

LET THERE BE

*Light*

THE SEASON OF  
ADVENT

December 11, 2022  
St. John's Lutheran Church

## *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.)*

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### Contact Us

2727 North Union Boulevard, Decatur, IL 62526

Phone: (217) 875-3656; website: [www.stjohnsdecatur.com](http://www.stjohnsdecatur.com)

Church office hours: 8:00 am – 4:00 pm, Monday - Friday

Members of The Lutheran Church Missouri Synod & Lutheran School Association



#### **St. John's Staff**

Rev. Adam Ray, Lead Pastor.....[pastoradam@stjohnsdecatur.com](mailto:pastoradam@stjohnsdecatur.com)

Rev. Aaron Bird, Assoc. Pastor.....[pastoraaron@stjohnsdecatur.com](mailto:pastoraaron@stjohnsdecatur.com)

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Carol Reynolds, Financial Secretary.....[carolr@stjohnsdecatur.com](mailto:carolr@stjohnsdecatur.com)

Jeff Miller, Custodian

#### *LSA Faculty & Staff – Members of St. John's Lutheran Church*

*Ciara Collins*

*Anne Jesgarz*

*Angela Martinek*

*Jeff Salefski*

*Brenda Salogga*

*Melissa Saurmann*

*Stephanie Wilkerson*

**THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT**  
**DECEMBER 11, 2022**  
**8:30 A.M.**

**PRE-SERVICE MUSIC AND A TIME FOR PRAYER**

**RINGING OF THE BELLS**

**WELCOME/GREETING**

**OPENING HYMN**

*When All the World Was Cursed*

*LSB 346*

**INVOCATION**

**LIGHTING OF ADVENT WREATH**

L: The people walking in darkness have seen a great Light!

**C: Jesus Christ is the Light of the World. The Light no darkness can overcome.**

L: Today we light the third candle of our Advent wreath in recognition of the Joy that Jesus' Light brings into the world,

**C: that we would not carry our nagging sorrow in darkness but would be upheld by the enduring strength of God's joy.**

L: Nights will bring their sadness and rob our hearts of peace

**C: And sin in all its madness around us may increase**

L: But now three lights are beaming whose rays have pierced the night

**C: God comes for our redeeming from sin's oppressive might.**

*(LSB 337, "The Night Will Soon Be Ending," verse 4)*

**CONFESSION & ABSOLUTION**

L: Let us now make confession of our sins to God, our heavenly Father.

**C: Merciful Father, our Lord and King, we have sinned against You in thought, word, and deed. We have left undone those things we ought to have done; we have done those things we ought not to have done. We have not always made Your kingdom of first importance in our lives. We sincerely repent of our sins and humbly ask Your grace and forgiveness**

**in Jesus Christ. By the renewing work of the Holy Spirit, lead us to change what is sinful in our lives that each day we may grow in righteousness and godly living to the glory of Your holy name.**

**L:** Jesus comes to hearts rejoicing, bringing news of sins forgiven; Jesus comes with words of gladness, leading souls redeemed to heaven. As a called and ordained servant of Christ and by His authority, I announce to you today that your sins are forgiven in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

**C: Amen. Alleluia! Alleluia! Joy to all the world is given.**  
*(LSB 353, "Jesus Came, the Heavens Adoring," verse 3)*

