

# St. John's Lutheran Church

218 North Jefferson Street

Kittanning, Pennsylvania 16201

Phone (724) 548-2051

Home: 724-548-5512

Church Web Site: [www.stjohnskittanning.org](http://www.stjohnskittanning.org)

Church e-mail: [stjohnskittanning@gmail.com](mailto:stjohnskittanning@gmail.com)

The Rev. Carl A. Johnson, Pastor

**December 14, 2025**

**11:00 a.m. WORSHIP SERVICE**



St. John's Lutheran Church is part of the North American Lutheran Church. We welcome you and are glad you are participating in worship this morning as we celebrate the **Third Sunday of Advent**. Please register your attendance in the blue pad at the end of the pew. HOLY COMMUNION is celebrated the first and third Sundays of each month and on Festival Sundays. All who are baptized and believe that Christ is truly present in the Lord's Supper are invited to receive this Sacrament with us.

*Prayer upon entering God's House:*

*Create in us, Father, the spirit of humility so that we may stand receptive in the presence of Your coming; and shine through us so that all may see in us, the true love and greatness of You, our Lord and God. Amen.*

**PRELUDE***"Fantasia on Veni Emmanuel"*

Rowley

**\*BRIEF ORDER FOR CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS**

**P** In the name of the Father, and of the ✠ Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

**C** Amen

**P** Almighty God, to whom all hearts are open, all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hid: Cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of Your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love You and worthily magnify Your holy name, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

**C** Amen

**P** If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. But if we confess our sins, God who is faithful and just will forgive our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

*Silence for self-examination.*

**P** Most merciful God,

**C** we confess that we are in bondage to sin and cannot free ourselves. 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. 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

**P** Almighty God, in His mercy, has given His Son to die for us and, for His sake, forgives us all our sins. As a called and ordained minister of the Church of Christ, and by His authority, I therefore declare to you the entire forgiveness of all your sins, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

**C** Amen

**\*OPENING HYMN***"Hark, the Glad Sound!"*


LBW 35


**\*GREETING**

**P** The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

**C** And also with you.


**\*KYRIE**

 **A** In peace, let us pray to the Lord.




Ⓐ For the peace from a-bove, and for our sal-va-tion, let us pray to the Lord.

♩ Lord, have mer - cy.

A musical staff with a treble clef and a key signature of one flat (B-flat). The melody consists of a half note B-flat, followed by a whole note G, a half note F, and a whole note E. The lyrics "A For the peace of the whole world, for the well-being of the Church of God," are written below the staff.

and for the u - ni - ty of all, let us pray to the Lord.

  
 Lord, have mer - cy.



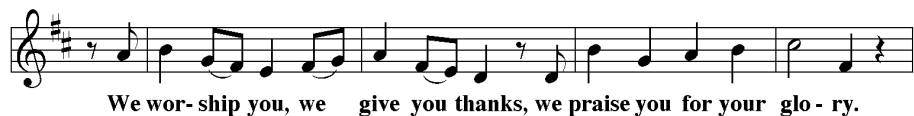
A For this holy house, and for all who offer here their wor - ship and praise,

let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, have mer - cy.**

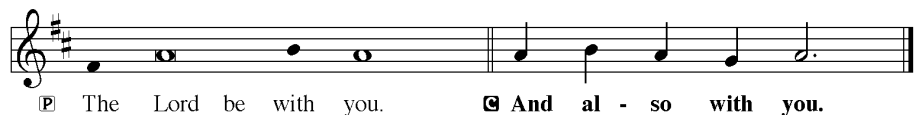
A Help, save, comfort, and de - fend us, gra-cious Lord.    C A - men

## \*HYMN OF PRAISE

  
 A Glo-ry to God in the high-est, and peace to his peo-ple on earth.



### \*PRAYER OF THE DAY



**P** Let us pray.

Almighty God, You once called John the Baptist to give witness to the coming of Your Son and to prepare His way. Grant us, Your people, the wisdom to see Your purpose today and the openness to hear Your will, that we may witness to Christ's coming and so prepare His way; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

