



Message: ***The Right Place at the Right Time*** | January 11, 2026 | Speaker: **Pastor Eddie Eddy**

**Isaiah 42:1-9** New International Version (NIV) **The Servant of the Lord**

42 *“Here is my servant, whom I uphold, my chosen one in whom I delight; I will put my Spirit on him, and he will bring justice to the nations.  
2 He will not shout or cry out, or raise his voice in the streets.  
3 A bruised reed he will not break, and a smoldering wick he will not snuff out. In faithfulness he will bring forth justice;  
4 he will not falter or be discouraged till he establishes justice on earth. In his teaching the islands will put their hope.”  
5 This is what God the Lord says—the Creator of the heavens, who stretches them out, who spreads out the earth with all that springs from it, who gives breath to its people, and life to those who walk on it:  
6 “I, the Lord, have called you in righteousness; I will take hold of your hand. I will keep you and will make you to be a covenant for the people and a light for the Gentiles,  
7 to open eyes that are blind, to free captives from prison and to release from the dungeon those who sit in darkness.  
8 “I am the Lord; that is my name! I will not yield my glory to another or my praise to idols.  
9 See, the former things have taken place, and new things I declare; before they spring into being I announce them to you.”*

Leader: *This is the word of God for the people of God*

People: ***Thanks be to God***

## **THE RIGHT PLACE AT THE RIGHT TIME**

Have you ever had that feeling like you were in the right place at the right time?

The scripture that I just read was written almost 800 years before Matthew wrote his account of what happened on the day that Jesus stepped into the Jordan River with John to be baptized. For Jesus, this was when he knew that he was in the right place at the right time. Today we remember the baptism of our Lord. This is the event that kicked off Jesus’ public ministry of saving the world from their sins. Here’s what the Gospel of Matthew says. I’ll be reading from “The Message” version of the bible:

**Matthew 3:13-17** The Message (MSG)

13-14 *Jesus then appeared, arriving at the Jordan River from Galilee. He wanted John to baptize him. John objected, “I’m the one who needs to be baptized, not you!”*

15 *But Jesus insisted. “Do it. God’s work, putting things right all these centuries, is coming together right now in this baptism.” So John did it.*

16-17 *The moment Jesus came up out of the baptismal waters, the skies opened up and he (John) saw God’s Spirit—it looked like a dove—descending and landing on him (Jesus). And along with the Spirit, a voice: “This is my Son, chosen and marked by my love, the delight of my life.”*

Sometimes we aren't sure if "now" is the right time for things. Throughout our lives we wonder if, "now is the right time to buy a car or invest in a house, is it the right time to get married or have a baby, or is it the right time to change jobs or, is now when I should retire?"

There are also times when we wonder if we are in the right place. "Is this part of Wisconsin the right place where I'm supposed to be in ministry? Should I be at this party with these people? Is this the best neighborhood to raise our kids? Is this a safe place to spend some time?"

One time Jeanie and I were flying to Portland Oregon for some business. We were meeting our friends, Willie and Charlotte, at O'Hare airport and we were supposed to fly out there together. Jeanie and I got to the airport early, I found our flight to Oregon on the TV screen and we headed off through the airport to our gate to wait for our friends.

When we got to our gate, I took our boarding passes up to the desk and checked in. The friendly attendant said we would be boarding on time and everything looked good for our flight to Portland.

The time to board was sneaking up on us pretty quickly and there was no sign of Willie or Charlotte. I remember thinking that they were going to miss the flight.

As I looked around, I noticed something was a little off though. I wondered, why is there an American Airlines jet in the Air Reno gate where we would be boarding? You ever had that feeling in the pit of your stomach? Suddenly, I had the revelation that I was not in the right place at the right time.

I went up to talk to the young lady at the desk, the same young lady who had checked me in earlier, and told her I believe I have a problem. We are at the wrong gate. I think the flight we were supposed to be on with Willie and Charlotte had already taken off without us.

She grabbed my pass again, looked at it and said, "no problem, well get you on this flight". So...we grabbed our carry on bags and climbed aboard. Whooo, we made it! As we were pushing off and turning toward the runway I looked at Jeanie and said, "I wonder if we are going to Portland, Oregon or Portland, Maine?"

Well, God was our copilot that day and we not only ended up in the right Portland, but we had a nonstop flight with a full meal service. We were comfortably in our room before Willie and Charlotte even caught their connecting flight in Reno.

That day, by the grace of God, we were in the right place at the right time. And today I feel we are in the right place at the right time too.