## **SALUTATION**

## **PRAYER OF THE DAY**

### **LISTENING TO GOD SPEAK TO US THROUGH HIS WORD**

#### ***Old Testament***

*Isaiah 35:1-10*

<sup>1</sup>The wilderness and the dry land shall be glad; the desert shall rejoice and blossom like the crocus; <sup>2</sup>it shall blossom abundantly and rejoice with joy and singing. The glory of Lebanon shall be given to it, the majesty of Carmel and Sharon. They shall see the glory of the Lord, the majesty of our God. <sup>3</sup>Strengthen the weak hands, and make firm the feeble knees. <sup>4</sup>Say to those who have an anxious heart, "Be strong; fear not! Behold, your God will come with vengeance, with the recompense of God. He will come and save you." <sup>5</sup>Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf unstopped; <sup>6</sup>then shall the lame man leap like a deer, and the tongue of the mute sing for joy. For waters break forth in the wilderness, and streams in the desert; <sup>7</sup>the burning sand shall become a pool, and the thirsty ground springs of water; in the haunt of jackals, where they lie down, the grass shall become reeds and rushes. <sup>8</sup>And a highway shall be there, and it shall be called the Way of Holiness; the unclean shall not pass over it. It shall belong to those who walk on the way; even if they are fools, they shall not go astray. <sup>9</sup>No lion shall be there, nor shall any ravenous beast come up on it; they shall not be found there, but the redeemed shall walk there. <sup>10</sup>And the ransomed of the Lord shall return and come to Zion with singing; everlasting joy shall be upon their heads; they shall obtain gladness and joy, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away. (ESV)

**L:** This is the Word of our Lord.

**C: Thanks be to God.**

<sup>7</sup> Be patient, therefore, brothers, until the coming of the Lord. See how the farmer waits for the precious fruit of the earth, being patient about it, until it receives the early and the late rains. <sup>8</sup> You also, be patient. Establish your hearts, for the coming of the Lord is at hand. <sup>9</sup> Do not grumble against one another, brothers, so that you may not be judged; behold, the Judge is standing at the door. <sup>10</sup> As an example of suffering and patience, brothers, take the prophets who spoke in the name of the Lord. <sup>11</sup> Behold, we consider those blessed who remained steadfast. You have heard of the steadfastness of Job, and you have seen the purpose of the Lord, how the Lord is compassionate and merciful. (ESV)

L: This is the Word of our Lord.

C: **Thanks be to God.**

### COMMON ALLELUIA AND VERSE

#### HOLY GOSPEL

*Matthew 11:2-15*

L: The Holy Gospel according to St. Matthew, the eleventh chapter.

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

<sup>2</sup> Now when John heard in prison about the deeds of the Christ, he sent word by his disciples <sup>3</sup> and said to him, “Are you the one who is to come, or shall we look for another?” <sup>4</sup> And Jesus answered them, “Go and tell John what you hear and see: <sup>5</sup> the blind receive their sight and the lame walk, lepers are cleansed and the deaf hear, and the dead are raised up, and the poor have good news preached to them. <sup>6</sup> And blessed is the one who is not offended by me.” <sup>7</sup> As they went away, Jesus began to speak to the crowds concerning John: “What did you go out into the wilderness to see? A reed shaken by the wind? <sup>8</sup> What then did you go out to see? A man dressed in soft clothing? Behold, those who wear soft clothing are in kings' houses. <sup>9</sup> What then did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, I tell you, and more than a prophet. <sup>10</sup> This is he of whom it is written, “Behold, I send my messenger before your face, who will prepare your way before you.” <sup>11</sup> Truly, I say to you, among those born of women there has arisen no one greater than John the Baptist. Yet the one who is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he. <sup>12</sup> From the days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of heaven has suffered violence, and the violent take it by force. <sup>13</sup> For all the Prophets and the Law prophesied until John, <sup>14</sup> and if you are willing to accept it, he is Elijah who is to come. <sup>15</sup> He who has ears to hear, let him hear. (ESV)

L: This is the Gospel of our Lord.

