

Welcome to Worship

at

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



December 8, 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 *“Hark! A Thrilling Voice Is Sounding!”*
by William H. Monk (Tune: “Merton”)

*Confession and Forgiveness

P: Blessed be the holy Trinity, † one God, alive in the world,
reviving creation, arriving soon.

C: Amen.

P: Let us confess our sin in the presence of God and of one
another. *Silence is kept for reflection.* God of mercy,

**C: We confess that we have sinned. We trust earthly powers
and human authority alone. We grow fearful. We cling to false
comforts.**

P: God of might,

**C: We confess that we have sinned. We have turned away
from our neighbors. We have trusted false promises.**

P: God in our midst,

**C: We confess that we have sinned. We plead: come to us.
Bring your mercy to birth in us.**

P: A righteous branch springs forth: it is Christ the Lord, our Savior, in whom we have forgiveness, life, and mercy. By the power of the Holy Spirit, receive the grace and forgiveness of God through † Christ Jesus, whose day draws near.

C: Amen.

***Gathering Hymn**

ELW # 247 *“Come Now, O Prince of Peace”*

***Greeting**

- page 98

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 98

***Lighting the Advent Wreath: Second Sunday of Advent**

P: We praise you, O God, for this circle of light that marks our days of preparation for Christ’s advent. As we light the candles on this wreath, kindle within us the fire of your Spirit, that we may be light shining in the darkness. Enlighten us with your grace,

that we may welcome others as you have welcomed us. Grant this through Christ our Lord, whose coming is certain and whose day draws near.

C: Amen.

The second candle is lit.

***Advent Hymn**

ELW #257 “*O Come, O Come, Emmanuel*” (ver. 3-4)

**3 O come, O come, O Lord of might,
as to your tribes on Sinai's height
in ancient times you gave the law
in cloud, and majesty, and awe. *Refrain***

Refrain **Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel
shall come to you, O Israel.**

**4 O come, O Branch of Jesse, free
your own from Satan's tyranny;
from depths of hell your people save,
and give them vict'ry o'er the grave. *Refrain***

***Prayer of the Day**

A: Let us pray. Stir up our hearts, Lord God, to prepare the way of your only Son. By his coming give to all the people of the world knowledge of your salvation; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C: Amen

Children's Chat

Word

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

First Reading

Malachi 3:1-4

¹ See, I am sending my messenger to prepare the way before me, and the Lord whom you seek will suddenly come to his temple. The messenger of the covenant in whom you delight—indeed, he is coming, says the Lord of hosts. ² But who can endure the day of his coming, and who can stand when he appears?

For he is like a refiner's fire and like fullers' soap; ³ he will sit as a refiner and purifier of silver, and he will purify the descendants of Levi and refine them like gold and silver, until they present offerings to the Lord in righteousness. ⁴ Then the offering of Judah and Jerusalem will be pleasing to the Lord as in the days of old and as in former years.

A: The Word of the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God.

Responsive Reading:

Luke 1:68-79

⁶⁸ Blessed are you, Lord, the God of Israel, you have come to your people and set them free.

⁶⁹ **You have raised up for us a mighty Savior,
born of the house of your servant David.**

⁷⁰ Through your holy prophets, you promised of old to save us
|from our enemies,

⁷¹ from the hands of all who hate us,

⁷² **to show mercy to our forebears,
and to remember your holy covenant.**

⁷³ This was the oath you swore to our father Abraham:

⁷⁴ to set us free from the hands of our enemies,

free to worship you without fear,

⁷⁵ **holy and righteous before you, all the days of our life.**

⁷⁶ And you, child, shall be called the prophet of the Most High,
for you will go before the Lord to prepare the way,

⁷⁷ **to give God's people knowledge of salvation
by the forgiveness of their sins.**

⁷⁸ In the tender compassion of our God
the dawn from on high shall break upon us,

⁷⁹ **to shine on those who dwell in darkness and in the shadow of
death,
and to guide our feet into the way of peace.**

Second Reading

Philippians 1:3-11

³ I thank my God every time I remember you, ⁴ constantly praying
with joy in every one of my prayers for all of you, ⁵ because of
your sharing in the gospel from the first day until now. ⁶ I am
confident of this, that the one who began a good work among you
will bring it to completion by the day of Jesus Christ. ⁷ It is right
for me to think this way about all of you, because you hold me in
your heart, for all of you share in God's grace with me, both in my

imprisonment and in the defense and confirmation of the gospel.
8 For God is my witness, how I long for all of you with the
compassion of Christ Jesus. 9 And this is my prayer, that your love
may overflow more and more with knowledge and full insight 10 to
help you to determine what is best, so that in the day of Christ you
may be pure and blameless, 11 having produced the harvest of
righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ for the glory and
praise of God.

