

**To those who are
visiting today:**

Welcome to St. John Lutheran Church! We are delighted to have you here.

If you do not have a church home, you are cordially invited to join the St. John parish family.

Sound amplifying devices,

which are electronically connected to our speaker system, are available to those who have a hearing impairment. The units are light-weight, cordless, and simple to operate.

Please speak to an usher if you would like to use one.



The Rev. Joshua Ball
Pastor
(586) 749-5286

The Rev. Anthony Keilani
Assistant Pastor

Mr. Erwin Aufdemberge
Director of Parish Music

**Prayers as you await the beginning
of the Divine Service are found
inside the front cover of the hymnal.**

**The Psalms in the front section of
the hymnal will also aid your
pre-service meditation.**

St. John Evangelical-Lutheran Church

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(586) 749-5286

The Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod

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The Third Sunday in Advent – Gaudete

Rejoice!

December 14, 2025

Welcome, Visitors to St. John Lutheran Church!

Concerning the Lord's Supper or Holy Communion:

The Lord's Supper is the true Body and Blood of our Lord, Jesus Christ for repentant sinners to eat and drink.

In addition, receiving this blessed Sacrament of the Altar is a public expression that you are one with the faith that is believed, taught, and confessed by that congregation. St. John Ev.-Lutheran Church is a member congregation of the Lutheran Church–Missouri Synod (LC-MS.) Our pastors and congregations subscribe to the Confessions contained in the Book of Concord of 1580 as the correct interpretation of the Holy Scriptures, and faithful proclamation of the Christian faith. Therefore, communicant members in good standing of LC-MS congregations, and churches in altar and pulpit fellowship with the LC-MS, are invited to commune at St. John.

Not all Christians believe in communion practice of this kind, however we ask your kindness in respecting our practice. We rejoice at the faith of all who belong to our Lord's Church, and are glad that you are here with us today.

Adult and youth catechism instruction is always available, without obligation.

The Sign of the Cross, kneeling and other Church Customs

The hymnal places a cross , at certain points in the service where you may cross yourself. This is a very ancient and good – but *optional* – symbol and custom among Lutherans and many other Christians. Two examples are at the Invocation (“In the Name of the Father and of the , Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.”) and in the final sentence of the Nicene Creed.

What does making the sign of the cross mean?

It means “I belong to the true, living God: God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit”, for the sign of the cross is His sign. On the cross, God the Son willingly died in our place to pay for all our sins. God's sign was placed on your forehead and heart at Holy Baptism to “mark you as belonging to Christ the crucified.”

Please kneel where indicated *if you are able* (or stand with head bowed.)

Kneeling is a sign of humility and thanksgiving before God. Martin Luther encouraged Lutherans to follow the ancient custom of kneeling for these words in the Nicene Creed: “came down from heaven and was incarnate by the Holy Spirit of the Virgin Mary and was made man.” Why? This outward action shows our humility and thanksgiving that God has made Himself our Brother by becoming a true Man. Those words in the Creed are, therefore, marked [▼▲] for those who desire to kneel. You could also bow your head at those words.

Another ancient and good custom is bowing the head whenever the name “Jesus” is spoken during the Divine Service. This is an outward way to give honor and glory to our Savior and Lord, Jesus Christ.

The Calendar for the Week:

<u>Today:</u> 12/14	9:00 am Divine Service Altar Server: Andrew Upton Crucifer: Ezra Ball 10:30 am Sunday School & Bible Study
<u>Monday:</u> 12/15	6:00 pm Divine Service
<u>Wednesday:</u> 12/17	6:30 pm Divine Service Altar Server: Andrew Upton Crucifer: Ezra Ball
<u>Next Sunday:</u> 12/21	9:00 am Divine Service Altar Server: Ron Heimke Crucifer: Ezra Ball 10:30 am Sunday School & Bible Study
<u>Next Monday:</u> 12/22	6:00 pm Divine Service

Attendance Wednesday 12/13: 35 **Last Sunday:** 78 **Monday:** 16
Offering 12/13: Current: \$ 800 Advent: \$163
 12/17: Current: \$2,604 Advent: \$105 Thanksgiving: \$50 Missions: \$7 Building Fund: \$47
To meet our 2024 budgetary requirements, an average weekly collection of \$3,635 is required.

