

Imminent Arrival of the Judge



St. John's Lutheran Church
December 7, 2025

Welcome to St. John's

Thanks for being here today! We feel blessed that you're here and truly pray you find the warmth of our Christian family, the powerful truth of God's Word and the peaceful assurance of His promises. If we can assist you in any way, please ask. To start, everything for our worship is projected on the screens up front and printed here in the service folder. God bless your time with us today. We hope you can worship with us again!

If You're New to St. John's:

You and your kids are welcome. We really love and enjoy having kids in worship and encourage the worshiping family! In fact, our worship often includes a children's message with little ones in mind. And if your children are acting up, please know it's never a bother to our worship service. However, If you do need a quiet place to calm a child, a nursery room is available with screens immediately to the left as you exit the sanctuary. There are also changing stations in each bathroom.

Restrooms are located in the entrance as you came into the building

Make yourself at home. You don't have to rush off after service today. Light refreshments are usually provided in our social hall after worship. If you feel comfortable, please stay and follow up with one of our pastors; we'd be honored if you took a moment to introduce yourself!

Don't feel obligated. Our members give financial offerings to the Lord as an expression of thanks and praise for his amazing love. Please know that you are our guests and we're simply happy you've come to hear about Jesus and His Word today. You're not expected to give an offering; it's your choice.

Cell Phones. To remove as many distractions as possible from worshipping God today, we kindly ask you to silence your phone before the service.

Fill out a Connection Card. We'd love to know you were here and help you take the next step. There are Connection Cards inserted in the worship folders, or they can be completed online. Text "Connect" to 651-401-1400, scan the QR code, or visit www.StJohnsLutheran.com/connection-card to complete the card online.



Welcome to St. John's

Dawning Light of Our Salvation

CW 311 sts. 1, Ref, 2



1 Long in dark - ness Is - rael wan - dered; long in mor - tal
2 He shall raise a might - y Sav - ior; born of Da - vid's



shad - ows we walked in bond - age and self - pit - y, trod in
lin - eage, he comes in cov - 'nant love to claim us, from our



paths of sin and grief. In the proph - ets' words he told us,
sins to set us free. Light to those who dwell in dark - ness,



long the God of Is - rael spoke; he a - lone in strength would
life to those from death who flee, joy un - to the earth, and



save us from the hands of all our foes.
glad - ness, to your path - ways dawn - ing peace!



Ev - 'ry val - ley be ex - alt - ed! Ev - 'ry moun - tain



be made plane! Crook - ed ways re - pent and straight - en;

Stand

We worship in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.
Amen.

Prepare the way for the LORD,
make straight in the desert a highway for our God.

Every valley shall be raised up, every mountain and hill made low; the rough ground shall become level, the rugged places a plain.

And the glory of the Lord will be revealed, and all people will see it together.

Dear friends, one day Christ will come in glory to deliver his people. Therefore, let us prepare our hearts to meet him by humbly seeking his forgiveness.

Almighty and merciful Father,
 we have strayed from your ways like lost sheep.
 We have followed what we have devised and desired in our own hearts.
 We have offended you and sinned against your holy law.
 We have done those things that we should not have done,
 and we have not done those things that we should have done.
 Have mercy on us, Lord!
 Spare us, forgive us, and restore us.
 according to your promises in Christ Jesus.

What God promised long ago through his prophets he has fulfilled in his Son, Jesus Christ. Christ came in human flesh; Immanuel, God with us. By his perfect life, he fulfilled God's law. By his innocent death, he paid sin's penalty. By rising from the grave, he opened heaven's door. Christ now comes to you through his words of light and life.

I forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.
Amen.

3 Je - sus, Lord, and might - y Sav - ior, Da - vid's son and
yet his King, dawn - ing light of our sal - va - tion, of your
sav - ing pow'r we sing! Stand, O lame, and dance, ye bro - ken;
know the Sav - ior's heal - ing grace. Come, O deaf, and hear him
sing - ing; turn, O blind, be - hold his face!

