



*Lessons  
& Carols*

December 17, 2023  
St. John's Lutheran Church



## **Welcome to St. John's Lutheran Church**

Good morning and a blessed welcome to you! It is an honor to have you worshiping with us this morning and we pray that you find great comfort and peace in Jesus' Word of love, mercy, and forgiveness!

At St. John's we are pleased to offer two styles of worship services 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 worshiping with us; we would love to have you join us again!

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

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### **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 or Pastor Aaron 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.

# **SERVICE OF NINE LESSONS AND CAROLS**

**December 17<sup>th</sup>, 2023**

**9:30 a.m.**

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

## **PRAYER FOR THE UPCOMING CHRISTMASTIDE**

*O Father of lights, from whom comes every good gift and every perfect endowment, let not the mad and frantic rush of these hurried holidays, the frenzy of our preparations and the schedule of our obligations, drown out the message of the angels drawing near; but give us grace, with peaceful hearts and eager minds, to hear and ponder all the wonder which your living Word proclaims.*

## **PRE-SERVICE MUSIC**

## **RINGING OF THE BELLS**

## **WELCOME/GREETING OF ONE ANOTHER**

*Please take time to complete the appropriate side of the attendance registration cards. Once completed, pass the cards toward the center aisle. They will be collected during the offering.*

## **CONGREGATIONAL HYMN**

*O Come, O Come, Emmanuel (Vv 1, 3-5)*

*LSB 357*

## **INVOCATION**

## **OPENING SENTENCES**

**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 to us and the world.  
We sing...

## LIGHTING OF ADVENT CANDLE

*Light One Candle is sung*

### FIRST LESSON

*Genesis 3:8-15*

*God announces in the Garden of Eden that the seed of woman shall bruise the serpent's head.*

<sup>8</sup> And they heard the sound of the Lord God walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and the man and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God among the trees of the garden. <sup>9</sup> But the Lord God called to the man and said to him, "Where are you?" <sup>10</sup> And he said, "I heard the sound of you in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked, and I hid myself." <sup>11</sup> He said, "Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten of the tree of which I commanded you not to eat?" <sup>12</sup> The man said, "The woman whom you gave to be with me, she gave me fruit of the tree, and I ate." <sup>13</sup> Then the Lord God said to the woman, "What is this that you have done?" The woman said, "The serpent deceived me, and I ate." <sup>14</sup> The Lord God said to the serpent, "Because you have done this, cursed are you above all livestock and above all beasts of the field; on your belly you shall go, and dust you shall eat all the days of your life. <sup>15</sup> I will put enmity between you and the woman and between your offspring and her offspring; he shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise his heel." (ESV)

### CONFESSION & ABSOLUTION

**L:** That we may have true joy in the great things our forgiving God does for us, let us together confess our sins before Him.

**C:** **Most merciful God, we confess that we are by nature sinful and unclean. Just like our ancestors, we continually disobey You and Your Word. We have sinned against You in thought, word, and deed, by what we do and by what we fail to do. Instead of being Your witnesses of love and truth, we are often critical of or indifferent to those around us. For the sake of our Savior and King, have mercy on us. Forgive us and restore us. Guide us and renew us. Help us to walk in Your ways to the glory of Your holy name. Amen.**

L: Our faithful God hears our prayers and answers them, removing our sins from us and declaring us blameless in His sight through faith in Jesus Christ. As a called and ordained servant of Christ, I therefore forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

**C: Amen.**

## **SECOND LESSON**

*Genesis 22:15-18*

*God promises to faithful Abraham that in his seed shall the nations of the earth be blessed.*

<sup>15</sup>And the angel of the Lord called to Abraham a second time from heaven <sup>16</sup>and said, "By myself I have sworn, declares the Lord, because you have done this and have not withheld your son, your only son, <sup>17</sup>I will surely bless you, and I will surely multiply your offspring as the stars of heaven and as the sand that is on the seashore. And your offspring shall possess the gate of his enemies, <sup>18</sup>and in your offspring shall all the nations of the earth be blessed, because you have obeyed my voice." (ESV)

