

# Love of Christ Lutheran Church

1525 North Power Road  
Mesa AZ 85205

Fax: (480) 832-2583  
Office: (480) 981-6199

## Welcome to LOC's Weekly E-News

Third Sunday in Advent, December 14, 2025



### "The Marks of the Messiah"

Through Advent we listen to readings inviting us to be ready, be prepared, be watchful, be faithful, be patient, and to constantly look for the coming Messiah. John the Baptist is in prison for his continued outspokenness regarding the unsavory marriage between King Herod and his brother's wife. After Jesus' baptism he became concerned that his expectation of the coming judgment of God and the deliverance of God's faithful people would soon follow. But Jesus seems to not be meeting John's expectations, so John sends some of his disciples to investigate. Jesus tells his investigators to report his mission is not to bring down the wrath of God, but to reveal God is in the business of reconciliation and restoration. He sends them back with the words of Isaiah which declare the marks of the Messiah, God's Anointed One: the blind see, the lame walk, the lepers are healed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and good news is preached to the poor.

### Christmas Eve Services:

4PM & 6PM in Center of Compassion

8PM in Sanctuary

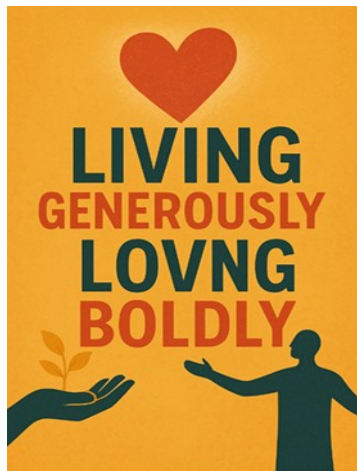
Christmas Day

10AM in the Sanctuary





The origin of Advent as a season of fasting to prepare for baptisms at Epiphany is particularly evident on the third Sunday. Whenever God comes—in the past in the history of Israel and the incarnation of Jesus, in the present in the word and sacrament of each Sunday, and in the future at the end of all things—a reorienting of our life is called for. The lectionary's readings stand in stark contrast to our society's partying and shopping for Christmas. The coming of Christ means to transform the world, saving all who are in need. The gospel of Advent 3 responds to the gospel of Advent 2: last week John the Baptist predicted the coming judgment, and this week Jesus, also citing the prophet Isaiah, speaks of the transformative power of his ministry. Each week we hear more about what the presence of God means for the world, today and at the end of time. That coming begins here, in word and sacrament.



**2026 Financial Commitment Cards may still be returned in our Sunday Offering plates or to the Church Office. Thank you!**

Living Generously is evident in this congregation; over the past several weeks we have seen tangible evidence: \$4650 in grocery gifts cards to assist our LSS-SW Food Pantries at Victory and First Lutheran in Mesa for Thanksgiving and beyond, \$6000 in Target gift cards provided so children from our neighborhood schools will have gifts for Christmas, Thanksgiving offerings being shared with ELCA World Hunger and our local Food Pantries, the Rooster and the Pig carrying ELCA World Hunger Good Gifts ornaments continue to be restocked! More Reverse Advent boxes needed to be distributed than we anticipated, so we will help replenish the Food Pantries post-Christmas. Thank you for living generously and loving boldly.



## Leadership Needs moving into 2026

### 2-Board Members

**The LoC Board of Directors** has the responsibility for governance and oversight of the staff and mission of Love of Christ. Board members are elected for a three-year term. The Board meets on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesday of each month at 6PM excluding July and December. Board members are committed to regular worship and prayer, continued faith-formation, and growing in service and generosity. There will be a need beginning March 1 for two new Board members.

**The Endowment Committee** has responsibility of oversight for and grant recommendations from our Love of Christ Endowment Fund. Over the past several years our Endowment Fund has grown to over \$127,000.00 and the Committee anticipates making initial grants in 2026. Fund by-laws dictate how the funds are to be disbursed, but the primary recipients are in support of mission opportunities within the ELCA and Grand Canyon Synod. The Committee tries to meet quarterly on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesday of the month prior to a LoC Board Meeting. There is a need for one Endowment Committee nominee to serve a two-year term beginning 3/1/26. We are always looking for members of the Nominating Committee, who help identify and nominate members to serve on the LoC Board, Endowment Fund Committee and Audit Committee. If you are curious about any of these areas for possibly sharing your time and abilities, please contact one of the pastors or Board President Doug Price. We invite the congregation to pray for the Holy Spirit to raise the gifted people from this congregation to serve the leadership needs of this congregation.