Refrain
Ev - 'ry val - ley be ex - alt - ed! Ev - 'ry moun - tain
be made plane! Crook - ed ways re - pent and straight - en;
all cre - a - tion bend in praise!

CW 311 sts. Ref, 3

Lighting of the Advent Wreath*

The advent wreath will be lit following the responsive reading while the Sunday School children sing "Special Gift"

We light two Advent candles remembering Jesus, who came in history. He came into a world of sin and death.

**We remember Jesus, who came as the promised Messiah.
John the Baptist prepared the way of the Lord.**



We hear his call to repent.

We light two Advent candles as a sign of our repentance and desire for renewal.

Come, Lord Jesus, be our guest.

Through your Word and Spirit may our souls be blessed.

Prayer of the Day

Stir up our hearts, O Lord, to prepare the way for your only Son. By his coming, give us strength in our conflicts, and shed light on our path through the darkness of this world; through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Amen.

Be seated

* The Advent Wreath is a combination of two very common Christian symbols: light and the fir tree. From the early centuries of Christianity it has been the practice to represent Christ by a burning candle. The fir tree has a long history of religious use. No doubt the Wreath was suggested by the Christmas tree.

God's Word for our Hearts

Isaiah 11:1–10

- ¹A shoot will come up from the stump of Jesse;
from his roots a Branch will bear fruit.
²The Spirit of the LORD will rest on him—
the Spirit of wisdom and of understanding,
the Spirit of counsel and of might,
the Spirit of the knowledge and fear of the LORD—
³and he will delight in the fear of the LORD.

He will not judge by what he sees with his eyes,
or decide by what he hears with his ears;
⁴but with righteousness he will judge the needy,
with justice he will give decisions for the poor of the earth.
He will strike the earth with the rod of his mouth;
with the breath of his lips he will slay the wicked.
⁵Righteousness will be his belt
and faithfulness the sash around his waist.

⁶The wolf will live with the lamb,
the leopard will lie down with the goat,
the calf and the lion and the yearling together;
and a little child will lead them.

⁷The cow will feed with the bear,
their young will lie down together,
and the lion will eat straw like the ox.

⁸The infant will play near the cobra's den,
and the young child will put its hand into the viper's nest.

⁹They will neither harm nor destroy
on all my holy mountain,
for the earth will be filled with the knowledge of the LORD
as the waters cover the sea.

¹⁰In that day the Root of Jesse will stand as a banner for the peoples; the nations will rally to him, and his resting place will be glorious.

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Gospel Acclamation

Luke 3:4,6

Alleluia. Prepare the way for the Lord, make straight paths for him. And all people will see God's salvation.

Alleluia.

God's Word for our Hearts

Romans 15:4–13

⁴For everything that was written in the past was written to teach us, so that through the endurance taught in the Scriptures and the encouragement they provide we might have hope.

⁵May the God who gives endurance and encouragement give you the same attitude of mind toward each other that Christ Jesus had, ⁶so that with one mind and one voice you may glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

⁷Accept one another, then, just as Christ accepted you, in order to bring praise to God. ⁸For I tell you that Christ has become a servant of the Jews on behalf of God's truth, so that the promises made to the patriarchs might be confirmed ⁹and, moreover, that the Gentiles might glorify God for his mercy. As it is written:

“Therefore I will praise you among the Gentiles;
I will sing the praises of your name.”

¹⁰Again, it says,

“Rejoice, you Gentiles, with his people.”

¹¹And again,

“Praise the Lord, all you Gentiles;
let all the peoples extol him.”

¹²And again, Isaiah says,

“The Root of Jesse will spring up,
one who will arise to rule over the nations;
in him the Gentiles will hope.”

