

“I bring you
**GOOD
NEWS**
of *great joy*
for all people

Christmas Day
December 25, 2022

Welcome to St. John's Lutheran Church

Good morning and a blessed welcome to you! It truly is an honor to have you worshipping with us this morning and it is our prayer that you find great comfort and peace in Jesus' Word of love, mercy, and forgiveness! If you are visiting with us today, please take one of the visitor gift bags from the visitors' center.

At St. John's we are pleased to offer a variety of service formats on Sunday morning. In our 8:30 a.m. traditional service we offer familiar hymns and rich, traditional worship forms in a meaningful and inspirational setting. Our 11:00 a.m. contemporary service includes the same message as our 8:30 a.m. service but in an informal style, enhanced with contemporary music. We encourage you to try both worship styles! Thank you for worshipping with us; we would love to have you join us again!

(If you need any assistance or need a hearing aid device, please see one of the ushers.)

The Lord's Supper

Though we are eager for all to participate fully in the Lord's Supper, we do not want to compromise any portion of God's Word among us. Because Scripture states that the Lord's Supper can be taken to one's spiritual harm if not properly understood, we ask all visitors to refer to the following statement of belief regarding the Lord's Supper before communing:

I am truly sorry for the sin in my life. I am struggling to die to my sin and to live in faith in Jesus. I am looking to Jesus to empower me to stop my sinning and to live a new life in Him. I believe when I receive the bread, I am receiving the true body of Christ, and when I receive the wine, I am receiving the true blood of Jesus. I believe that when I receive His true body and blood my sins are forgiven, I am given power over sin, death and the devil, and the gift of eternal life. My faith is completely in the words of Jesus.

The Lord's Supper offers the two-fold gift of forgiveness and peace with God on the one hand, and unity and oneness among those who commune together on the other hand (Matt. 26:28; 1 Cor. 10:16–17). Those who receive the body and the blood of the Lord do so in terms of their relationship with God as well as with their fellow-communicants. Therefore, all baptized believers who understand and agree with the above Lutheran teaching of the Lord's Supper are welcome to attend. As always, we encourage you to speak with Pastor Ray with any questions or concerns. Thank you.

Disabled – The pastor and lay minister will gladly commune anyone unable to come to the communion rail. Let the pastor or an usher know before the service begins.

Christmas Day

December 25, 2022

9:30 a.m.

Our Vision: Grounded in Christ, Growing in Faith, Branching to Others

PRE-SERVICE MUSIC AND A TIME FOR PRAYER

Good morning and a blessed welcome to you! It truly is an honor to have you worshipping with us this morning and it is our prayer that you find great comfort and peace in Jesus' Word of love, mercy, and forgiveness! Thank you for worshipping with us; we would love to have you join us again!

RINGING OF THE BELLS

WELCOME/GREETING OF ONE ANOTHER

OPENING HYMN

Angels from the Realms of Glory

LSB 367

1 Angels from the realms of glory, Wing your flight o'er all the earth;
Ye who sang creation's story, Now proclaim Messiah's birth. Refrain

ref Come and worship, come and worship; Worship Christ, the newborn King.

2 Shepherds in the field abiding, Watching o'er your flocks by night,
God with us is now residing, Yonder shines the Infant Light. Refrain

3 Sages, leave your contemplations, Brighter visions beam afar;
Seek the great Desire of nations, Ye have seen His natal star.

4 Saints before the altar bending, Watching long in hope and fear,
Suddenly the Lord, descending, In His temple shall appear. Refrain

5 All creation, join in praising, God the Father, Spirit, Son,
Evermore your voices raising, To the eternal Three in One. Refrain

INVOCATION

L: In the Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

C: **Amen.**

OPENING SENTENCES

L: The people who walked in darkness

C: **have seen a great light!**

L: For behold, I bring you good news of great joy!

C: **Unto us is born this day a Savior!**

L: He is Christ, the Lord!

C: **Glory to God in the highest, and peace on earth.**

CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION

L: Of all the mighty and powerful acts of God, today we look to one of the greatest - the incarnation of Jesus, the Word of God becoming flesh. The power of God to save is revealed in this Jesus Christ—in his humble manger bed, in his weakness and suffering on the cross and in the empty tomb on the day of his resurrection! “The word of the cross is folly to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God.” It is for this reason Jesus came into the world, “to save His people from their sins.”

