

Welcome

**"RAISE YOUR HEADS"**

**DECEMBER 1, 2024**



**ST. JOHN'S**

Lutheran Church

Grounded • Growing • Branching

## **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.)*

---

### **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.

# FIRST SUNDAY IN ADVENT

DECEMBER 1, 2024

*Grounded in Christ, Growing in Faith, Branching to Others*

## PRE-SERVICE MUSIC AND A TIME FOR PRAYER

## RINGING OF THE BELLS

## WELCOME & GREETING

## OPENING SONG

*Savior of the Nations Come V. 1-4*

*LSB 332*

## INVOCATION

## CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION

L: If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us.

**C: But if we confess our sins, God, who is faithful and just, will forgive our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness.**

*Silence for reflection on God's Word and self-examination.*

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

**C: Most merciful God, we confess that we are by nature sinful and unclean. We have sinned against You in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done and by what we have left undone. We have not loved You with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. We justly deserve Your present and eternal punishment. For the sake of Your Son Jesus Christ, have mercy on us. Forgive us, renew us, and lead us, so that we may delight in Your will and walk in Your ways to the glory of Your holy name. Amen.**

L: Almighty God in His mercy has given His Son to die for you and for His sake forgives you all your sins. As a called and ordained servant of Christ, and by His authority, I therefore forgive you all your sins in the

name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

**C: Amen.**

## **LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT WREATH**

L: Each week in Advent, we light a candle as we prepare for the arrival of the Savior, who would come to His people in human flesh and who promises to come again. In a world of darkness, a light shines. Jesus Christ is the light of the world.

**C: The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.**

L: The first Advent candle is known as the prophecy candle or the candle of hope. We hear again the first promise and prophecy made in the Garden of Eden after the fall into sin: "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." The Lord has kept His Word through the mouths of prophets who, for generations, pointed people to the promised Savior to come.

**C: The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world.**

L: Guided by the light of hope, we respond with the psalmist: "Our soul waits for the Lord;

**C: He is our help and our shield.**

L: For our heart is glad in Him, because we trust in His holy name.

**C: Let Your steadfast love, O Lord, be upon us, even as we hope in You."**

## **HYMN**

*O Come, O Come, Emmanuel V. 1-2*

*LSB 357*

## **SALUTATION**

## **PRAYER OF THE DAY**

## **LISTENING TO GOD SPEAK TO US THROUGH HIS WORD**     *Jeremiah 33:14-16*

### **OLD TESTAMENT**

<sup>14</sup> "Behold, the days are coming, declares the Lord, when I will fulfill the promise I made to the house of Israel and the house of Judah. <sup>15</sup> In those days and at that time I will cause a righteous Branch to spring up for David, and he shall execute justice and righteousness in the land. <sup>16</sup> In those days Judah will be saved, and Jerusalem will dwell securely. And this is the name by which it will be called: 'The Lord is our righteousness.'

L: This is the Word of our Lord.

**C: Thanks be to God.**

### **NEW TESTAMENT**

*1 Thessalonians 3:9-13*

<sup>9</sup> For what thanksgiving can we return to God for you, for all the joy that we feel for your sake before our God, <sup>10</sup> as we pray most earnestly night and day that we may see you face to face and supply what is lacking in your faith? <sup>11</sup> Now may our God and Father himself, and our Lord Jesus, direct our way to you, <sup>12</sup> and may the Lord make you increase and abound in love for one another and for all, as we do for you, <sup>13</sup> so that he may establish your hearts blameless in holiness before our God and Father, at the coming of our Lord Jesus with all his saints. (ESV)

L: This is the Word of our Lord.

**C: Thanks be to God.**

### **COMMON ALLELUIA AND VERSE**

#### **HOLY GOSPEL**

*Luke 21:25-36*

L: The Holy Gospel according to St. Luke, the twenty-first chapter.

