers that wa- | ter the earth.
7 In his time may the | righteous flourish;
and let there be an abundance of peace till the moon shall | be no more.
18 **Blessed are you, LORD God, the | God of Israel;**
you alone do | wondrous deeds!
19 And blessed be your glorious | name forever,
and may all the earth be filled with your glory. A- | men. Amen. ***Refrain***

SECOND READING **Romans 15:4-13**

God's promise to include Gentiles within the circle of God's blessed people has been fulfilled in Jesus Christ. Christians live out their unity by welcoming and encouraging each other just as Christ has welcomed them into God's family.

4 Whatever was written in former days was written for
our instruction, so that by steadfastness and by the
encouragement of the scriptures we might have hope.
5 May the God of steadfastness and encouragement
grant you to live in harmony with one another, in
accordance with Christ Jesus, 6 so that together you may
with one voice glorify the God and Father of our Lord
Jesus Christ.

7 Welcome one another, therefore, just as Christ has
welcomed you, for the glory of God. 8 For I tell you that
Christ has become a servant of the circumcised on behalf
of the truth of God in order that he might confirm the

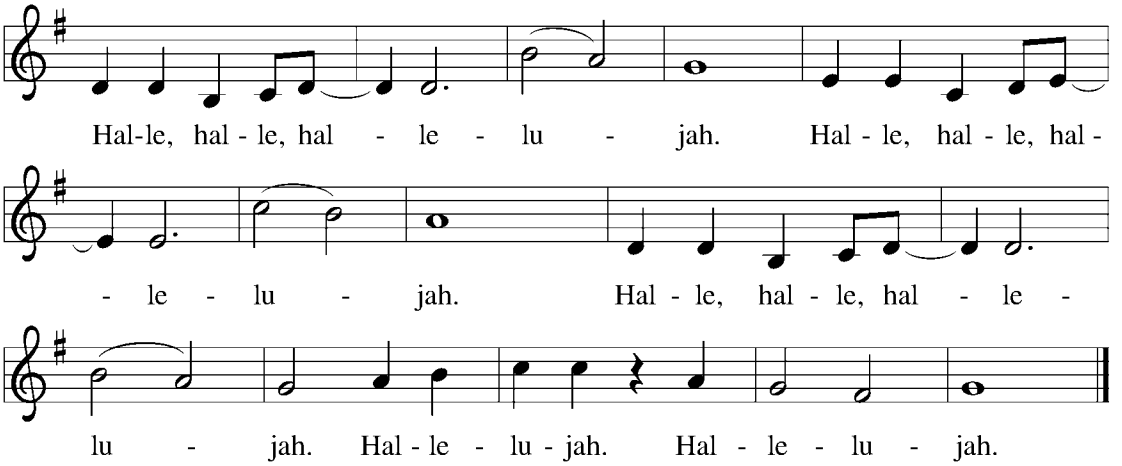
promises given to the ancestors [9] and that the gentiles
might glorify God for his mercy. As it is written,
"Therefore I will confess you among the gentiles
and sing praises to your name";
[10] and again he says,
"Rejoice, O gentiles, with his people";
[11] and again,
"Praise the Lord, all you gentiles,
and let all the peoples praise him";
[12] and again Isaiah says,
"The root of Jesse shall come,
the one who rises to rule the gentiles;
in him the gentiles shall hope."
[13] May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in
believing, so that you may abound in hope by the power
of the Holy Spirit.

The word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

Please stand as you are able for the Gospel

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION **ELW 172 *Halle, Halle, Hallelujah***

The congregation sings the Alleluia. The cantor sings the verse, and the congregation repeats the Alleluia.



Verse: Prepare the way | of the Lord. All flesh shall see the salva- | tion of God. (Luke 3:4, 6)*

GOSPEL **Matthew 3:1-12**

The holy gospel according to Matthew. **Glory to you, O Lord.**

[1] In those days John the Baptist appeared in the
wilderness of Judea, proclaiming, [2] "Repent, for the
kingdom of heaven has come near." [3] 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.' "
[4] Now John wore clothing of camel's hair with a leather
belt around his waist, and his food was locusts and wild
honey. [5] Then Jerusalem and all Judea and all the region
around the Jordan were going out to him, [6] and they
were baptized by him in the River Jordan, confessing
their sins.
[7] 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? [8] Therefore, bear fruit worthy of
repentance, [9] 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.
[10] 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.
[11] "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. 12 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 Gospel of the Lord. **Praise to you, O Christ.**

Please be seated.