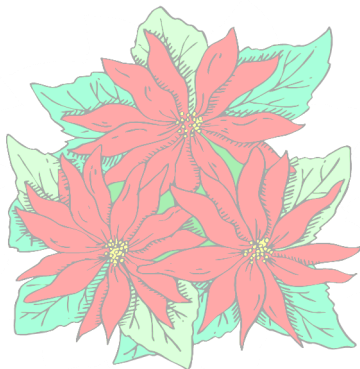
### ***By What Authority: Rethinking Early Christian History***

**On Christmas Break and returns 1/14/26 at 6pm**

We are on a journey through the first five centuries of the Early Church. It provides helpful background in how the Holy Spirit worked through the global and diverse movement of believers and communities coming together. How they dealt with Emperor and Empire. How they navigated, debated, and determined our early creeds and church organization. This course is on Wednesdays through February 11. Whether you can attend some of the classes or all, all are welcome to join.

**Upcoming Topics:** 12/17-1/7 Christmas Break; 1/14 Christianity and Judaism, 1/21 Martyrs and Confessors, 1/28 Monasticism and Ascetics.





### Order Your Poinsettia by Dec. 14

We will be decorating both our chancel areas with red poinsettias this Christmas season. We will be ordering the foil wrapped plants from a local greenhouse at a cost of \$18 ea. We invite you to give a red poinsettia in memory or in honor of a loved one. Your order and check must be received by December 14. Order forms will be available in the Sanctuary and Center of Compassion!



### Book Nook News

The Book Nook just got these new books and booklets just in time to celebrate Advent.

We also have Advent calendars which are not shown but readily available at the Book Nook. Come in and see what we have!



### Calling All Bakers

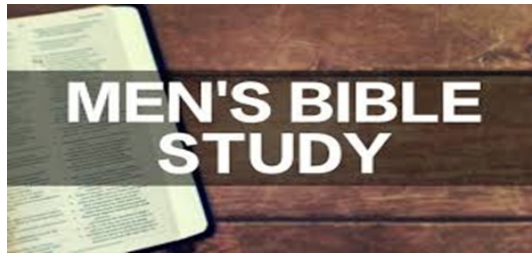
Cookie Ministry is looking for people who like to bake. The Cookie Ministry is part of the Faith in Action programs at Love of Christ. This ministry makes cookies for our various events that are held here on our campus and beyond our campus. If you are interested in baking cookies for this ministry, please contact Eunice Ketterling at [ketts14az@gmail.com](mailto:ketts14az@gmail.com)

### Community Garden News



The weather has cooled down. That signals the start of the fall gardening season! Come join us and grow something beautiful. Questions? Contact Nancy [Dntoll74@gmail.com](mailto:Dntoll74@gmail.com)

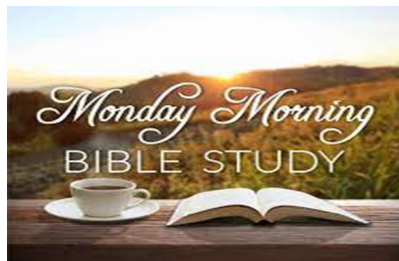




**Pastor Steve is leading a weekly early morning Men's Bible Study on Mondays, 6:30-7:30AM in the Leadership Room. We are studying Paul's letter to the Ephesians. Men of all ages are welcome to participate.**



**Online Video introductions provided by our pastors of Sunday Lectionary readings may be found on Facebook, YouTube or [loveofchristchurch.net](http://loveofchristchurch.net)**



**Monday Morning Bible Study in the Leadership room 10:30—Coffee Fellowship,  
11:00AM Bible Study.**



**Prayer Share Care Women's Bible Study**

All women are invited to a weekly Bible study group called Prayer Share Care. This group meets on Thursday afternoons at 1:00 in the Leadership Room for the next three weeks. We will be discussing the topic of Lament and How Lament Can Lead to Joy. We will be using the Book of Lamentations and the Psalms as our guide!



## Music Notes....

### Dear Church Family,

We are thrilled to invite you into a season filled with music, celebration, and fellowship through our Music Ministry! A special event is coming up, and we would love for you to be a part of it.

#### 1. Christmas Cantata

Join us on **Sunday, December 14th**, with performances at **9:00 a.m. and 10:45 a.m.** This will be a beautiful celebration of the season that you won't want to miss.

