

Welcome to Worship

at

St. John's Evangelical Lutheran Church
a reconciling in Christ congregation



January 7th, 2024

10:30 am

Interim Pastor: The Rev. Mike Button

Director of Music: Jessica Madow

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Statement of Welcome

*There is no longer Jew or Greek, there is no longer slave or free, there is no longer male and female;
for all of you are one in Christ Jesus. — Galatians 3:28*

As a community of God striving to be open to all people, we at St. John's Lutheran Congregation believe that the gospel is God's gift to all people, to be shared unconditionally. We welcome all to join us as we struggle to better understand the mysteries of God's teachings. We are challenged by Christ to care for, to love, to understand, and to listen to each other, regardless of race, age, gender, marital status, physical and mental abilities, sexual/affectional orientation, national origin, or economic status. We celebrate together our unity as God's people.

St. John's Lutheran Congregation is a place for each person to shine in their own unique gifts.

Statement of Mission

St. John's Lutheran Church is a downtown, community-oriented, congregation of Christians. We worship God, strive to welcome, and wholly accept everyone, and reach out with and in God's love.

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Communion is a time we invite all baptized Christians who believe that our Lord Jesus is truly present in the bread and wine of the Sacrament. If this is your belief, there are instructions to follow at the time of Communion later in the bulletin.

Service Notes:

- (asterisk) indicates, please stand as you are able.
- Page # indicates the front of the hymnal is used . . .
- Hymn # indicates the back of the Hymnal is used . . .

Hymn Book Abbreviations:

ELW – Evangelical Lutheran Worship Book
WOV – With One Voice
ACS – All Creation Sings

Gathering

The Holy Spirit calls us together as the people of God.

Welcome

Prelude *“O Morning Star, How Fair, How Bright!”*
arr. Jad Wolm

*Confession and Forgiveness

P: Blessed be the holy Trinity, ✝ one God, who forgives all our sin, whose mercy endures forever.

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: Let us confess our sin in the presence of God and of one another. Most merciful God,

C: We confess that we are captive 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, I 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: In the mercy of almighty God, Jesus Christ was given to die for us, and for his sake God 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.

*Gathering Hymn

ELW #275 *“Angels, from the Realms of Glory”*

*Greeting

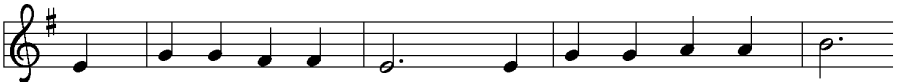
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P: The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

C: And also with you.

*Kyrie

- page 203



- 1 Have mer - cy on us, Lord, and hear our sol - emn prayer.
- 2 Have mer - cy on us, Christ, and wash a - way our sin.
- 3 Have mer - cy on us, Lord; make sin and shame de - part.



We come to hear your liv - ing word; it saves us from de - spair.
Pour out your grace and make us whole that new life may be - gin.
Re - new us with your sav - ing pow'r; cre - ate in us new hearts!

*Canticle of Praise

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1 Glo-ry be to God in heav-en; peace, good-will to all the earth.
2 Glo-ry be to Christ for - ev - er, Lamb of God and Lord of love.
3 Ho - ly One we now ac-claim you; Lord a - lone, to you we call;



Might-y God of all cre - a - tion, Fa - ther of sur - pass - ing worth:
Son of God and gra - cious Sav - ior, you have come from heav'n a - bove;
Ho - ly One in faith we name you, God most high, yet near to all:



we ex - alt you, we a - dore you, we lift high our thanks and praise.
on the cross you died to save us; now you reign at God's right hand.
Je - sus Christ, with God the Spir - it, in the Fa - ther's splen - dor bright.



Saints and an - gels bow be - fore you; here on earth our songs we raise.
Hear our prayer; re - store, for - give us; in your prom - ise firm we stand.
For the peace that we in - her - it, glo - ry be to God on high!

*Prayer of the Day

A: Let us pray. O God, on this day you revealed your Son to the nations by the leading of a star. Lead us now by faith to know your presence in our lives and bring us at last to the full vision of your glory, through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C: Amen

Childrens Chat

Word

God speaks to us in scripture reading, preaching, and song.

First Reading

Isaiah 60:1-6

¹Arise, shine; for your light has come, and the glory of the LORD has risen upon you.

²For darkness shall cover the earth, and thick darkness the peoples; but the LORD will arise upon you, and his glory will appear over you.

³Nations shall come to your light, and kings to the brightness of your dawn.

⁴Lift up your eyes and look around; they all gather together, they come to you; your sons shall come from far away, and your daughters shall be carried on their nurses' arms.

⁵Then you shall see and be radiant; your heart shall thrill and rejoice, because the abundance of the sea shall be brought to you, the wealth of the nations shall come to you.

⁶A multitude of camels shall cover you, the young camels of Midian and Ephah; all those from Sheba shall come.

They shall bring gold and frankincense, and shall proclaim the praise of the LORD.

A: The Word of the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God.

