



Sermon
Rev. Dr. Lang Yang

"His Name is John"

First Sunday in Advent
Our Savior Lutheran Church
11-28-2021

Grace, mercy, and peace to you from God, our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ! Amen

Luke 1:63, "He asked for a writing tablet, and to everyone's astonishment he wrote, "His name is John." (NIV). This is the Word of the Lord. (Cross-reference – Matthew 8:10, Luke 1:13, 60)

Illustration "Celebration" (Show people gathering around the birth of John the Baptist)



The celebration of childbirth is an important event in Jewish life that marked the child as a child of the covenant. The Apostle Luke invites us into the house of the Priest Zechariah and his wife, Elizabeth. Elizabeth gave birth to John the Baptist, and on the eight days, friends and family gather in the house for the circumcision of John for the announcement of his name. It is always a time of great rejoicing when a child is born into a family of godly people. It is a beautiful family event. If you live in a small town such as Zechariah and Elizabeth, a birth also becomes a community event, one in which neighbors and friends join in the celebration together. Everyone wants to visit the mother and child. (Show birth of a child)



Similarly, in the Hmong people, when a child is born, the Hmong have a word saying, "The month is fulfilled – *Puv hli*," meaning that it is thirty days, and the child and the mother have finished the postpartum period. A feast is prepared. The family, friends, and relatives gather to celebrate a new birth. This practice is called postpartum confinement, mainly practiced in the Asian community, which could go up to 40 days, two months, or 100 days.

I. In the story of Zachariah, his son, John, is a miracle baby, and the people were in awe of the unique hand of God at work. (Show Elizabeth pregnant)



The rejoicing came because the people knew this child in some way would be a benefit to all people. They rejoiced at God's love. Gods had shown mercy toward a barren couple who had no hope for a child. When Elizabeth conceived, the hills in Judea were buzzing with wonder at this baby's purpose. Do you see that John was beginning his ministry by just being born? The people knew that 90-year-old women don't have babies and 90-year-old men don't become fathers. (Show Zachariah the priest)



Who is Elizabeth? John's mother. She is a daughter of a priest who is an aunt to Mary, the mother of Jesus Christ. Who is Zachariah? Of course, he is John the Baptist's father. What is Zachariah's occupation? Zachariah is a priest from the hill country of Judea. There are about twenty thousand priests who serve in the area. The priest divided up into twenty-four sections. Zachariah serves in the

eight sections of Abijah. The only time all the priests gather together is during Passover, Pentecost, and Tabernacles. The rest of the year, each priest serves in the Temple twice, for one week at a time.

(Show Zachariah the priest)



During these two weeks of service, the priest's duties are assigned by lot. Every morning and evening, sacrifice is to be made for the whole nation. Before the sacrifice of the male lamb, one of the most critical tasks is given – the lighting of the incense in the holy place. The priest who can light the incenses was indeed a once-in-a-lifetime experience. Many of the priests who serve there will never have the opportunity, and many never will.

- II. It is where the story begins of how the name John came to be. Zachariah and Elizabeth were childless. They were in old ages. In the Jewish culture, if you are barren, it is a sign of reproach or that God is angry at you. I'm sure friends and relatives ridiculed them, but they both continue to serve God faithfully irrespective of their circumstances. (Show the Angel to Zachariah)



On the day when the Angel appears to Zachariah, saying to him, "Do not be afraid, Zechariah; your prayer has been heard. Your wife Elizabeth will bear you a son, and you are to call him John. And he will go on before the Lord, in the spirit and power of Elijah, to turn the hearts of the parents to their children and the disobedient to the wisdom of the righteous—to make ready a people prepared for the Lord." (Luke 1:13, 17, NIV).

Zachariah is already an older man, and his wife is well along in years; he doesn't believe the Angel. The Angel Gabriel said to Zachariah, "And now you will be silent and not able to speak until the day this happens because you did not believe my words, which will come true at their appointed time." (Luke 1:20, NIV). Elizabeth became pregnant and while they waited for the birth. (Show people talk)



It never fails that when a couple finds themselves pregnant, everybody and their brother want to know what names have been picked. Most everyone has an opinion when the mother and father tell them. While The Apostle Luke continues the story that when Elizabeth gave birth and came to circumcise the child on the eight days, everyone had discussed the matter since Zechariah could not engage in the conversation. They took it upon themselves to name the baby. How about Zechariah? They said it is a good name after the child's father. It is also a family name and Elizabeth

should call him Zechariah. But, Elizabeth said, "No! He is to be called John." (Luke 1:60, NIV). The relative was against it because no one among their relative had that name. (Show his name is John)



