

St. John's Lutheran Church

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The Rev. Carl A. Johnson, Pastor

December 24, 2025

11:00 p.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 as we celebrate **the Nativity of Our Lord**. 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.

11:00 P.M. WORSHIP SERVICE

Prayer upon entering God's House:

Grant, O Lord, that the glory, the beauty, and the peace of this Holy Night, may fill our hearts and our lives, so that He, who has been born anew in our hearts this Christmas, may live fully among us throughout all of the coming year. In Christ's name we pray. Amen.

PRELUDE

"Christmas Celebration"

arr. Scott

***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

***PROCESSIONAL HYMN**

"Oh, Come, All Ye Faithful"

LBW 45

***THE DIALOG**

P: Glory to God in the Highest.

C: And peace to His people on earth.

P: Let us bless the Lord.

C: Bless the Lord, O my soul.

P: and all that is within me bless His holy name.

C: Bless the Lord, O my soul.

P: and forget not His benefits.

**C: for unto us is born this day in the city of David a Savior,
who is Christ the Lord. Bless the Lord, O my soul!**

***PRAYER OF THE DAY**

P: Let us pray....Almighty God, You made this holy night shine with the brightness of the true Light. Grant that here on earth we may walk in the light of Jesus' presence and in the last day wake to the brightness of His glory; through Your only Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C: Amen

BELL ANTHEM

"In Excelsis Deo"
Handbell Ensemble

arr. Krug

FIRST LESSON

Isaiah 9:2–7

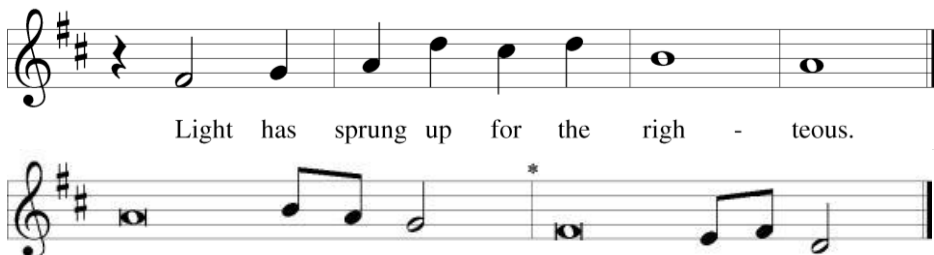
A: The First Lesson is from the ninth chapter of Isaiah.

²The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who lived in a land of deep darkness — on them light has shined. ³You have multiplied the nation, you have increased its joy; they rejoice before you as with joy at the harvest, as people exult when dividing plunder. ⁴For the yoke of their burden, and the bar across their shoulders, the rod of their oppressor, you have broken as on the day of Midian. ⁵For all the boots of the tramping warriors and all the garments rolled in blood shall be burned as fuel for the fire. ⁶For a child has been born for us, a son given to us; authority rests upon his shoulders; and he is named Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. ⁷His authority shall grow continually, and there shall be endless peace for the throne of David and his kingdom. He will establish and uphold it with justice and with righteousness from this time onward and forevermore. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will do this.

A: Here ends the reading.

PSALM

Psalm 97



¹The LORD is king; let the | earth rejoice; *
let the multitude of the | isles be glad.

**²Clouds and darkness are | round about him, *
righteousness and justice are the foundations | of his throne.**

³A fire | goes before him *
and burns up his enemies on | every side.

**⁴His lightnings light | up the world; *
the earth sees it and | is afraid.**

⁵The mountains melt like wax at the presence | of the LORD, *
at the presence of the LORD of | the whole earth.

**⁶The heavens de- | clare his righteousness, *
and all the peoples | see his glory.**

⁷Confounded be all who worship carved images and delight | in false gods! *
Bow down before him, | all you gods.

**⁸Zion hears and is glad, and the cities of Ju- | dah rejoice, *
because of your judg- | ments, O LORD.**

⁹For you are the LORD, most high over | all the earth; *
you are exalted far a- | bove all gods.

**¹⁰The LORD loves those | who hate evil; *
he preserves the lives of his saints
and delivers them from the hand | of the wicked.**

¹¹Light has sprung up | for the righteous, *
and joyful gladness for those who | are truehearted.

**¹²Rejoice in the | LORD, you righteous, *
and give thanks to his | holy name. R**

SECOND LESSON:

TITUS 2:11-14

A The Second Lesson is from the second chapter of Titus.

