

10 December 2023

Second Sunday of Advent

St. John's:  
Making and Maturing  
Disciples of Jesus Christ

PREPARE THE WAY OF  
THE LORD

Make straight in the desert  
A highway for our God.

~ISAIAH 40:3

ST. JOHN'S EVANGELICAL CHURCH  
211 EAST CARROL STREET  
KENTON, OH 43326

# St. John's Evangelical Church

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## **“Making and Maturing Disciples of Jesus Christ”**

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### **Second Sunday of Advent**

**December 10, 2023**

*Nursery is provided off the sanctuary for Infants – Kindergarten.*

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### **Welcome & Announcements (Greet online viewers)**

**Prelude**

*Trio on French Carol*

D. H. Hegarty

**\*Hymn #113**

*Angels We Have Heard on High*

**\*Call to Worship**

**Psalm 85:8-10**

L: Let me hear what God the Lord will speak,  
for He will speak peace to His people, to His saints;

**C: but let them not turn back to folly.**

L: Surely His salvation is near to those who fear Him,

**C: that glory may dwell in our land.**

L: Steadfast love and faithfulness meet;

**C: righteousness and peace kiss each other.**

### **Advent Wreath Lighting**

Fire burns. It hurts. It can destroy. Fire also gives warmth and light. The coming of Christ is both a day of judgment and a day of promise. Two candles, flickering brightly, help us remember that the coming of Christ has many meanings.

**Scripture:** “Steadfast love and faithfulness will meet; righteousness and peace will kiss each other. Faithfulness will spring up from the ground, and righteousness will look down from the sky” (**Psalm 85:10-11**).

*The first two blue/purple candles are lit.*

Light two candles; see them glow  
Brightly, so that all may know  
How two candles show the way  
Making our darkness bright as God's day.

**Prayer:** Dear God, we have much to do and we are not sure we will be ready for the day of Your coming. In Advent's light, help us to see what is important: to be who You want us to be, and to do what You would have us do. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

**\*Gloria Patri**

**Let Us Pray Unto the Lord:**

The Pastoral Prayer

Missing Person: Raymond Williams – Akron, OH

Mission of the Month: Love Inc.

The Lord's Prayer (*Debts/Debtors*)

**Children's Message**

**Preparing the Way**

Isaiah 4:3-4

**Chancel Choir**

*Emmanuel, Expected Jesus* Wesley/Williams

**Giving of Tithes and Offerings:**

Offering Prayer

Offerings can be placed in the baskets in back of sanctuary

**\*Doxology**

**Scripture**

**Isaiah 40:1-11**

**Mark 1:1-8**

**Sermon**

**Prepare the Way**

**\*Hymn #120**

*Joy to the World*

**\*Benediction**

**Postlude**

*In Excelsis Deo*

Traditional French Carol

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\*— Those who are able, please stand

## **Scripture Readings (ESV):**

### **Isaiah 40:1-11:**

<sup>1</sup>Comfort, comfort My people, says your God.

<sup>2</sup>Speak tenderly to Jerusalem,  
and cry to her

that her warfare is ended,

that her iniquity is pardoned,

that she has received from the LORD's hand  
double for all her sins.

<sup>3</sup>A voice cries:

“In the wilderness prepare the way of the LORD;  
make straight in the desert a highway for our God.

<sup>4</sup>Every valley shall be lifted up,  
and every mountain and hill be made low;  
the uneven ground shall become level,  
and the rough places a plain.

<sup>5</sup>And the glory of the LORD shall be revealed,  
and all flesh shall see it together,  
for the mouth of the LORD has spoken.”

<sup>6</sup>A voice says, “Cry!”  
And I said, “What shall I cry?”

All flesh is grass,  
and all its beauty is like the flower of the field.

<sup>7</sup>The grass withers, the flower fades  
when the breath of the LORD blows on it;  
surely the people are grass.

<sup>8</sup>The grass withers, the flower fades,  
but the word of our God will stand forever.

<sup>9</sup>Go on up to a high mountain,  
O Zion, herald of good news;  
lift up your voice with strength,  
O Jerusalem, herald of good news;  
lift it up, fear not;

say to the cities of Judah,  
“Behold your God!”

<sup>10</sup>Behold, the Lord GOD comes with might,  
and His arm rules for Him;

behold, His reward is with Him,  
and His recompense before Him.  
<sup>11</sup> He will tend His flock like a shepherd;  
He will gather the lambs in His arms;  
He will carry them in His bosom,  
and gently lead those that are with young.

### **Mark 1:1-8:**

<sup>1</sup> The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God.  
<sup>2</sup> As it is written in Isaiah the prophet,  
“Behold, I send My messenger before your face,  
who will prepare your way,  
<sup>3</sup> the voice of one crying in the wilderness:  
‘Prepare the way of the Lord,  
make His paths straight,’”  
<sup>4</sup> John appeared, baptizing in the wilderness and proclaiming a  
baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. <sup>5</sup> And all the  
country of Judea and all Jerusalem were going out to him and were  
being baptized by him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins.  
<sup>6</sup> Now John was clothed with camel's hair and wore a leather belt  
around his waist and ate locusts and wild honey. <sup>7</sup> And he preached,  
saying, “After me comes He who is mightier than I, the strap of  
whose sandals I am not worthy to stoop down and untie. <sup>8</sup> I have  
baptized you with water, but He will baptize you with the Holy  
Spirit.”