Silence for reflection.

L: Let us then confess our sins to God our Father:

C: **Almighty God, so often we turn away from your Word and your holy will to follow our own desires and the temptations of the world around us. We fail to love others as we should. We have sinned against you in our thoughts, words, and actions. For the sake of your Son Jesus, have mercy on us and forgive us.**

L: God has had mercy on us. He sent his Son to be our Savior. In weakness, the Son of God, Jesus our Lord, died on the cross for us. In power he rose from the dead in triumph over sin, death, and the devil. In and through this powerful work of Jesus, I announce to you that your sins are forgiven in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

C: **Amen.**

LISTENING TO GOD SPEAK TO US THROUGH HIS WORD*Exodus 15:1-18*

¹ Then Moses and the people of Israel sang this song to the Lord, saying, "I will sing to the Lord, for he has triumphed gloriously; the horse and his rider he has thrown into the sea. ² The Lord is my strength and my song, and he has become my salvation; this is my God, and I will praise him, my father's God, and I will exalt him. ³ The Lord is a man of war; the Lord is his name. ⁴ "Pharaoh's chariots and his host he cast into the sea, and his chosen officers were sunk in the Red Sea. ⁵ The floods covered them; they went down into the depths like a stone. ⁶ Your right hand, O Lord, glorious in power, your right hand, O Lord, shatters the enemy. ⁷ In the greatness of your majesty you overthrow your adversaries; you send out your fury; it consumes them like stubble. ⁸ At the blast of your nostrils the waters piled up; the floods stood up in a heap; the deeps congealed in the heart of the sea. ⁹ The enemy said, 'I will pursue, I will overtake, I will divide the spoil, my desire shall have its fill of them. I will draw my sword; my hand shall destroy them.' ¹⁰ You blew with your wind; the sea covered them; they sank like lead in the mighty waters. ¹¹ "Who is like you, O Lord, among the gods? Who is like you, majestic in holiness, awesome in glorious deeds, doing wonders? ¹² You stretched out your right hand; the earth swallowed them. ¹³ "You have led in your steadfast love the people whom you have redeemed; you have guided them by your strength to your holy abode. ¹⁴ The peoples have heard; they tremble; pangs have seized the inhabitants of Philistia. ¹⁵ Now are the chiefs of Edom dismayed; trembling seizes the leaders of Moab; all the inhabitants of Canaan have melted away. ¹⁶ Terror and dread fall upon them; because of the greatness of your arm, they are still as a stone, till your people, O Lord, pass by, till the people pass by whom you have purchased. ¹⁷ You will bring them in and plant them on your own mountain, the place, O Lord, which you have made for your abode, the sanctuary, O Lord, which your hands have established. ¹⁸ The Lord will reign forever and ever." (ESV)

L: This is the Word of the Lord.

C: **Thanks be to God.**

LISTENING TO GOD SPEAK TO US THROUGH HIS WORD*Titus 3:4-7*

⁴ But when God our Savior revealed his kindness and love, ⁵ he saved us, not because of the righteous things we had done, but because of his mercy. He washed away our sins, giving us a new birth and new life through the Holy Spirit. ⁶ He generously poured out the Spirit upon us through Jesus Christ our Savior. ⁷ Because of his grace he made us right in his sight and gave us confidence that we will inherit eternal life. (NLT)

L: This is the Word of the Lord.

C: **Thanks be to God.**

HOLY GOSPEL

John 1:1-14

L: The Holy Gospel according to St. John the first chapter.

C: **Glory to You, O Lord.** (*sung*)

¹ In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. ² He was in the beginning with God. ³ All things were made through him, and without him was not any thing made that was made. ⁴ In him was life, and the life was the light of men. ⁵ The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it. ⁶ There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. ⁷ He came as a witness, to bear witness about the light, that all might believe through him. ⁸ He was not the light, but came to bear witness about the light. ⁹ The true light, which gives light to everyone, was coming into the world. ¹⁰ He was in the world, and the world was made through him, yet the world did not know him. ¹¹ He came to his own, and his own people did not receive him. ¹² But to all who did receive him, who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God, ¹³ who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God. ¹⁴ And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth. (ESV)

L: This is the Gospel of the Lord.

