



First Lutheran Church

Gospel of Matthew

Summer 2026 Reading Challenge



Introduction

Week 6: Matthew chapters 11 and 12

Matthew 11:1-10	Chapter Outline
Matthew 11:20-30	John the Baptist
Matthew 12:1-21	Unrepentant Cities
Matthew 12:22-50	The Chosen Servant
	The Sign

What to Expect

Chapters 11 and 12 continue the theme of conflict. John the Baptist, who was there when Jesus was baptized, and who heard the voice from God, should know who Jesus is ... but is now questioning. Though in response Jesus aligns with John again and sets John and himself as representing God's kingdom against the world.

Jesus expresses his disappointment with towns that do not repent, even the towns he has performed miracles in, demonstrating that even when the Kingdom of God comes near, that doesn't always produce repentance. Jesus has conflict with the Pharisees and the need for a sign is rebuffed, except for the sign of Jonah.

So again, we are left to wonder about conflict, how people fight for the kingdom they want to have power in - either the kingdoms of the world or God's Kingdom. We are left to see conflict in faith, what does it mean to see God's Kingdom in action, what results are we supposed to see in ourselves when God's Kingdom comes to us.

But the section ends with a description of what Jesus' true family looks like - those who do God's will are Jesus' true family. So while the author Matthew may be describing the Church in many ways and crafting a Church to reflect Jesus, Matthew reminds us that belonging to the Church is not what matters, being near to the Kingdom is not enough, following strict Sabbath rules is not a marker of belonging, what matters is that we do God's Will.

Enter this section with caution, and care, and the freedom of the Gospel leading you into God's Kingdom.

2026 Summer Reading Challenge

Throughout this summer, First Lutheran Church will engage the Gospel of Matthew.

Each week we will read 2 chapters of Matthew.

Resources will be available along the way, including:

- An introduction to the week
- A Deep Dive into a big theme of Matthew's Gospel
- A Deep Dive into one part of this week's reading
- A Devotional based on one part of this week's reading
- A Video to read along with Pastor Jamie.

Check out our website and our Facebook page for weekly and daily postings related to this reading challenge.

Gathered by God, we live our faith with: Compassion, Grace, Gratitude, and Joy

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