

Living Water Fellowship

3rd Sunday in Advent - 11th December 2022

COME TO JESUS

SONG: Infant Holy (LHS 741)

WELCOME and PRAYER OF THE DAY:

GROW IN HIS GRACE

BIBLE READING: Luke 3:7-18

⁷ When the crowds came to John for baptism, he said, "You brood of snakes! Who warned you to flee the coming wrath? ⁸ Prove by the way you live that you have repented of your sins & turned to God. Don't just say to each other, 'We're safe, for we are descendants of Abraham.' That means nothing, for I tell you, God can create children of Abraham from these very stones. ⁹ Even now the axe of God's judgment is poised, ready to sever the roots of the trees. Yes, every tree that does not produce good fruit will be chopped down & thrown into the fire." ¹⁰ The crowds asked, "What should we do?"

¹¹ John replied, "If you have two shirts, give one to the poor. If you have food, share it with those who are hungry." ¹² Even corrupt tax collectors came to be baptized & asked, "Teacher, what should we do?" ¹³ He replied, "Collect no more taxes than the government requires." ¹⁴ "What should we do?" asked some soldiers. John replied, "Don't extort money or make false accusations. And be content with your pay."

¹⁵ Everyone was expecting the Messiah to come soon, & they were eager to know whether John might be the Messiah. ¹⁶ John answered their questions by saying, "I baptize you with water; but someone is coming soon who is greater than I am—so much greater that I'm not even worthy to be his slave & untie the straps of his sandals. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit & with fire. ¹⁷ He is ready to separate the chaff from the wheat with his winnowing fork. Then he will clean up the threshing area, gathering the wheat into his barn but burning the chaff with never-ending fire." ¹⁸ John used many such warnings as he announced the Good News to the people.

CHILDREN'S TIME:

SONG: Star Child (AT 520)

FAITH CHAT:

1. Given the circumstances in our world, how does hope play a role in your day?
2. What is one thing you are asking God to accomplish in your life this Christmas?

THE MESSAGE: *EXPERIENCE CHRISTMAS! HOLD THE HOPE*

SONG: Away in a Manger (Together at Christmas 9)

PRAYERS:

The Communion:

Words of Institution & The Lord's Prayer:

Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name. Your kingdom come, your will be done on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us. Lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power, & the glory are yours now & forever. Amen.

Worship Video during Communion: No Longer Slaves (Zach Williams)

GO IN HIS POWER

BLESSING:

**† _____, child of God,
Christ holds you in his hope for the world!
Amen.**

Announcements:

SONG: Mary's Boy Child (Together at Christmas 52)

SHOW HIS LOVE

Group Bible Study/Discussion:

1. Read Luke 3:7-18. What questions immediately come to mind? What do you hear God say to you as you read it a few times to yourself? What do you find to be most important in the texts? Why?
2. How would you describe John's message & style? Do you think anyone would listen to such preaching today? If so, why? If not, why not? What's significant about John calling the crowds "brood of snakes"? What is he implying? Is he correct?
3. What does it mean to "repent"? Do you have to "feel" something in particular to repent? If so, what? If not, what is repentance?
4. Why is an ancestry of faith not the same as having personal faith? What's the cost of trying to live from someone else's belief instead of your own? What does John mean by, "God can create children of Abraham from these very stones"?
5. What seems radical about John's message? What's the connection between the "roots" & the "fruit" of the tree as John uses those words? How would you hear & interpret those words today?
6. Why did people think John might be the Messiah? How is that confusion justified? But how does John differentiate himself from Jesus? What does his imagery indicate? Read also John 3:30 (including the immediate surrounding texts). What else does John say about his ministry compared to Jesus'? How does that happen? What should our attitude be toward what God does in our lives & how God uses us in the lives of others?
7. Note in Lk 3:3, John is "preaching that people should be baptized to show that they had repented of their sins & turned to God to be forgiven." How do his answers to "What should we do?" begin to spell out how a restored relationship with God transforms a person's life?
8. What will be the difference between John's baptism & the Messiah's? How does that come to pass in the life of Jesus & the early church? What is the Messiah's role in judgment? (vs 17) [See also John 3:17-21 and John 5:24-30]
9. Why should warnings also be couched in the good news of the gospel? Why should the good news of the gospel also include warnings?
10. The gospel could be told as a story of rebellion, restoration, & rejoicing. How does that pattern exhibit itself in your life? How have you experienced being restored by & then rejoicing in your relationship with Jesus? With whom can you share that this week?