Sermon Notes  
**10 December 2023**

Scripture: **Isaiah 40:1-11; Mark 1:1-8**

Sermon: **Prepare the Way**

1. How do you prepare the way for others to receive Christ in this Advent and Christmas season? How do you speak of God's comfort, peace, and forgiveness (**Isaiah 40:1-3**)?
2. How do you move from the cultural tendency to make Christmas celebrations personal/internal to making those celebrations about building a community and reaching out to others? [Think of the difference between the Peanuts and Charlotte's Web illustrations.]
3. How should we proclaim the eternal and immutable (unchanging) Word of God to a people that is perishing? How should we proclaim repentance alongside God's comforting presence (**Isaiah 40:7-11**)?
4. How did John the Baptist fulfill the prophecy of **Isaiah 40**? How can we speak the truth of the Gospel of Jesus Christ with our distinctive attributes (**Mark 1:6**) while orienting our ministry away from ourselves to the glory of Christ (**Mark 1:7-8**)? What specific acts would facilitate this?

**Soli Deo Gloria ("to the glory of God alone")**

## Announcements and Upcoming Events

**Missing Person:** Today we pray for Raymond Williams missing from Akron, OH.

**Christmas Poinsettias:** we will have artificial poinsettias to decorate for Christmas this year. The poinsettias are provided by the church and will remain at the church, but we are asking people to sponsor them with a donation to have your memorials/honors/gifts placed in the bulletin. All proceeds from your donations will go to Salvation Army Red Kettle Drive. Salvation Army keeps 90% of your donations for use in Hardin County to help those in need. Slips will be available as before to complete with your information. We will collect Sponsorship forms until December 15. Any questions, please see Nancy Weaver or the church office.

**Christmas Eve Service:** December 24 at 8 pm

**Angels for the Elderly Food Drive:** We will be collecting food for Angels for the Elderly again this year. Below is a suggested donation list. Please place items under the tree in the back of the sanctuary. Sample list of items needed: Bottled water, Canned vegetables - don't forget canned potatoes, Canned fruit, canned applesauce - (or small individual containers), Canned soup, Instant potatoes as well as bags of potatoes which can be divided for a few homes, Spaghetti sauce and pasta, Pancake mix and syrup, Canned meats (tuna, chicken, beef stew, etc.), Peanut butter and jelly, Macaroni & cheese, Cereal and/or instant oatmeal, Biscuit or baking mixes, especially those that only use water (don't forget Jiffy Mix), Boxed meals that require only water – also Tuna Helper & Hamburger Helper, Dried beans, Raisins - small boxes, Jello & pudding, Chapstick, hand or body lotion, body wash, Bars of soap, Cough drops, Deodorant, razors, toothbrushes & toothpaste, Shampoo & conditioner, Toilet paper, paper towels and facial tissue, Laundry detergent and dish soap, Adult disposable underwear, Socks, hats and gloves.

**Committee Budgets & Year End Reports:** It is that time of year again. Please submit committee budget requests by the end of November and year end reports for the Annual Meeting Booklet by December 31 or financials by the beginning of January.

**Un-decorate the church:** January 7

**Thank You for Shoeboxes:** The Women's Ministry of St. John's would like to thank everyone who took part in providing 99 shoeboxes which were sent to children all over the world to hear about Jesus through Operation Christmas Shoebox. Mark 6: 15 says Jesus said to his followers, "Go everywhere in the world, and tell the Good News to everyone." This ministry is a way we can all "go forth" Thank you again! Toni Pfister, President, St. John's Women's Ministry

## Week at a Glance

Today, 12/10:	9:00 AM Women's Bible Study – FH 10:00 AM Worship Service 7:00 PM NA Meeting – Chapel
Monday, 12/11:	6-8 PM CEF Christmas – Chapel
Tuesday, 12/12:	5:00 PM Missions -Evangelism 6:30 PM Celebrate Recovery – Chapel
Wednesday, 12/13:	5-7 PM Kid's Night 7:00 PM Bible Study 7:00 PM Choir Practice
Thursday, 12/14:	6:00 PM Church Council – Chapel
Friday, 12/15:	11:30 AM Friday w/ Friends Pizza Hut - Kenton
Saturday, 12/16:	7:30 AM Men's Bible Study – Chapel 9-10:30 AM The Chosen Bible Study – FH

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### Week at a Glance:

Attendance (12/3): 54

Envelopes: \$4658

Loose Ones:

Mission (Love Inc.): \$255 Nov. \$25

Salvation Army:

Ushers:

12/10: Steve & Kae Merold

12/17: Terry & Susan Hord



**Bulletin Announcements:** due by Friday at 8:30 AM.

**Office Hours:** 8:30-10:30 am & 12:30-2:30 pm, Monday – Friday unless there is a delay/cancellation. Please call the office if you have any questions.