PAUSE

In our first passage this morning, the Prophet Isaiah tells us about what is going to happen when God feels the time is right. And Matthew tells us in his Gospel, that time has arrived. Jesus has arrived at just the right time and right place.

In our lesson we find ourselves at the Jordan River, it's about 30 years after Jesus was born. Just think if we could go back and stand in line with all the others waiting on the shoreline of that river in the wilderness. People lined up, as far as we can see, wanting to get cleansed in the dirty Jordan River water. They want to change their lives...they want to repent from their sins and take a different path from the way they are living now.

They heard John's message that there's a guy coming to save them...but they need to get ready, to prepare themselves.

John the Baptizer had gathered quite a following. He was at the height of his preaching and baptizing ministry. The popularity polls had him ranked extremely high.

He had earned so much street credibility that he even called out the religious hot shots...The Pharisees and the Sadducees...for being hypocrites. John was on top of his game.

SP

And now picture this...you're standing there in line, waiting patiently for your turn to get dunked, and the crowd starts to murmur. You hear this whispering...and you see all the people's heads turning, looking in the same direction. And then you realize what they're looking at. Here he comes. Here comes Jesus...the one John had told us about...and he walks straight out into the water (not on top of it yet) to meet John. You would think that Jesus is going out there to baptize John...but no...Jesus expects John to baptize him.

Listen again: "Jesus then appeared, arriving at the Jordan River from Galilee. He wanted John to baptize him. But John objected, "I'm the one who needs to be baptized, not you!"

Can't you almost see John putting out his hands to Jesus saying, "Wait, wait! This ain't right, you should be baptizing me."

That would be like Brett Favre driving by your house as you throw out the garbage. And then all of a sudden he pulls his car into your driveway. You see him running toward you and he says, "Hey, I saw how well you threw that garbage bag, I need you to throw me some passes so I can catch some footballs from someone with such a golden arm." You'd look at him like he had 2 heads. Wouldn't you say, "Whoa, wait a minute? You're a three-time NFL Most Valuable Player. You should be throwing to me and showing me how it's done!"

That's what John saw. He saw the Son of God standing there... asking to be baptized by him.

SP

John knew that Jesus was much greater than he was, and that he wasn't even fit to tie Jesus sandals. He recognized Jesus as one who didn't need to repent, who didn't need forgiveness. He didn't need to be cleansed of anything. So why would Jesus want to be baptized by him? John had to be thinking, "This is Bass Ackwards! There is no way this should be happening"

SP

But listen to Jesus' response, "'15 Jesus insisted. "Do it John. God's work of putting things right all these centuries...is coming together right now, right here in this baptism."... So John did it."

Jesus was saying, "At another time, John, you would be right in what you're thinking. But this is the right place at the right time for this baptism."

PAUSE

I am always fascinated by this story of the baptism of Jesus. It is one of the few stories that's in all four gospels. I think this one is so intriguing because it's a hard one to understand.

The question I hear most people struggle with because of this passage is this, "Why did Jesus even need to be baptized?" He didn't need to get his sins washed away because...he was without sin. And if he was without sin...why did he need forgiveness?

SP

Here's why. For Jesus this Baptism was his way of submitting himself to God's will. For him, it was the letting go of one phase of his life and moving on to the next phase. This was the beginning of his public ministry. It was now the right time and the right place for him to start his journey. A journey that would lead him to the cross where he would die, to a tomb where he would pay the price for our sins, and then, to a resurrection where we receive eternal life with Jesus.

The act of baptism symbolizes all of these steps in Jesus' journey, from life...to death...to new life.

Just think again about all the people standing there on the banks of the river that day. They too were there to start the next phase of their life. They had heard the call of John to change their ways and repent.

That group of lost souls chose to change the path they were on. They chose to trust God enough to walk away from their old ways...the ways that led to death...and take a new path that offers them life. A path that opened the invitation into God's family.

PAUSE

Back Roads...today we remember Jesus' baptism. We also celebrate the fact that we still have access to...and we are still invited to take part in what happened on the shoreline so long ago.

Our Baptism is God's gracious invitation into the fullness of his power and grace. Through both Baptism and the Lord's Table, we are drawn into direct encounter with God's living presence. These sacraments are not primarily about what we do for God, but about what God is doing for us...and within us...shaping, strengthening, and sustaining us by His grace.

Today is the right time and the right place for us to remember our own baptisms and recommit to our journey on the path to everlasting life.

To God be the Glory, Amen.

**Next Steps:**

- I will remember my baptism and recommit to my journey on the path to everlasting life
- I will pray for the kids and caretakers of Interhope
- I will pray about a financial gift for Interhope before January 25