## **CONGREGATIONAL HYMN**

*On Christmas Night All Christians Sing*

*LSB 377*

## **THIRD LESSON**

*Isaiah 9:2, 6-7*

*Christ's birth and kingdom are foretold by Isaiah.*

<sup>2</sup>The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who dwelt in a land of deep darkness, on them has light shone. <sup>6</sup>For to us a child is born, to us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder, and his name shall be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. <sup>7</sup>Of the increase of his government and of peace there will be no end, on the throne of David and over his kingdom, to establish it and to uphold it with justice and with righteousness from this time forth and forevermore. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will do this. (ESV)

## **MINISTRY IN MUSIC**

*Choir*

## **FOURTH LESSON**

*Isaiah 11:1-2,6-9*

*The peace that Christ will bring is foreshown.*

<sup>1</sup>There shall come forth a shoot from the stump of Jesse, and a branch from his roots shall bear fruit. <sup>2</sup>And the Spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him, the Spirit of wisdom and understanding, the Spirit of counsel and might, the Spirit of knowledge and the fear of the Lord. <sup>6</sup>The wolf shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the young goat, and the calf and the lion and the fattened calf together; and a little child shall lead them. <sup>7</sup>The cow and the bear shall graze; their young shall lie down together; and the lion shall eat straw like the ox. <sup>8</sup>The nursing child shall play over the hole of the cobra, and the weaned child shall put his hand on the adder's den. <sup>9</sup>They shall not hurt or destroy in all my holy mountain; for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea. (ESV)

## **CONGREGATIONAL HYMN**

*Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus*

*LSB 338*

## **FIFTH LESSON**

*Luke 1:26-35,38*

*The angel Gabriel salutes the virgin Mary.*

<sup>26</sup>In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God to a city of Galilee named Nazareth, <sup>27</sup>to a virgin betrothed to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. And the virgin's name was Mary. <sup>28</sup>And he came to her and said, "Greetings, O favored one, the Lord is with you!" <sup>29</sup>But she was greatly troubled at the saying, and tried to discern what sort of greeting this might be. <sup>30</sup>And the angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. <sup>31</sup>And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus. <sup>32</sup>He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. And the Lord God will give to him the throne of his father David, <sup>33</sup>and he will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end." <sup>34</sup>And Mary said to the angel, "How will this be, since I am a virgin?" <sup>35</sup>And the angel answered her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be called holy—the Son

of God. <sup>38</sup> And Mary said, "Behold, I am the servant of the Lord; let it be to me according to your word." And the angel departed from her. (ESV)

## **CHOIR AND CONGREGATIONAL HYMN**

*Once in Royal David's City*

*LSB 376*

## **SIXTH LESSON**

*Luke 2:1,3-7*

*St. Luke tells of the birth of Jesus.*

<sup>2</sup>In those days a decree went out from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be registered. <sup>3</sup>And all went to be registered, each to his own town. <sup>4</sup>And Joseph also went up from Galilee, from the town of Nazareth, to Judea, to the city of David, which is called Bethlehem, because he was of the house and lineage of David, <sup>5</sup>to be registered with Mary, his betrothed, who was with child. <sup>6</sup>And while they were there, the time came for her to give birth. <sup>7</sup>And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in swaddling cloths and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn. (ESV)

## **OFFERING**

*O Come, All You Unfaithful*

## **SEVENTH LESSON**

*Luke 2:8-16*

*The shepherds go to the manger.*

<sup>8</sup>And in the same region there were shepherds out in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. <sup>9</sup>And an angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were filled with great fear. <sup>10</sup>And the angel said to them, "Fear not, for behold, I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. <sup>11</sup>For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord. <sup>12</sup>And this will be a sign for you: you will find a baby wrapped in swaddling cloths and lying in a manger." <sup>13</sup>And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying, <sup>14</sup>"Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace among those with whom he is pleased!" <sup>15</sup>When the angels went away from them into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, "Let

us go over to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has made known to us.”<sup>16</sup> And they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby lying in a manger. (ESV)