¹¹For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all, ¹²training us to renounce impiety and worldly passions, and in the present age to live lives that are self-controlled, upright, and godly, ¹³while we wait for the blessed hope and the manifestation of the glory of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ. ¹⁴He it is who gave himself for us that he might redeem us from all iniquity and purify for himself a people of his own who are zealous for good deeds.

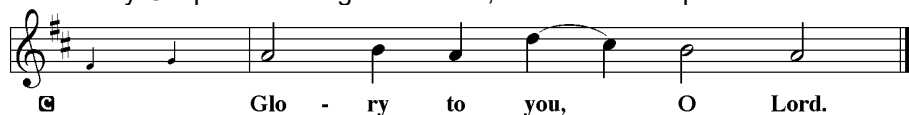
A Here ends the reading.



*GOSPEL READING

Luke 2:1-20

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

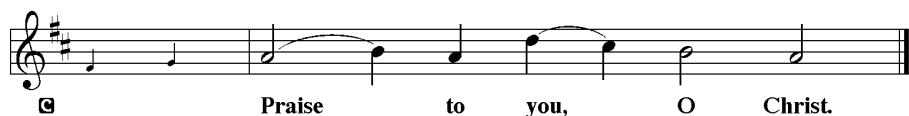


In those days a decree went out from Emperor Augustus that all the world should be registered. ²This was the first registration and was taken while Quirinius was governor of Syria. ³All went to their own towns to be registered. ⁴Joseph also went from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to the city of David called Bethlehem, because he was descended from the house and family of David. ⁵He went to be registered with Mary, to whom he was engaged and who was expecting a child. ⁶While they were there, the time came for her to deliver her child. ⁷And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in bands of cloth, and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn.

⁸In that region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. ⁹Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. ¹⁰But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid; for see — I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: ¹¹to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord. ¹²This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger." ¹³And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying,

¹⁴"Glory to God in the highest heaven,
and on earth peace among those whom he favors!"

¹⁵When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, "Let us go now to Bethlehem and see this thing that has taken place, which the Lord has made known to us." ¹⁶So they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the child lying in the manger. ¹⁷When they saw this, they made known what had been told them about this child; ¹⁸and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds told them. ¹⁹But Mary treasured all these words and pondered them in her heart. ²⁰The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them.



***HYMN** "What Child Is This" LBW 40

SERMON "I Didn't Ask for This"

***THE PRAYERS**

A: Let us pray that Jesus brings light, salvation, and peace to the church, the world, and all people.

A brief silence

Lord Jesus, we come to Your cradle with joy and wonder! We adore you for Your loving-kindness. We thank you for making Yourself small and meek, so we can approach you without fear. Thank you, dear Savior. Accept our hearts as our loving gift. LORD, in Your mercy,

C: 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

***PEACE**

P: The peace of the Lord be with you always.

C: And also with you.

Peace be with you.

R: Peace be with you.

ANTHEM "Were You There on That Christmas Night" Sleeth

OFFERING

***OFFERTORY** "It Came Upon the Midnight Clear" LBW 54

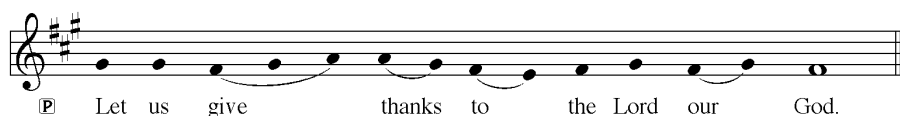
***OFFERTORY PRAYER**

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



*EUCCHARISTIC PRAYER

P: We give You thanks, Father, through Jesus Christ, your beloved Son, whom you sent in this end of the ages to save and redeem us and to proclaim to us your will. He is your Word, inseparable from you. Through him you created all things, and in him you take delight. He is your Word, sent from heaven to a virgin's womb. He there took on our nature and our lot and was shown forth as your Son, born of the Holy Spirit and of the virgin Mary. It is he, our Lord Jesus, who fulfilled all your will and won for you a holy people; he stretched out his hands in suffering in order to free from suffering those who trust you.

It is he who, handed over to a death he freely accepted, in order to destroy death, to break the bonds of the evil one, to crush hell underfoot, to give light to the righteous, to establish his covenant, and to show forth the resurrection, taking bread and giving thanks to you, said:

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

Do this for the remembrance of me.