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

**CHILDREN'S MESSAGE**

*Pastor Adam Ray*

**SERMON HYMN**

*"Hark the Glad Sound"*

*LSB 349*

**SERMON**

*"The Way"*

*Isaiah 35:1-10*

*Pastor Aaron Bird*

**APOSTLES' CREED**

**OFFERING**

*Tithes and gifts may be placed in the collection plate or given at  
[www.stjohnsdecatour.com/giving](http://www.stjohnsdecatour.com/giving).*

**PRAYER OF THE CHURCH**

*The Leader will conclude every prayer with: "Lord, in Your mercy."*

*People respond with: "hear our prayer"*

**LORD'S PRAYER**

**RECEPTION OF NEW MEMBERS**

**RECOGNITION OF BAPTISM BIRTHDAYS**

**ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**BENEDICTION**

**SENDING SONG**

**THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT**

**DECEMBER 11, 2022**

**11:00 A.M.**

**OPENING PRAISE SONGS**

*O Come, O Come Emmanuel*

*Great Things*

**WELCOME/GREETING**

**CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION**

**SHARING THE PEACE**

**OFFERING**

*Light of The World*

**SCRIPTURE READING**

*Isaiah 35:1-10*

**SERMON**

*“The Way”*

*Isaiah 35:1-10*

*Pastor Aaron Bird*

**APOSTLES’ CREED**

**PRAYERS**

**LORD’S PRAYER**

**RECEPTION OF NEW MEMBERS**

**RECOGNITION OF BIRTHDAY BAPTISMS**

**ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**SENDING SONG**

*My Lighthouse*

**BLESSING**

## *Sunday Servants*

Preacher .....	Pastor Aaron Bird
Worship Leader .....	Pastor Adam Ray
Reader .....	Frank Whitehead
Lay Minister .....	8:30 – Larry Westbrook 11:00 – Matt Cushing
Organist.....	Ted Hesse
Ushers .....	8:30 – Gary Schwartzle/Rick Laskowski 11:00 – Serenity Calhoun/Debbie Strong
Computer .....	8:30 – Mike Patzwitz 11:00 – Julia Cushing
Live Stream.....	11:00 – Lindsay Tipsword
Camera.....	11:00 – Eric Brown
Sound .....	8:30 – Brandon Patzwitz 11:00 – Doug Hicks

## *Thank You for Your Service!*

### *Praise Team*

Vocals .....	Melissa Saurmann, Pam Saurmann, Ted Hesse
Acoustic Guitar.....	Wendy Salefski
Piano .....	Angela Cushing

### *Our Mission*

*We are restored to God through the death and resurrection of Jesus. As a family of Christians, we are dedicated to the love and forgiveness of Christ as we reach out, preach and teach the truth of God's Word to each other, our community and the world.*

**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, Caleb Goodson, Austin Highcock, Braden Highcock, Destiny Little, Noah Lung, Nathan Lung, Andrew Nailer, Jared Pinney, Caitlin Salefski, Tyler Salefski, Gavin Stanzione, Jacob Thornell

## Congregation News

**Adult Sunday School Hour:** Pastor Aaron is leading a Bible Study series during Sunday morning Adult Education, focusing on the basics of Christian theology. The series will be based on the book, "Called to Believe" by Dr. Steven P. Mueller. Come join us in the Fellowship Hall each Sunday at 9:45 a.m. as we learn more about our faith together.

**Advent Midweek Service** on Wednesday, December 14<sup>th</sup> at 6:30 p.m. Wednesday Evening Meals will begin at 5:00 p.m. This week's meal is Pulled Pork prepared by Assimilation Ministry.

**Northeast Community Fund Service Night** is this Thursday evening, December 15<sup>th</sup>, 5:00 – 6:30 p.m. We will be filling Christmas Baskets. This is a great time of fun and fellowship.

### **Christmas Services:**

Kids Program: Sunday, December 18<sup>th</sup> 9:30 a.m. One Service

Christmas Eve Candlelight Services: 2:30 & 4:30 p.m.

Sunday, December 25, 2022: One Service at 9:30 a.m.

Invite cards are on the back table. Please take a few to pass along to others. Invite your family and friends.

**Christmas Birthday Brunch!** Following the Christmas Children's program on Sunday, December 18<sup>th</sup>, there will be a Christmas brunch for all to enjoy! We hope you will be a part of this great time of fellowship with one another! We are still in need of a few food items, please contact Malinda if you are able to make, bake or donate something.