## **MINISTRY IN MUSIC**

*Children's Choir*

*Go Tell It On the Mountain*

## **EIGHTH LESSON**

*Matthew 2:1-11*

*The wise men are led by the star to Jesus.*

<sup>1</sup>Now after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod the king, behold, wise men from the east came to Jerusalem, <sup>2</sup>saying, “Where is he who has been born king of the Jews? For we saw his star when it rose and have come to worship him.” <sup>3</sup>When Herod the king heard this, he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him; <sup>4</sup>and assembling all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Christ was to be born. <sup>5</sup>They told him, “In Bethlehem of Judea, for so it is written by the prophet: <sup>6</sup>”“And you, O Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, are by no means least among the rulers of Judah; for from you shall come a ruler who will shepherd my people Israel.” <sup>7</sup>Then Herod summoned the wise men secretly and ascertained from them what time the star had appeared. <sup>8</sup>And he sent them to Bethlehem, saying, “Go and search diligently for the child, and when you have found him, bring me word, that I too may come and worship him.” <sup>9</sup>After listening to the king, they went on their way. And behold, the star that they had seen when it rose went before them until it came to rest over the place where the child was. <sup>10</sup>When they saw the star, they rejoiced exceedingly with great joy. <sup>11</sup>And going into the house, they saw the child with Mary his mother, and they fell down and worshiped him. Then, opening their treasures, they offered him gifts, gold and frankincense and myrrh. (ESV)

## **CONGREGATIONAL HYMN**

*Hark the Glad Sound*

*LSB 349*



## **NINTH LESSON**

*John 1:1-14*

*St. John unfolds the great mystery of the incarnation.*

*(Congregation standing)*

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

## **PRAYER**

### **LORD'S PRAYER**

### **WORDS OF OUR LORD**

### **DISTRIBUTION HYMNS**

*Special Music*

*Handbell Choir*

*The Night Will Soon Be Ending*

*LSB 337*

*Let All Mortal Flesh Keep Silence*

*LSB 621*

### **CLOSING LITANY**

L: Jesus, name called Wonderful; our great Counselor,  
Jesus, true and mighty God:

**C: We praise and bless your holy name.**

L: Jesus, Son of David, Branch of Jesse,  
Jesus, Son of Abraham, Bright and Morning Star:

**C: Deliver us from our sins, we beg you.**

L: Jesus, Light of the Gentiles, Desire of Nations;  
Jesus, Prince of Peace

**C: Help us and bless us.**

L: O Jesus, hear us,

**C: And prepare us for your coming.**

L: Prepare us for your coming,

**C: And save us from our sins.**

L: Lead us to your manger-throne,

**C: And give us your peace. Amen.**

## **TABLE PRAYER**

Kaylee & Matteo Ray

## **CONGREGATIONAL HYMN**

*Angels We Have Heard on High*

*LSB 368*

## **STUDENT INSTRUMENTALIST**

David Albrecht – Saxophone

Samuel Albrecht – Clarinet

Lily Calhoun – Flute

Julia Cushing – Percussion

Ellie Hesse – Flute

Jackson Miller – Trombone

Nathan Albrecht – Trombone

Hayden Calhoun – Clarinet

Allison Cushing – Flute

Zach Hesse – Trumpet

Micah Langston – Guitar

Carson Miller – Saxophone

## SUNDAY SERVANTS

Preacher .....	Pastor Adam Ray & Aaron Bird
Communion Helper .....	Jeff Salefski/Jason Frisby
Lay Minister .....	Frank Whitehead
Organist .....	Sharon Cripe
Ushers .....	Brady Fawcett
Computer .....	Brandon Patzwitz
Live Stream .....	Matt Cushing
Camera .....	Matt Cushing
Sound.....	John Salogga

**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:** 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 Goodson, Tyler Salefski, Jacob Thornell

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## CONGREGATION NEWS

**Christmas Brunch** will follow the Lessons & Carols service today. Please come and join us for a time of fellowship with one another!