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

<sup>25</sup> "And there will be signs in sun and moon and stars, and on the earth distress of nations in perplexity because of the roaring of the sea and the waves, <sup>26</sup> people fainting with fear and with foreboding of what is coming on the world. For the powers of the heavens will be shaken. <sup>27</sup> And then they will see the Son of Man coming in a cloud with power and great

glory.<sup>28</sup> Now when these things begin to take place, straighten up and raise your heads, because your redemption is drawing near.”<sup>29</sup> And he told them a parable: “Look at the fig tree, and all the trees.<sup>30</sup> As soon as they come out in leaf, you see for yourselves and know that the summer is already near.<sup>31</sup> So also, when you see these things taking place, you know that the kingdom of God is near.<sup>32</sup> Truly, I say to you, this generation will not pass away until all has taken place.<sup>33</sup> Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away.<sup>34</sup> “But watch yourselves lest your hearts be weighed down with dissipation and drunkenness and cares of this life, and that day come upon you suddenly like a trap.<sup>35</sup> For it will come upon all who dwell on the face of the whole earth.<sup>36</sup> But stay awake at all times, praying that you may have strength to escape all these things that are going to take place, and to stand before the Son of Man.” (ESV)

L: This is the Gospel of our Lord

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

## **SERMON**

*“Raise Your Heads”*

*Luke 21:25-36*

*Pastor Aaron Bird*

## **NICENE CREED**

## **OFFERING**

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

## **PRAYERS OF THE CHURCH**

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

***People respond with: “hear our prayer.”***

## **LORD’S PRAYER**

**PREFACE** (*responses sung*)

## **PROPER PREFACE**

**SANCTUS** (sung)

**WORDS OF OUR LORD**

**PAX DOMINI**

**AGNUS DEI** (sung)

**DISTRIBUTION**

**DISTRIBUTION HYMNS**

<i>The Day is Surely Drawing Near</i>	LSB 508
<i>Soul, Adorn Yourself with Gladness</i>	LSB 636

**ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**BLESSING**

**SENDING HYMN**

<i>Savior of the Nations Come v. 5-8</i>	LSB 332
--	---------

**POSTLUDE**

**Last Week's Giving**

Weekly Needed .....	\$12,403.85
General Fund .....	\$7,499.00
Online Giving.....	
Total Giving .....	\$7,499.00

**Last Week's Attendance**

8:30 a.m. ....	132
11:00 a.m.....	55
Total.....	187

**FIRST SUNDAY IN ADVENT**  
**DECEMBER 1, 2024 | 11:00 a.m.**

**OPENING SONGS**

*Everlasting God*  
*Goodness of God*

**WELCOME & GREETING**

**CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION PRAYER**

**SHARING THE PEACE**

**OFFERING**

*Give Thanks*

**SCRIPTURE READING**

*Luke 21:25-36*

**SERMON**

*"Raise Your Heads"*

*Luke 21:25-36*

*Pastor Aaron Bird*

**APOSTLES' CREED**

**PRAYERS**

**LORD'S PRAYER**

**ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**BLESSING**

**SENDING SONG**

*Living Hope*



## SUNDAY SERVANTS

Preacher .....	Pastor Aaron Bird
Worship Leader .....	Pastor Adam Ray
Reader .....	Scott Tavarczyk
Communion Helper .....	Alan Bishop/Kevin Tavarczyk
Lay Minister .....	8:30 – Troy Harrison 11:00 – Drew Miller
Organist .....	Ted Hesse
Ushers .....	8:30 – Dave Munson 11:00 – Dan Murphey/Tom Schollenbruch
Computer .....	8:30 – Brandon Patzwitz 11:00 – Ellie Hesse
Live Stream .....	8:30 – Eric Brown
Camera .....	8:30 – Eric Brown
Sound .....	8:30 – Doug Hicks 11:00 – Doug Hicks
Vocals.....	Melissa Saurmann, Pam Saurmann, Ted Hesse
Acoustic Guitar .....	Wendy Salefski
Piano.....	Ted Hesse

**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

## CONGREGATION NEWS

**"His Gospel is Peace" - Advent Services** will begin on Wednesday, December 4<sup>th</sup> through December 18<sup>th</sup> at 6:00 p.m. Advent Dinner will be served starting at 5:00 p.m. This Wednesday will be Chicken & Noodles served by Ladies Friendship Circle.

**Decorating the Church:** We will be decorating the church for Christmas on Saturday, Dec. 7<sup>th</sup> starting at 8:30 a.m. Would appreciate any help.

### CHRISTMAS SCHEDULE

Sunday, December 22 <sup>nd</sup> at 9:30 a.m.	Lessons & Carols Service
Tuesday, the 24 <sup>th</sup> at 2:30 & 4:30 p.m.	Christmas Eve Candlelight Service
Wednesday, the 25 <sup>th</sup> at 9:30 a.m.	Christmas Service w/ Communion

**Seeking Names:** St. John's is seeking to call a Director of Faith Formation! As we begin this process, we are gathering names of potential candidates for the position. How can you help? 1) Review the job description (located on the back table) 2) Spread the word - share this news with family, friends, and any LCMS contacts! 3) Let us know of any possible candidates! Contact Rachel Tavarczyk ([rtavarczyk@gmail.com](mailto:rtavarczyk@gmail.com)) or Pastor Adam.