¹³May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Prepare the Royal Highway

CW 302 sts. 1, Ref, 2-3



1 Pre - pare the roy - al high - way; the King of kings is
 2 God's peo - ple, see him com - ing: your own e - ter - nal
 3 Then fling the gates wide o - pen to greet your prom - ised



near! Let ev - 'ry hill and val - ley a
 King! Palm branch - es strew be - fore him! Spread
 King! Your King, yet ev - 'ry na - tion its



lev - el road ap - pear! Then greet the King of
 gar - ments! Shout and sing! God's prom - ise will not
 trib - ute too should bring. All lands, bow down be -



glo - ry, fore - told in sa - cred sto - ry:
 fail you! No more shall doubt as - sail you!
 fore him! All na - tions, now a - dore him!



Refrain
 Ho-san - na to the Lord, for he ful - fills God's Word!

Today's Message from our Loving God – Matthew 3:1-12

¹In those days John the Baptist came, preaching in the wilderness of Judea ²and saying, “Repent, for the kingdom of heaven has come near.” ³This is he who was spoken of through the prophet Isaiah:

“A voice of one calling in the wilderness,
‘Prepare the way for the Lord,
make straight paths for him.’ ”

⁴John’s clothes were made of camel’s hair, and he had a leather belt around his waist. His food was locusts and wild honey. ⁵People went out to him from Jerusalem and all Judea and the whole region of the Jordan. ⁶Confessing their sins, they were baptized by him in the Jordan River.

⁷But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees coming to where he was baptizing, he said to them: “You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the coming wrath? ⁸Produce fruit in keeping with repentance. ⁹And do not think you can say to yourselves, ‘We have Abraham as our father.’ I tell you that out of these stones God can raise up children for Abraham. ¹⁰The ax is already at the root of the trees, and every tree that does not produce good fruit will be cut down and thrown into the fire.

¹¹“I baptize you with water for repentance. But after me comes one who is more powerful than I, whose sandals I am not worthy to carry. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. ¹²His winnowing fork is in his hand, and he will clear his threshing floor, gathering his wheat into the barn and burning up the chaff with unquenchable fire.”

Message Notes: *Things for me to remember this week...*

Our Offering of Thanks & Love

“Whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him” - Colossians 3:17

Our offerings are both an expression of thankfulness for what our Savior has done for us, and a way of supporting the spread of the gospel through the Church’s work. Guests need not feel obligated to contribute.

Ways to Give Electronically

Choose one of 3 Simple, Safe Options for Offering Thanks



- Text “give” to 651-401-1400
 - Go to www.StJohnsLutheran.com/give
 - Scan the QR code
-

Our Prayers and The Lord’s Prayer

Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us. Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours now and forever. Amen.

The Sacrament

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them up to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give him thanks and praise.

It is truly good and right that we should at all times and in all places give you thanks, O Lord, holy Father, almighty and everlasting God, through Jesus Christ our Lord, whose way John the Baptist prepared when he called people to repentance and pointed to Jesus as the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world. Therefore, with all the saints on earth and hosts of heaven, we praise your holy name and join their glorious song:

Holy, Holy, Holy

CW 184

Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of pow - er,
God of might. Heav - en and earth are full of your
glo - ry. Ho - san - na in the high - est.
Bless - ed is he who comes in the name of the
Lord. Ho - san - na in the high - est, ho -
san - na in the high - est!

Words of Institution

Our Lord Jesus Christ, on the night he was betrayed, took bread; and when he had given thanks, he broke it and gave it to his disciples, saying, “Take and eat; this is my ✠ body, which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me.”

Then he took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, “Drink from it, all of you; this is my ✠ blood of the new covenant, which is poured out for you for the forgiveness of sins. Do this, whenever you drink it, in remembrance of me.”

The peace of the Lord be with you always.

Amen.

Jesus, Lamb of God

CW 186

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

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

Je - sus, Lamb of God, you take a - way the
sin of the world; grant us your peace.

