Sermon
All Saints Day
Light Lutheran Church – Freeling & Rosedale
November 1st, 2026

1 Jn. 3:1-3; Rev. 7:9-17 – "Who wants to be a child again?"

Introduction

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

Who wants to be a child again?

Being a child has its advantages. You don't have to worry about paying the bills, filling the car with fuel, or wondering whether the next harvest will be a good one. Someone else takes care of those things.

But childhood also means growing up. You don't understand everything, you depend on others, and you face things you can't control.

As we grow older, we might wish we could be young again. We might long for the days when our parents were still with us, when family gathered around the table, and when life seemed simpler.

Today, on All Saints Day, we remember those who have gone before us in faith. We remember loved ones, friends and fellow Christians who once sat beside us in church. We miss their familiar faces, their voices and their presence in our lives.

We know death comes to everyone, but our society rarely wants to talk about it. We tuck death and grief away, mentioning them only in quiet conversations.

All Saints Day gives us permission to speak openly about death, grief and the hope we share in Jesus Christ. We remember those who have died, but we also celebrate God's promise that death will not have the final word.

That brings us back to our question: **Who wants to be a child again?**

John writes in our first reading:

“See what great love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called children of God! And that is what we are!”

John doesn't say we might become God's children if we try hard enough. He doesn't say we must prove ourselves worthy.

He says, “That is what we are!”

God makes us his children through Jesus Christ. He doesn't adopt us because we've earned our place in his family. Through Jesus' death and resurrection, God forgives our sins and welcomes us home. In baptism, he joins us to Christ and gives us the promise of eternal life.

We belong to God now, not because we've earned his love, but because he freely gives it.

John also reminds us that, although we are God's children now, we haven't yet seen everything God has planned for us.

We still struggle with sin. We experience illness, loneliness and grief. Our bodies grow older, and eventually we die. Sometimes we wonder what lies ahead.

John points us towards Jesus. When Christ appears, we will see him as he really is, and we will be like him.

One day, we will see our Saviour face to face. We won't have to wrestle with doubts or wonder what heaven will be like. God will complete what he has begun in us.

That is the hope we celebrate today. The saints who have died trusting Jesus have not put their faith in vain. Their future, like ours, rests in the hands of the risen Christ.

Revelation gives us a wonderful picture of that future.

John sees a crowd nobody can count, gathered before God's throne and the Lamb. They come from every nation, tribe, people and language. They wear white robes and hold palm branches in their hands.

Who are these people?

They are God's people, brought through suffering into his eternal presence.

John tells us what has made their robes white: “They have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.”

That sounds strange, doesn't it? Blood normally stains clothes rather than cleans them.

But John wants us to understand something wonderful. Our sin stains our lives, and we cannot wash it away through good deeds or by pretending we've done nothing wrong.

Only Jesus can cleanse us.

The Lamb is Jesus, who gave his life on the cross for us. His blood speaks of his sacrifice for our sin. Through his death and resurrection, Jesus forgives us and clothes us in his righteousness.

The saints in heaven don't stand before God because they lived perfect lives. They stand before him because Jesus has made them clean.

That includes the people we remember today. Their hope rested not in their goodness, but in God's grace. The same grace welcomes us.

Look at what God promises his people. He shelters them. They will never hunger or thirst again. The Lamb will shepherd them to springs of living water, and God himself will wipe every tear from their eyes.

What a picture of God's love!

The Jesus who died for us is the same Jesus who lives for us. He doesn't simply rescue us from death; he brings us home to live with him forever.

We cannot explain every detail of what our departed loved ones now experience. We don't need to fill the gaps with guesses. God's Word gives us a better promise: those who belong to Christ will share his victory and see him as he truly is.

Death separates us from those we love, and that hurts. Jesus himself wept at the grave of his friend Lazarus. Tears don't mean we lack faith.

We grieve because we love, but we grieve with hope because Jesus lives.

So, what does All Saints Day mean for us?

First, we can stop trying to earn God's love. We already belong to his family through Jesus. Our love and service to others grow from the love he has freely given us.

Second, we can face ageing and mortality honestly. We may lose our independence, our friends and the familiar things that have shaped our lives. Yet none of these things can separate us from God's love in Christ.

Third, we can live with hope in a world that often doesn't recognise God or understand what it means to belong to him.

Our neighbours might not understand why we gather for worship or trust Jesus when life gets hard. Our congregations might feel small, and our future might seem uncertain. Yet our future doesn't depend on our strength, our numbers or our circumstances. It rests with our risen Saviour.

Through his Word and Sacraments, God continues to forgive us, strengthen our faith and sustain us. He sends us into daily life to love

and serve others, not to earn his favour, but because he has already welcomed us into his family.

Today, we remember the saints who have finished their earthly journey. We give thanks for their lives, mourn their absence and rejoice in the promise they shared with us.

We are not yet all gathered together before the throne. We still live in a world of sorrow, uncertainty and death. Yet we share one Saviour, one gracious Father and one sure hope.

So, who wants to be a child again?

Perhaps we don't want to return to childhood as we once knew it. But through Jesus, we can rejoice that we are children of our heavenly Father.

We are God's children now. We are growing towards the day when Christ reveals the fullness of his promise. Those who die trusting him will see their Saviour face to face, and one day we will join them.

Then the Lamb will lead us home. God will wipe every tear from our eyes, and death will be no more.

Until that day, we trust the Father who loves us, the Son who redeemed us, and the Holy Spirit who sustains our faith.

We are God's children now. We belong to Jesus today. In him, our future is secure.

Amen.