Sermon **Pastor Michael Coffey**

Please stand as you are able.

Hymn of the Day **ELW 264 *Prepare the Royal Highway***

During Advent the creed is omitted.

Prayers of Intercession

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.

Peace

The peace of the Lord be with you always. **And also with you.**

Greet one another with the peace of Christ. After the Peace, please be seated.

Birthday and Anniversary Prayers of Blessing

Announcements

Meal

Offering

An offering is gathered for the mission of the church, including the care of those in need.
Offering plates are on the welcome table in the narthex before and after the service.

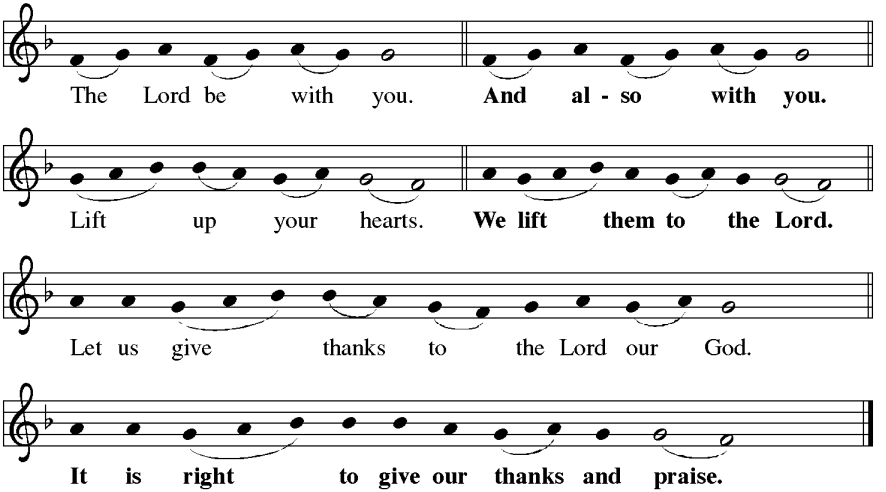
Musical Offering **(8:00) *Comfort, Comfort Ye My People*** **M. Burkhardt**
(10:30) *Prepare the Royal Highway* **arr. Sondra K. Tucker**

Please stand as you are able.

Offering Prayer

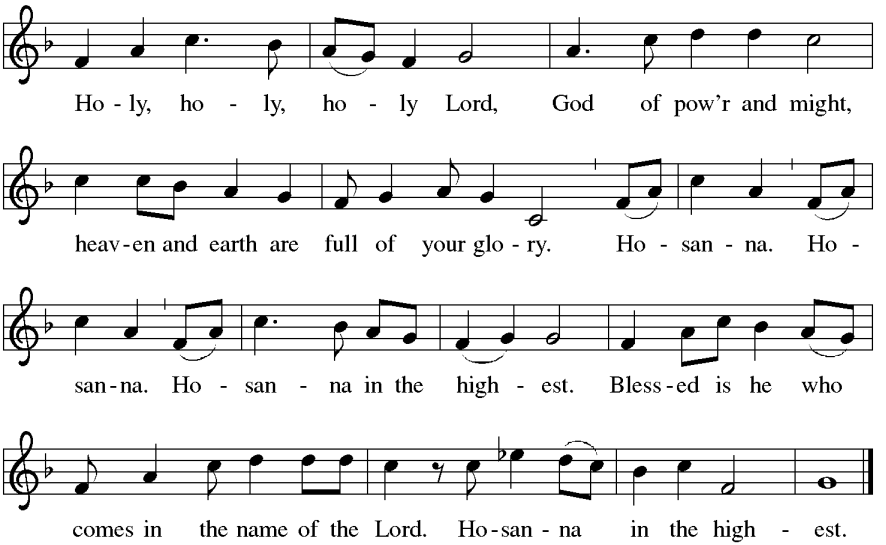
God of abundance,
we bring before you the precious fruits of your creation,
and with them our very lives.
Teach us patience and hope as we care for all those in need
until the coming of your Son, our Savior and Lord. Amen.

