

St. John's Lutheran Church

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The Rev. Carl A. Johnson, Pastor

December 8, 2024

11:00 a.m. WORSHIP SERVICE



2ND SUNDAY OF *Advent*

St. John's Lutheran Church is part of the North American Lutheran Church in America. We welcome you and are glad you are participating in the Service of the Word this morning as we celebrate the **Second 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:

Lord, in the eagerness of our anticipation to celebrate the day of Your birth, give us the calmness of spirit to discern and recognize Your own coming to us today in this worship service. In Christ's name, we pray. Amen.

PRELUDE

Prepare Thyself, Zion

Bach

***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**

"Prepare the Royal Highway"

LBW 26

***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



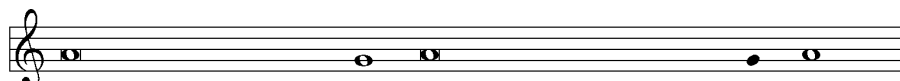
A In peace, let us pray to the Lord. **G** Lord, have mer - cy.



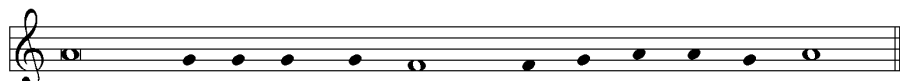
A For the peace from a - bove, and for our sal - vation, let us pray to the Lord.



G Lord, have mer - cy.



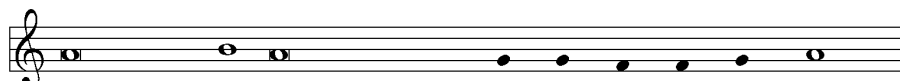
A For the peace of the whole world, for the well-being of the Church of God,



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



G 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. **G** Lord, have mer - cy.



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

*HYMN OF PRAISE



A This is the feast of vic - to - ry for our God. Al - le - lu - ia.



☩ Wor - thy is Christ, the Lamb who was slain, whose blood set us



free to be peo - ple of God. Pow - er and rich - es and wis - dom and



strength, and hon - or and bless - ing and glo - ry are his.



This is the feast of vic - to - ry for our God. Al - le - lu - ia.



Sing with all the peo - ple of God and join in the



hymn of all cre - a - tion: Bless - ing and hon - or and glo - ry and



might be to God and the Lamb for - ev - er. A - men.

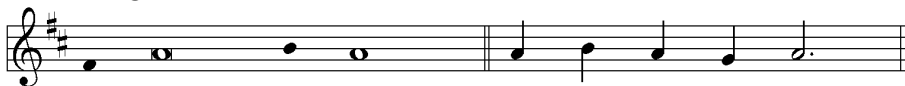


This is the feast of vic - to - ry for our God, for the Lamb who was slain



has be - gun his reign. Al - le - lu - ia. Al - le - lu - ia.

***PRAYER OF THE DAY**



☩ The Lord be with you. ☩ And al - so with you.

P Let us pray.

Stir up our hearts, Lord God, to prepare the way of Your only Son. By His coming give to all the people of the world knowledge of Your salvation; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

AMEN

FIRST LESSON:

MALACHI 3:1-4

A The First Lesson is from the third chapter of Malachi.

"Behold, I send my messenger, and he will prepare the way before me. And the Lord whom you seek will suddenly come to his temple; and the messenger of the covenant in whom you delight, behold, he is coming, says the LORD of hosts. ²But who can endure the day of his coming, and who can stand when he appears? For he is like a refiner's fire and like fullers' soap. ³He will sit as a refiner and purifier of silver, and he will purify the sons of Levi and refine them like gold and silver, and they will bring offerings in righteousness to the LORD. ⁴Then the offering of Judah and Jerusalem will be pleasing to the LORD as in the days of old and as in former years.

A Here ends the reading.

LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT CANDLE

LBW 34, v. 1-2

ADVENT READING

CANTICLE:

LUKE 1:68-79

Blessed be the LORD, the God of Israel;
he has come to his people and set them free.

**⁶⁹He has raised up for us a mighty Savior,
born of the house of his servant David.**

⁷⁰Through his holy prophets he promised of old

⁷¹that he would save us from our enemies,
from the hands of all who hate us.