Cantata rehearsals on **Thursdays 6—7:30pm** in the Sanctuary. If you have any questions, please feel free to email me at [jungmusic@locle.org](mailto:jungmusic@locle.org).

#### 2. Handbell Ringers Needed

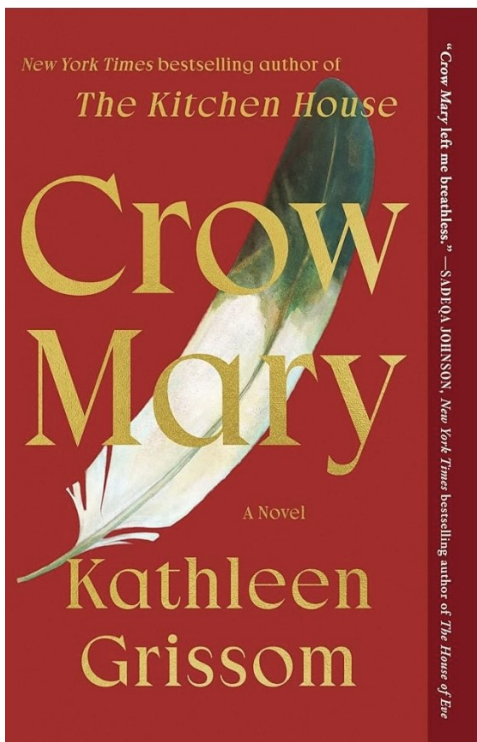
Do you read music and count beats? We would love to have you join our Handbell Choir! We are looking for ringers for both monthly Sunday performances and the Christmas Cantata.

Rehearsals are held **Thursdays at 7:30 p.m. in the Greenroom**. If you're interested, please let me know—we'd love to ring in the season with you! You can contact me at [jungmusic@locle.org](mailto:jungmusic@locle.org)

We can't wait to celebrate this wonderful season of music, fellowship, and joy with all of you.

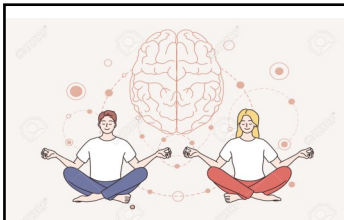
**With gratitude and excitement,**  
Jung Lee

**The LoC Book Club will meet on Sunday, January 11, to discuss the book below:**



In 1872, sixteen-year-old Goes First, a Crow Native woman, marries Abe Farwell, a white fur trader. He gives her the name Mary, and they set off on the long trip to his trading post in Saskatchewan, Canada. Along the way, she finds a fast friend in a Métis named Jeannie; makes a lifelong enemy in a wolfer named Stiller; and despite learning a dark secret of Farwell's past, falls in love with her husband.

The winter trading season passes peacefully. Then, on the eve of their return to Montana, a group of drunken whiskey traders slaughters forty Nakota—despite Farwell's efforts to stop them. Mary, hiding from the hail of bullets, sees the murderers, including Stiller, take five Nakota women back to their fort. She begs Farwell to save them, and when he refuses, Mary takes two guns, creeps into the fort, and saves the women from certain death. Thus, she sets off a whirlwind of colliding cultures that brings out the worst and best in the cast of unforgettable characters and pushes the love between Farwell and Crow Mary to the breaking point. Contact Penny Day for questions at [ptdayser@gmail.com](mailto:ptdayser@gmail.com)



Faith stretch yoga **meets on Thursdays at 9:00am in Outreach room.**  
For questions and more information, text Georgia at 406-925-0013 or  
email: [nonnagg51@gmail.com](mailto:nonnagg51@gmail.com) .



There is hangout this Sunday from 10 to Noon in the Youth Room!

There is Youth Group this Wednesday night from 6-7:30pm in Youth Room!

**Contact Mason Weatherly for more info at [masonw@locic.org](mailto:masonw@locic.org)**



### **Confirmation**

Confirmation will be held on Wednesday nights from 6PM to 7PM in the room 48.

Listed below is the schedule:

December 10th

Any questions, please contact Pastor Nanette at [nanette@locic.org](mailto:nanette@locic.org)





### **No Sunday School until January 4<sup>th</sup>!**

Sunday School is for ages 4-2<sup>nd</sup> grade Sunday School is from 9:10-9:50. Children are to come to church with their parents and are dismissed for Sunday School after the Children's Message. They return to worship during Communion. For grades 3-6 Sunday school begins at 9:50 and they are done at 10:20. Sunday School takes place in the Godly Play room. For any questions please contact Pastor Nanette at [nanette@locic.org](mailto:nanette@locic.org).