In the same way he took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it for all to drink, saying:

This is my blood poured out for you.

Do this for the remembrance of me.

Remembering, then, his death and resurrection, we lift this bread and cup before you, giving you thanks that you have made us worthy to stand before you and to serve you as your priestly people.

And we ask you: Send your Spirit upon these gifts of your Church; gather into one all who share this bread and wine; fill us with your Holy Spirit to establish our faith in truth, that we may praise and glorify you through your Son Jesus Christ.

Through him all glory and honor are yours, Almighty Father, with the Holy Spirit, in your holy Church both now and forever.

C: Amen

***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

All who are baptized and believe that Christ is truly present in the Lord's Supper are invited to receive this Sacrament with us.

Children are invited forward to be blessed.

Gluten-Free Communion Wafers

For those that require special dietary restrictions, we have gluten-free, communion wafers. Please inform the Pastor of your needs.

COMMUNION HYMNS

Please sing two verses of each hymn:

<i>The First Noel</i>	<i>LBW 56</i>
<i>O Little Town of Bethlehem</i>	<i>LBW 41</i>
<i>Good Christian Friends, Rejoice</i>	<i>LBW 55</i>
<i>Angels, From the Realms of Glory</i>	<i>LBW 50</i>
<i>Go Tell It on the Mountain</i>	<i>LBW 70</i>

***BLESSING**

P: The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen you and keep you in his grace.

C: Amen

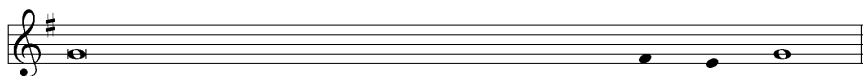
CANTICLE HYMN"Hark! The Herald Angels Sing"**LBW 60****POST-COMMUNION PRAYER**

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

***CANDLE LIGHTING HYMN** *"Silent Night"**LBW 65*

Light from the Christ Candle of the Advent Wreath will be taken by the Pastor and passed to light other candles (hold lit candle straight up; tilt only the unlit candle). Please do not drop wax.

BENEDICTION

☩ 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.



☩ A - men

RECESSIONAL HYMN"Joy to the World"**LBW 39****DIMISSAL**

A: Go in peace. Serve the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God.

POSTLUDE*"Toccata on 'Adeste Fidelis'"**Hagerty*

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This evening we light the **Christ Candle** on our Advent Wreath. This candle symbolizes the fulfillment of the prophecy of the birth of Jesus Christ, the Savior and Light of the world.

We welcome you and are pleased you are participating in worship this evening as we celebrate the Birth of Christ. All who are baptized and believe that Christ is truly present in the Lord's Supper are invited to receive this Sacrament with us. Children are invited forward to be blessed. Please register your attendance in the blue pad at the end of the pew. **If you are a visitor**, please complete a "Visitor's Card" from a pew rack and place it in the offering.



Christmas poinsettias are presented to the Glory of God and in honor of:

By:

Our Loved Ones	Susan & Bob Barto
Our Children	Charlesetta and Bob Bleakney
Our Grandchildren	Charlesetta and Bob Bleakney
My Family	Carole Cable
Grandparents Jack and Debbie Griffin	Nesta, Larissa, Colvin & Callie
Chris & Connie Choncek, Brandon, Tyler & Anna	Butch Choncek
Jeff, Austin, & Ashleigh Choncek	Butch Choncek
Blair & Mary Jane Dawson	Angela B. Clever
Pastor Carl & Nancy Johnson	Rose Debnar
Children, Jeff, Jason & Wendy Debnar	Rose Debnar
Grandchildren, Rochelle, Zachary, Tyler & Jaslyn Debnar	Rose Debnar
Stephen, Celeste, Adelaide, Cecilia, Juliette	Keith Livengood & Rachel Flischel
Stephen, Rebecca, Liam & Mara Lash	Keith Livengood & Rachel Flischel
Richard Fite	Keith Livengood & Rachel Flischel
Madison Flischel	Keith Livengood & Rachel Flischel
Our Acolytes	Gene Hughes
Kendall, Allison, Mitchell, Brendon & Katy,	Steve & Diana Ignatz
Christopher & Allison	Steve & Diana Ignatz
Mary Anne Dalmagro	Rebecca Johnson
My Family—especially Erik	Rebecca Johnson
For all those fighting cancer	Rebecca Johnson
Pops & Nana	Emma & Landon Kirkpatrick
Emma & Landon Kirkpatrick	Denny & Patty Kirkpatrick
Carol Runninger	Donna Livengood
Our Family	Janet & Larry Means
Our Children & Grandchildren	Roger & Cheryl Mechling
Mother & Granddaughter	James Merryman
Pastor & Nancy Johnson	Rose Montgomery
Rebecca Veith	Rose Montgomery
Liz Cramer	Rose Montgomery
Our Children & Grandchildren	Rev. Jim & Sue Neal
Bryce Olinger	Bill & Crystal Olinger
My Father, Joseph Campbell	Juanita Sams
Our Parents	The Shafer Family
Mr. & Mrs. Holt's 1 st Anniversary	Christine & Lance Whiteman
Mr. & Mrs. McGalla's 1 st Anniversary	Christine & Lance Whiteman
Mr. & Mrs. Whiteman's 32 nd Anniversary	Christine & Lance Whiteman



