

St. John's Lutheran Church

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The Rev. Carl A. Johnson, Pastor

December 28, 2025

11:00 a.m. WORSHIP SERVICE



Then *Joseph* Got Up,
took the child and his mother by night,
and went to **EGYPT.**

Matthew 2:14, NRSV

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 **First Sunday of Christmas**. 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:

We lift our voices in prayer to You, Lord, and You hear; we present our lives in prayer, and You see; grant to us Your peace and wholeness in all that we do. In Christ's name we pray. Amen.

PRELUDE

Fanfare on "Hark the Herald Angels Sing"

Wyton

***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

ENTRANCE HYMN**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.



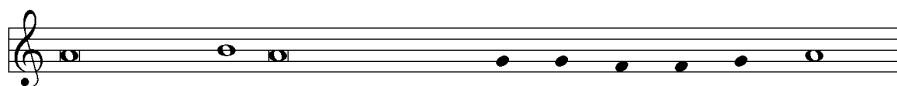
A For the peace of the whole world, for the well-being of the Church of God,



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,



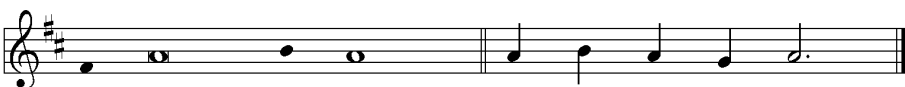
let us pray to the Lord. **G** Lord, have mer - cy.



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

*HYMN OF PRAISE

*PRAYER OF THE DAY



P The Lord be with you. **G** And al - so with you.

P Let us pray.

P Almighty God, You have made Yourself known in Your Son, Jesus, redeemer of the world. We pray that His birth as a human child will set us free from the old slavery of our sin; 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 63:7–9

A The First Lesson is from the sixty-third chapter of Isaiah.

⁷ 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.

⁸ For he said, “Surely they are my people,
children who will not deal falsely.”
And he became their Savior.

⁹ 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.

A Here ends the reading.

*HYMN OF JOY

PSALM:

PSALM 148

Hallelujah! Praise the LORD from the heavens;
praise him in the heights.

**²Praise him, all you angels of his;
praise him, all his host.**

³Praise him, sun and moon;
praise him, all you shining stars.

**⁴Praise him, heaven of heavens,
and you waters above the heavens.**

⁵Let them praise the name of the LORD;
for he commanded, and they were created.

**⁶He made them stand fast forever and ever;
he gave them a law which shall not pass away.**

⁷Praise the LORD from the earth,
you sea-monsters and all deeps;

**⁸fire and hail, snow and fog,
tempestuous wind, doing his will;**

⁹mountains and all hills,
fruit trees and all cedars;

¹⁰**wild beasts and all cattle,
creeping things and winged birds;**

¹¹kings of the earth and all peoples,*
princes and all rulers of the world;

¹²**young men and maidens,
old and young together.**

¹³Let them praise the name of the LORD,
for his name only is exalted, his splendor is over earth and heaven.

¹⁴**He has raised up strength for his people
and praise for all his loyal servants,
the children of Israel, a people who are near him.
Hallelujah!**

SECOND LESSON:

Hebrews 2:10–18

The Second Lesson is from the second chapter of Hebrews.

¹⁰ For it was fitting that he, for whom and by whom all things exist, in bringing many sons to glory, should make the founder of their salvation perfect through suffering. ¹¹ For he who sanctifies and those who are sanctified all have one source. That is why he is not ashamed to call them brothers, ¹² saying,

“I will tell of your name to my brothers;
in the midst of the congregation I will sing your praise.”

¹³ And again,

“I will put my trust in him.”

And again,

“Behold, I and the children God has given me.”

¹⁴ Since therefore the children share in flesh and blood, he himself likewise partook of the same things, that through death he might destroy the one who has the power of death, that is, the devil, ¹⁵ and deliver all those who through fear of death were subject to lifelong slavery. ¹⁶ For surely it is not angels that he helps, but he helps the offspring of Abraham. ¹⁷ Therefore he had to be made like his brothers in every respect, so that he might become a merciful and faithful high priest in the service of God, to make propitiation for the sins of the people. ¹⁸ For because he himself has suffered when tempted, he is able to help those who are being tempted.

A Here ends the reading.

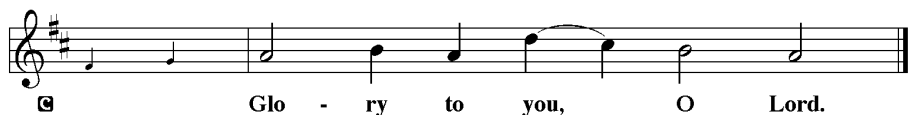
*VERSE



GOSPEL:

Matthew 2:13–23

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



¹³ 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." ¹⁴ And he rose and took the child and his mother by night and departed to Egypt ¹⁵ 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."