**Christmas Brunch** will follow the Lessons & Carols service on Sunday, Dec. 22<sup>nd</sup>. We hope you will be a part of this time of fellowship with one another! For lots of laughs and festive fun, you are invited to join in a **White Elephant Gift Exchange** during the Christmas Brunch! Just bring a wrapped gift, and together we'll share some laughs, enjoy a few surprises, and maybe even spark a little friendly rivalry!

**If you wish to purchase a Poinsettia** in someone's memory/honor, please use a Poinsettia offering envelopes located on the back table. Suggested donation of \$20.00. Deadline to purchase Poinsettias is Sun., Dec. 15.

**Would you like to help?** Looking for volunteers for funeral dinners. How can you help? Set-up, Serve, Cleanup, and/or make a dish? Can you help for 2

to 6 hours? Can you help with one or two a year? If you can answer “yes” or have any questions, please contact Beth Tatum at 217-972-2299.

**Thank you** to all who helped with the leaf pick-up on Tuesday, Nov. 26<sup>th</sup>. We appreciate all your help. *-Properties Team*

**Thank you** for all the prayers, well wishes, and kindness during my time of illness. I am now healing from successful heart surgery. God’s Grace is Good! *- Doug Precht*

**NECF Food Drive:** St. John’s is sponsoring a food drive for the Northeast Community Fund. There is a need for the following items: Breakfast items, mac & cheese, peanut butter, and canned meats (tuna, chicken, etc.) However, they will accept any donations of nonperishable food items. There will be a table to receive the donated items plus a box for monetary gifts on Sunday, December 1<sup>st</sup> in the back of the sanctuary. If any questions, please contact Vicki Schwartzle.

**Unity Auction Team** - Unity's largest fundraiser of the year will take place May 2, 2025, and we need your help! Unity is looking for people with event planning/fundraising experience, or just a passion for the school and willingness to help to join our 2025 Auction Team. You can contribute in a way that works with your schedule and unique gifts. Please get in touch with Brian Booth at [bbooth@unitydecatour.org](mailto:bbooth@unitydecatour.org) to learn more.

**Attention CAT Employees** - The Caterpillar Foundation is offering a limited time 2:1 matching program for gifts from employees and retirees from December 2-6. As an educational organization, Unity Christian School is an eligible recipient for these matching gifts. That means your \$1,000 gift could turn into \$3,000 for Unity. To learn more, including details about the year-round 1:1 matching program, visit:

<https://www.caterpillar.com/en/company/caterpillar-foundation/matching-gifts.html>

or reach out to Brian Booth at [bbooth@unitydecatour.org](mailto:bbooth@unitydecatour.org)).

## THIS WEEK AT ST. JOHN'S

### SUNDAY, DECEMBER 1

8:30 A.M. .... Traditional Service  
9:45 A.M. .... Education Hour (FH)  
11:00 A.M. .... Contemporary Service

### MONDAY, DECEMBER 2

6:30 P.M. .... Properties Meeting  
7:00 P.M. .... Boy Scouts (FH)

### TUESDAY, DECEMBER 3

1:00 P.M. .... Staff Meeting  
5:30 P.M. .... Outreach Team Meeting (FH)  
6:00 P.M. .... Discipleship Team Meeting (Rock)

### WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 4

5:00 P.M. .... Advent Meal Begins (FH)  
6:00 P.M. .... Advent Service  
7:00 P.M. .... Bells Rehearsal

### THURSDAY, DECEMBER 5

5:30 P.M. .... TOPS (FH)  
6:00 P.M. .... Choir Rehearsal  
7:00 P.M. .... Worship Practice

### FRIDAY, DECEMBER 6

No church activities scheduled.

### SATURDAY, DECEMBER 7

8:30 A.M. .... Church Decorating  
3:00 P.M. .... Boy Scouts (FH)

### SUNDAY, DECEMBER 8

8:30 A.M. .... Traditional Service  
9:45 A.M. .... Education Hour (FH)  
11:00 A.M. .... Contemporary Service  
12:30 P.M. .... Confirmation Class (FH)