C: **Praise to You, O Christ.** (*sung*)

SERMON HYMN

Hark! The Herald Angels Sing

LSB 380

1 Hark! The herald angels sing, "Glory to the newborn King;
Peace on earth and mercy mild, God and sinners reconciled!"
Joyful, all ye nations, rise, Join the triumph of the skies;
With the_angelic host proclaim, "Christ is born in Bethlehem!"

ref Hark! The herald angels sing, "Glory to the newborn King!"

2 Christ, by highest heav'n adored, Christ, the everlasting Lord,
Late in time behold Him come, Offspring of a virgin's womb.
Veiled in flesh the Godhead see, Hail the_incarinate Deity!
Pleased as Man with man to dwell, Jesus, our Immanuel!

3 Hail, the heav'n-born Prince of Peace! Hail, the Sun of Righteousness!
Light and life to all He brings, Ris'n with healing in His wings.
Mild He lays His glory by, Born that man no more may die,
Born to raise the sons of earth, Born to give them second birth.

SERMON

Pastor Aaron Bird

NICENE CREED

C: I believe in one God, the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth and of all things visible and invisible. And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Son of God, begotten of His Father before all worlds, God of God, Light of Light, very God of very God, begotten, not made, being of one substance with the Father, by whom all things were made; who for us men and for our salvation came down from heaven and was incarnate by the Holy Spirit of the virgin Mary and was made man; and was crucified also for us under Pontius Pilate. He suffered and was buried. And the third day He rose again according to the Scriptures and ascended into heaven and sits at the right hand of the Father. And He will come again with glory to judge both the living and the dead, whose kingdom will have no end. And I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord and giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son, who with the Father and the Son together is worshiped and glorified, who spoke by the prophets. And I believe in one holy Christian and apostolic Church, I acknowledge one Baptism for the remission of sins, and I look for the resurrection of the dead and the life of the world to come. Amen.

GIVING TO JESUS THANKFULLY FROM THE HEART (*Offerings & Tithes*)

OFFERTORY HYMN

From Heaven Above to Earth I Come (1-5, 15)

LSB 358

1 "From heav'n above to earth I come,
To bear good news to ev'ry home;
Glad tidings of great joy I bring,
Whereof I now will say and sing:

2 "To you this night is born a child,
Of Mary, chosen virgin mild;
This little child of lowly birth,
Shall be the joy of all the earth.

- 3 "This is the Christ, our God Most High,
Who hears your sad and bitter cry;
He will Himself your Savior be,
From all your sins to set you free.
- 4 "He will on you the gifts bestow,
Prepared by God for all below,
That in His kingdom, bright and fair,
You may with us His glory share.
- 5 "These are the signs that you shall mark:
The swaddling clothes and manger dark.
There you will find the infant laid,
By whom the heav'ns and earth were made."
- 15 Glory to God in highest heav'n,
Who unto us His Son has giv'n!
While angels sing with pious mirth,
A glad new year to all the earth.

PRAYERS OF THE CHURCH

- L:** Lord and Savior, look in mercy on those who suffer from illness, grief and loneliness. Strengthen them in faith and comfort them according to the promises of your Word. By your mighty power, bring them healing according to your will.
- C:** **Lead us by the power of your Spirit to share your love and compassion with those in need.**
- L:** Lord and Savior, you sent John the Baptist to prepare the way before you. Through a baptism of repentance, the people were made ready to welcome you, their Messiah and Lord.
- C:** **Help us, according to your command, to proclaim to all nations repentance and forgiveness in your name.**
- L:** Lord and Savior, you brought Israel safely across the Red Sea and in glorious triumph defeated their enemies. Through your mighty power, hidden in your suffering and death and revealed in your resurrection, you defeated sin, death and the devil for us.

C: Your glorious power has shattered our enemies!

L: Holy Savior, Lord of might and power, hear our prayers and accept our praise as together we pray the prayer you taught us to pray...

LORD'S PRAYER

C: Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name, Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven; give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For Thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever and ever. Amen.

