



>Welcome

**"THE WAY OF JESUS:
EMBRACING RADICAL LOVE"
FEBRUARY 23, 2025**



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.)

Contact Us

2727 North Union Boulevard, Decatur, IL 62526

Phone: (217) 875-3656; website: www.stjohnsdecatur.com

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

Members of The Lutheran Church–Missouri Synod & Unity Christian School



St. John's Staff

Rev. Adam Ray, Lead Pastor
pastoradam@stjohnsdecatur.com

Rev. Aaron Bird, Assoc. Pastor
pastoraaron@stjohnsdecatur.com

Ted Hesse, Worship Music Director
tedh@stjohnsdecatur.com

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Jeff Miller, Custodian

Unity Christian School Faculty & Staff – Members of St. John's Lutheran Church

Ciara Collins

Angela Martinek

Jeff Salefski

Brenda Salogga

Melissa Saurmann

Lindsay Tipsword

Stephanie Wilkerson

SEVENTH SUNDAY AFTER EPIPHANY

February 23, 2025

8:30 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 worshiping 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 worshiping with us; we would love to have you join us again!

RINGING OF THE BELLS

WELCOME & GREETING

OPENING SONG

Praise to the Lord, the Almighty

LSB 790

INVOCATION

OPENING SENTENCES

L: As by a man came death,

C: **by a man has come also the resurrection of the dead.**

L: As in Adam all die,

C: **so also in Christ shall all be made alive.**

L: What is sown is perishable;

C: **what is raised is imperishable.**

CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION

L: Confident of our Lord's victory over death, leading all who follow Him by faith, let us confess our sins. "Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you." We confess our failure to love our enemies, O Lord.

C: **We have responded to them as they have dealt with us. We have not done to them as we wish they would have done to us. Forgive us,**

Father.

L: "If you love those who love you, what benefit is that to you?" We confess our giving preference to people who are like us.

C: We have loved those near and dear to us and have dealt with others without love and mercy. Forgive us, Lord Jesus.

L: "Judge not, and you will not be judged." We confess our judgment of people we think are not up to the standards we think we can meet.

C: We have failed to pass on the forgiveness we have received from You, O Holy Spirit. Forgive us, Lord our God.

L: "Forgive, and you will be forgiven." Your sins have been forgiven by the death and resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ! As a called and ordained servant of His, I therefore forgive you in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

C: Amen.

SALUTATION

PRAYER OF THE DAY

LISTENING TO GOD SPEAK TO US THROUGH HIS WORD

Old Testament

Genesis 45:3-15

³And Joseph said to his brothers, "I am Joseph! Is my father still alive?" But his brothers could not answer him, for they were dismayed at his presence.

⁴So Joseph said to his brothers, "Come near to me, please." And they came near. And he said, "I am your brother, Joseph, whom you sold into Egypt. ⁵And now do not be distressed or angry with yourselves because you sold me here, for God sent me before you to preserve life. ⁶For the famine has been in the land these two years, and there are yet five years in which there will be neither plowing nor harvest. ⁷And God sent me before you to preserve for you a remnant on earth, and to keep alive for you many survivors. ⁸So it was not you who sent me here, but God. He has made me a father to Pharaoh, and lord of all his house and ruler over all the land of

Egypt. ⁹ Hurry and go up to my father and say to him, 'Thus says your son Joseph, God has made me lord of all Egypt. Come down to me; do not tarry. ¹⁰ You shall dwell in the land of Goshen, and you shall be near me, you and your children and your children's children, and your flocks, your herds, and all that you have. ¹¹ There I will provide for you, for there are yet five years of famine to come, so that you and your household, and all that you have, do not come to poverty.' ¹² And now your eyes see, and the eyes of my brother Benjamin see, that it is my mouth that speaks to you. ¹³ You must tell my father of all my honor in Egypt, and of all that you have seen. Hurry and bring my father down here." ¹⁴ Then he fell upon his brother Benjamin's neck and wept, and Benjamin wept upon his neck. ¹⁵ And he kissed all his brothers and wept upon them. After that his brothers talked with him. (ESV)

L: This is the Word of our Lord.

C: Thanks be to God.