¹⁶ 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.

¹⁷ Then was fulfilled what was spoken by the prophet Jeremiah:

¹⁸ "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."

¹⁹ But when Herod died, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared in a dream to Joseph in Egypt, ²⁰ 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." ²¹ And he rose and took the child and his mother and went to the land of Israel. ²² 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. ²³ 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.

P The Gospel of the Lord.



CHILDREN'S SERMON

***HYMN OF THE DAY SERMON**

INSTALLATION OF CONGREGATIONAL COUNCIL MEMBERS

***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

***OFFERTORY**

***THE PRAYERS**

With gratitude for the gift of Christ the Savior, let us draw near to our heavenly Father in prayer, asking his mercy for the Church, the world, and all who need his loving-kindness.

A brief silence

Protect your Church, dear Lord, from the malice of its enemies and from every temptation to forsake, ignore or distort your holy Word. Make it a light shining in the world's darkness and a safe haven in our earthly pilgrimage. Use it to draw many hearts to love and trust Jesus, the Redeemer of the world. 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.



***CLOSING HYMN**

***DISMISSAL**

A Go in peace. Serve the Lord.
C Thanks be to God.

POSTLUDE *Toccata on “Noel Nouvelet”* *arr. Young*

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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 12/28	8:30 a.m.	Rock of Our Salvation
	9:45 a.m.	Sunday School
	11:00 a.m.	Worship: Hymn Sing
Tuesday 12/30	5 – 8 p.m.	YOUTH CHRISTMAS PARTY!
		Caroling to shut-ins.
January 1/1	HAPPY NEW YEAR!	OFFICE CLOSED
Sunday 1/4	9:45 a.m.	Sunday School
	10:00 a.m.	Senior Choir
	11:00 a.m.	Worship: Communion

Mark Your Calendars

January 25	Congregational Meeting
February 18	Ash Wednesday
March 14	CPR Certification
April 5	Easter
May 3	Spring Concert
May 24	Pentecost Sunday (Confirmation)

PEACE LOVE HOPE JESUS PEACE LOVE HOPE JESUS



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.



How important to you is the Music Ministry at St Johns?

When Ralph and I started coming to St John's over thirty years ago, I was taken in by the wonderful choir and how uplifting the Anthems were. Singing to the glory of God is seen in the Old Testament. The psalms were sung and they emphasized worship, trust and praise for God's unfailing love and power.

The Anthems are an integral part of the worship service. To continue praising God through these Anthems, we need members of St. John's (particularly male voices) to join the choir. We are fortunate to have talented musicians amongst our choir members and Rebecca and Liz do a phenomenal job leading the choir. So please consider joining.

Blessings,
Michelle Kozłowski



Many thanks to everyone . . .

. . . the singers, ringers, musicians, staff, and others who put in countless hours to rehearse or have contributed in other ways to make the Advent and Christmas Season a special time for all.

We are blessed to have such a talented and dedicated group of people that contribute to the St. Johns music ministry throughout the entire church year!

**After Christmas, choir rehearsals will resume Wednesday,
January 7, 2026.**

Rebecca Veith
Organist/Director of Music

Amazing Grace
how sweet the sound



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.

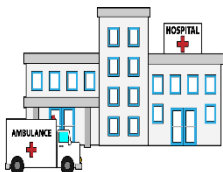
Are you aware of any groups looking for a service project? Please remind them that Katie's is a great opportunity. St Johns would be happy to accept their donations or service time to support our community with their help!

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.

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

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.

Tuesday 12/30

5 – 8 P.M.

YOUTH GROUP
CHRISTMAS PARTY



**YOUTH
CHRISTMAS
PARTY!**

SERVICE PARTICIPANTS

Assisting Minister	Robert John (E)
	Karen Waugaman (L)
Lector	Cassidy Smith (E)
	Nancy Pierce (L)
Communion	Gracie Hodak & Melissa Venesky (E)
Acolyte	Tommy Baker (E)
	Avia B. Clever (L)
Welcome team	The Farahs (E)
	Baylee & Brandy Kozlowski (L)
Camera Operator	Robert John (E)
	Keith Livengood (L)

STAFF MEMBERS

Director of Children's & Youth Ministry	Julie Smith
Secretary	Angela B. Clever
Sexton	TBD
Organist/Choir Director/Director of Music	Rebecca Veith
Sr. Choir Accompanist	Elizabeth Cramer



The flower chart for 2026 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 are \$70.00.**

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