In today's readings: **John the Baptizer Prepares the Way for the Lord.** The voice of the Baptizer cried out in the wilderness: "Prepare the way of the Lord . . ." (Isa. 40:1). John called the people to be made ready for the Messiah's coming through repentance, for "all flesh is grass" (Isa. 40:6). Now He asks from prison, "Are you the one who is to come . . .?" (Matt. 11:2). Jesus' works bear witness that He is. The sick are made well; the dead are raised, and the poor have the Gospel preached to them. Their iniquity is pardoned; they have received from the Lord's hand double forgiveness for all their sins. The "stewards of the mysteries of God" (1 Cor. 4:1) still deliver Christ's overflowing forgiveness to the poor in spirit, comforting God's people with the word of the Gospel which stands forever. This Gospel produces rejoicing among all those who believe.

You can prepare for next week's Divine Service by reading: Deut. 18:15-19; Philippians 4:4-7; John 1:19-28; Luke 1:39-56. Suggested Book of Concord reading: Formula of Concord, Solid Declaration VIII:76.

The final Evening Advent Service is this Wednesday, December 17 at 6:30 p.m. These mid-week services of Word and Sacrament help us prepare for the glorious Christmas celebration of our Lord's incarnation and birth.

Anthem Notes: "Daughter of Zion, Shout for Joy" has a text that well fits the Introit theme this Sunday: "Rejoice in the Lord, and again I say rejoice." The tune is by George Frederick Handel.

The Sacrament of Individual Confession & Absolution is available by scheduling an appointment with Pastor Ball. The rite for individual, private confession comes from Luther's Small Catechism and is found in our hymnal on Pages 292-293.

Sacred music for the Advent season. "Savior of the Nations, Come," "On Jordan's Bank the Baptist's Cry," "Lo! He Comes with Clouds Descending," "Hark! A Thrilling Voice Is Sounding," "O Come, O Come, Emmanuel." You can listen to sacred music for the Advent season 24/7 at lutheranpublicradio.org, Amazon Alexa, Google Home, Apple HomePod, TuneIn, and the Lutheran Public Radio mobile app.

Daily Lutheran Chapel Service. You can watch chapel services from Concordia Theological Seminary, Fort Wayne, IN live weekdays at 9:30 a.m. (Central Time) and on-demand at ctsfw.edu/daily-chapel/ You can also listen on-demand at issuesetc.org/kramerchapel/ and the Lutheran Public Radio mobile app.



Divine Service schedule for this holy season

Midweek Advent Divine Services
 Wednesdays through December 17 at **6:30 p.m.**

Christmas Eve – Wednesday, December 24
 Candlelight Divine Service at **4:00 p.m.**

Christmas Day – Thursday, December 25
 Festival Divine Service at **10:30 a.m.**

New Year's Eve – Wednesday, Dec. 31
 Divine Service at **6:00 p.m.**

, In Nomine Jesu ,

The Preparatory Office

Please stand when the bells are rung. You may give reverence to our Lord by turning to face His cross as it comes down the center aisle and by bowing as it passes.

Processional Hymn: #347 *Comfort, Comfort Ye My People*

The Invocation, Confession and Absolution *Please stand*

Pastor: In the name of the Father and of the , Son and of the Holy Spirit.

Congregation: Amen.

Pastor: Beloved in the Lord, let us draw near with a true heart and confess our sins unto God, our Father, beseeching Him in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to grant us forgiveness.

P: Our help , is in the name of the Lord,

C: Who made heaven and earth.

P: I said, I will confess my transgressions unto the Lord,

C: and You forgave the iniquity of my sin.

Please kneel – Silence for reflection on God's Word and for self-examination.

P: O almighty God, merciful Father,

C: I, a poor miserable sinner, confess unto You all my sins and iniquities with which I have ever offended You and justly deserved Your temporal and eternal punishment. But I am heartily sorry for them and sincerely repent of them, and I pray You of Your boundless mercy and for the sake of the holy, innocent, bitter sufferings and death of Your beloved Son, Jesus Christ, to be gracious and merciful to me, a poor sinful being.

The pastor stands:

P: Upon this your confession, I, by virtue of my office, as a called and ordained servant of the Word, announce the grace of God unto all of you, and in the stead and by the command of my Lord Jesus Christ I forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the , Son and of the Holy Spirit.

