



PREPARE FOR JESUS

**WELCOME TO
ST. JOHN'S LUTHERAN CHURCH & SCHOOL**
2415 Silas Creek Parkway
Winston-Salem, NC 27103
www.stjohnsws.com

**Traditional Service
The Second Sunday in Advent**
(Divine Service Setting Four)
December 6, 2015 – 10:45 a.m.

***St. John's Mission: To help one more person get to Heaven
by pointing them to Jesus Christ.***

PAVE THE WAY FOR JESUS! Getting ready for Christmas means a lot of preparation. God is pleased you took time to get ready to worship Him this morning. Advent is also a time to prepare our hearts spiritually for celebrating Christ's birth. We pray that you also will be excellently prepared to rejoice in Jesus this Christmas and throughout your life.

† Prayer Before Worship †

Come O Holy Spirit and prepare my heart to celebrate Jesus and His coming to be my Savior. Bless my worship today as I hear Your Word and apply it to my daily life that I might seek that which is excellent. Help me share the Good News of Your forgiveness and salvation in this Advent season. In the name of Jesus, my coming Savior, I pray. Amen.

Prelude

Let All Mortal Flesh Keep Silence

arr. Charles Callahan

Welcome

(Please Stand)

Processional Hymn #343 *Prepare the Royal Highway*

Confession and Absolution

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

C: Amen.

P: Our help is in the name of the Lord,

C: who made heaven and earth.

P: If You, O Lord, kept a record of sins, O Lord, who could stand?

C: But with You there is forgiveness; therefore You are feared.

P: Since we are gathered to hear God's Word, call upon Him in prayer and praise, let us first consider our unworthiness and confess before God and one another that we have sinned in thought, word, and deed, and that we cannot free ourselves from our sinful condition. Together as His people let us take refuge in the infinite mercy of God, our heavenly Father, seeking His grace for the sake of Christ, and saying: God, be merciful to me, a sinner.

C: Almighty God, have mercy upon us, forgive us our sins, and lead us to everlasting life. Amen.

P: 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.

C: Amen.

Lighting of the Advent Wreath

P: A shoot will come up from the stump of Jesse.

C: The Spirit of the Lord will rest on Him.

P: He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and with fire.

C: Prepare the way for the Lord, make straight paths for Him.

P: Two flames shoot up in preparation for the coming of our Lord.

C: Restore us, O God; make Your face shine upon us, that we may be saved.

P: Let us pray.

O Lord Jesus Christ, the true hope who comes into the world to give hope to everyone, bless us as we light the candles of this wreath in preparation for Your coming, and so enkindle our hearts with the fire of Your love that we may receive You with joy and gladness and evermore remain steadfast in the faith; for You live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C: Amen.

Choral Call to Advent

A voice cries out in the wilderness:

“Prepare a way for the Lord!”

A voice cries out in the wilderness:

“Make straight a highway for God!”

The first and second candles on the wreath are lit.

Kyrie

One measure introduction



G Lord, have mer - cy; Christ, have mer - cy; Lord, have mer - cy.

Prayer of the Day

P: The Lord be with You.

C: And also with you.

P: Let us pray.

Father, come fill our hearts with thankfulness and praise for all the ways You bless us in both body and soul. Focused upon Your saving work, enrich us today with Your gifts, that we may boldly live as Your partners in the Gospel; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C: Amen.

(Be Seated)

Old Testament

Malachi 3:1-7b

(A messenger will precede the sudden arrival of the Lord.)

¹“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. ²But 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. ³He 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. ⁴Then the offering of Judah and Jerusalem will be pleasing to the LORD as in the days of old and as in former years. ⁵“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. ⁶“For I the LORD do not change; therefore you, O children of Jacob, are not consumed. ⁷From the days of your fathers you have turned aside from my statutes and have not kept them. Return to me, and I will return to you, says the LORD of hosts. But you say, ‘How shall we return?’

L: This is the Word of the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God.

Epistle

Philippians 1:2-11

(Paul prays that God’s people would abound in love and approve that which is excellent and remain pure and blameless when Christ comes.)

²Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. ³I thank my God in all my remembrance of you, ⁴always in every prayer of mine for you all making my prayer with joy, ⁵because of your partnership in the gospel from the first day until now. ⁶And 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. ⁷It 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. ⁸For God is my witness, how I yearn for you all with the affection of Christ Jesus. ⁹And it is my prayer that your love may abound more and more, with knowledge and all discernment, ¹⁰so that you may approve what is excellent, and so be pure and blameless for the day of Christ, ¹¹filled with the fruit of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ, to the glory and praise of God.

L: This is the Word of the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God.

(Please Stand)

Alleluia and Verse

One measure introduction



C Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia.

Cantor: Prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight; all flesh shall see the salvation of God.



C Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia.

Holy Gospel

Luke 3:1-14

(John preaches a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins.)

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

C: Glory to You, O Lord.

¹In 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, ²during the high priesthood of Annas and Caiaphas, the word of God came to John the son of Zechariah in the wilderness. ³And he 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 Isaiah the prophet, "The voice of one crying 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 become straight, and the rough places shall become level ways, ⁶and all flesh shall see the salvation of God.'" ⁷He 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? ⁸Bear 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. ⁹Even 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." ¹⁰And the crowds asked him, "What then shall we do?" ¹¹And he answered them, "Whoever has two tunics is to share with him who has none, and whoever has food is to do likewise." ¹²Tax collectors also came to be baptized and said to him, "Teacher, what shall we do?" ¹³And he said to them, "Collect no more than you are authorized to do." ¹⁴Soldiers 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."