WORDS OF INSTITUTION

DISTRIBUTION HYMNS

Let All Mortal Flesh Keep Silence

LSB 621

- 1 Let all mortal flesh keep silence, and with fear and trembling stand;
ponder nothing earthly-minded, for with blessing in his hand
Christ, our God, to earth descending, comes our homage to command.
- 2 King of kings, yet born of Mary, as of old on earth he stood,
Lord of lords in human likeness, in the body and the blood
he will give to all the faithful his own self for heav'nly food.
- 3 Rank on rank the host of heaven spreads its vanguard on the way
as the Light from Light, descending from the realms of endless day,
comes the pow'rs of hell to vanquish as the darkness clears away.
- 4 At his feet the six-winged seraph, cherubim with sleepless eye,
veil their faces to the presence as with ceaseless voice they cry:
"Alleluia, alleluia! Alleluia, Lord Most High!"

O Little Town of Bethlehem

LSB 361

- 1 O little town of Bethlehem, How still we see thee lie!
Above thy deep and dreamless sleep, The silent stars go by;
Yet in thy dark streets shineth, The everlasting light.
The hopes and fears of all the years, Are met in thee tonight.

2 For Christ is born of Mary, And, gathered all above
While mortals sleep, the angels keep, Their watch of wond'ring love.
O morning stars, together, Proclaim the holy birth,
And praises sing to God the king, And peace to all the earth!

3 How silently, how silently, The wondrous gift is giv'n!
So God imparts to human hearts, The blessings of His heav'n.
No ear may hear His coming; But in this world of sin,
Where meek souls will receive Him, still The dear Christ enters in.

4 O holy Child of Bethlehem, Descend to us, we pray;
Cast out our sin, and enter in, Be born in us today.
We hear the Christmas angels, The great glad tidings tell;
O come to us, abide with us, Our Lord Immanuel!

BLESSING

L: The Lord bless you and keep you. The Lord make His face shine on you
and be gracious to you. The Lord look upon you with favor and give you
peace.

C: **Amen.**

SENDING HYMN

Joy to the World

LSB 387

1 Joy to the world, the Lord is come! Let earth receive her King;
Let ev'ry heart prepare Him room, And heav'n and nature sing,
And heav'n and nature sing, And heav'n, and heav'n and nature sing.

2 Joy to the earth, the Savior reigns! Let men their songs employ,
While fields and floods, rocks, hills, and plains, Repeat the sounding joy,
Repeat the sounding joy, Repeat, repeat the sounding joy.

3 No more let sins and sorrows grow, Nor thorns infest the ground;
He comes to make His blessings flow, Far as the curse is found,
Far as the curse is found, Far as, far as the curse is found.

4 He rules the world with truth and grace, And makes the nations prove
The glories of His righteousness, And wonders of His love,
And wonders of His love, And wonders, wonders of His love.

Sunday Servants

Preacher Pastor Aaron Bird
Worship Leader Pastor Adam Ray
Reader Mike Patzwitz
Lay Minister 9:30 – Steve Craycroft
Organist..... Sharon Cripe
Ushers9:30 – David Vanskike
Sound 9:30 – Doug Hicks

Thank You for Your Service!

In Need of Prayer: If you would like to be added to the prayer list or the prayer chain, please contact the church office. Please call the prayer chain with an update of your prayer request.

In the Military: Kaleb Blakeman, Laura Byers, Bryon Chaney, Kimberly Chaney, Kristel Chaney, Travis Chaney, Dan Cheney, Tristin Comer, Randy Edwards, Austin Highcock, Braden Highcock, Destiny Little, Noah Lung, Andrew Nailer, Jared Pinney, Caitlin Salefski, Tyler Salefski, Gavin Stanzione, Jacob Thornell

Last Week's Giving

Weekly Needed \$12,403.85
General Fund \$7,939.00
Online Giving \$1,553.43
Total \$9,492.43

Last Week's Attendance

9:30 a.m. 162

Congregation News

Next Sunday, January 1st we will have our normal service times:

8:30 a.m. – Traditional Service

9:45 a.m. – Adult Sunday School

11:00 a.m. – Contemporary Service

Offering Envelopes are available in your mailbox. If you did not receive envelopes, please contact the church office.

Adult Sunday School Hour: As St. John's launches this new year with a sermon series focusing on our vision of being *Grounded in Christ, Growing in Faith, and Branching to Others*, please join us in the Fellowship Hall January 8th, 15th, and 22nd at 9:45am for some food, fellowship, and in depth discussion unpacking these themes and how we hope them to shape the future of our ministry at St. John's.

