

WELCOME

"The Other Side"  
December 28, 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.)*

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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 & 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@stjohnsdecatur.com](mailto:tedh@stjohnsdecatur.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

Kelly Smith

Lindsay Tipsword

Stephanie Wilkerson

# First Sunday after Christmas

December 28, 2025

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 & A TIME FOR PRAYER**

### **RINGING OF THE BELLS**

### **WELCOME & GREETING**

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

### **OPENING HYMN**

*Let All Together Praise Our God (Vv. 1, 4-7)*

*LSB #389*

### **INVOCATION**

### **CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION**

L: Brothers and sisters in Christ, 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.**

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: Dear friends in Christ, forgiveness has been won for you! The babe born in Bethlehem is the only-begotten Son of God who laid down His life and took it back up again to grant You forgiveness and life. And so, 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.**

## **SALUTATION**

## **PRAYER OF THE DAY**

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

*Old Testament*

*Isaiah 63:7–14*

I will recount the steadfast love of the Lord, the praises of the Lord, according to all that the Lord has granted us, and the great goodness to the house of Israel that he has granted them according to his compassion, according to the abundance of his steadfast love.<sup>8</sup> For he said, "Surely they are my people, children who will not deal falsely." And he became their Savior.<sup>9</sup> In all their affliction he was afflicted, and the angel of his presence saved them; in his love and in his pity he redeemed them; he lifted them up and carried them all the days of old.<sup>10</sup> But they rebelled and grieved his Holy Spirit; therefore he turned to be their enemy, and himself fought against them.<sup>11</sup> Then he remembered the days of old, of Moses and his people. Where is he who brought them up out of the sea with the shepherds of his flock? Where is he who put in the midst of them his Holy Spirit,<sup>12</sup> who caused his glorious arm to go at the right hand of

Moses, who divided the waters before them to make for himself an everlasting name,<sup>13</sup> who led them through the depths? Like a horse in the desert, they did not stumble.<sup>14</sup> Like livestock that go down into the valley, the Spirit of the Lord gave them rest. So you led your people, to make for yourself a glorious name. (ESV)

L: This is the Word of our Lord.

**C: Thanks be to God.**

## **EPISTLE**

*Galatians 4:4–7*

<sup>4</sup>But when the fullness of time had come, God sent forth his Son, born of woman, born under the law,<sup>5</sup> to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as sons.<sup>6</sup> And because you are sons, God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, “Abba! Father!”<sup>7</sup> So you are no longer a slave, but a son, and if a son, then an heir through God.

L: This is the Word of our Lord.

**C: Thanks be to God.**

## **COMMON ALLELUIA AND VERSE**

### **HOLY GOSPEL**

*Matthew 2:13–23*

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

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

<sup>13</sup>Now when they had departed, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream and said, “Rise, take the child and his mother, and flee to Egypt, and remain there until I tell you, for Herod is about to search for the child, to destroy him.”<sup>14</sup> And he rose and took the child and his mother by night and departed to Egypt<sup>15</sup> and remained there until the death of Herod. This was to fulfill what the Lord had spoken by the prophet, “Out of Egypt I called my son.”<sup>16</sup> Then Herod, when he saw that he had been tricked by the wise men, became furious, and he sent and killed all the male children in Bethlehem and in all that region who were two years old or under, according to the time that he had ascertained from the wise

men.<sup>17</sup> Then was fulfilled what was spoken by the prophet Jeremiah: <sup>18</sup> “A voice was heard in Ramah, weeping and loud lamentation, Rachel weeping for her children; she refused to be comforted, because they are no more.” <sup>19</sup> But when Herod died, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared in a dream to Joseph in Egypt, <sup>20</sup> saying, “Rise, take the child and his mother and go to the land of Israel, for those who sought the child's life are dead.” <sup>21</sup> And he rose and took the child and his mother and went to the land of Israel. <sup>22</sup> But when he heard that Archelaus was reigning over Judea in place of his father Herod, he was afraid to go there, and being warned in a dream he withdrew to the district of Galilee. <sup>23</sup> And he went and lived in a city called Nazareth, so that what was spoken by the prophets might be fulfilled, that he would be called a Nazarene. (ESV)

L: This is the Gospel of our Lord.

