

*Welcome*

**"CELEBRATION OF DISCIPLINE: FASTING"**

**MARCH 9, 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](http://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](mailto:pastoradam@stjohnsdecatur.com)

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

**Ted Hesse**, Worship Music Director  
[tedh@stjohnsdecaur.com](mailto:tedh@stjohnsdecaur.com)

**Georgia Newman**, Office Manager  
[georgian@stjohnsdecatur.com](mailto:georgian@stjohnsdecatur.com)

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

**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*

# First Sunday of Lent

March 9, 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**

*Jesus Sinners Doth Receive (Vv. 1-4)*

LSB 609

## **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.**

## **SALUTATION**

## **PRAYER OF THE DAY**

**LISTENING TO GOD SPEAK TO US THROUGH HIS WORD** *Matthew 6:16-21*

<sup>16</sup>“And when you fast, do not look gloomy like the hypocrites, for they disfigure their faces that their fasting may be seen by others. Truly, I say to you, they have received their reward. <sup>17</sup> But when you fast, anoint your head and wash your face, <sup>18</sup> that your fasting may not be seen by others but by your Father who is in secret. And your Father who sees in secret will reward you. <sup>19</sup>“Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal, <sup>20</sup> but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal. <sup>21</sup> For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also. (ESV)

L: This is the Word of our Lord.

**C: Thanks be to God.**

## **CHILDREN'S MESSAGE**

*Pastor Adam Ray*

## **SERMON HYMN**

*O Christ, You Walked the Road*

*LSB 424*

## **SERMON**

*“Celebration of Discipline: Fasting”*

*Matthew 6:16-21*

*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)*

## **PRAYERS OF THE CHURCH**

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

***People respond with: "hear our prayer."***

## **LORD'S PRAYER**

## **BAPTISM BIRTHDAYS**

## **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

## **BENEDICTION**

## **SENDING SONG**

*Lord, Keep Us Steadfast In Your Word*

*LSB 655*

## **POSTLUDE**

# **First Sunday of Lent**

March 9, 2025 | 11:00 a.m.

## **OPENING SONGS**

*Praise*

*Firm Foundation*

## **WELCOME & GREETING**

## **CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION PRAYER**

## **SHARING THE PEACE**

## **OFFERING**

*I Love You Lord*

## **SCRIPTURE READING**

*Matthew 6:16-21*

## **CHILDREN'S MESSAGE**

*Pastor Aday Ray*

## **SERMON**

*"Celebration of Discipline: Fasting"*

*Matthew 6:16-21*

*Pastor Aaron Bird*

## **APOSTLES' CREED**

## **PRAYERS**

## **LORD'S PRAYER**

## **BAPTISM BIRTHDAYS**

## **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

## **BLESSING**

## **SENDING SONG**

*Who You Say I Am*

## SUNDAY SERVANTS

Preacher .....	Pastor Aaron Bird
Worship Leader .....	Pastor Adam Ray
Reader .....	Karl Albrecht
Lay Minister .....	8:30 – John Hubert 11:00 – Mike Baggett
Organist .....	Carol Pelz
Ushers .....	8:30 – Gary Schwartzle/Rick Laskowski 11:00 – Dan Zimmerman
Computer .....	8:30 – Brandon Patzwitz 11:00 – Ava Saurmann
Live Stream .....	11:00 – Lindsay Tipsword
Camera .....	11:00 – Pat Robinson
Sound .....	8:30 – Doug Hicks 11:00 – Doug Hicks
Vocals.....	Pam Saurmann, Melissa 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, Braden Highcock, Destiny Little, Noah Lung, Nathan Lung, Andrew Nailer, Jared Pinney, Caitlin Goodson, Tyler Salefski

## CONGREGATION NEWS

**Outreach Team** is sponsoring a special Caring & Sharing door offering event this **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 Series:** Join us this Lenten season as we explore and engage 6 spiritual disciplines from the book *Celebration of Discipline*. Our topics will include: Fasting; Study; Submission; Solitude; Guidance; and Worship. The series kicks off on Sunday, March 9th!