C: Amen. Please stand

The Liturgy of the Word

The Introit



The Antiphon:

Cantor: Rejoice in the Lord | always;*
again I will | say, Rejoice.

All: **Let your reasonableness be known to | everyone.***
The Lord | is at hand. (Philippians 4:4-5)

Psalm:

Cantor: LORD, You were favorable | to Your land;*
You restored the fortunes of | Jacob.

All: **You forgave the iniquity of Your | people;***
You covered | all their sin.

Cantor: Will You not revive | us again,*
that Your people may re- | joice in you?

All: **Let me hear what God the | LORD will speak,***
for He will speak peace to His people, to His saints;
but let them not turn back to | folly. (Psalm 85:1-2, 6, 8)

Glory be to the Father and | to the Son*

And to the Holy | Spirit;

As it was in the be- | ginning,*

Is now, and will be forever. | Amen.

The Antiphon - (as above)

The Kyrie

Lord, have mer - cy up - on us. Christ, have mer - cy up -
on us. Lord, have mer - cy up - on us.

[The Gloria in Excelsis is omitted throughout Advent.]

The Salutation and Collect of the Day

The Lord be with you.
, And with thy spir - it.
Let us pray...

P: Lord Jesus Christ, we implore You to hear our prayers and to lighten the darkness of our hearts by Your gracious visitation; for You live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

A - - - men.

The Old Testament Reading: Isaiah 40:1-11

After the reading:

P: The Word of the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God.

The Gradual

Cantor: erubim, | shine forth.*
to | save us!

All: Give ear, O Shepherd of | Israel,*
You who lead Joseph | like a flock! (Psalm 80:1-2)

The Epistle Reading: 1 Corinthians 4:1-5

After the reading:

P: The Word of the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God.

The Alleluia and Verse – *Please stand*

All: Hymn #952 *Alleluia – II*



Cantor:

Stir | up Your might*
and come to | save us. (*Luke 21:26-27*)

All: Hymn #952 *Alleluia – II*

Announcement of the Holy Gospel: St. Matthew 11:2-11

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



☐ Glo - ry be to Thee, O Lord.

Response to the Gospel

P: This is the Gospel of the Lord.



☐ Praise be to Thee, O Christ.

The Nicene Creed: Confessed by all.

I believe in one God, the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth and of all things visible and invisible.

And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Son of God, begotten of His Father before all worlds, God of God, Light of Light, very God of very God, begotten, not made, being of one substance with the Father, by whom all things were made; who for us men and for our salvation ▼ came down from heaven and was incarnate by the Holy Spirit of the Virgin Mary and was made man; ▲ and was crucified also for us under Pontius Pilate. He suffered and was buried. And the third day He rose again according to the Scriptures and ascended into heaven and sits at the right hand of the Father. And He will come again with glory to judge both the living and the dead, whose kingdom will have no end.

And I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord and giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son, who with the Father and the Son together is worshiped and glorified, who spoke by the prophets. And I believe in one holy *Christian and Apostolic Church, I acknowledge one Baptism for the remission of sins, and I look for the resurrection of the dead and the life , of the world to come. Amen.

*The ancient text reads: one holy *catholic* and apostolic Church.

The Preaching of the Gospel

The Hymn of the Day: #345 *Hark! A Thrilling Voice Is Sounding*

The Prayer of the Church - *Please kneel*

The Offering

The Liturgy of the Holy Eucharist

Please stand when the offering is brought forward.

The Offertory

C 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 Thy pres - ence, and take not Thy Ho - ly Spir - it
 from me. Re - store un - to me the joy of Thy sal - va -
 tion, and up - hold me with Thy free spir - it. A - men.

The Preface

* The Lord be with you. **C** And with thy spir - it.
P Lift up your hearts. **C** We lift them up un - to the Lord.
P Let us give thanks un - to the Lord, our God. **C** It is meet and right so to do.