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

## **SERMON HYMN**

*Let Us All with Gladsome Voice*

*LSB 390*

## **SERMON**

*“The Other Side”*

*Matthew 2:13-23*

*Pastor Adam Ray*

## **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: “let us pray to the Lord:”*

***People respond with: “Lord, have mercy.”***

## **LORD'S PRAYER**

## **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**BENEDICTION**

**SENDING SONG**

*Now Sing We, Now Rejoice*

*LSB 386*

# **First Sunday after Christmas**

***December 28, 2025***

***11:00 a.m.***

## **OPENING SONGS**

*Hymn of Joy*

*Holy Forever*

## **WELCOME & GREETING**

## **CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION**

## **SHARING THE PEACE**

## **OFFERING**

*Peace Has Come*

## **SCRIPTURE READING**

*Matthew 2:13–23*

## **SERMON**

*“The Other Side”*

*Matthew 2:13–23*

*Pastor Adam Ray*

## **APOSTLES' CREED**

## **PRAYERS**

## **LORD'S PRAYER**

## **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

## **BLESSING**

## **SENDING SONG**

*Joy To The World*

## SUNDAY SERVANTS

Preacher .....	Pastor Adam Ray
Reader .....	Jeff Salefski
Lay Minister .....	8:30 – Troy Harrison 11:00 – David Salogga
Organist .....	Sharon Cripe
Ushers .....	8:30 – Dave Vanskike 11:00 – Matt Cushing
Acolytes .....	11:00 – Rory Lawson
Computer .....	8:30 – Mike Patzwitz 11:00 – Ava Saurmann
Live Stream .....	11:00 – Pat Robinson
Camera .....	11:00 – Lindsay Hicks
Sound .....	Jessie Denning
Vocals .....	Melissa Saurmann, Pam Saurmann, Lindsay Tipsword
Acoustic Guitar .....	Nathaniel Stoll
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:** 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

## CONGREGATION NEWS

**Is there any evidence for what we read in the Bible?** Come learn how more evidence is being discovered all the time at our upcoming Wednesday Adult Bible Study on Biblical Archaeology starting Wednesday, December 10 at 10:00 a.m. Everyone is welcome to attend. Wednesday Adult Bible Study will not meet on December 24<sup>th</sup> & 31<sup>st</sup>.

**Offering Envelopes** are available in the back of the sanctuary. If you did not receive envelopes, please contact the church office.

**Christmas Decorations:** Thank you to everyone who helped with decorating the church. We will be taking the decorations down on Saturday, January 10 at 9:00 a.m. Again, we will appreciate all your help.

**LSA ReSale Shop:** Did you know that we not only take donations on Thursday 2:00–6:00 PM, but we are OPEN for shoppers till 6:00 also! The Shop is open 9:00 AM – 3:00 PM Monday – Wednesday & Friday – Saturday with Thursday hours 9:00 AM – 6:00 PM. Other donation times are Monday & Tuesday 9:00 AM – 1:00 PM. The Shop offers clothes for everyone, shoes, purses, kitchen items, décor of any kind, vintage items, seasonal decorations, etc. Stop by the Shop at 421 E. Cerro Gordo or call 217-423-0122. Follow the Shop on Facebook for the most up-to-date information!

**STEWARDSHIP SEEDS: Galatians 4:4 – “But when the fullness of time had come, God sent forth his Son, born of woman, born under the law.”** Jesus was born under the law so that He might fulfill the law in our place. His perfect righteousness is credited to us. And it is this free forgiveness of sins and this crediting of righteousness that sets us free to follow our Lord in godly living. Since we are freed from the law’s condemnation, we are freed from any mercenary attitudes. Now that the Lord has shown His love to us in saving us, we freely show our thanks to Him in generosity, humility and kindness.

**Last Week's Giving**

Weekly Needed .....	\$12,403.85
General Fund.....	\$16,816.00
Online Giving (General Fund).....	
Total Giving.....	\$16,816.00

**Last Week's Attendance**

9:30 a.m. ....	184
Wednesday Advent Service 12/17.....	64

**THIS WEEK AT ST. JOHN'S**

**SUNDAY, DECEMBER 28**

8:30 A.M. .... Traditional Service  
9:45 A.M. .... Education Hour  
10:45 A.M. .... Christmas Brunch

**MONDAY, DECEMBER 29**

7:00 P.M. .... Boy Scouts

**TUESDAY, DECEMBER 30**

No church activities scheduled.

**WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 31**

Church Office Closed at Noon

**THURSDAY, JANUARY 1, 2026 – HAPPY NEW YEAR**

Church Office Closed

**FRIDAY, JANUARY 2**

5:00 P.M. .... Fellowship Hall & Kitchen Reserved

**SATURDAY, JANUARY 3**

No church activities scheduled.

**SUNDAY, JANUARY 4**

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