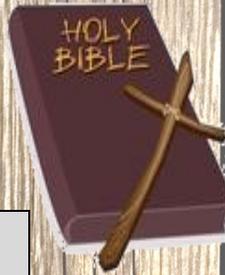


Our Saviour's & Balsamlund Lutheran Church; ELCA E-News

For December 6, 2020

DAILY BIBLE READINGS 12/6/20—12/12/20



SUNDAY-Revelation 1:1-20
MONDAY- Revelation 2:1-29
TUESDAY- Revelation 3:1-22
WEDNESDAY- Revelation 4:1-11
THURSDAY- Revelation 5:1-14
FRIDAY- Revelation 7:1-17
SATURDAY- Revelation 19:1-10



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12/6/20

10am Worship from OSLC on OSCL's Facebook page

12/9/20

5pm Finance Mtg. via Zoom
6:30pm Zoom with all Confirmation classes

12/13/20

10am Worship from Balsamlund on OSLC's Facebook page

As we head into winter, if you are not on Pastor Eric's call list, but would like to be, please contact Dawn at the OSLC office or Pastor Eric's cell phone.

Balsamlund Announcements

Because of the steep rise of COVID cases in our area, our milestone celebrations are postponed until a later date. We'll keep you updated as we go along.

OSLC Announcements

Thanks everyone who was able to help out this year! All the tags have been filled! All gifts should be in the church office by Dec 7th. Let's bring smiles to some local children's faces this Christmas.

Due to the rise in the number of cases and the Sebek School going with distant learning model till the end of Christmas break, we will continue with our on-line worship till the end of December.

Thanks to everyone who helped with the Thanksgiving Day dinner. We served 90 meals and raised over \$900.00 for the Sebek Food Shelf.

"A voice of one cries in the wilderness, 'Prepare the way of the Lord. Make his paths straight.'"

Isaiah prophesied it.

John the Baptist spoke it as a call of anticipation.

Mark recorded it for us to read today.

We're only three verses into the Gospel story and already God has called people from different times and places together in service of telling this story.

We're in the season of Advent, this season of preparation now, but it certainly feels different than usual. We're preparing for Christmas in ways we never have before. But no matter how our preparations this year may differ from years past or years ahead, the call from John of *the work of preparing* hasn't changed.

What does John call us to do?

Make a straight path as Jesus draws near.

In the church, we have a word for this act of moving in a new direction at the invitation of Jesus and that word is repentance.

Often repentance is a word thundered down from on high as a way of making us feel bad about the decisions we've made or the bad things we've done. But that isn't actually what repentance is.

Repentance simply means to turn and go in a different direction.

It's making a clear path where once a path through was muddied and overgrown.

Last week, the first step in our Advent series Lord, Stir Us to Dream invited us to lament - to cry out to God about the injustices in the world. To air out our grievances with God and let God know how the things that cause us grief, anger, and sadness.

Now this week, we turn to ourselves. Having lamented the injustices of the world, we turn our attention inward, and turn away from the injustices in our hearts. We turn away from our sin. We turn away from everything in our heart that goes against God or our neighbor, no matter what form it may take.

And we prepare.

We prepare a pathway for God to draw near this Advent season. We make a clear path in the wilderness of 2020. We cut away everything that takes us away from God and make a pathway in the hope and expectation that God will draw near.

For me this year, I'm spending my December being much more intentional about the screens in my life. Screens like my computer, cell phone, and television. They can often draw me away from spending time with God or serving my neighbor.

I wonder what it might be for you. I wonder what kind of concrete way you can turn toward God and your neighbor this Advent season as a way to prepare for God to draw near.

In this extra wilderness-y Advent season, my prayers are with you. I hope and pray that each of you can find some time, however brief, to prepare your hearts for the good news of God's arrival this Christmas.

Grace + Peace,
Pastor Eric