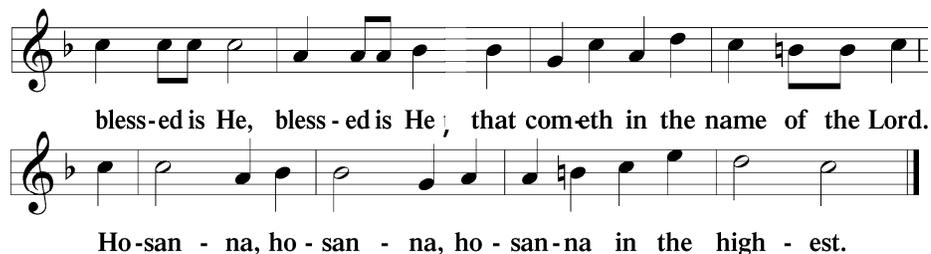
The Proper Preface

It is good, right, and salutary ... evermore praising You and saying:

The Sanctus (Holy, Holy, Holy)

It is appropriate to kneel for the Sanctus and to remain kneeling until the distribution.

C Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord God of Sab - a - oth;
 heav'n and earth are full of Thy glo - ry. Ho - san - na,
 ho - san - na, ho - san - na in the high - est. Bless - ed is He,



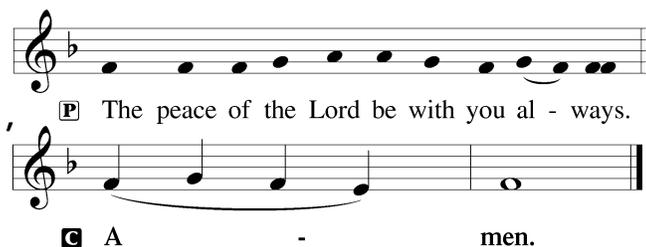
bless-ed is He, bless-ed is He ; that com-eth in the name of the Lord.
Ho-san - na, ho - san - na, ho - san-na in the high - est.

The Our Father (*spoken by all*)

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.

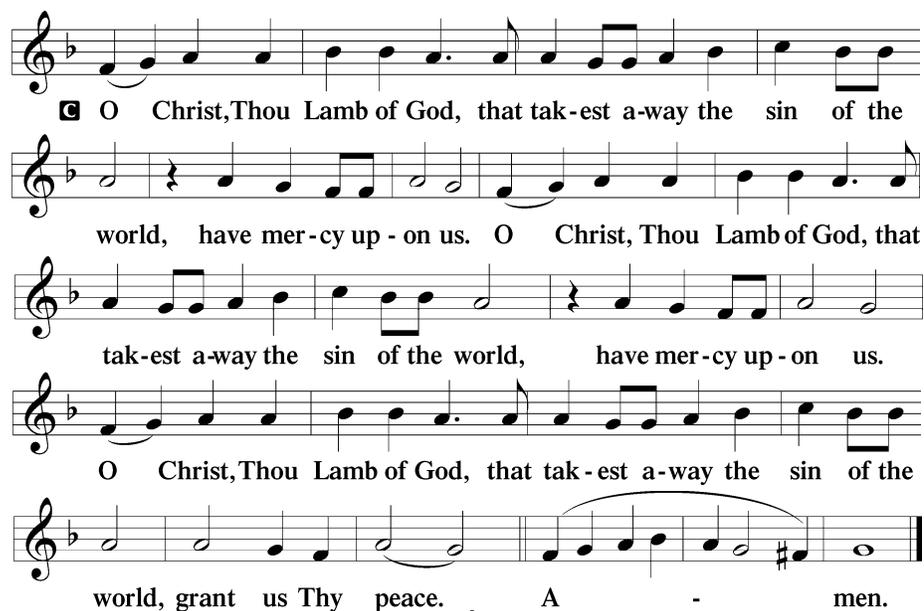
The Verba Christi (*The Words of Christ* by which He instituted the Blessed Sacrament)

The Pax Domini (*The Peace of the Lord*)



The peace of the Lord be with you al - ways.
A - men.

The Agnus Dei (*Lamb of God*)



O Christ, Thou Lamb of God, that tak-est a-way the sin of the world, have mer-cy up - on us. O Christ, Thou Lamb of God, that tak-est a-way the sin of the world, have mer-cy up - on us. O Christ, Thou Lamb of God, that tak-est a-way the sin of the world, grant us Thy peace. A - men.