New Testament

1 Corinthians 15:21-26, 30-42

²¹ For as by a man came death, by a man has come also the resurrection of the dead. ²² For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ shall all be made alive. ²³ But each in his own order: Christ the firstfruits, then at his coming those who belong to Christ. ²⁴ Then comes the end, when he delivers the kingdom to God the Father after destroying every rule and every authority and power. ²⁵ For he must reign until he has put all his enemies under his feet. ²⁶ The last enemy to be destroyed is death. ³⁰ Why are we in danger every hour? ³¹ I protest, brothers, by my pride in you, which I have in Christ Jesus our Lord, I die every day! ³² What do I gain if, humanly speaking, I fought with beasts at Ephesus? If the dead are not raised, "Let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we die." ³³ Do not be deceived: "Bad company ruins good morals." ³⁴ Wake up from your drunken stupor, as is right, and do not go on sinning. For some have no knowledge of God. I say this to your shame. ³⁵ But someone will ask, "How are the dead raised? With what kind of body do they come?" ³⁶ You foolish person! What you sow does not come to life unless it dies. ³⁷ And what you sow is not the body that is to be, but a

bare kernel, perhaps of wheat or of some other grain. ³⁸ But God gives it a body as he has chosen, and to each kind of seed its own body. ³⁹ For not all flesh is the same, but there is one kind for humans, another for animals, another for birds, and another for fish. ⁴⁰ There are heavenly bodies and earthly bodies, but the glory of the heavenly is of one kind, and the glory of the earthly is of another. ⁴¹ There is one glory of the sun, and another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars; for star differs from star in glory. ⁴² So is it with the resurrection of the dead. What is sown is perishable; what is raised is imperishable. (ESV)

L: This is the Word of our Lord.

C: Thanks be to God.

COMMON ALLELUIA AND VERSE

HOLY GOSPEL

Luke 6:27-38

L: The Holy Gospel according to St. Luke, the sixth chapter.

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

²⁷ "But I say to you who hear, Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, ²⁸ bless those who curse you, pray for those who abuse you. ²⁹ To one who strikes you on the cheek, offer the other also, and from one who takes away your cloak do not withhold your tunic either. ³⁰ Give to everyone who begs from you, and from one who takes away your goods do not demand them back. ³¹ And as you wish that others would do to you, do so to them.

³² "If you love those who love you, what benefit is that to you? For even sinners love those who love them. ³³ And if you do good to those who do good to you, what benefit is that to you? For even sinners do the same. ³⁴ And if you lend to those from whom you expect to receive, what credit is that to you? Even sinners lend to sinners, to get back the same amount. ³⁵ But love your enemies, and do good, and lend, expecting nothing in return, and your reward will be great, and you will be sons of the Most High, for he is kind to the ungrateful and the evil. ³⁶ Be merciful, even as your Father is merciful. ³⁷ "Judge not, and you will not be judged; condemn not, and you will not be condemned; forgive, and you will be

forgiven; ³⁸ give, and it will be given to you. Good measure, pressed down, shaken together, running over, will be put into your lap. For with the measure you use it will be measured back to you." (ESV)

L: This is the Gospel of our Lord.

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

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

Pastor Adam Ray

SERMON HYMN

Lord of All Nations, Grant Me Grace

LSB 844

SERMON

"The Way of Jesus: Embracing Radical Love"

Luke 6:27-38

Pastor Aaron Bird

APOSTLES' CREED

OFFERING

*Tithes and gifts may be placed in the collection plate or given at
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

ANNOUNCEMENTS

BENEDICTION

SENDING SONG

Almighty Father, Bless the Word

LSB 923

POSTLUDE

SEVENTH SUNDAY AFTER EPIPHANY

February 23, 2025 | 11:00 a.m.

OPENING SONGS

Mighty Warrior
Goodness of God

WELCOME & GREETING

CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION PRAYER

SHARING THE PEACE

OFFERING

We Fall Down

SCRIPTURE READING

Luke 6:27-38

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

Pastor Adam Ray

SERMON

"The Way of Jesus: Embracing Radical Love"