A: The Word of the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God.

***Gospel Acclamation** *“Alleluia”* - page 102

*** Gospel** **Luke 3:1-6**

P: The Holy Gospel according to Luke, the 3rd chapter.

C: Glory to you, O Lord.

1 In the fifteenth year of the reign of Emperor Tiberius, when
Pontius Pilate was governor of Judea, and Herod was ruler of
Galilee, and his brother Philip ruler of the region of Ituraea and
Trachonitis, and Lysanias ruler of Abilene, 2 during the high
priesthood of Annas and Caiaphas, the word of God came to John
son of Zechariah in the wilderness. 3 He went into all the region
around the Jordan, proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the
forgiveness of sins, 4 as it is written in the book of the words of the
prophet Isaiah,

“The voice of one crying out in the wilderness: ‘Prepare the way
of the Lord, make his paths straight.

5 Every valley shall be filled, and every mountain and hill shall

be made low, and the crooked shall be made straight, and the rough ways made smooth; ⁶ and all flesh shall see the salvation of God.’”

P: The Gospel of the Lord.

C: Praise to you, O Christ.

Sermon — The Reverend Mike Button

***Hymn of the Day**

ELW # 249 “*On Jordan's Bank the Baptist's Cry*”

***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. Refining God, move through your church. Root out practices that harm your people and kindle a fire for sharing the gospel among bishops, pastors, deacons, and all the baptized. Lord, in your mercy,

C: Receive our prayer.

A: Renewing God, transform your creation. Steer us from habits that harm what you have made and guide us in practices that preserve and restore creatures and habitats. Lord, in your mercy,

C: Receive our prayer.

A: Ruling God, teach the nations your ways. Strengthen organizations and communities that broker peace and care for refugees, immigrants, and all caught in the center of conflict. Lord, in your mercy,

C: Receive our prayer.

A: Rescuing God, restore your people who are in any need. Heal all who are suffering including *those we mention on our prayer list . . . and those we name aloud or silently in our hearts . . .*, Provide comfort and strength, and nurture sustained wholeness for the future. Lord, in your mercy,

C: Receive our prayer.

A: Reforming God, fill this congregation with your presence. Enrich our seasonal preparations, and bless the efforts by worship committees, music ensembles, staff, clergy, and lay leaders as they work in the weeks ahead. Lord, in your mercy,

C: Receive our prayer.

Here other intercessions may be offered.

A: Reassuring God, we remember those who have died and rest in you. Guide us in deep gratitude for their life, and allow us to learn from their faithful witness. Lord, in your mercy,

C: Receive our prayer.

A: Savior of the nations, come, and receive these prayers and the pleas of our hearts, in the name of Jesus Christ.

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 “Alleluia for Advent” set by Patrick Liebergen

Sung by the Wittenberg Choir

***Presentation of Gifts** *(Ushers now bring the offering plates forward.)*

*Offertory Hymn

ACS# 905 “We Are Waiting for Jesus”



1 We are wait - ing for Je - sus; Je - sus brings peace.
2 We are wait - ing for Je - sus; Je - sus brings peace.



We are wait - ing for Je - sus; Je - sus brings peace.
We are wait - ing for Je - sus; Je - sus brings peace.



Sun of jus - tice, shine up - on us; we are trust - ing in your prom - ise.
Lov - ing Shep - herd, walk be - side us; stir our hearts, and gent - ly guide us.



We are wait - ing for Je - sus; Je - sus brings peace.
We are wait - ing for Je - sus; Je - sus brings peace.

***Offertory Prayer**

A: Let us pray. God of abundance, we bring before you the precious fruits of your creation, and with them our very lives. Teach us patience and hope as we care for all those in need until the coming of your Son, our Savior and Lord.

C: Amen

***Great Thanksgiving** - page 107

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

***Holy, Holy, Holy** - page 108

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

***Lord's Prayer** - page 112

***Lamb of God** - page 112

***Invitation to Communion** - page 112

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 #266 “*All Earth Is Hopeful*”

ELW #252 “*Each Winter As the Year Grows Older*”

ELW # 239 “*Hark, the Glad Sound!*”

***Table Blessing**

***Post Communion Hymn** “*Now Lord . . .*” - page 113

***Prayer after Communion**

A: Let us pray. God for whom we wait, in this meal you give us a foretaste of that day when the hungry will be fed with good things. Send us forth to make known your deeds and to proclaim the greatness of your name, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

C: Amen.

Sending

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

Announcements

*Blessing

P: God of endings and beginnings, God in the darkness and the light, God, our hope for the journey, ✠ bless and keep you now and forever.

C: Amen.