**⁷²He promised to show mercy to our fathers
and to remember his holy covenant.**

⁷³This was the oath he swore to our father Abraham:
to set us free from the hands of our enemies,

⁷⁴free to worship him without fear,

**⁷⁵holy and righteous in his sight
all the days of our life.**

⁷⁶You, my child, shall be called the prophet of the Most High,
for you will go before the LORD to prepare his way,

**⁷⁷to give his people knowledge of salvation
by the forgiveness of their sins.**

⁷⁸In the tender compassion of our God
the dawn from on high shall break upon us,

**⁷⁹to shine on those who dwell in darkness
and the shadow of death,**


and to guide our feet into the way of peace.

SECOND LESSON:**PHILIPPIANS 1:3-11**

A The Second Lesson is from the first chapter of Philippians.

³ I thank my God in all my remembrance of you, ⁴ always in every prayer of mine for you all making my prayer with joy, ⁵ because of your partnership in the gospel from the first day until now. ⁶ And I am sure of this, that he who began a good work in you will bring it to completion at the day of Jesus Christ. ⁷ It is right for me to feel this way about you all, because I hold you in my heart, for you are all partakers with me of grace, both in my imprisonment and in the defense and confirmation of the gospel. ⁸ For God is my witness, how I yearn for you all with the affection of Christ Jesus. ⁹ And it is my prayer that your love may abound more and more, with knowledge and all discernment, ¹⁰ so that you may approve what is excellent, and so be pure and blameless for the day of Christ, ¹¹ filled with the fruit of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ, to the glory and praise of God.

A Here ends the reading.

***VERSE**



Al - le - lu - ia. Lord, to whom shall we go?



You have the words of e - ter - nal life. Al - le - lu - ia.

GOSPEL:**LUKE 3:1-6**

P The Holy Gospel according to St. Luke the third chapter.



Glo - ry to you, O Lord.

In the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Caesar, Pontius Pilate being governor of Judea, and Herod being tetrarch of Galilee, and his brother Philip tetrarch of the region of Ituraea and Trachonitis, and Lysanias tetrarch of Abilene, ² during the high priesthood of Annas and Caiaphas, the word of God came to John the son of Zechariah in the wilderness. ³ And he went into all the region around the Jordan, proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. ⁴ As it is written in the book of the words of Isaiah the prophet,

“The voice of one crying in the wilderness:

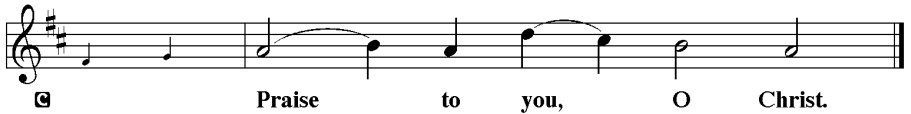
‘Prepare the way of the Lord,
make his paths straight.

⁵ Every valley shall be filled,
and every mountain and hill shall be made low,
and the crooked shall become straight,

and the rough places shall become level ways,

⁶ and all flesh shall see the salvation of God.”

P The Gospel of the Lord.



CHILDREN'S SERMON

***HYMN OF THE DAY** “On Jordan’s Bank the Baptists Cry”

LBW 36

SERMON

Comfort?

***NICENE CREED**

We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all that is, seen and unseen.

We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, eternally begotten of the Father, God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, of one Being with the Father. Through him all things were made. For us and for our salvation he came down from heaven; by the power of the Holy Spirit he became incarnate from the virgin Mary, and was made man. For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate; he suffered death and was buried. On the third day he rose again in accordance with the Scriptures; he ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead, and his kingdom will have no end.

We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son. With the Father and the Son he is worshiped and glorified. He has spoken through the prophets. We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church. We acknowledge one Baptism for the forgiveness of sins. We look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come. Amen

***THE PRAYERS**

For the Church, the world, for one another, and for the sake of all people, let us pray to the Lord.

A brief silence

Thank you, dear Father, for your refining fire. Purge away our sin. Purify us, body and soul, heart and mind, to worship you and care for one another in the name of your Son. 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

ANTHEM

"Waiting"

Choplin

***OFFERTORY**



Let the vine-yards be fruit-ful, Lord, and fill to the brim our cup of



bles-sing. Gath-er a har-vest from the seeds that were sown, that we may be



fed with the bread of life. Gath-er the hopes and dreams of all; u -



nite them with the prayers we of - fer. Grace our ta - ble with your



pres - ence, and give us a fore - taste of the feast to come.

