

## December 6, 2020 – Advent 2

Gracious God - bless now the words of my lips and the meditations of all our hearts.

Breathe your Spirit into us and grant that we may hear and in hearing be led in the way you want us to go. Amen

Our Gospel reading today was of a familiar figure... one sent to let others know that Christ was coming...

Some thought he must be the long anticipated one...but he wasn't.

John the Baptist—I have always associated my eccentric Uncle George with John. my uncle was kind of single, kind of grumpy, wirey crazy red hair, eye brows sticking up at all angles...chin never quite shaven...

well John too was eccentric--Hair flying in the river valley breeze, matted camel fur on his back, eye of locust hanging from his beard, and the people -- the people flocking to him in droves. Why? How did they know he was to be taken seriously? What was it that made them respond?

You and I know that John is an important figure in the Story of Jesus. He is the babe in the womb of Elizabeth, who leaps for joy at the sound of Mary's voice and the presence of the Baby Jesus in her womb. He is the one God has sent to make ready the way of the Lord. to point the way to others so that they may know that Jesus really is the Messiah. john is the one who baptizes Jesus with water when the Holy spirit descends upon Jesus.

John sets the stage for the Light of the World. We ourselves can identify with the longing of the crowds who surrounded him, in their pilgrimage into the chaos of desert and wilderness.

What would have happened if my uncle George started proselytizing? started predicting the presence of Jesus. preaching on the street corners? How long before he would have been picked up by the authorities?

I have always wondered what would happen if John appeared today? In all his eccentricity...preaching about the coming of the Lord...saying that he John was not worthy to tie the shoes of the one sent by God.

I wonder if I could get past the strangeness of John and realize him for whom he was...and in realizing whom he was, would I be prepared to accept Jesus?

Sometimes, the John the Baptists of the world come amongst us and are discounted—it is hard to take them seriously in their passionate presentations. Sometimes, we-you and I are called to be John the Baptist. We are called to point the way to Jesus. We are called to take risks and prepare the way of the Lord.

What if this Advent, in its strangeness became an opportunity for us to wait and wonder and act... to prepare ourselves to be the Way of the Lord. To be a road marker to others of who Christ is and where Christ is. For Christ is amongst us and within us.

God sent a light to be among us. Jesus. But first he sent John the Baptist to make ready the way for people to receive Christ, to prepare themselves, to cleanse themselves. And now God has sent us...you and me. To be a light in this world, to be the light of Christ. with all our eccentricities and faults and fears. We are sent to make ready the way of the lord.

In this season of Advent and at all times, let us embrace and rejoice in our God given gifts. Let us prepare the way of the Lord.

And as we let our light shine, we will be giving other people permission to do the same

WE are a light.

Amen.