### **Fun Food and Faith**

For grades 4,5,and 6 will meet again on

December 21st, 3:30 pm.

Please contact Pastor Nanette for more information.

### **Children's Nativity and Bethlehem Booths on Dec. 21<sup>st</sup> from 3:30-5:00 in the CoC!**



Come and enjoy the story of Jesus retold through the voices of children!

Musical instruments will be played by our grades 4,5,and 6! And after the Story of Jesus' Birth, everyone can walk around the various Booths of Bethlehem! Come and learn the Dreidel game, what a synagogue was like, how to weave, what kind of spices were available, cookies to decorate, and so much more!



### Service opportunities

**Reverse Advent Food Boxes:** We have some more boxes available in the Narthex of the Sanctuary.

**Boxes are due back anytime from Dec. 21-Dec. 28.**

**ELCA Good Gifts:** For a different kind of a gift, see the Good Gifts tables in the Narthex of the Sanctuary and CoC.

**December 21 Children's Nativity and Bethlehem Booths! 3:30 COC**

**Family Promise (December 28-Jan 4)**

**Here are some of the ways you can give both Locally and to the World!**

### **ELCA World Hunger and Good Gifts:**

Stories cut across generations. They show us the ways we belong and how we have an obligation to one another. They show us places where things look the same as they have before and where oppression reigns. And they show us where God breaks in to demand that things be different. The key is how we react when we hear the stories of our neighbors. Perhaps most challenging, gospel justice can enter into our communities when we make ourselves vulnerable enough to tell stories of where we have been hurt and where we have hurt others.

The average American spends more than \$900 a year on Christmas gifts. Yet, when we think about the best gifts we have given or received, often what makes them memorable is not the gift itself but the story behind it. ELCA Good Gifts enables you to purchase a gift in honor of a loved one and support real projects from a variety of ELCA ministries — including ELCA World Hunger. Check out some fun and educational ways to get your congregation involved with ELCA Good Gifts: Visit <https://goodgifts.elca.org/> to order your Good Gifts today.

**Thank  
You**

Thank you for your generosity! We raised \$6000.00 in gift cards and so many will have a wonderful Christmas because of it. We were able to help over 40 children and a total of 18 families. Each child receives a new outfit, and shoes as well as a Christmas toy. Thanks to your generosity there will be a lot of smiles on Christmas Day!



### **Refugee Family Co-Sponsorship with Lutheran Social Services:**

Our Co-Sponsorship Team has been helping a refugee family from Syria. The help that is needed is working with the adults who are learning English. This team is making wonderful progress and forming some beautiful relationships with the family as well. We have provided back to school clothing and backpacks for each of the four children, along with teaching them English. If you are interested in learning more or think you might like to join this team, please contact Chris Norden at [norden6162@gmail.com](mailto:norden6162@gmail.com)

The picture above is of the Ali family who is our refugee family from Afghanistan. We have been helping them learn English! This is a picture from a picnic they had in October.

### **Help Restock the Lutheran Food Banks by participating in Reverse Advent Boxes:**

**Reverse Advent Boxes:** There are some more boxes in the narthex of the Sanctuary if you would like to have one. On the inside cover of the box is a suggested item to put in each day. PLEASE ONLY BUY THE SIZE THAT IS REQUESTED! Advent Food Boxes will be collected from Dec. 21-28. These boxes will then be distributed to First Evangelical Food Bank in downtown Mesa and Victory Food Bank to help replenish their shelves after the holiday season. Please remember not to tape the top shut.

### **Sleep in Heavenly Peace News**

**We are celebrating the 10,000th bed to be delivered soon to a child in the Phoenix area! The Phoenix Chapter began 7 years ago and is still going strong to meet the need of our community.**

**Thanks to all the donors of time and funds to make this exciting milestone happen. The reason for this effort which improves the lives of children in our community is brought home every time we witness a child receiving a bed for the first time!**

**We are also fortunate to have a lot of individuals who continue to make blankets and contribute stuffed animals, books and sheets.**







Many of us have had Advent calendars where a count-down to Christmas includes opening a small flap which exposes a treat or a surprise of some kind. A reverse Advent box gives us an opportunity to share the joy we experience as we count down the days to the celebration of Christ's birth in a manger. But many of our neighbors experience a worry about having enough food to feed their families throughout the year. A reverse Advent box gives us an opportunity to reach out to those in need by supplying Food Banks with a box of non-perishable items that are most needed. By putting one of the listed items in the supplied box each day during Advent, we

will put into action our command to love our neighbor by helping those who need it most. You can bring your box in any Sunday during December and we will bless them on Christmas eve. They will be transported after Christmas to two Lutheran Social Service Food Banks after Christmas. The list of non-perishable items will be in box and available on the Love of Christ website and in the ENews. Pick up your box beginning Sunday, November 30th and deliver it to the church anytime before Christmas eve. We will be delivering all 100 boxes to the food banks the first week in January.

