

Welcome to Worship

at

St. John's Evangelical Lutheran Church

reconciling in Christ congregation

"Today, this scripture has been
completed among
you."



Third Sunday after Epiphany

January 26, 2025

10:30 am

Interim Pastor: The Rev. Mike Button

Director of Music: Jessica Madow

330 Ferry Street; Easton, PA 18042-4500

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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 “*Psalm 19*” by Benedetto Marcello

*Confession and Forgiveness

P: Blessed be the holy Trinity, † one God, our creator, our protector, our wellspring of life.

C: Amen.

P: Trusting that God receives our words and the meditations of our hearts, let us confess our sin . . .

Merciful God,

C: You speak blessing and compassion into the world. Forgive us for the ways we act with judgment, cruelty, or indifference. We ignore the needs of our neighbors; we resist your call to oppose injustice; we give in to scarcity and fear; we assume the worst about one another. Cleanse us from our faults and release us from their grasp. Show us your loving kindness. Restore our hearts and repair your world, that we may live in Christ’s ways. Amen.

P: God proclaims these words of assurance: “Do not fear, for I have redeemed you. I have called you by name. You are mine.”
In † Christ, you are forgiven. In the Spirit, you are made free.
Refreshed by the waters of mercy, live anew as beloved children of God.

C: Amen.

***Gathering Hymn**

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

***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**

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***Canticle of Praise**

“Glory to God”

- page 99

*Prayer of the Day

A: Let us pray. Blessed Lord God, you have caused the holy scriptures to be written for the nourishment of your people. Grant that we may hear them, read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest them, that, comforted by your promises, we may embrace and forever hold fast to the hope of eternal life, through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

C: Amen

Children's Chat

Word

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

First Reading

Nehemiah 8:1-3, 5-6, 8-10

¹ All the people [of Israel] gathered together into the square before the Water Gate. They told the scribe Ezra to bring the book of the law of Moses, which the Lord had given to Israel. ² Accordingly, the priest Ezra brought the law before the assembly, both men and women and all who could hear with understanding. This was on the first day of the seventh month. ³ He read from it facing the square before the Water Gate from early morning until midday, in the presence of the men and the women and those who could understand; and the ears of all the people were attentive to the book of the law. ⁵ And Ezra opened the book in the sight of all the people, for he was standing above all the people; and when he opened it, all the people stood up. ⁶ Then Ezra blessed the Lord, the great God, and all the people answered, "Amen, Amen," lifting up

their hands. Then they bowed their heads and worshiped the Lord with their faces to the ground. ⁸ So they read from the book, from the law of God, with interpretation. They gave the sense, so that the people understood the reading.

⁹ And Nehemiah, who was the governor, and Ezra the priest and scribe, and the Levites who taught the people said to all the people, “This day is holy to the Lord your God; do not mourn or weep.” For all the people wept when they heard the words of the law.

¹⁰ Then he said to them, “Go your way, eat the fat and drink sweet wine and send portions of them to those for whom nothing is prepared, for this day is holy to our Lord; and do not be grieved, for the joy of the Lord is your strength.”

A: The Word of the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God.

Responsive Reading:

Psalm 19

¹ The heavens declare the glory of God,
and the sky proclaims its maker’s handiwork.

**² One day tells its tale to another,
and one night imparts knowledge to another.**

³ Although they have no words or language,
and their voices are not heard,

**⁴ their sound has gone out into all lands, and their message to
the ends of the world, where God has pitched a tent for the
sun.**

⁵ It comes forth like a bridegroom out of his chamber;
it rejoices like a champion to run its course.

6 It goes forth from the uttermost edge of the heavens and runs about to the end of it again; nothing is hidden from its burning heat.

⁷ The teaching of the Lord is perfect and revives the soul; the testimony of the Lord is sure and gives wisdom to the simple.

8 The statutes of the Lord are just and rejoice the heart; the commandment of the Lord is clear and gives light to the eyes.

⁹ The fear of the Lord is clean and endures forever; the judgments of the Lord are true and righteous altogether.

10 More to be desired are they than gold, more than much fine gold, sweeter far than honey, than honey in the comb.

¹¹ By them also is your servant enlightened, and in keeping them there is great reward.

**12 Who can detect one's own offenses?
Cleanse me from my secret faults.**

¹³ Above all, keep your servant from presumptuous sins; let them not get dominion over me; then shall I be whole and sound, and innocent of a great offense.

**14 Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be acceptable in your sight,
O Lord, my strength and my redeemer.**

Second Reading

1 Corinthians 12:12-31a

¹² For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with

Christ. ¹³ For in the one Spirit we were all baptized into one body—Jews or Greeks, slaves or free—and we were all made to drink of one Spirit.