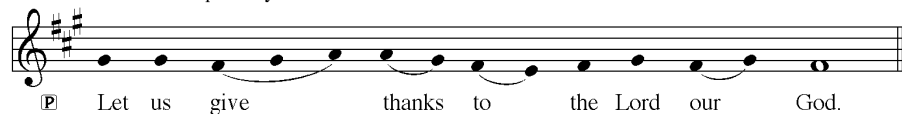
***OFFERTORY PRAYER**

A Let us pray.

A Blessed are You,

C O Lord our God, maker of all things. Through Your goodness You have blessed us with these gifts. With them we offer ourselves to Your service and dedicate our lives to the care and redemption of all that You have made, for the sake of Him who gave Himself for us, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

THE GREAT THANKSGIVING



* PREFACE

P It is indeed right and salutary that we should at all times and in all places offer thanks and praise to You, O Lord, Holy Father, almighty and ever living God. You comforted Your people with the promise of the Redeemer, through whom You will also make all things new in the day when He comes again to judge the world in righteousness. And so, with the Church on earth and the hosts of heaven, we praise Your name and join their unending hymn:

SANCTUS



EUCCHARISTIC PRAYER

P Blessed are You, LORD of heaven and earth. In mercy for our fallen world, You gave Your only Son, that all those who believe in Him should not perish, but have eternal life. We give thanks to You for the salvation You have prepared for us through Jesus Christ. Send now Your Holy Spirit into our hearts, that we may receive our Lord with a living faith as He comes to us in His holy supper.

C Amen. Come, Lord Jesus.

P In the night in which He was betrayed, our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks; broke it, and gave it to His disciples, saying:

Take and eat; this is my body, given for you.

Do this for the remembrance of me.

Again, after supper, He took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it for all to drink, saying:

This cup is the new covenant in my blood,
shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin.

Do this for the remembrance of me.

***THE LORD'S PRAYER**

**C: 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**



☉ Lamb of God, you take a-way the sin of the world; have mer- cy on us.



Lamb of God, you take a-way the sin of the world; have mer- cy on us.



Lamb of God, you take a- way the sin of the world;



grant us peace, grant us peace.

COMMUNION HYMNS

LBW 197, 22, 31, 214, 224

***COMMUNION**

*All who are baptized and believe that Christ is truly present
in the Lord's Supper are invited to receive this Sacrament with us.
Gluten-Free Communion Wafers are available, please inform the Pastor of your needs.*

P The body and blood of our LORD Jesus Christ strengthen you and keep you in His grace.

C Amen

***CANTICLE**



C Thank the Lord and sing his praise; tell ev-'ry-one what he has done.



Let ev-'ry-one who seeks the Lord re-joice and proud-ly bear his name.



He re-calls his prom-is-es and leads his peo-ple forth in joy



with shouts of thanks-giv-ing. Al-le-lu-ia. Al-le-lu-ia.

***POST-COMMUNION PRAYER**

A Let us pray.... Almighty God, you gave your Son both as a sacrifice for sin and a model of the godly life. Enable us to receive him always with thanksgiving, and to conform our lives to his; through the same Jesus Christ our LORD.

C 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.



C A - men

CLOSING HYMN

"Comfort, Comfort Now My People"

LBW 29

***DISMISSAL**

A Go in peace. Serve the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

POSTLUDE

"People, Look East"

arr. Wood

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

CHURCH MUSIC NOTES

TODAY: The Senior Ringers will hold a special Christmas Concert rehearsal immediately following the worship service from 12:30-1:30.

TODAY: The Senior Vocal Choir will meet at 5:15 pm to warm up for the Christmas Concert.

No choir rehearsals on December 11th – enjoy a well-deserved evening off!



St. John's Lutheran Church

Presents the

Annual Christmas Concert

Featuring:

The Vocal Choirs

The Bell Choirs

Under the direction of Rebecca Veith

Accompanist Elizabeth Cramer

TODAY – Sunday, December 8, 2024 at 7:00 p.m.

Admission is free.

No offering will be taken.

Refreshments to follow the concert.