P: This is the Gospel of the Lord.

C: Praise to You, O Christ

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.**

(Be Seated)

Children's Message – Pastor Schoolcraft

Hymn of the Day #347 *Comfort, Comfort Ye My People*

Sermon

“Approve What is Excellent”

Philippians 1:2-11

Offering

Anthem

On Jordan's Bank the Baptist Cry

Claudio Monteverdi

(Please Stand)

Prayer of the Church

P: Lord God, we were captives to sin and Satan, and You have freed us. You have done excellent things for us, and we are filled with joy. As You listened to the prayers of ancient captives, listen to our prayers and graciously answer them for the sake of Your Son, our Savior.

C: **Look upon those who are in tears due to their personal struggles and sorrows. Bring comfort and relief to those who are abused in their homes and relationships.**

P: O Lord, Your Word promises that those who sow in tears will reap with songs of joy.
Today there are those among us who are in tears due to trouble, hardship and loss of loved ones.

C: Bring joy to those whom we now name in our hearts that they may find strength in Your promises. (a brief silence)

P: Lord Jesus, we confess that You will come again to judge the living and the dead. Many are unprepared for Your arrival. As you sent John to prepare the way, send us into the world where we live to prepare the hearts of people for Your arrival.

C: Give us the words we need to share and guide our actions that Your Kingdom would come here on earth as it is in heaven.

P: We thank You, God, for the Church and all our partners in the faith. Bless all whom we love with Your Holy Spirit that their love would abound more and more in knowledge and depth of insight.

C: Help us discern what is best, keep us pure and blameless until the day when Jesus, Your Son, shall come in glory.

P: Bless our president, governor, members of Congress, judges and all in positions of authority. Bring peace to warring nations.

C: Enable the Good News of the Savior to be freely shared that many people will be prepared to meet the Savior when He comes.

P: We pray for all who are struggling with illness and health issues, especially
Strengthen their faith and grant them relief and renewed health according to Your will.
Lord, in Your mercy,

C: Hear our prayer.

P: O Lord, we thank you for your continued guidance as our President, John Denninger prepares a call list for St. John's.

C: Bless him and us with your Holy Spirit as we prepare for our next Settled Pastor.

(Other Petitions offered here.)

P: Into Your hands, O Lord, we commend all for whom we pray, trusting in Your mercy through Your Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord.

C: 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.

Benedicamus and Benediction

P: Let us bless the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God.

P: 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.

C: Amen.

Recessional Hymn #349 *Hark the Glad Sound*

Dismissal

P: Go in Peace and Serve the Lord!

C: Thanks be to God!

Postlude

Noel

Jean-Francois Dandrieu

Advent Midweek Worship
Wednesdays - 7:00 p.m.

“THE POWER OF CHRIST PREVAILS”

The Church Year begins in Advent by telling the story of our Lord’s earthly ministry. As we prepare to celebrate His first coming at Christmas, we also look to the final resurrection when He will come again on the Last Day. We ask the Lord to prepare our hearts to make ready the way for the Lord. In our midweek meditations, we will consider the power of hope, the power of peace, and the power of love. Claim the blessings God’s Holy Spirit offers you gather and prepare the celebration of our Savior’s Birth. Our Advent Services each Wednesday will use the Holden Evening Prayer as our order of worship.

Dec. 9 “The Power of Peace in Christ”

Plan to join us for Supper at 5:30-6:30pm served by the Fellowship Ministry Team. Our menu will be: Spaghetti, salad & bread. Desserts provided by members. Plan to join us for Fellowship and Worship.

St. John’s School Christmas Programs

Grades three through five will present their Christmas program on Wednesday December 9 for chapel at 8:30am and on Thursday evening December 10 at 7pm for families and friends.

The preschool children will present their Christmas program on Wednesday December 16 for chapel at 8:30am and on Thursday evening December 17 at 7pm for families and friends.

We love to have you join us as we proclaim the joyous news of Jesus’ birth!



SPECIAL WORSHIP SERVICES

Thursday, December 24 – 6:00 p.m. Christmas Eve Family Worship

Thursday, December 24 – 8:00 p.m. Christmas Eve Candlelight
Worship w/Holy Communion

Friday, December 25 – 10:30 a.m. Christmas Day Worship
w/Holy Communion

Thursday, December 31 – 7:00 p.m. New Year's Eve Worship
w/Holy Communion

Did you pick up the Separate Announcement sheet **"Weekly News "** in the church entry?



St. John's

LUTHERAN

Church & School

Our Sunday Worship - Morning services are at
8:30 a.m. and 10:45 a.m. Sunday School and
Adult Bible Class both begin at 9:45 a.m.

A Great Place to Grow in Christ

*As a part of our outreach ministry, we have a
Preschool/Pre-K program and Kindergarten through 8th grade.
All programs/grades have full-time care available.*

Rev. Roger P. Schoolcraft,
Intentional Interim Pastor
725-1651 x406 (office)
336-655-5710 (cell)
pastor@stjohnsww.org

Mark Edmiston, Principal
Tom Baldwin, Director of Admissions and Community Relations
Michael Zeoli, Director of Music for Contemporary Worship
Frances Burmeister, Director of Music for Traditional Worship

Altar Flowers are given to the Glory of God by Norman and Leatha Drouillard in
memory of Norman Drouillard Sr.

Ushers: Bob Hoisington, Holly Richardson, Butch Roberts & John Williams