

NEXT STEP: STUDY & SHARE

READINGS

Isaiah 11:1-10

Psalm 72:1-7, 18-19

May the righteous flourish; let there be an abundance of peace. (v7)

Romans 15:4-13

Matthew 3:1-12

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 & peace; through Jesus Christ, our Savior & Lord, who lives & reigns with you & the Holy Spirit, one God, now & forever. Amen.

SERMON TEXT- Matthew 3:1-12

¹In those days John the Baptist appeared in the wilderness of Judea, proclaiming, ²“Repent, for the kingdom of heaven has come near.” ³This 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.’” ⁴Now John wore clothing of camel’s hair with a leather belt around his waist, & his food was locusts & wild honey. ⁵Then the people of Jerusalem & all Judea were going out to him, & all the region along the Jordan, ⁶and they were baptized by him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins. ⁷But when he saw many Pharisees & Sadducees coming for baptism, he said to them, “You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the wrath to come? ⁸Bear fruit worthy of repentance. ⁹Do 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. ¹⁰Even now the ax is lying at the root of the trees; every tree therefore that does not bear good fruit is cut down & thrown into the fire. ¹¹I baptize you with water for repentance, but one who is more powerful than I is coming after me; I am not worthy to carry his sandals. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit & fire. ¹²His winnowing fork is in his hand, & he will clear his threshing floor & will gather his wheat into the granary; but the chaff he will burn with unquenchable fire.”

LISTENING TO . . .

GOD- *Christian life is rooted in the Father, Son, & Holy Spirit*

1. Catch up on who St. John the Baptizer is. Read *Luke 1:5-25, 39-45, 57-66, 3:19-20, 7:18-25, 9:7-9*; check out Wikipedia, too en.wikipedia.org/wiki/John_the_Baptist especially the “comparative analysis.”
2. “Repent, for the kingdom of heaven has come near...Bear fruit worthy of repentance!” (vv2, 8). What might these fruits look like? See *Matthew 7:15-20, 21:28-46; John 15:1-8, 16; Romans 7:4-5; Galatians 5:22-26; Ephesians 5:6-11; Colossians 1:4-14; Hebrews 12:11, 13:15; James 3:17; 2 Peter 1:3-11*

EACH OTHER- *Sharing & growing with our brothers & sisters in Christ*

3. Mainstream Christians in our culture would likely accuse St. John of “taking his religion too far” (cf. v4, 14:6-12). How do these parables of Jesus challenge our (narrow) assumptions of what’s “too far”? See *Matthew 13*. What does the “Sermon on the Mount”? See *Matthew 4-6*
4. What does v9 warn against in our own families? See *John 8:31-59*. How can “the Holidays” help rekindle faithfulness across your family’s generations? How will you keep *Christ & Mass* (the old timey word for worship service) in Christmas?

NEIGHBORS- *Bearing fruit for those not yet our brothers & sisters*

5. How do you explain Advent to your neighbors? It’s a season of the church year focused on Jesus’ promised return, guaranteed by his nativity in Bethlehem. In other words, his second coming is secured by his first coming.
6. Read about ancient threshing & winnowing. How does this physical activity speak as a realistic metaphor to real, everyday life and its difficulties? What’s the hope in v12?

Compare with 1 Peter 1:7 en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Threshing en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Winnowing

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Second Sunday of Advent

12.04.22

Series: Guest List

Rev. Jared Stillions, STS

Wild Man

He brings his gift of full-throttle, full-throated, two-fisted faithfulness

-Notes-

KEY VERSE: 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.’” (v3)

-NEXT STEPS MEMORY VERSE-

Prepare the way of the Lord.

All flesh shall see the salvation of God. (*Luke 3:4, 6*)

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