**C** Amen

## FIRST LESSON:

ISAIAH 35:1-10

**A** The First Lesson is from the thirty-fifth chapter of Isaiah.

The wilderness and the dry land shall be glad;  
the desert shall rejoice and blossom like the crocus;  
<sup>2</sup> it shall blossom abundantly and rejoice with joy and singing.  
The glory of Lebanon shall be given to it,  
the majesty of Carmel and Sharon.  
They shall see the glory of the LORD,  
the majesty of our God.  
<sup>3</sup> Strengthen the weak hands,  
and make firm the feeble knees.  
<sup>4</sup> Say to those who have an anxious heart,  
"Be strong; fear not!  
Behold, your God will come with vengeance,  
with the recompense of God.  
He will come and save you."  
<sup>5</sup> Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened,  
and the ears of the deaf unstopped;  
<sup>6</sup> then shall the lame man leap like a deer,  
and the tongue of the mute sing for joy.  
For waters break forth in the wilderness,  
and streams in the desert;  
<sup>7</sup> the burning sand shall become a pool,  
and the thirsty ground springs of water;  
in the haunt of jackals, where they lie down,  
the grass shall become reeds and rushes.  
<sup>8</sup> And a highway shall be there,  
and it shall be called the Way of Holiness;  
the unclean shall not pass over it.  
It shall belong to those who walk on the way;  
even if they are fools, they shall not go astray.  
<sup>9</sup> No lion shall be there,  
nor shall any ravenous beast come up on it;  
they shall not be found there,  
but the redeemed shall walk there.  
<sup>10</sup> And the ransomed of the LORD shall return  
and come to Zion with singing;  
everlasting joy shall be upon their heads;  
they shall obtain gladness and joy,  
and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.

**A** Here ends the reading.

**LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT CANDLE**  
**ADVENT READING**

*LBW 34, v. 1-3*

**PSALM:****PSALM 146:4-9**

Happy are they who have the God of Jacob for their help,  
whose hope is in the LORD their God;

**<sup>6</sup>who made heaven and earth,  
the seas, and all that is in them;  
who keeps his promise forever;**

<sup>7</sup>who gives justice to those who are oppressed,  
and food to those who hunger.

**<sup>8</sup>The LORD sets the prisoners free;  
the LORD opens the eyes of the blind;  
the LORD lifts up those who are bowed down;**

<sup>9</sup>the LORD loves the righteous; the LORD cares for the stranger;  
he sustains the orphan and widow, but frustrates the way of the wicked.

**<sup>10</sup>The LORD shall reign forever,  
your God, O Zion, throughout all generations. Hallelujah!**

**SECOND LESSON:****JAMES 5:7-10**

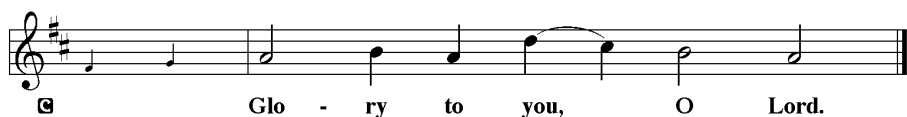
**A** The Second Lesson is from the fifth chapter of James.

<sup>7</sup> Be patient, therefore, brothers, until the coming of the Lord. See how the farmer waits for the precious fruit of the earth, being patient about it, until it receives the early and the late rains. <sup>8</sup> You also, be patient. Establish your hearts, for the coming of the Lord is at hand. <sup>9</sup> Do not grumble against one another, brothers, so that you may not be judged; behold, the Judge is standing at the door. <sup>10</sup> As an example of suffering and patience, brothers, take the prophets who spoke in the name of the Lord.

**A** Here ends the reading.

**\*VERSE****GOSPEL:****MATTHEW 11:2-11**

**P** The Holy Gospel according to St. Matthew the eleventh chapter.



<sup>2</sup> Now when John heard in prison about the deeds of the Christ, he sent word by his disciples <sup>3</sup> and said to him, "Are you the one who is to come, or shall we look for another?" <sup>4</sup> And Jesus answered them, "Go and tell John what you hear and see: <sup>5</sup> the blind receive their sight and the lame walk, lepers are cleansed and the deaf hear, and the dead are raised up, and the poor have good news preached to them. <sup>6</sup> And blessed is the one who is not offended by me."

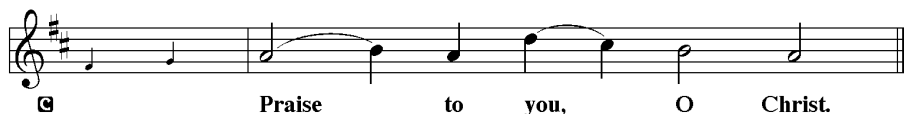
<sup>7</sup> As they went away, Jesus began to speak to the crowds concerning John: "What did you go out into the wilderness to see? A reed shaken by the wind? <sup>8</sup> What then did you go out to see? A man dressed in soft clothing? Behold, those who wear soft clothing are in kings' houses.

