

Turning and Mending (Again)

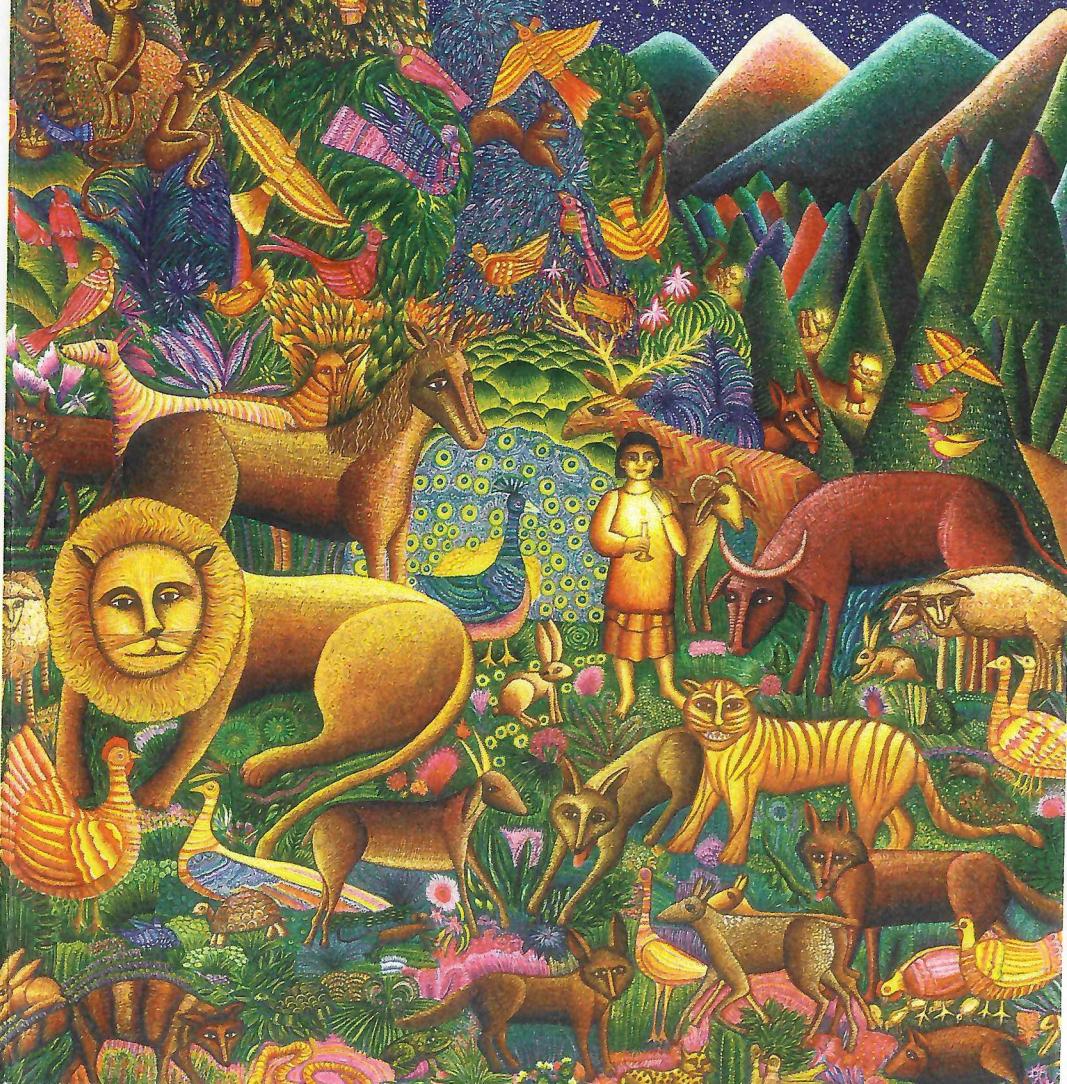
Being on the receiving end of sharp language can be heartbreaking. Indeed, words can wound—or worse. John the Baptizer, a key figure in our Advent narratives, finds himself at odds with other religious leaders of the time, and uses the tool he has (language) to call attention to their broken relationship. 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.

A little child shall lead them

ISAIAH 11:6



FRIEDENS LUTHERAN CHURCH

Second Sunday of Advent December 7, 2025

* Indicates for the congregation to stand if you are able.

Congregation responses are printed in **bold print**.

Liturgy and hymns are in the green hymnal unless indicated.

WELCOME, ANNOUNCEMENTS and PRELUDE

*CONFESSiON AND FORGIVENESS P. 56

*HYMN "Comfort, Comfort, Now my People". P. 29

*PRAYER OF THE DAY Spoken in unison.
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.

*HYMN OF PRAISE "Praise to the Father"
Praise to the Father for his loving kindness, Tenderly caring for his erring children; Praise him, all angels; praise him in the Heaven; Praise to the Father!

FIRST READING Isaiah 11:1-10

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.

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

Community Blood Drive

Trinity Lutheran Church social hall, 1220 W. Maple Street, Valley View. Tuesday, December 9, 1 PM – 6 PM. Call 1-800-733-2726 to register.