**Lent Services** will begin on Wednesday, March 12<sup>th</sup> 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.

**Voter's Meeting** is scheduled for Sunday, March 16<sup>th</sup> at 9:45 a.m. (during the Education Hour) in the Fellowship Hall.

**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, sign-up sheets are on the back table or contact the church office or Angela Cushing at [aocushing@gmail.com](mailto:aocushing@gmail.com).

**We need Bell Ringers,** if you are interested, please contact Ted Hesse or the church office.

**Good Samaritan Inn:** St. John's will host the noon meal at Good Samaritan Inn on Sunday, March 30th. Volunteers are appreciated. We are also in need of **cookie donations** for the dessert. If you are interested in



volunteering or donating cookies, please call the church office so we know to expect you. Please have the cookies in the church kitchen by the end of the early service on March 30th.

**Bus Trips:** 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 25<sup>th</sup> (Ring of Fire, Johnny Cash), July 25<sup>th</sup> (Sound of Music), and August 14<sup>th</sup> (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 the 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](mailto:rtavarczyk@gmail.com)) or Pastor Adam.

**Do you have used furniture you no longer need?** Unity Christian School will be collecting quality used furniture items over the month of March, and hosting a furniture resale weekend on April 11th and 12th. If you have a furniture item you'd like to donate, we may be able to pick it up at no charge. You can also drop it off at St. Paul's Lutheran Church. **Please email [furniture@unitydecatour.org](mailto:furniture@unitydecatour.org) with a photo and estimated measurements of your item and we'll get back to you regarding scheduling a pick up or drop off time.** Look for more details to come on the resale weekend, which will be held at St. Paul's. All proceeds will directly benefit Unity's Scholarship Fund.

**SAVE THE DATE:** Join us for a celebration of Unity Christian School at our Country Boots & Christian Roots Dinner Auction on **May 2, 2025**. A fun night for everyone! Enjoy an evening of hors d'oeuvres, dinner, drinks, dessert, music, and silent & live auctions featuring exclusive items & experiences. More information, including tickets & childcare, will be available soon at [unitydecatour.org/auction](http://unitydecatour.org/auction).

**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.

**Trinity Lutheran Church Secretary/Office Manager Position.** If you would like more information on this position and an application, please contact the St. John’s church office.

**STEWARDSHIP SEEDS: Matthew 4:7 – “Jesus said to him, ‘Again it is written ...’”** Isn’t it interesting that Jesus does not defeat Satan with His power as God, but rather by His perfect obedience in His perfect humanity? Jesus defeats Satan not by miracles, but by quoting the Scriptures and living according to them. This should cause us great joy for two reasons. First, because we see Jesus win the victory for us. Second, because here Jesus shows us how to stand in that victory: on the Word of God alone. Let us build our lives on the sure rock of this Word!

**Last Week’s Giving**

Weekly Needed .....	\$12,403.85
General Fund .....	\$8,627.00
Online Giving.....	\$1,599.71
Total Giving .....	\$10,226.71

**Last Week’s Attendance**

8:30 a.m. ....	134
11:00 a.m.....	61
Total.....	195
Ash Wednesday Service .....	95

## THIS WEEK AT ST. JOHN'S

### **SUNDAY, MARCH 9**

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)

### **MONDAY, MARCH 10**

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

### **TUESDAY, MARCH 11**

10:00 A.M. .... DMH Grief Support Group (Lounge)  
1:00 P.M. .... Staff Meeting  
6:30 P.M. .... Lay Ministry Meeting (FH)

### **WEDNESDAY, MARCH 12**

10:00 A.M. .... Adult Bible Study (FH)  
5:00 P.M. .... Meal (Brinner)  
6:00 P.M. .... Lent Service

### **THURSDAY, MARCH 13**

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

### **FRIDAY, MARCH 14**

No church activities scheduled.

### **SATURDAY, MARCH 15**

No church activities scheduled.

### **SUNDAY, MARCH 16**

8:30 A.M. .... Traditional Service  
9:45 A.M. .... Voter's Meeting  
11:00 A.M. .... Contemporary Service  
12:30 P.M. .... Confirmation Class (FH)