DATE	ITEM	DONATED
Dec. 1st	Box of Cereal (12 oz. size)	
Dec. 2nd	Peanut Butter (28 oz.)	
Dec. 3rd	Canned Soup (18 oz.)	
Dec. 4th	Box of Potatoes (Mashed, Scalloped, Casserole etc)	
Dec. 5th	Mac and Cheese (with premade cheese packet)	
Dec. 6th	Canned or plastic jar of Fruit (15.25 oz.)	
Dec. 7th	Canned Tomatoes (14.5 oz.)	
Dec. 8th	Canned (or pouch) Tuna (12 oz.)	
Dec. 9th	Dessert Mix (pudding, fudge, cake mix, etc.)	
Dec. 10th	Plastic jar of Applesauce (23 oz.)	
Dec. 11th	Canned green beans (14.5 oz.)	
Dec. 12th	Package of Pasta (16 oz.)	
Dec. 13th	Jar of Pasta Sauce (24 oz.)	
Dec. 14th	Canned pinto beans (15.5 oz.)	
Dec. 15th	Canned black beans (15.5 oz.)	
Dec. 16th	Canned vegetable (14.5 oz.)	
Dec. 17th	Shelf stable or powdered milk (can or box)	
Dec. 18th	Can of stew or chili (15 oz.)	
Dec. 19th	Box of Crackers (13 oz.)	
Dec. 20th	Package of Rice (32 oz.)	
Dec. 21st	Canned meat (Ham, Spam) (12 oz.)	
Dec. 22nd	Canned chicken (12.5 oz.)	
Dec. 23rd	Instant noodles or soup (18 oz.)	
Dec. 24th	Granola bars (25 oz.)	

## 🌸 MomCo at Love of Christ Lutheran Church! 🌸

Calling all moms! Whether you're in the thick of toddlerhood, navigating teenage years, or somewhere in between — you're not alone.



We're excited to announce that our church will now be hosting MomCo, a community designed for moms, by moms. MomCo is a place where women gather in circles of support, friendship, and faith — because raising humans is both beautiful and hard, and no one should have to do it alone:

- Build meaningful, lasting friendships
- Encourage and equip moms to lead with love
- Grow the church by nurturing families in faith
- Bring mothers and their families closer to Jesus

Join Us! Location: Love of Christ

📅 When: Next meeting January 7, every 1st Wednesday of the month | 6:00 PM to 7:00 PM in Godly Playroom (Nursery) located in entrance to Center of Compassion.

📞 Contact: Kacey Weir or Pastor Nanette Christofferson 🌐

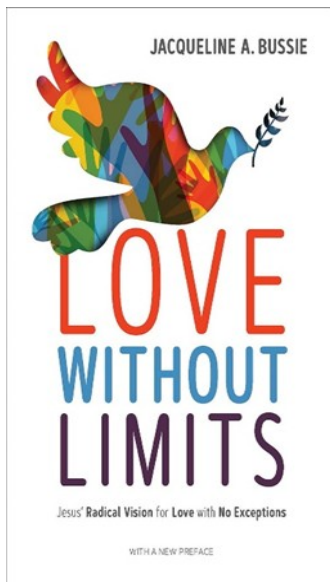
Online Options: - <http://www.themom.co/groups/loveofchristmesa>

## Love Without Limits meets again on January 7th at 4:30 in Fellowship Hall

In her book, Jacqueline Bussie says nothing is more scandalous than a “love without limits.” How does a love without limits mirror Jesus and the God we are called to serve? How does this echo Jesus’ ministry in Luke 15 (the parables of being lost) or Paul’s proclamation in Galatians 3:28 (There is no longer Jew or Greek, there is no longer slave or free, there is no longer male and female; for all of you are one Christ Jesus)? This study is open to all women who are interested in learning about our God who loves without limits!