Follow the Star – Live Nativity and Pasta Dinner

Trinity Lutheran Church, December 13th, 4PM – 8PM, 300 W. Arch Street, Pottsville, PA. The Advent Dinner Cost: \$8.00.

Christmas Eve Service – Candlelight Service, December 24, 2025, 6:00 PM.

A Saying for the Day – Afterall, life's not about having more. It's about doing more with what you have!

Change in Address - Dirk Klinger, Room 205, Brookdale South Windsor, 1715 Ellington Road, South Windsor, CT. 06074

Today's Leaders

Service, Pastor Barry Spatz, with Holy Communion **Lector**, Lisa Maurer **Head Usher**, Dave Henninger **Ushers**, Christy Leiter, Damaris Merwine, Ed Tietsworth **Counters**, Mike & Sue Deiter **Greeters**, Janet & Ron Radel.

Flowers – In honor of Vicki's birthday by Jason, Katie, and Family.

Attendance: 35 (11/30/2025)

Offering. November 30, 2025	– Current Exp.:	\$1,121.00
	Other Offering:	\$0.00
	Total:	\$1,121.00

Weekly Offering Needed: \$2,638.92

Volunteers the Week of 12/14/2025 - Service, Damaris Merwine Organist, Harold Morgan Lector, Scott Deiter Counters, Kathryn Otto, TBD Head Usher, Dave Henninger Usher, Mike Allvord, Scott Allvord, Mike Deiter Greeters, AJ Kline & Ann Miller.

FRIEDENS EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH
 510 East Main St. PO Box 375, Hegins, PA 17938 ph. 570-682-9690
 Website: [HTTPS://www.thefriedenslutheran.com](https://www.thefriedenslutheran.com)
 Church e-mail: friedenslutheran4@gmail.com
Designated Pastor: Pastor Lee A. Diefenderfer, 1295 Red Dale Road,
 Orwigsburg, PA 17961, 610-858-4136
Council President: Damaris Merwine, 570-985-0644
Worship time – 10:30 AM

In the name of Jesus Christ, we strive to serve all people in our community and world. We extend a warm welcome to all visitors who are worshipping with us today. Please sign the guest register in the narthex and complete a visitor's pew card, placing it in the offering plate.

December 7, 2025 * 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.

Calendar

Today's Service, Pastor Barry Spatz with Holy Communion, Congregational meeting and Dinner.

December 14, Message, Damaris Merwine.

December 21, Sunday School Christmas Program.

December 24, Pastor Barry Spatz.

December 28, Message, Lisa Maurer.

Announcements

- **12/7/2025** – Annual Congregational Meeting immediately following the worship service. Adoption of the 2026 budget and election of church council members.
- **12/20/2025** – Sunday School Program practice.
- **12/21/2025** – Sunday School Program.
- **12/24/2025** – Christmas Eve Candlelight Service with Holy Communion, 6 PM.

Prayer Corner

November 23: Tom Barnhart.

November 16: James Sell.

Lighting of the Advent Candles.

PSALM 72: 1-7, 18-19

Read responsively.

¹ Give the king your justice, 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 among the people, rescue the poor, and crush the oppressor.

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 water 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. **Amen.**

SECOND READING Romans 15: 4-13

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.**

The Holy Gospel according to Matthew.

Glory to you, O Lord.

***GOSPEL** Matthew 3:1-12

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.*

CHILDREN'S & CONGREGATIONAL MESSAGE by Pastor Spatz
HYMN "O Living Bread from Heaven"

P. 197

*NICENE CREED

We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all that is, seen and unseen. We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, eternally begotten of the Father, God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, of one Being with the Father. Through him all things were made. For us and for our salvation he came down from heaven; by the power of the Holy Spirit, he became incarnate from the virgin Mary, and was made man. For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate; he suffered death and was buried. On the third day he rose again in accordance with the Scriptures; he ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead, and his kingdom will have no end. We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son. With the Father and the Son he is worshiped and glorified. He has spoken through the prophets. We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church. We acknowledge one Baptism for the forgiveness of sins. We look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come.

Amen.

*PRAYERS God of grace, *hear our prayer.*

*SHARING OF THE PEACE
The peace of the Lord be with you always. And also with you.

OFFERING/OFFERTORY

*DOXOLOGY
Praise God, from whom all blessings flow, praise him, all creatures here below; Praise him above, ye heavenly host; Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.

*OFFERING PRAYER

*THE GREAT THANKSGIVING
The Lord be with you. And also with you. Lift up your hearts. We lift them to the Lord. Let us give thanks to the Lord our God. It is right to give God thanks and praise.

*PREFACE

"HOLY, OLY, HOLY"
(Spoken)
Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might, heaven and earth are full of your glory. Hosanna in the highest. Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest.

*WORDS OF INSTITUTION

*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.

HOLY COMMUNION

*COMMUNION PRAYER
We give you thanks almighty God, that you have refreshed us through the healing power of this gift of life; and we pray that in your mercy you would strengthen us, through this gift, in faith toward you and in fervent love toward one another; for the sake of Jesus Christ our Lord. AMEN

*BLESSING

*SENDING HYMN "On Jordan's Banks" Vs. 1-4

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*DISMISSAL
Go in peace. Serve the Lord. Thanks be to God