¹⁴ Indeed, the body does not consist of one member but of many. ¹⁵ If the foot would say, “Because I am not a hand, I do not belong to the body,” that would not make it any less a part of the body. ¹⁶ And if the ear would say, “Because I am not an eye, I do not belong to the body,” that would not make it any less a part of the body. ¹⁷ If the whole body were an eye, where would the hearing be? If the whole body were hearing, where would the sense of smell be? ¹⁸ But as it is, God arranged the members in the body, each one of them, as he chose. ¹⁹ If all were a single member, where would the body be? ²⁰ As it is, there are many members, yet one body. ²¹ The eye cannot say to the hand, “I have no need of you,” nor again the head to the feet, “I have no need of you.” ²² On the contrary, the members of the body that seem to be weaker are indispensable, ²³ and those members of the body that we think less honorable we clothe with greater honor, and our less respectable members are treated with greater respect; ²⁴ whereas our more respectable members do not need this. But God has so arranged the body, giving the greater honor to the inferior member, ²⁵ that there may be no dissension within the body, but the members may have the same care for one another. ²⁶ If one member suffers, all suffer together with it; if one member is honored, all rejoice together with it.

²⁷ Now you are the body of Christ and individually members of it. ²⁸ And God has appointed in the church first apostles, second prophets, third teachers; then deeds of power, then gifts of healing, forms of assistance, forms of leadership, various kinds of tongues. ²⁹ Are all apostles? Are all prophets? Are all teachers? Do all work miracles? ³⁰ Do all possess gifts of healing? Do all speak in tongues? Do all interpret? ^{31a} But strive for the greater gifts.

A: The Word of the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God.

*** Gospel**

Luke 4:14-21

P: The Holy Gospel according to Luke, the 4th chapter.

C: Glory to you, O Lord.

¹⁴ Then Jesus, filled with the power of the Spirit, returned to Galilee, and a report about him spread through all the surrounding country. ¹⁵ He began to teach in their synagogues and was praised by everyone.

¹⁶ When he came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up, he went to the synagogue on the sabbath day, as was his custom. He stood up to read, ¹⁷ and the scroll of the prophet Isaiah was given to him. He unrolled the scroll and found the place where it was written:

¹⁸ “The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to bring good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to let the oppressed go free, ¹⁹ to proclaim the year of the Lord’s favor.”

²⁰ And he rolled up the scroll, gave it back to the attendant, and sat down. The eyes of all in the synagogue were fixed on him. ²¹ Then he began to say to them, “Today this scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing.”

P: The Gospel of the Lord.

C: Praise to you, O Christ.

Sermon – *The Rev. Mike Button*

*Hymn of the Day

ELW # 866 “*We Are Marching in the Light*”

*Apostles’ Creed

C: I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth.

I believe in Jesus Christ, God’s only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried; he descended to the dead.* On the third day he rose again; he ascended into heaven, he is seated at the right hand of the Father, and he will come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

Installation of Leaders in the Congregation

P: The following people have been elected [by the congregation] to positions of leadership. We give thanks for their willingness to serve. In baptism we are welcomed into the body of Christ and sent to share in the mission of God; we rejoice now that these sisters and brothers will lead us in our common life and our mutual mission as a congregation.

A reading from First Corinthians:

There are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit; and there are varieties of services, but the same Lord; and there are varieties of activities, but it is the same God who activates all of them in

everyone. To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good. (*1 Corinthians 12:4-7*)

P: You have been elected to positions of leadership and trust in this congregation. You are to see that the words and deeds of this household of faith bear witness to God, who gathers us into one together with the whole church.

You are to seek to involve all members of this congregation in worship, learning, witness, service, and support, so that the mission of Christ is carried out in this congregation, in the wider church, in this community, and in the whole world.

You are to be faithful in your specific area of serving, that the Spirit who empowers you may be glorified.

You are to be examples of faith active in love, fostering peace, harmony, and mutual understanding in this congregation.

On behalf of your sisters and brothers in Christ, I ask you:
Will you accept and faithfully carry out the duties of the offices to which you have been elected?

Council Member Response: I will, and I ask God to help me.

P: People of God, I ask you: Will you support these, your elected leaders, and will you share in the mutual ministry that Christ has given to all who are baptized?

Congregation: We will, and we ask God to help us.

P: I now declare you installed as officers / council members of this congregation. Almighty God bless you, and direct your days and your deeds in peace, that you may be faithful servants of Christ.

C: Amen.

***Prayers of Intercession**

A: Let us pray. As your word is opened in our midst, we give thanks for all who share scripture: for parents, grandparents, and godparents; teachers and mentors; deacons, pastors, bishops, and scholars. Inspire passion for the stories of faith. God of grace,

C: Hear our prayer.

A: As heavens declare your glory and the sky proclaims your work, we lift our voices in awe of quarks and atoms, vast stars and solar systems. Guide us to speak on behalf of your handiwork. God of grace,

C: Hear our prayer.

A: As Jesus proclaimed life and freedom in his community, energize communities and nations to eliminate poverty, engage in prison ministry and transformative justice, and envision new ways of working together for your promised reign. God of grace,

C: Hear our prayer.