Be seated

A note to our guests: God's Word speaks of the spiritual blessings of this Sacrament (Matthew 26:28). God's Word also warns us against the spiritual danger in sharing this Holy meal (1 Corinthians 11:27-29). Because we deeply care about you and don't want to see anyone's faith harmed, we ask that only those persons who are members of our church or fellowship join us in this intimate expression of oneness (1 Corinthians 10:17; Amos 3:3). We are not judging your love for Jesus; we are showing our love for Jesus by obeying his commands (John 14:15,21). Please feel free to ask one of our pastors for more information. We are eager to listen and share over an open Bible. Thanks!

Distribution Hymn: On Jordan's Bank the Baptist's Cry

CW 316



1 On Jor - dan's bank the Bap - tist's cry an - nounc - es
 2 Then cleansed be ev - 'ry life from sin and fur - nished
 3 We hail you as our Sav - ior, Lord, our ref - uge
 4 Stretch forth your hand, our health re - store, and lift us
 5 All praise to you, e - ter - nal Son, whose ad - vent



that the Lord is nigh; come, then, and lis - ten,
 for a Guest with - in, and let us all our
 and our great re - ward; with - out your grace we
 up to fall no more; O make your face on
 has our free - dom won, whom with the Fa - ther



for he brings good news a - bout the King of kings.
 hearts pre - pare for Christ to come and en - ter there.
 waste a - way like flow'rs that with - er and de - cay.
 us to shine, and fill the world with love di - vine.
 we a - dore and Ho - ly Spir - it ev - er - more.

Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good;

his mercy endures forever.

Whenever we eat this bread and drink this cup,

we proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.

We give thanks, almighty God, that you have refreshed us with this saving gift. We pray that through it you will strengthen our faith in you and increase our love for one another. We ask this in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Amen.

Blessing

The Lord bless you and keep you.

The Lord make his face shine on you and be gracious to you.

The Lord look on you with favor and ✠ give you peace.

Amen.

Comfort, Comfort All My People

CW 312 sts. 1-2, 4



1 "Com - fort, com - fort all my peo - ple; speak of peace," so
2 All their sins our God will par - don, blot - ting out each
4 Then make straight the crook - ed high - way; make the rough - er



says our God. "Com - fort those who sit in dark - ness, groan - ing
dark mis - deed; all that well de - served his an - ger he no
plac - es plain. Let your hearts be true and hum - ble, read - y



from their sor - rows' load. Speak to all Je - ru - sa - lem
more will see or heed. They have suf - fered man - y a day;
for his ho - ly reign. For the glo - ry of the Lord



of the peace that waits for them; tell them that their
now their griefs have passed a - way. God will change their
now o'er earth is spread a - broad, and all flesh shall



sins I cov - er, that their war - fare now is o - ver."
ach - ing sad - ness in - to ev - er - spring - ing glad - ness.
see the to - ken that his word is nev - er bro - ken.

Take the Next Step

If this is your first time with us, we're so glad that you took a big step and came to worship. What's your next step?

Come back next week

Connecting with God at worship is a great way to spend time during your weekend.

Try "God & Me"

God & Me is the place to learn more about God's word in your life, for both long time-members and beginners who want to learn more about God's love, the Bible, and St. John's. A new session of classes will be starting soon. Connect with Pastor and/or check the box on your Connection Card if you'd like to know more.

Join a Grow Group

Grow Groups are small groups that get together in person or online to learn about God's Word. It's a safe, comfortable atmosphere to discuss the way God's love intersects our daily lives. If you are interested in joining or starting a Grow Group or Bible Study, mark the box on your Connection Card and we will reach out to you.

Service Opportunities

There are multiple areas to volunteer each Sunday to make worship happen well for those in person and online: Guest Services & Hospitality Team, Tech Team, & Worship Prep Team. Are you interested in serving? Mark the box on your Connection Card today!

Staff

Dennis Harbach | Pastor
pastordh@stjohnslutheran.com
(262) 402-2664

Jon Zimpelmann | Pastor
Jon.zimpelmann@gmail.com
(651) 829-4574

Michelle Schulte | Office Admin
Admin@StJohnsLutheran.com
(651) 438-3730



Visit us online:



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