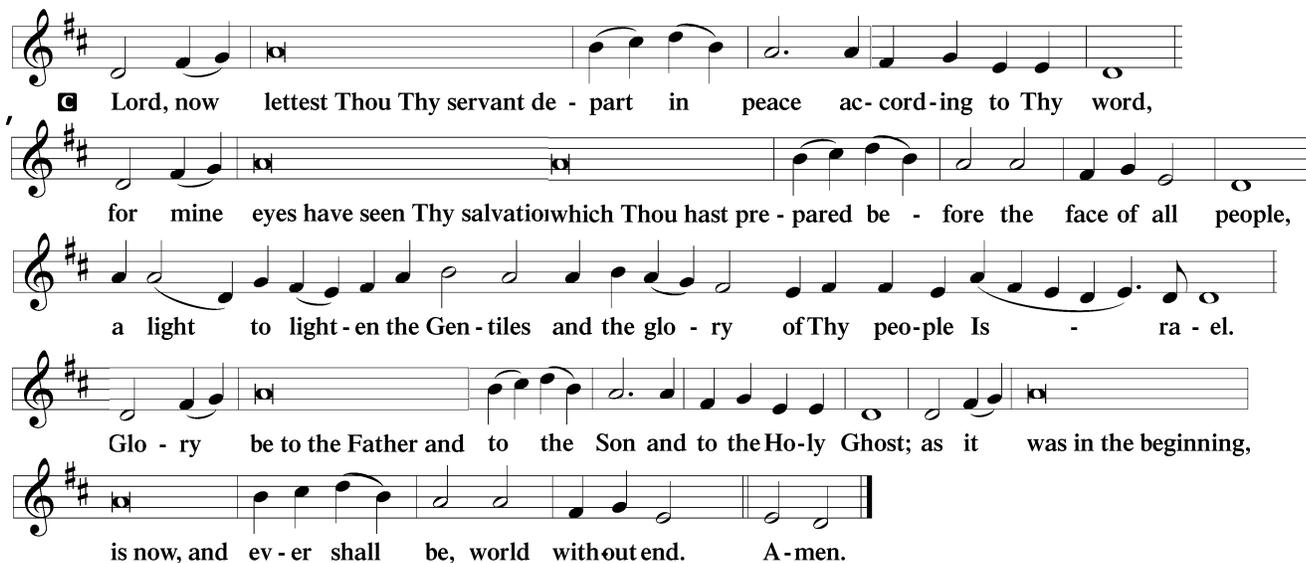
The Holy Communion — Hymn sung during distribution of the Sacrament:

#820 My Soul, Now Praise Your Maker

Prayers for before and after receiving the Sacrament are found inside the front cover of the hymnal.

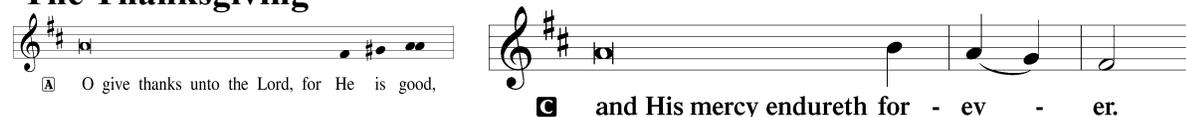
Please stand when motioned by Pastor

The Nunc Dimittis



Lord, now lettest Thou Thy servant de - part in peace ac - cord - ing to Thy word,
 for mine eyes have seen Thy salvation which Thou hast pre - pared be - fore the face of all people,
 a light to light - en the Gen - tiles and the glo - ry of Thy peo - ple Is - ra - el.
 Glo - ry be to the Father and to the Son and to the Ho - ly Ghost; as it was in the beginning,
 is now, and ev - er shall be, world without end. A - men.

The Thanksgiving



A O give thanks unto the Lord, for He is good,
 and His mercy endureth for - ev - er.

The Post-Communion Collect

P: We beg Your mercy, O Lord, that these divine gifts, having cleansed us from our sin, may prepare us for the coming Festival of Your birth; through our Lord, Jesus Christ, who lives and reigns with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.



A - men.

The Salutation and *Benedicamus*



The Lord be with you.
 And with thy spir - it.
 Bless we the Lord.
 Thanks be to God.

The Benediction

P: The Lord bless you and keep you. The Lord make His face shine on you and be gracious to you. The Lord lift up His countenance on you and , give you peace.



A - men, a - men, a - men.

Silent Prayer

Recessional Hymn: #515 *Rejoice, Rejoice, Believers*

, *Soli Deo Gloria* ,