Unity 23: In a world that often feels divided, we're ready for Unity. As we near 2023, we're joining with our five association churches to raise funds for our shared ministry. Would you consider a special (tax-deductible) gift this year-end to help Jesus be known in Decatur? 50% of your gift will support the LSA; 50% will support St. John's = 100% will make a real impact on our community. Donation envelopes are available on the back table, in the church office, or online St. John's webpage.

To wrap up Unity 23 and celebrate moving into the New Year, we're going to have a Unity 23 night for our home basketball games on January 6th. We'd love to have all of our congregations come together to cheer on the Lions that night. JV is at 6pm and Varsity is at 7:30pm.

Volunteer at Northeast Community Fund: Join us in serving our community at the Northeast Community Fund! The NECF works to assist needy families in our Decatur and Macon County community with the resources available in a caring and Christ-like manner. Consider signing up as a regular individual volunteer through their website. Go to www.northeastcommunityfund.org and fill out a volunteer form by clicking, "Volunteer" at the top of the web page. In the form, include the times you would be able to volunteer in the comment box and the NECF will contact you.

Young Adult Bible Study - (Geared towards ages 24-35) We are meeting Mondays at 6:30pm at the home of Anne Jesgarz. Come join us for evenings of Bible study and board games. You can email Anne at JesgarzAnne@gmail.com for the address. We can't wait to see you there!

LWML: Mite boxes will be collected the first Sunday of each month. LWML National Convention is June 22-25, 2023 in Milwaukee, Wisconsin.

Stewardship Seeds: *John 1:5* – “*The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.*” Through all of our hardships, all of our sorrows, all of our pains and loneliness, Jesus’ light shines in the darkness, and we are not overcome. In the face of our sin, in the midst of our pettiness, against all our pride, Jesus’ light shines and illuminates our hearts and changes us, day by day, into a greater reflection of His likeness.

Poinsettias In Memory of

Lois Garrett

In Memory of Don Garrett

Jenette Heideman

*In Memory of Arthur & Ella Heidemann,
Dewayne Heidemann
John & Helena Backhus,
Herman & Minnie Heidemann*

Janis Karasch

*In Memory of Adam & Augusta Yobski
Fred & Margaret Karasch
Bill Karasch*

The Family

In Memory of Kenny & Sue Lake

Gavin & Carolyn Marquis

*In Memory of Parents, John & Frieda Sendzik,
Brother, Dan Sendzik*

Jerome & Carol Pelz

*In Memory of Carl & Kathryn Brink
Curtis & Georgia Ann Pelz*

Saurmann Family

In Memory of Frederick R. Saurmann III

Gary & Vicki Schwartzle

*In Memory of Paul & Amelia Ponewash
Dale & Eleanor Schwartzle*

Shirley Taylor

In Memory of Larry Taylor

The Family

In Memory of Cheri Trimmer

Dave Vanskike

In Memory of Parents & Grandparents

*Judy Voelker ,
Julie & Tony Cox*

*In Memory of Leonard, Margaret, Michael, & John Tanzyus;
Brian Puckett; Jerry, Phil, Hilda & Ed Voelker*

Denny & Marsha Ward

In Memory of Chad Ward

Larry & LuAnne Westbrook

In Memory of James Swartz, Phyllis Boland, Greg Walsh

Joan Wyant

In Memory of John Wyant & Loved Ones

THIS WEEK AT ST. JOHN'S

Sunday, December 25 – Merry Christmas

9:30 a.m. Christmas Day Service with Communion

Monday, December 26

Church Office Closed

(No church activities scheduled.)

Tuesday, December 27

(No church activities scheduled.)

Wednesday, December 28

10:00 a.m. Adult Bible Study (FH)

Thursday, December 29

5:30 p.m. TOPS (FH)

Friday, December 30 - Church Office Closed at Noon

(No church activities scheduled.)

Saturday, December 31

(No church activities scheduled.)

Sunday, January 1, 2023 – Happy New Year

8:30 a.m. Traditional Service

9:45 a.m. Adult Sunday School Hour (FH)

11:00 a.m. Contemporary Service