<sup>9</sup> What then did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, I tell you, and more than a prophet. <sup>10</sup> This is he of whom it is written,

"Behold, I send my messenger before your face,  
who will prepare your way before you."

<sup>11</sup> Truly, I say to you, among those born of women there has arisen no one greater than John the Baptist. Yet the one who is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he.

**P** The Gospel of the Lord.



## CHILDREN'S SERMON

**\*HYMN**

*"Rejoice, Rejoice, Believers"*

*LBW 25*

## SERMON

### **\*APOSTLES' CREED**

I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth.

I believe in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord.

He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit  
and born of the virgin Mary.

He suffered under Pontius Pilate,  
was crucified, died, and was buried.

He descended into hell.

On the third day He rose again.

He ascended into heaven,

and is seated at the right hand of the Father.

He will come again to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic Church,

the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins,

the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen

**ANTHEM**

*"Emmanuel"*

*Allen*

## \*OFFERTORY



Cre-ate in me a clean heart, O God, and re-new a right spir -  
it with-in me. Cast me not a-way from your pres-ence, and take  
not your Ho - ly Spir - it from me. Re-store to me the  
joy of your sal-va - tion, and up-hold me with your free Spir - it.

## \*THE PRAYERS

As we await the coming of Christ in mercy and majesty, let us pray for the Church, the world, and for all people according to their need.

*A brief silence*

How sweet are Your words today, dear Lord! Thank you for refreshment along life's often-dusty road. Thank you for hope that dawns unexpectedly in our heart's wilderness. Thank you for Jesus, Your sweetest Word of forgiveness, compassion, and life. Lord, in your mercy,  
**hear our prayer.**

*(Other intercessions are offered.)*

**P** Into your hands, O LORD, we commend all for whom we pray, trusting in Your mercy; through Jesus Christ our LORD.

**C** Amen

## \*THE LORD'S PRAYER

**Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name,  
thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.**

**Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses,  
as we forgive those who trespass against us;  
and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.**

**For thine is the kingdom, and the power,  
and the glory, forever and ever. Amen.**

## BENEDICTION

**P** The LORD bless you and keep you. The LORD make His face shine on you and be gracious to you. The LORD look upon you with favor and give you peace. In the name of the Father, and of the ✠ Son, and of the Holy Spirit.



A - men



**CONGREGATIONAL MEETING****\*DISMISSAL****A** Go in peace. Serve the Lord.**C** Thanks be to God.**POSTLUDE***"In Dulci Jubilo"**Bach*

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*A Nursery/Cry Room is available on the second floor of the Education Building for those who may need it.*



*Everyone is invited for a time of fellowship following worship in the Gathering space.*

**THIS WEEK AT ST. JOHN'S****Sunday 12/14**

10:00 a.m.

Christmas Pageant

10:00 a.m.

Senior Choir

11:00 a.m.

Worship

After Worship

Congregational Meeting

Fellowship

Reception: In honor of Julie Smith

**Monday 12/15**

7:00 p.m.

Council

**Wednesday 12/17**

6:15 p.m.

Senior Bells

7:00 a.m.

PJ's Bible Study

7:30 p.m.

Senior Choir

**Thursday 12/18**

1:00 p.m.

Newsletter (Folding Party!)

2:45 p.m.

Catechism

7:00 p.m.

Catechism

**Sunday 12/21**

9:45 a.m.

Sunday School

10:00 a.m.

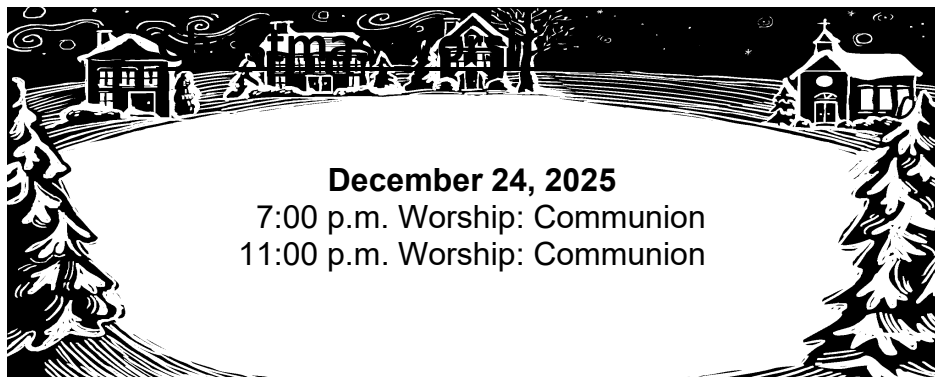
Senior Choir

11:00 a.m.