The people turn to Zechariah to find out what he would like to name the child. Zechariah wrote on the tablet, "His name is John. Immediately his mouth was opened, and his tongue set free, and he began to speak, praising God. All the neighbors were filled with awe. Throughout the hill country of Judea, people were talking about all these things. Everyone who heard this wondered about it, asking, "What then is this child going to be?" For the Lord's hand was with him." (Luke 1:63-66, NIV). (Show John in Hebrew)

Yohanan
 יוֹחָנָן

Their conversations were turned away from themselves and to the things God was doing. If John is to be the forerunner of the Messiah, then the Messiah must be close on the horizon. If this miraculous event took place in the life of one who is to announce the Messiah, then what sort of miracle might we see when He's born? The name "John" is derived from the Hebrew "*Yohanan* (יֹהָנָן)," meaning "Grace by God."

([https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/John_\(given_name\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/John_(given_name))) (Show Advent wreath)

III. Brothers and sisters in Christ, the Church Year begins with **Advent**.



The word "advent" literally means "coming" or "arrival." The Advent season consists of the four weeks (4 Sundays) before Christmas. The Advent season emphasizes the coming or arrival of Jesus into our world. During the Advent season, we speak of Jesus coming into our world at His birth. His coming into our hearts through faith, and he will come again to judge the world. (Show John was to prepare the way for Jesus' ministry)

His job was to prepare the way for Jesus' ministry.



John the Baptist is the forerunner before Jesus. He makes the path straight, smooths out the road, a voice calling from the wilderness, makes way for the Lord Jesus Christ. Our Lord and Savior already came over two thousand years ago, and He is coming back to take us to be with Him forever and ever. Jesus is coming. The mood of Advent is both one of repentance and anticipation. The Advent season is also a time of preparation as we get ready to celebrate Christmas.

(Show John 1:29)



"Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!"
John 1:29

Luke writes, "For the Lord's hand was with him." John pointed his hand at Jesus and said, "Look, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!" (John 1:29). Christ already came, and He is coming back. Repent and believe in Him; you shall have life. Continue to learn, live, and share Christ. Amen. Now may the peace of God which passes all understanding, keep your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus. Amen.

Children Message

"His Name Is John"



Scripture: **Luke 1:63**, "He asked for a writing tablet, and to everyone's astonishment he wrote, "His name is John." (NIV).

Object: A US Citizenship certificate and a birth certificate

Good morning, boys and girls. Today is a time for us to remember the story of when John the Baptist was born and how he got his name. How many of you remember when you were born or how you were named? (*Let them answer*). None of us remember the day that we were born, but all of us have a piece of paper that tells when we were born and another piece of paper that means when we were named. Let me show you mine. (*Take out your birth certificate or a birth certificate of someone*).

In Laos, many Hmong people were born, but they don't have a birth certificate. When they come to the United States and become a US citizen, their citizenship certificate serves as their birth certificate. This is my oldest daughter's birth certificate. (*Read the information*). That proves that she was born, date, time, city, state, county, and the parent's name.

I wanted to share this with you because there is a more remarkable story about John and his father. John's father was a priest at the Temple and quite an older man. He and his wife had prayed to God for years for a child, but they never had one. One day an angel promised John's mother and father that they would have a child, a unique child, who would not only be their child but also someone who would help God tell the world about the Messiah. When John's father heard this, he was so happy, but he also lost his voice. He could no longer speak. He tried, but he could not talk. All the other people were amazed at how he had lost his voice. For nine months, he did not speak.

Then one day, John was born to his parents. All the people were so happy for his parents, Elizabeth and Zechariah. They knew how proud Zechariah was of the little boy, and they were sure that he would want to give the baby his name. But God had also told Zechariah what to call the child, and Zechariah kept his promise to God. When the people asked Zechariah what the name would be; he took a tablet and wrote "John." Everyone was amazed.

Then something else very strange happened. As soon as John was given his name, Zechariah was able to talk. What a happy day it was for everyone! John, the servant of God, was given his name and Elizabeth was now a mother, something she wanted all her life. Zechariah was not only a proud father, but he also received his voice back. That is the story of how John the Baptist got his name, and it is one for you and me to remember how our parents gave us our name.