**Christmas Tree
Set Up and Decorating**
Tuesday, December 17th @ 6:00 p.m.
Sanctuary Decorating
After Church, Sunday, December 22nd

Christmas in the Barn

December 11th at 7:00 pm at 256 Adrian Sherrett Road St. Mark's is hosting a Christmas Carol Service for all area NALC congregations. The service will feature carol singing, and a special Christmas sermon by Vicar Matthew. Following the service there will be hot chocolate, cookies, and fellowship.



Come experience Christmas in the Barn amidst the cattle, sheep, oxen, and donkeys—and get a feel for the way the holy birth really took place.

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:	\$97,000.00
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.

"You pray for the hungry. Then you feed them....
That's how prayer works" ~ Pope Francis



Thanks so much for your outpouring of love~ Harvest Home and your financial donations will enable us to continue to supplement the community.

We are offering the Reverse Advent Calendar this year again for your family's use.....

As winter is preparing for full swing, please remember Katie's after the holiday season. The need for a warm meal and necessities does not change. HOWEVER, you are impacting lives in the greatest of ways as Jesus commanded, "love your neighbor".

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



REVERSE ADVENT CALENDAR KATIE'S CUPBOARD 2024

Day 1	Box of Cereal	Day 13	Saltines
Day 2	Dish Detergent	Day 14	Cleaning solutions for home
Day 3	Complete meal soup (ex Spaghetti O's)	Day 15	Canned Fruit
Day 4	Pasta	Day 16	Cereal
Day 5	Soaps (shower, hand, hair)	Day 17	Powdered milk
Day 6	Canned meat	Day 18	Instant Mashed potato
Day 7	Baking products (bisquick, flour, sugar)	Day 19	Toothpaste & brushes
Day 8	Small Instant coffee	Day 20	Mens & womens deodorant
Day 9	Pasta Sauce	Day 21	Soups
Day 10	Stuffing Mix	Day 22	Instant flavored rice/noodles
Day 11	Canned vegetables	Day 23	Pudding cups/jello
Day 12	Shaving items (male/female), combs		

*Day 24 Baby food, diaper packs, wipes for babies
to celebrate the birth of The Christ Child



THIS WEEK AT ST. JOHNS

Today 12/8	9:45 a.m.	Sunday School
	10:00 a.m.	Senior Choir
	11:00 a.m.	Worship: Communion
	After Worship:	Congregational Meeting
	7:00 p.m.	Christmas Concert
Monday 12/9	7:00 p.m.	Council
Wednesday 12/11	9:30 a.m.	Children's Hour
	7:00 p.m.	Christmas in the Barn – St. Mark's 256 Adrian Sherrett Road
Thursday 12/12	9:30 a.m.	Children's Hour
	12:00	Women's Study at Kings
	2:45 p.m.	Catechism
	7:00 p.m.	Catechism
Sunday 12/15	9:45 a.m.	Sunday School
	10:00 a.m.	Senior Choir
	11:00 a.m.	Worship
	6:30 p.m.	Youth Group

Congregational Meeting:

Today, December 8th following 11:00 am worship for the purpose of electing new Congregational Council members, and voting on designating the 2023 New Church Building Fund earnings for the building loan. The four nominees selected by the nominating committee are: Bill Bouch, Christopher Choncek, Elijah Holt, and Ryan Shafer.



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.

**Christmas Eve service will also be broadcast live at
7:00 p.m. and again at 11:00 p.m.**

SERVICE PARTICIPANTS

Assisting Ministers

Lectors

Comm Assistants

Acolytes

Welcome Team

Camera Operator

Charlie Bleakney

Linda Charley

Mollie Bouch, Sue Neal

Sara Shafer, Keith Livengood

Callie Adkins, Noelle Smoyer

Brenna Zurn, Cassidy Smith

Cheryl & Roger Mechling

Bill Bouch

STAFF MEMBERS

Director of Children's & Youth Ministry

Secretary

Sexton

Organist/Choir Director/Director of Music

Sr. Choir Accompanist

Julie Smith

Angela B. Clever

Colin Toy

Rebecca Veith

Elizabeth Cramer

*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.



The flower chart for 2025 has been posted in the narthex. Please take this opportunity to sign up for the dates that you would like to place flowers on the altar in memory or in honor of a loved one or special event. You may also call the church office. **Flowers will increase to \$75.00 beginning January 2025.**

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.

GRACE
happens



at
St. John's Lutheran Church
Kittanning, PA