**“The Clothing of the King” - Advent Service** is Wed., December 6<sup>th</sup> at 6:00 p.m. Advent Dinner will be served starting at 5:00 p.m. If you would like a ride

to the meal and/or the service, please contact the church office. This Wednesday's meal will be sub sandwiches, provided by Lay Ministry.

**Christmas Services:** Dec. 17<sup>th</sup> at 9:30 (one service), Lessons & Carols service with Christmas Brunch following; Christmas Eve service at 9:30 a.m. (one service); Christmas Eve Candlelight services: 2:30 & 4:30 p.m.; Christmas Day service with Communion at 9:30 a.m.

**Friendship Circle** will hold its annual Christmas party at 1:00 on Tuesday, December 19<sup>th</sup>, in the fellowship hall. Please bring your appetite plus a snack, appetizer, or dessert to share. Ladies, even if you have never attended a meeting, come celebrate Christmas with us on the 19<sup>th</sup>!

**Meal Train:** A meal train has been set up for Frank & Janet Whitehead. They have requested meals for Sunday's and Tuesday's. They have no dietary restrictions. You can call the office to sign up or use the link below. Any questions, please contact Beth Tatum.

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10C054AA8AD29A0FE3-46818534-meal>

**Photo Op** in the foyer will be available for family photos until the New Year! Don't forget to tag St. John's Lutheran Church your photo.

**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. Suggested donation of \$20.00. Deadline to purchase the Poinsettias is Sunday, December 17.

**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.

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

**Order St. John's Shirts** for your whole family using the order form on the table in the back of the church. Soft t-shirts are available in adult and youth

sizes. Moisture-wicking short-sleeved polos and long-sleeved quarter-zip come in both men's and women's cuts. All orders are due to the church office by December 17th. Shirts will arrive in January.

**Living Nativity Costumes:** Thank you for laundering the living nativity costumes. Please return the costumes to the church.

**Choir Robes:** If you would like an old choir robe, please contact Del Gross.

**Stewardship Seeds: 1 Corinthians 4:2 – “Moreover, it is required of stewards that they be found faithful.”** A steward manages the property of the owner for the owner's purposes. We are stewards of all that God has given us. So, we are called to use all that we are and all that we have for God's purposes. How do we know what His purposes are? Consider your vocations, your callings from God, in the home, in the church and in society: What are the roles God has called you to play? And how should you be using the gifts He has given you to fulfill those roles?

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**Last Week's Giving**

Weekly Needed .....	\$12,403.85
General Fund .....	\$13,619.00
Online Offering.....	\$2,887.07
Total Giving .....	\$16,506.07

**Last Week's Attendance**

8:30 a.m.....	140
11:00 a.m.....	65
Total.....	205
Wednesday Advent Service.....	70

## THIS WEEK AT ST. JOHN'S

### SUNDAY, DECEMBER 17

- 9:30 A.M. .... Lessons & Carols Service  
Christiam Breakfast (FH)
- 4:00 P.M. .... Confirmation Class
- 5:30 P.M. .... Youth Group Christmas Party

### MONDAY, DECEMBER 18

- 6:30 P.M. .... Boy Scouts (FH)

### TUESDAY, DECEMBER 19

- 1:00 P.M. .... Staff Meeting
- 1:00 P.M. .... Friendship Circle (FH)

### WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 20

- 10:00 A.M. .... Adult Bible Study (Lounge)
- 10:00 A.M. .... Youth Christmas Movie Marathon (FH)
- 5:00 P.M. .... Advent Meal (Sub Sandwiches)
- 6:00 P.M. .... Advent Service
- 7:00 P.M. .... Bell Rehearsal

### THURSDAY, DECEMBER 21

- 5:30 P.M. .... TOPS
- 6:00 P.M. .... Choir Rehearsal
- 7:00 P.M. .... Worship Practice

### FRIDAY, DECEMBER 22

Church Office Closed at 12:00 p.m.

### SATURDAY, DECEMBER 23

No church activities scheduled.

### SUNDAY, DECEMBER 24

- 9:30 A.M. .... One Church Service
- 2:30 P.M. .... Christmas Eve Candlelight Service
- 4:30 P.M. .... Christmas Eve Candlelight Service