Responsive Reading:

Psalm 72:1-7, 10-14

¹Give the king your justice, O God,
and your righteousness to the king's son;

²**that he may rule your people righteously
and the poor with justice;**

³that the mountains may bring prosperity to the people,
and the hills, in righteousness.

⁴**Let him defend the needy among the people,
rescue the poor, and crush the oppressor.**

⁵May he live as long as the sun and moon endure,
from one generation to another.

⁶**Let him come down like rain upon the mown field,
like showers that water the earth.**

⁷In his time may the righteous flourish;
and let there be an abundance of peace till the moon shall be no
more.

¹⁰**May the kings of Tarshish and of the isles pay tribute,
and the kings of Sheba and Seba offer gifts.**

¹¹May all kings bow down before him,
and all the nations do him service.

¹²**For the king delivers the poor who cry out in distress,
the oppressed, and those who have no helper.**

¹³He has compassion on the lowly and poor,
and preserves the lives of the needy.

**¹⁴From oppression and violence he redeems their lives,
and precious is their blood in his sight.**

Second Reading

Ephesians 3:1-12

¹This is the reason that I Paul am a prisoner for Christ Jesus for the sake of you Gentiles—²for surely you have already heard of the commission of God's grace that was given me for you, ³and how the mystery was made known to me by revelation, as I wrote above in a few words, ⁴a reading of which will enable you to perceive my understanding of the mystery of Christ. ⁵In former generations this mystery was not made known to humankind, as it has now been revealed to his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit: ⁶that is, the Gentiles have become fellow heirs, members of the same body, and sharers in the promise in Christ Jesus through the gospel.

⁷Of this gospel I have become a servant according to the gift of God's grace that was given me by the working of his power. ⁸Although I am the very least of all the saints, this grace was given to me to bring to the Gentiles the news of the boundless riches of Christ, ⁹and to make everyone see what is the plan of the mystery hidden for ages in God who created all things; ¹⁰so that through the church the wisdom of God in its rich variety might now be made known to the rulers and authorities in the heavenly places. ¹¹This was in accordance with the eternal purpose that he has carried out in Christ Jesus our Lord, ¹²in whom we have access to God in boldness and confidence through faith in him.

A: The Word of the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God.

*** Gospel**

Matthew 2:1-12

P: The Holy Gospel according to Matthew, the 2nd chapter.

C: Glory to you, O Lord.

¹In the time of King Herod, after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, wise men from the East came to Jerusalem, ²asking, “Where is the child who has been born king of the Jews? For we observed his star at its rising, and have come to pay him homage.” ³When King Herod heard this, he was frightened, and all Jerusalem with him; ⁴and calling together all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Messiah was to be born. ⁵They told him, “In Bethlehem of Judea; for so it has been written by the prophet:

⁶‘And you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah,
are by no means least among the rulers of Judah;
for from you shall come a ruler
who is to shepherd my people Israel.’ ”

⁷Then Herod secretly called for the wise men and learned from them the exact time when the star had appeared. ⁸Then he sent them to Bethlehem, saying, “Go and search diligently for the child; and when you have found him, bring me word so that I may also go and pay him homage.” ⁹When they had heard the king, they set out; and there, ahead of them, went the star that they had seen at its rising, until it stopped over the place where the child was. ¹⁰When they saw that the star had stopped, they were overwhelmed with joy. ¹¹On entering the house, they saw the child with Mary his mother; and they knelt down and paid him homage. Then, opening their treasure chests, they offered him gifts of gold, frankincense,

and myrrh. ¹²And having been warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they left for their own country by another road.

P: The Gospel of the Lord.

C: Praise to you, O Christ.

Sermon — The Reverend Mike Button

***Hymn of the Day —**

ELW #303 *“Brightest and Best of the Stars”*

Nicene Creed

C: 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, was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the virgin Mary and became truly human.

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,* who with the Father and the Son is worshiped and glorified, who 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.

****Prayers of Intercession***

A: Let us pray. Humble the hearts of your faithful people, that we seek to be servants of your gospel and witnesses to your mysteries. Give us boldness in faith, that we make the good news of Christ's birth known to all people. Hear us, O God.

C: Your mercy is great.

A: Establish justice on earth for all its inhabitants. Lead us to protect fragile ecosystems and endangered species. Empower the work of all who research, engineer, and make accessible alternative and renewable sources of energy. Make us careful stewards of your creation. Hear us, O God.

C: Your mercy is great.

A: Nations shall come to your light and kings to your dawning. Remove corruption and fear from the hearts of leaders and authorities. Lead governments to expand policies and resources that care for refugees and all migrants. Strengthen the work of agencies that provide help and guidance . Hear us, O God.

C: Your mercy is great.

A: Defend the cause of all who are in need, all facing poverty, and all who are oppressed. Come quickly to those who are sick or are in pain. Reassure those who feel that their lives and livelihoods are fragile and your people everywhere including *those we mention on our prayer list . . . and those we name aloud or in our hearts . . .* Give them strength and lead them forth with hope. Hear us, O God. Hear us, O God.

C: Your mercy is great.