*Sending Hymn

ELW # 631 *“Love Divine, All Loves Excelling”*

*Dismissal

P: Go in peace. Prepare the way for Emmanuel.

C: Thanks be to God.

Postlude

Thank you to our Worship Volunteers . . .

Worship Assistant–Jim Heck

Ushers – Barbara Horinko / Lois Anne Calloway

Reader – Mike Thompson

Advent Candle Lighter – Carol & David Faulkner

Altar Guild – Barbara Horinko / Sylvia Orem

Video Team – David Faulkner

This Week at St. John's December 8th – December 15th

Today (12/8/24) – Second Sunday of Advent, 10:30 am

Today (12/8/24) – Following Worship: Congregational Meeting

Today (12/8/24) – Gallery Holiday Show, 12-3:00 pm

Monday (12/9/24) – Choir Rehearsal, 1:00 pm

Monday (12/9/24) – Council Meeting, 7:00 pm

Wednesday (12/11/24) – Prayer Group 11:00 am – Hospitality Room

Wednesday (12/11/24) – Advent Dinner 6:00 pm / Worship – 7:00 pm
@ St. Paul's Third Lutheran Church

Friday (12/13/24) – Newsletter Deadline

Saturday (12/14/24) – Easton H.S. Chamber Singers – 7:00 pm

Sunday (12/15/24) – Sunday School / Adult Forum – 9:00 am

Sunday (12/15/24) – Third Sunday of Advent, 10:30 am

Sunday (12/15/24) – Following Worship: Property Mtg.- Office

Sunday (12/15/24) – Gallery Holiday Show, 12-3:00 pm

Bible Study is Back . . . Topic: The New Testament

(Bible Study will meet the 1st and 3rd Wednesdays of the Month.)

Week 47, 12/1/24

Last Sunday's Envelope / Plate Offering	\$2,858.00
Weekly amount needed to reach our Budget:	\$2,126.00
Year to Date Envelope / Plate Offering:	\$102048
Behind Budget	-\$3,472.00

Prayer List: Chuck, Clark, Don, Joe, Kara, Christine, Bill, Michael, Shelley, Jan, Paula, Keith, George, Lois Anne, Carolyn, Charles, Julia, John, Kirk, Donald, Terry, Lenny, Emily, Bill, Mary, Bucky, Jim, Shirley, Jeff, Karla, Debbie, Pastor Orem, Peggy, Tony, George, Joan, Karen, Our Homebound Family & Friends, the St. John's Call Committee, Our Future Pastor, and the Family and Friends of Jane Thomas.



"The true light, which gives light to everyone, was coming into the world."

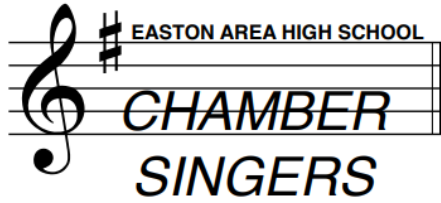
John 1:9

Midweek Advent Worship:

*Join us for a light Soup Supper at 6:00 pm,
followed by Worship at 7:00 pm*

December 11th—St. Paul's Third Lutheran Church

December 18th—St. Andrew's Lutheran Church



Present:

"A Christmas Celebration"

7:00 PM, Saturday, December 14, 2024

at

St. John's Evangelical Lutheran Church
330 Ferry St., Easton, PA 18042

(A free-will offering will be taken)

Come enjoy the sounds of the season!



***St. John's is looking for
Volunteers to visit Our Homebound
Members this Holiday Season.***

*St. John's has 10 Homebound Members and
is looking for 5 volunteers to visit 2
members each.*

***Why not let our members be
Thankful for "You" ! and let
"You" be the gift they cherish this year.***

'Tis the Season for Baking

The Membership Committee is looking for bakers!

*Please donate 1 to 2 dozen of your
favorite Christmas cookie.*

*Cookies will be gift-packaged for our
homebound members.*

Donations due to the church by Friday, Dec. 20th.

Thank you! Merry Christmas.



The Gallery at St. John's "Holiday Show"

*December 1st–22nd, 2024
12:00 – 3:00 pm*

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- 6. "Each Winter As the Year Grows Older" (ELW #252, Text: William Gay; Music: Annabeth Gay; Text and music © 1971 United Church Press.)*

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ORDER YOUR
POINSETTIAS



May the Righteous Flourish,
and Peace Abound—Psalm 72:7

*Every year we decorate our sanctuary with poinsettias for
our Christmas Eve Worship Service.*

*We invite you to purchase a flower to remember special
people in our lives, past or present.*

\$9.00 each / Deadline December 8th, 2024

Name: _____

Phone: _____

Dedication: _____



Number of Flowers: _____

*Poinsettias can
be taken home following the
Christmas Eve Worship Service.*