A: As your word and presence revive the soul, accompany all experiencing depression, anxiety, sickness or pain; be a source of strength for all affected by memory loss and their caregivers; draw near to all undergoing medical treatment or surgery or are in need in any way including *those we mention on our prayer list . . . and those we name aloud or in our hearts . . .* God of grace,

C: Hear our prayer.

A: As we are made one body in baptism, strengthen all who serve. Renew and inspire all who use their gifts in this congregation, community, and the world including *fellowship hosts, worship assistants, council, and committee members*. God of grace,

C: Hear our prayer.

Here other intercessions may be offered.

A: As our faith is strengthened by saints who have gone before us, we remember leaders of the early church and beloved friends and family who have died God of grace,

C: Hear our prayer.

A: We entrust our prayers to you, O God, in the sure and certain hope that your promise is revealed among the people.

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 “*Sing, Sing, Sing Alleluia!*” by Joseph M. Martin
Sung by the Wittenberg Choir

*Presentation of Gifts

(Ushers now bring the offering plates forward.)

*Offertory Hymn

ACS# 914 “*Jesus, the Light of the World*” (v. 4)

4 Hail the heav'n-born Prince of peace! Je-sus, the Light of the world;
Hail the Sun of righ-teous-ness! Je-sus, the Light of the world.
Refrain
We'll walk in the light, beau-ti-ful light, come where the dew-drops of mer-cy are bright.
Shine all a-round us by day and by night, Je-sus, the Light of the world.

***Offertory Prayer**

A: Let us pray. God of grace, your love reaches to the heavens, and your abundance to the depths of the seas. Bless what we offer to your service: our gifts, our abilities, and our hearts. Let us overflow with gratitude and generosity, now and always.

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 # 843 ***“Praise the One Who Breaks the Darkness”***

ELW # 496 ***“One Bread, One Body”***

ELW # 494 ***“For the Bread Which You Have Broken”***

***Table Blessing**

*Post Communion Hymn

ACS #984 *“May the God of Hope Go with Us”*

May the God of hope go with us ev - 'ry day,
to a world in need with news of joy and peace.
May the God of jus - tice speed us on our way,
bring - ing light and hope to ev - 'ry land and race.
Pray - ing, let us work for peace; sing - ing, share our
joy with all; work - ing for a world that's new,
faith - ful when we hear Christ's call.

*Prayer after Communion

A: Let us pray. Nourishing God, at this table you have refreshed us with holy gifts of food and drink. Strengthen us for service, and send us out to embody your good news of liberation and healing for the sake of the world. In the name of Christ we pray,

C: Amen.

Sending

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

Announcements

*Blessing

P: The Spirit of the triune God † bless you with joy, anoint you with compassion, and send you in love.

C: **Amen.**

*Sending Hymn

ELW # 551 *“The Spirit Sends Us Forth to Serve”*

*Dismissal

P: Go in peace. Live in hope.

C: **Thanks be to God.**

Postlude *“Siyahamba”* Arr. Robert Buckley Farlee

Thank you to our Worship Volunteers . . .

Worship Assistant–Jim Heck

Ushers – Nancy Ducey / Connie Garr

Reader – Volunteer

Altar Guild – Sue Glenn / Sharon Rabuck

Video Team – Chris Orem

This Week at St. John's January 26th – February 2nd

Today (1/26/25) – Third Sunday after Epiphany, 10:30 am

Today (1/26/25) – Following Worship: Congregational Meeting
& light lunch

Monday (1/27/25) – Choir Rehearsal, 1:00 pm.

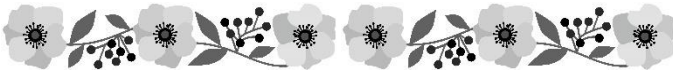
Wednesday (1/29/25) – Bible Study, 11:00 am – Hospitality Room

Sunday (2/2/25) – Sunday School / Adult Forum, 9:00 am

Sunday (2/2/25) – Fourth Sunday after Epiphany, 10:30 am

Week 3, 1/19/25 Attendance - 30

Last Sunday's Envelope / Plate Offering	\$1,079.00
Weekly amount needed to reach our Budget:	\$1,971.00
Year to Date Envelope / Plate Offering:	\$5,909.00
Difference Compared to Budget	(\$4.00)



*Altar Flowers are sponsored today by
Ruth & Brad Thomas –
"To the Glory of God"*

Prayer List: Chuck, Vicki, Clark, Joe, Kara, Christine, Michael, Shelley, Paula, Lois Anne, Carolyn, Charles, Julia, David, Grace, Terry, Jeff, Debbie, Pastor Orem, Peggy, Tony, Arlene, Joan, Karen, Our Homebound Family & Friends, the St. John's Call Committee, Our Future Pastor, and the family and friends of Gerald Weiss

Join us for Prayer Group:
2nd and 4th Wednesdays of the Month
@ 11:00 am in the Hospitality Room

Church News: Our Elevator is Fixed.

Please join us following the Congregational Meeting in the Fellowship Hall for a light lunch hosted by the Membership Committee . . .

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