Worship: Communion

After worship

Christmas Decorating





## **Electronic Giving is Good for You and the Church**

**You can now make a contribution to our church through a mobile app!**

Scan the QR code for St. John's



Lutheran Church: **Options Include:** *Local Expenses, Improvement Fund, Benevolence, Capital Appeal, Evangelism, Sunday School, Youth, World Hunger, Katie's Cupboard and Other.* **When choosing "Other" please indicate which fund you are contributing to. Thank you for supporting your church.**

**"Give according to your income,  
lest God make your income  
according to your giving."**



## **Internet Streaming St. John's Live Broadcast**

The St. John's worship service is broadcast live on You Tube each Sunday at 11:00 a.m. as well as 8:30 a.m. service Sundays. <http://www.youtube.com/@st.johnskittanning2251>

## **Empower the Mission and Ministry of St. John's!**

*Amounts needed in offerings during November and December to meet our budget in the following accounts:*

Current Account:	\$98,000.00
Benevolence:	\$24,000.00

**Every November and December we count on your generosity to make up the difference in these accounts so that we finish the year in the black.** This year presents a very great challenge for each and every one of us! Please consider increasing your giving and/or making a significant one time gift over and above your normal offerings. Thank you for your continued commitment to making the mission and ministry of Jesus Christ happen at St. John's.

## **Creative ways of year end giving to St. John's:**

- It is possible, if you are over 70 1/2, to make a direct payment from your IRA to St. John's. This saves the taxes and the gift is still eligible for a charitable gift deduction.
- Giving stock saves capital gains taxes and the gift is still eligible for a charitable gift deduction.



# Katie's Cupboard

As we approach Fall and Winter, rising inflation and shrinking dollars, your gracious gifts are providing in a way greater than you can imagine. Your weekly donations of food and offering make such an impact.

Are you aware of any groups looking for a service project? Please remind them that Katie's is a great opportunity. St Johns would be happy to accept their donations or service time to support our community with their help!

If you would care to volunteer, have great ideas for further this ministry, or can offer suggestions, please contact any member of council, Amber Zurn 724/902-9471 or Tammy Fleeger 724/664-1773.



## Congregational Meeting:

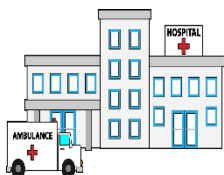
Sunday, December 14<sup>th</sup> following 11:00 am worship for the purpose of electing new Congregational Council members, voting on designating the 2024 New Church Building Fund earnings for the building loan and

voting to ratify the Constitutional Amendments to the national NALC Constitution.

**Don't forget to check out your Church Web Site:**

[www.stjohnskittanning.org](http://www.stjohnskittanning.org)

**Here you will find:** Bulletins, Newsletters, Morning Prayers, Upcoming events and program information, Youth Events including photos from the recent QUAKE trip, and more.



## Heading into the hospital?

*If you or a member of your family is hospitalized, please contact the office @ 724-548-2051. Because of confidentiality issues, the hospitals are not as helpful in notifying us as they once were.*

## SERVICE PARTICIPANTS

Assisting Ministers  
Lectors  
Acolytes  
Welcome Team  
Camera Operator

Charlie Bleakney  
Colvin Adkins  
Vieira Clever  
The Bouch Family  
Keith Livengood

## STAFF MEMBERS

Director of Children's & Youth Ministry  
Secretary  
Sexton  
Organist/Choir Director/Director of Music  
Sr. Choir Accompanist

Julie Smith  
Angela B. Clever  
TBD  
Rebecca Veith  
Elizabeth Cramer



**The flowers on the altar** this morning are given by the congregation, to the Glory of God, and in loving honor of Julie's spreading the Gospel of Christ Jesus and God's Kingdom here at St John's and for her faithful witness to the larger community.

## OUR MISSION

St. John's Lutheran Church is a group of people who believe that we are saved by God's grace and who respond to God's love by joyfully serving God, each other, our community and our world. We will humbly and lovingly serve by proclaiming the Gospel, teaching the Word, offering Sacraments, leading others to fellowship, supporting those in need, giving generously of our talents as well as our resources and by thanking and praising God.

*For 200 years  
St. John's has been a bright beacon  
of Christ's light and life  
for the world.  
200 years and the work continues:  
That all might know Christ's Love.*

**GRACE**  
*happens*



St. John's Lutheran Church  
Kittanning, PA