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

CERTIFICATE OF NATURALIZATION

No. **13111328**

Petition No. 2417 I.N.S. Registration No. A23 741 619

ORIGINAL

Personal description of holder as of date of naturalization: Date of birth February 12, 1968 sex male
 complexion fair color of eyes brown color of hair black height 5 feet 3 inches
 weight 123 pounds, visible distinctive marks none
 marital status married Country of former nationality Laos
 I certify that the description above given is true, and that the photograph affixed hereto is a likeness of me.



Lang Yang

Lang Yang
 (Signature and true signature of holder)

United States of America
 Western District of N. C. ss:

Be it known, that at a term of the United States District Court of Western District of North Carolina, held pursuant to law at Charlotte, North Carolina on May 20, 1988, the Court having found that

Lang Yang then residing at 514 Yancey Street, Marion, N. C. 28752 intends to reside permanently in the United States (when so required by the Naturalization Laws of the United States), had in all other respects complied with the applicable provisions of such naturalization laws, and was entitled to be admitted to citizenship, thereupon ordered that such person be and (she) was admitted as a citizen of the United States of America.

In testimony whereof the seal of the court is hereunto affixed this 20th day of May, nineteen hundred and eighty-eight.

Thomas J. McGraw
 Clerk of the U. S. District Court.
 By *Sharon Davis* Deputy Clerk.

DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

IT IS FURNISHABLE BY U. S. LAW TO COPY, PRINT OR PHOTOGRAPH THIS CERTIFICATE.

NORTH CAROLINA DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN RESOURCES
 DIVISION OF HEALTH SERVICES - VITAL RECORDS BRANCH

CERTIFICATE OF LIVE BIRTH

78 308

Registration District No. 05660 Local No. _____ BIRTH NO. - 132 76

1. CHILD'S NAME (First, Middle, Last) FOUA CHEE CAROLINE YANG		2. DATE OF BIRTH (Month, Day, Year) JUNE 10, 1988	3. TIME OF BIRTH 6:34 A
4. SEX FEMALE	5. CITY, TOWN, OR LOCATION OF BIRTH MARION	6. COUNTY OF BIRTH MCDOWELL	
7. PLACE OF BIRTH (Specify) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Hospital <input type="checkbox"/> Freestanding Birth Center <input type="checkbox"/> Clinic/Doctor's Office <input type="checkbox"/> Residence <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify)		8. FACILITY NAME (If not institution, give street and number) THE MCDOWELL HOSPITAL	
9. FATHER'S NAME (First, Middle, Last) LANG YANG		10. DATE OF BIRTH (Month, Day, Year) FEB. 12, 1968	11. BIRTHPLACE (State or foreign country) LAOS
12a. MOTHER'S NAME (First, Middle, Last) PHOUA YANG		12b. MAIDEN NAME HANG	13. DATE OF BIRTH (Month, Day, Year) JUL. 18, 1980
14. BIRTHPLACE (State or foreign country) LAOS	15a. USUAL RESIDENCE (STATE) N.C.	15b. COUNTY MCDOWELL	15c. CITY, TOWN OR LOCATION MARRON
16a. STREET AND NUMBER 129 VALLEY STREET	16b. INSIDE CITY LIMITS (Yes or No) YES	16c. MOTHER'S MAILING ADDRESS (If same as residence, enter "same") SAME	
17. MOTHER'S SIGNATURE (I certify that I have inspected this certificate for accuracy.) <i>Lang Yang</i>		17b. RELATION TO CHILD IF MOTHER CANNOT SIGN FATHER	
18. CERTIFIER'S NAME & TITLE (Type/Print) EUGENE G. RUDD, MD		19. ATTENDANT'S NAME AND TITLE (If other than certifier) (Type/Print) PO BOX 1413, MARION, NC 28752	
20. DATE REC'D BY LOCAL REG. 6-16-88		21. SIGNATURE OF REGISTRAR <i>Eugene G. Rudd</i>	22. DATE NAME ADDED 5/12/93
23. COLOR OR RACE OF FATHER (Specify White, Black, American Indian, etc.) ASIAN		24. COLOR OR RACE OF MOTHER (Specify White, Black, American Indian, etc.) ASIAN	

A TRUE COPY
 MARJORIE C. McENTIRE
 REGISTER OF DEEDS
 MCDOWELL COUNTY
 By *Marjorie C. McEntire*