Dialogue and Preface



It is indeed right… we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

HOLY, HOLY, HOLY **ELW Setting Three page 144**



THANKSGIVING AT THE TABLE

Holy and mysterious God… Hoping beyond hope, we proclaim the mystery of faith:
Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again.

Remembering all your promises fulfilled in Jesus… with eager expectation we cry out:
Come, Lord Jesus!

Send your Spirit into this broken world… and be filled with the courage to love.
Come, Holy Spirit!
All praise and thanks to you, holy God… here and now and into the great beyond.
Amen.

Lord's Prayer

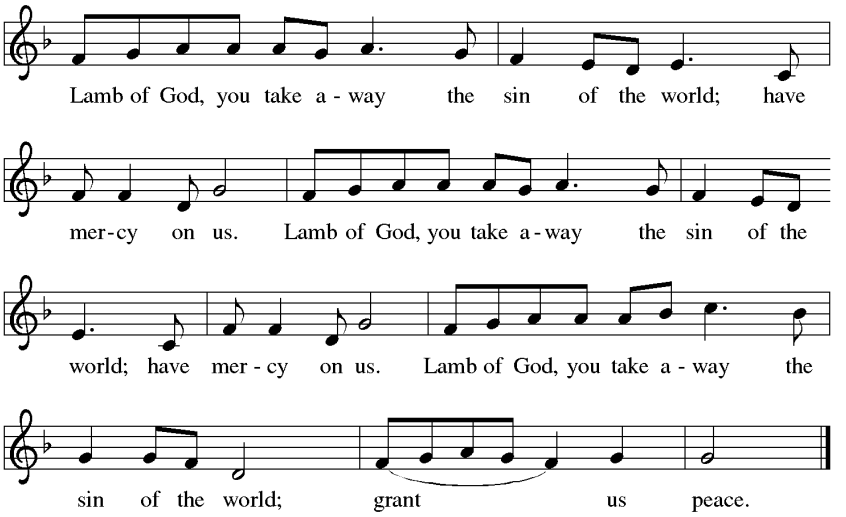
Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name,
thy kingdom come, thy will be done,
on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread;
and forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those who trespass against us;
and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory,
forever and ever. Amen.

Invitation

We welcome all baptized Christians to receive communion. Children who are communing in other churches are invited to commune here. All who are not receiving are invited to come forward for a blessing—you may indicate you want a blessing by holding your hands together or crossing your arms in front of you. Please follow the guidance from the ushers. Gluten-free wafers are available on request. Wine is red; grape juice is white. Those unable to come forward, remain seated and communion will be brought to you.

Lamb of God

ELW Setting Three page 146



MUSIC DURING COMMUNION

MUSIC ***O Lord, What a Morning*** **R. Billingham**

SONG **ELW 496** ***One Bread, One Body***

Please stand as you are able.

TABLE BLESSING

Christ has come to us now, renewing us in this sacred meal.
Live in the hope of Christ who will come to make all things new.
Amen.

SONG AFTER COMMUNION **ELW 439 stanza 1** ***Soon and Very Soon***

Soon and very soon, we are going to see the King.
Soon and very soon, we are going to see the King.
Soon and very soon, we are going to see the King.
Hallelujah, hallelujah, we are going to see the King!

SENDING

BLESSING

May God who comes among us,
Father, ☩ Son, and Holy Spirit,
grant you patience in waiting,
peace in the darkness,
and good news to share today and always.
Amen.

SENDING SONG **ELW 239** ***Hark, the Glad Sound!***

DISMISSAL

Go in peace. Christ is coming.
Thanks be to God.

POSTLUDE ***Shepherd's Noel*** **J. Wayne Kerr**

Gospel Message

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.

Commemorations

Ambrose, Bishop of Milan, died 397 **Sunday, December 7, 2025**
While a governor of northern Italy, Ambrose was elected bishop of Milan on the same day he was baptized. He was a famous preacher, a writer of hymns we still sing today, and helped lead St. Augustine to faith.

Lucy, martyr, died 304 **Saturday, December 13, 2025**
Lucy was a young Christian of Sicily who was martyred during the persecutions under Emperor Diocletian. Her celebration became particularly important in Sweden and Norway, perhaps because the feast of Lucia (whose name means "light") originally fell on the shortest day of the year.

From sundaysandseasons.com. Copyright © 2025 Augsburg Fortress. All rights reserved.