A: As the magi offered gifts to the Christ child, empower us to give generously. Prosper the work of ministry partnerships in our community. Together, help us share what we have to ensure that our neighbors have enough food, resources, and opportunities. Hear us, O God.

C: Your mercy is great.

A: You have redeemed the lives of your faithful departed. Through the love of Christ, gather us into one body with them, and reveal to us the mystery hidden for ages in the One who created all things. Hear us, O God.

C: Your mercy is great.

Here other intercessions may be offered.

A: Abide with us, O God of mercy, and receive our prayers according to your abundant grace.

C: Amen.

*** The Sharing of the Peace**

P: The peace of Christ be with you always.

C: And also with you.

Meal

God feeds us with the presence of Jesus Christ.

(Ushers now proceed to the Altar to receive the offering plates...)

Offertory *“When a Star Is Shining”* (ACS #915)
Sung by the Wittenberg Choir

***Presentation of Gifts**

(Ushers now bring the offering plates forward.)

***Offertory Hymn**

ELW #302 *“As with Gladness Men of Old”* - verse 3

***Offertory Prayer**

A: Let us pray. God of abundance, receive and bless these gifts we have offered. Join our hearts with the song of the angels, and gather us at your table of celebration. Strengthen us to share with all the world the abundance of your grace upon grace, poured out in Jesus Christ, the Word made flesh.

C: Amen

***Great Thanksgiving** - page 206

*** Preface** (*Leader continues . . .*)

***Holy, Holy, Holy** - page 207

***Thanksgiving at the Table** (*Leader continues . . .*)

***Lord's Prayer** - page 208

***Lamb of God** - page 208

***Invitation to Communion**

Holy Communion - *If you are baptized and believe that it is the real blood and body of Christ, we welcome you at the Lord's table.*

**At the invitation of the usher, please proceed to the front to receive communion. Communion is also available in your pew, please let an usher know. Gluten free wafers and grape juice are available upon request.*

Communion Hymns

ELW #461 *“All Who Hunger, Gather Gladly”*

ELW #464 *“Bread of Life, Our Host and Meal”*

ELW #477 *“I Received the Living God”*

***Table Blessing**

***Post Communion Hymn**

ELW #314 *“Arise, Your Light Has Come!”*

***Prayer after Communion**

A: Let us pray. God our redeemer, you have fed us at this table with gifts of grace, truth, and life. As you have gathered us in joy, send us forth as messengers of your peace. Make us shine with the good news of your glory, born to us in Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

C: Amen.

Sending

God blesses us and sends us in mission to the world.

Announcements

***Blessing**

P: God bless you and keep you, ✚ Jesus grant you grace and truth, and the Spirit send peace upon your hearts,

now and forever.

C: Amen.

***Sending Hymn**

ELW # 671 ***“Shine, Jesus, Shine”***

***Dismissal**

P: Christ the Savior is born! Go in peace. Proclaim this good news.

C: Thanks be to God.

Postlude

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Thank you to our Worship Volunteers . . .

Worship Assistant– Steve Moyer

Ushers – Panama Crozier / Connie Garr

Reader – Larry Transue

Altar Guild – Joyce Petty / Connie Garr

Video Team – Brad Thomas

This Week at St. John's: December 31st – January 7th

Today (1/7/24) – Epiphany of Our Lord, 10:30 am

Today (1/7/24) – Following Worship: Finance Mtg. – Office
Membership Mtg. - Chapel

Monday (1/8/24) – Choir, 1:00 pm

Monday (1/8/24) – Council Meeting, 7:00 pm

Tuesday (1/9/24) – Bible Study, 10:00 am - Hospitality Rm.

Wednesday (1/10/24) – Prayer Group, 11:00 am - Hospitality Rm.

Saturday (1/13/24) – Archives, 9:30 am

Sunday (1/14/24) – Sunday School / Adult Form, 9:00 am

Sunday (1/14/24) – Second Sunday of Epiphany, 10:30 am

Join us at Prayer Group:

The 2nd and 4th Wednesdays of the Month at 11:00 am



Prayer Concerns: Chuck, Fritzie, Sandy, Pam, James, Kara, Bill, Joe, Christine, Skip, Robin, Danny, Tammy, Carolyn, Julia, Charles, Bill, Donald, Jim, Betty, Madelyn, Ken, Judy, Judith, Sylvia, Tony, Liam, Harold, Arlene, Our Homebound Family and Friends, and the Friends and Family of Chris Yost and Lillie Lan

Save the Date . . .

Annual Congregational Meeting

January 28, 2024 – Following Worship

(Membership will be sponsoring a light lunch following the meeting, the Congregation is asked to bring a Side Dish or Dessert to share.)



Attention Committee Chairs:

Annual Reports are due to the church office by
January 12th, 2024

Adult Forum:

Join us Sunday's at 9:00 am in the Gallery . . .

NEW TOPIC:

**“Everything you wanted to know about worship but
were afraid to ask . . .”**



The Gallery at St. John's will be open the following dates in
January exhibiting art from the ACE and FAAS Communities . . .

Sunday - January 7, 12-3:00 pm

Sunday – January 14, 12-3:00 pm

Sunday – January 21, 12-3:00 pm