Luke 6:27-38

Pastor Aaron Bird

APOSTLES' CREED

PRAYERS

LORD'S PRAYER

ANNOUNCEMENTS

BLESSING

SENDING SONG

Holy Forever

SUNDAY SERVANTS

Preacher	Pastor Aaron Bird
Worship Leader	Pastor Adam Ray
Reader	Boy Scouts
Lay Minister	8:30 – Steve Craycroft 11:00 – Mike Baggett
Organist	Ted Hesse
Ushers	8:30 – Boy Scouts 11:00 – Dan Zimmerman
Computer	8:30 – Brandon Patzwitz 11:00 – Zach Hesse
Live Stream	11:00 – Brandon Patzwitz
Camera	11:00 – Brandon Patzwitz
Sound	8:30 – Doug Hicks 11:00 – Doug Hicks
Vocals.....	Melissa Saurmann, Pam Saurmann, Ted Hesse
Acoustic Guitar	Nathaniel Stoll
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, Braden Highcock, Destiny Little, Noah Lung, Nathan Lung, Andrew Nailer, Jared Pinney, Caitlin Goodson, Tyler Salefski

CONGREGATION NEWS

Camp Linn Haven, Linville, North Carolina Mission Trip – April 28–May 3, 2025 – **Informational Meeting will be held on today** in the Lounge between services. We want to send a team to Camp Linn Haven to help with cleanup from the devastating hurricane, Helene. Come find out more.

Sabbatical Sunday: Next Sunday, 3/2, we will have a special presentation, and a video shared at both services regarding Pastor Adam's upcoming sabbatical (Aug–Oct 2025). Please join us to learn more about our church's sabbatical policy and a newly created Sabbatical Fund in support of our sabbatical ministry!

Ash Wednesday Service is Wednesday, March 5th at 6:00 p.m. Imposition of Ashes will be at 12:00 noon. The meal (Taco Bar) will begin at 5:00 p.m.

Outreach Team will be sponsoring a special Caring & Sharing door offering event on Sunday, March 9th at both services. Offerings collected will be sent to the Lutheran Church Missouri Synod Pacific Southwest District to assist with the Southern California Wildfire Response. If you miss the caring and sharing event, but still want to help with the recovery, please access their website at: <https://www.psd-lcms.org/disaster-response>

Lent Services will begin on Wednesday, March 12th at 6:00 p.m. Lenten meal will begin at 5:00 p.m. The meals will be provided by the Youth, and all donations will go toward their NYG trip. We will explore the second half of our sermon series "Celebration of Discipline".

Get ready to indulge in the vibrant flavors of New Orleans at our Taste of New Orleans and Dessert Auction – Sunday, March 23, 3p–6p. We are looking for brave souls who are willing to bring a New Orleans inspired dish to share to our next Youth Gathering fundraiser! Delicious options like jambalaya, gumbo, red beans & rice, bananas foster and more could be on display for people to taste...but we need your help! If you'd be willing to donate a dish to share, please contact the church office or Angela Cushing at aocushing@gmail.com.

Bus Trips: Even though there is snow, it's still not too early to start thinking of summer fun. There are three trips planned for the summer season at the Little Theatre. The dates are June 25th (Ring of Fire, Johnny Cash), July 25th (Sound of Music), and August 14th (Forever Plaid). If you are interested, please contact Jerry Pelz (217-433-2961) or the church office. The is \$42.00 per ticket, which covers ticket, game, and ticket for the bus driver.

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) or Pastor Adam.

LSA ReSale Shop: Have you been spending your winter days purging and organizing? The LSA ReSale Shop would love to have your unwanted/no longer needed items. Drop-off times are: Monday & Tuesday 9-1 and Thursday 2-6. Our semi-annual 10¢ sale is on Thursday, March 13; with restocking on Friday & Saturday, March 14 & 15. Volunteers are needed for restocking. The shop will reopen on Monday, March 17 with all new spring & summer merchandise.

Last Week's Giving

Weekly Needed	\$12,403.85
General Fund	\$5,824.00
Online Giving	\$1,200.22
Total Giving	\$7,024.22

Last Week's Attendance

8:30 a.m.	90
11:00 a.m.....	34
Total.....	124

THIS WEEK AT ST. JOHN'S

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 23

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

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 24

7:00 P.M. Boy Scouts (FH)

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 25

10:00 A.M. DMH Grief Support (Lounge)
1:00 P.M. Staff Meeting

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 26

10:00 A.M. Adult Bible Study (FH)
6:30 P.M. Youth Hangout

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 27

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

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 28

No church activities scheduled.

SATURDAY, MARCH 1

No church activities scheduled.

SUNDAY, MARCH 2

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