**Ladies Friendship Circle** will meet for Christmas fun and fellowship at 1:00 on December 20<sup>th</sup>. Bring a snack to share, then be prepared to eat, visit, and play a game or two. In lieu of a gift exchange we are collecting small items that Baby Talk families might like for their preschool age children, 0-3 years. Think of things like bottles, pacifiers, bibs, diapers, wipes, underwear, small toys, books, or caps and mittens. While these will be gifts from us, they are not intended to be gifts for the children, so please don't wrap. If you've never attended a Friendship Circle meeting, this is a great opportunity to get to know the group!

**Poinsettias:** If you wish to purchase a Poinsettia in someone's memory or honor, please use a Poinsettia offering envelopes located on the back table. Deadline to purchase the Poinsettias is Sunday, December 18<sup>th</sup>.

**The Annual Mitten Christmas Tree** is in the foyer and needs your help with decorations. Donate gloves, mittens, scarves, and hats; and hang them on the tree. This is a long-standing partnership between St. John's and Northeast Community Fund. The donations will be added to the NECF Christmas Baskets.

**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. We all have the same mission: to spread the love of Jesus to the Decatur community. 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.

**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](http://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](mailto: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.

**Do you shop on Amazon?** If you do, you can invest in our youth group while making your favorite online purchases! You can sign up for Amazon Smile and designate St. John's as your favorite charity and Amazon will donate .5% of eligible purchase prices to our youth group! <https://smile.amazon.com/ch/37-0686255>

**Stewardship Seeds: Matthew 11:10 – “This is he of whom it is written, ‘Behold, I send my messenger before your face, who will prepare your way before you.’”** John prepared the way for Jesus by preaching repentance. Then, when Jesus’ ministry was complete and He was raised from the dead, He sent out His disciples to preach “repentance for the forgiveness of sins” (Luke 24:47). We never outgrow the need for repentance — for examining our lives, turning away from our sins, and turning toward Jesus in faith to receive his forgiveness and strength for a renewed life of godliness.

**Last Week’s Giving**

Weekly Needed.....	\$12,403.85
General Fund .....	\$14,325.00
Online Offering.....	\$1,661.71
Total.....	\$15,986.71

**Last Week’s Attendance**

8:30 a.m. ....	143
11:00 a.m. ....	56
Total.....	199
Adult Sunday School Class .....	35
Wednesday Adult Bible Study .....	14
Wednesday Advent 11/30 .....	87
Wednesday Advent 12/7 .....	81

## THIS WEEK AT ST. JOHN'S

### Sunday, December 11

8:30 a.m. .... Traditional Service  
9:45 a.m. .... Adult Sunday School  
11:00 a.m. .... Contemporary Service  
6-8 p.m. .... Jr. High Youth Groups

### Monday, December 12

6:30 p.m. .... Boy Scouts

### Tuesday, December 13

1:00 p.m. .... Staff Meeting  
6:30 p.m. .... Lay Ministry

### Wednesday, December 14

10:00 a.m. .... Adult Bible Study (FH)  
12:30 p.m. .... Bus Trip to Little Theatre in Sullivan  
5:00 p.m. .... Advent Meal (FH)  
6:30 p.m. .... Advent Service  
7:15 p.m. .... Bells Rehearsal

### Thursday, December 15

5-6:30 p.m. .... NECF Service Project  
5:00 p.m. .... TOPS  
6:00 p.m. .... Choir Rehearsal  
7:00 p.m. .... Worship Practice

### Friday, December 16

No church activities scheduled.

### Saturday, December 17

10:00 – 12:00 .... Children's Christmas Program Practice

### Sunday, December 18

9:30 a.m. .... ONE SERVICE – Children's Christmas Program  
Christmas Brunch following the program.  
4-5:30 p.m. .... Confirmation  
5:30 – 6 p.m. .... Shared Dinner  
6-8:00 p.m. .... Jr. High Youth