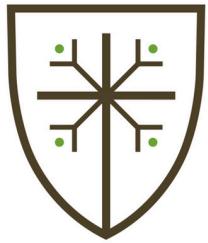




SERMON NOTES



January 18, 2026

SERMON INFO

TITLE

"John's Introduction and Jesus' Intervention"

PREACHER

Rev. Brent Baker

TEXTS

Exodus 12:1-6, 11-13

Revelation 22:1-5

John 1:19-29

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. If you were to introduce Jesus, how would you introduce him?
2. How can we be more deferential to Jesus in our lives?
3. How can we let go of any doubt that Jesus' forgiveness can expire?

SERMON IN SUMMARY

This week, Brent continued our sermon series by defining Epiphany as a reintroduction to Jesus. The Greek word from which epiphany is derived literally means "to shine upon again." In other words, a reintroduction. We see John reintroducing Jesus in the first chapter of his Gospel.

The Voice

After beginning the gospel with the famous words, "In the beginning was the Word and the Word was with God and the Word was God," John takes the opportunity to reintroduce Jesus through John the Baptist's testimony, which was laden with key Old Testament motifs and shows Jesus existing incarnate within time. John's reintroduction of Jesus was in response to the interrogation of the religious leaders at the time.

John was baptizing without the consent of the priests. Baptism was reserved for Gentiles converting to Judaism, and was an action the convert would perform themselves. John baptized others, and without discretion, angering the religious leaders. The leaders' line of impetuous questioning, "Who do you think you are?", served as the impetus for John's series of denials about his own identity and an opportunity to reorient them to Jesus; he is not the Christ, nor Elijah, nor a prophet. He is "the voice crying out in the wilderness, 'Make straight the way of the Lord,' as the prophet Isaiah said." The voice, John, is deferential, or made secondary, to the lamb.

The Lamb

The lamb is a consistent figure across the entirety of the Bible, though the picture of a lamb would not have been positive. Brent briefly guided us through the continuous story of scripture, highlighting the lamb's prominence. From the summary of animal sacrifice being used to clothe Adam and Eve in the garden after their disobedience, to a lamb—provided by God—taking Isaac's place when Abraham was called to sacrifice his beloved son, to the Passover lamb, to Levitical sacrifices, until the time of the prophets, lambs were a means of sacrifice and food.

The prophets began to reveal a deeper truth, however, about the qualities of the sacrifice needed to cover sin. Like the past events, a spotless, male lamb was needed, and like the past, the atonement was never long-lasting. But the prophets began to preach that not merely a lamb was needed, but a spotless man was needed to cover sin once and for all. This man is Jesus, God's only beloved son, who would cover sin for everyone for all time. Yet, even with this truth revealed to us time and time again, and even with all of scripture pointing to our perpetual need for Christ, sometimes we doubt that Jesus' atonement really never expires. We sometimes, knowingly or unknowingly, find ourselves in a perpetual state of unforgiveness or worry that God's forgiveness can run dry. That could not be farther from the truth. When we come to confession each week, we are not asking about a forgiveness that doesn't exist yet, but applying one that has always existed and has already been applied to our very souls.

Brent closed by reminding us that through confession and communion, we have perpetual reminders that we do not need to hold onto that which he has already taken away.