Christmas poinsettias are presented to the Glory of God and in loving memory of:

By:

Dale & Jeane Smart	Ruth Ann & Daniel D. Crawford
Our Loved Ones	Susan & Bob Barto
Jerry Cable	Carole Cable
Esther Choncek	Butch Choncek
Grandmother, Bernice L. Stitt	Angela B. Clever
Mary Crooks, Dean Crooks Sr. & Kim Crooks	Dean M. Crooks II
Bertram Gaines, Dr. Patrick O. Wolfe	Dean M. Crooks II
My husband, Emil Debnar	Rose Debnar
Gary Charles Duncan	Sandra Duncan
Murray & Arline Calhoun	Sandra Duncan
Charles & Norma Jean Duncan	Sandra Duncan
Henry & Cheryl Livengood	Keith Livengood & Rachel Flischel
Cheryl Fite	Keith Livengood & Rachel Flischel
Loved ones	Gloria Sgro & Sandra Hellam
Chuck Enright; Lila Iddings; Dennis Hughes	Gene Hughes
Loved Ones	Kyle & Erica Kirkpatrick
Mary "Libby" Reesman	Her Great Granddaughter, Baylee Kozlosky
Ray H. Law	Cindy and Family
Linda Lindeman	David Lindeman
Loved Ones	Roger & Cheryl Mechling
Betty Merryman & Reily Pyle	James Merryman
Our Parents	Rev. Jim & Sue Neal
Harry & Regina Neidig	Jane Neidig
Jean Neidig	Jane Neidig
Our Parents, Jim & Lorretta Kissinger	Bill & Crystal Olinger
Our Parents, John & Delma Olinger	Bill & Crystal Olinger
Don Runninger	Carol Runninger
Christine Schall	Carol Runninger
My Mother, Patricia Campbell	Juanita Sams
Loved Ones	The Shafer Family
Robert & Doris Smail	Steve & Diana Ignatz
Stephen & Alice Ignatz	Steve & Diana Ignatz
Derian Keefer	Donna Livengood
John Dalmagro, Phyllis & Eric Johnson, Gerald Mentch	Rebecca Johnson
Tony & Delores Ferraro	Scott Stirling
Lois & Eugene Sheasley	Christine & Lance Whiteman
Jim, Carol & Eric Jack	Kevin & Marcia Williamson
Bobbie, Rob & Keith Williamson	Kevin & Marcia Williamson
William Bouch Sr., Dorothy Bouch, Sue Wright	Bob, Chaunie, Dawson & Family

SERVICE PARTICIPANTS

Assisting Minister
Lector
Communion
Acolytes
Welcome team
Camera Operator
Brass Ensemble

Karen Waugaman
Charlie Bleakney
TBA
TBA
TBA
Bill Bouch
Dan Minnich, Trumpet
Karina Blose, Clarinet
Seth Schall, French Horn
Brendan Swanson, Baritone

STAFF MEMBERS

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

Julie Smith
Angela B. Clever
TBD
Rebecca Veith
Elizabeth Cramer

Our sincere appreciation is expressed to the members of our choirs, to our director of music, Rebecca Veith, our pianist, Elizabeth Cramer and to our instrumental accompanists for the beautiful and special music at our service this evening.

St. John's Kittanning streaming live on YouTube at St. John's Kittanning. <https://www.youtube.com/@st.johnskittanning2251>

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