This book, Love Without Limits, by Jacqueline Bussie is available on Amazon. [https://www.amazon.com/s?k=love+without+limits+jacqueline+bussie&crid=OPMUBD4M8181&s\\_prefix=Love+Without+Limits%2Caps%2C480&ref=nb\\_sb\\_ss\\_p13n-pd-pltr-ranker\\_3\\_19](https://www.amazon.com/s?k=love+without+limits+jacqueline+bussie&crid=OPMUBD4M8181&s_prefix=Love+Without+Limits%2Caps%2C480&ref=nb_sb_ss_p13n-pd-pltr-ranker_3_19)

You can purchase it online for \$13.46. There will be a few books for purchase on the first day of the study. We are looking forward to seeing everyone and hope that you will be able to join us!



**Scripture Lesson**  
**A Brief Look at Isaiah 35:1-10**  
**with Pastor Steve Talmage**  
(15 min)



**YouTube:** <https://youtu.be/KMa9tbnn7fs>

**Facebook:** <https://facebook.com/reel/1390372555766180/>

**Website:** <https://www.loveofchristchurch.net/media/series/7vjwfnk/bible-lessons>

**Scripture Lesson**  
**A Brief Look at Matthew 11:2-11**  
**with Pastor Steve Talmage**  
(15 min)



**YouTube:** <https://youtu.be/-j744FvGN58>

**Facebook:** <https://facebook.com/reel/1351927083064429/>

**Website:** <https://www.loveofchristchurch.net/media/series/7vjwfnk/bible-lessons>



Sunday, December 14, 2025, 7:50 am, 9 and 10:30,

some on  & 

Pastor Steve Talmage —"The Marks of the Messiah"

### Isaiah 35: 1-10

The wilderness and the dry land shall be glad;  
the desert shall rejoice and blossom;  
like the crocus it shall blossom abundantly  
and rejoice with joy and shouting.  
The glory of Lebanon shall be given to it,  
the majesty of Carmel and Sharon.  
They shall see the glory of the Lord,  
the majesty of our God.

Strengthen the weak hands  
and make firm the feeble knees.  
Say to those who are of a fearful heart,  
"Be strong, do not fear!  
Here is your God.  
He will come with vengeance,  
with terrible recompense.  
He will come and save you." Then the eyes of  
the blind shall be opened,  
and the ears of the deaf shall be opened;  
then the lame shall leap like a deer,  
and the tongue of the speechless sing for joy.  
For waters shall break forth in the wilderness  
and streams in the desert;  
the burning sand shall become a pool  
and the thirsty ground springs of water;  
the haunt of jackals shall become a swamp;  
the grass shall become reeds and rushes.

A highway shall be there,<sup>[a]</sup>  
and it shall be called the Holy Way;  
the unclean shall not travel on it,<sup>[a]</sup>  
but it shall be for God's people;<sup>[a]</sup>  
no traveler, not even fools, shall go astray.  
No lion shall be there,  
nor shall any ravenous beast come up on it;  
they shall not be found there,  
but the redeemed shall walk there.  
And the ransomed of the Lord shall return  
and come to Zion with singing;  
everlasting joy shall be upon their heads;  
they shall obtain joy and gladness,  
and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.

### James 5:7-10

Be patient, therefore, brothers and sisters, until  
the coming of the Lord. The farmer waits for the

precious crop from the earth, being patient with it  
until it receives the early and the late rains. You  
also must be patient. Strengthen your hearts, for  
the coming of the Lord is near. Brothers and sis-  
ters, do not grumble against one another, so that  
you may not be judged. See, the Judge is stand-  
ing at the doors! As an example of suffering and  
patience, brothers and sisters, take the prophets  
who spoke in the name of the Lord.

### Matthew 11:2-11

When John heard in prison what the Messiah was doing,  
he sent word by his disciples and said to him, "Are you the  
one who is to come, or are we to wait for another?" Jesus  
answered them, "Go and tell John what you hear and  
see: the blind receive their sight, the lame walk, those with  
a skin disease are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are  
raised, and the poor have good news brought to  
them. And blessed is anyone who takes no offense at  
me."

As they went away, Jesus began to speak to the crowds  
about John: "What did you go out into the wilderness to  
look at? A reed shaken by the wind? What, then, did you  
go out to see? Someone dressed in soft robes? Look,  
those who wear soft robes are in royal palaces. What,  
then, did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, I tell you, and  
more than a prophet. This is the one about whom it is writ-  
ten,

'See, I am sending my messenger ahead of you,  
who will prepare your way before you.'

"Truly I tell you, among those born of women no one has  
arisen greater than John the Baptist, yet the least in the  
kingdom of heaven is greater than he.