



December 3, 2023

9:00 a.m.

Second Sunday of Advent, Year B

St. John Ev. Lutheran Church, ELCA

Reverend Maggie Westaby

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CALL TO WORSHIP

Blessed be the Holy Trinity, † One God, who opens the heavens and draws near to us with salvation. **Amen.**

LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT WREATH

Bethlehem Candle & Candle of Peace.

God of Infinite Love,

May all see the Advent wreath as a symbol of your never-ending love. May the wreath be a place to acknowledge the blessings you give to us; the blessings of hope, peace, joy, and love. And on this second Sunday of Advent, we pray specifically for peace. Peace that comes as we prepare the way for the Lord. Peace that can be found even in the wilderness. Peace that Abraham found looking at the night sky. Peace birthed from your Son in holy darkness. **Amen.**

Light One Candle To Watch For Messiah Verse 2.

Light One Candle to Watch for Messiah



- 1 Light one can-dle to watch for Mes-si - ah: let the light ban-ish dark - ness.
- 2 Light two can-dles to watch for Mes-si - ah: let the light ban-ish dark - ness.
- 3 Light three can-dles to watch for Mes-si - ah: let the light ban-ish dark - ness.
- 4 Light four can-dles to watch for Mes-si - ah: let the light ban-ish dark - ness.



He shall bring sal - va - tion to Is - ra - el, God ful - fills the prom - ise.
He shall feed the flock like a shep - herd, gent - ly lead them home - ward.
Lift your heads and lift high the gate - way for the King of glo - ry.
He is com - ing, tell the glad tid - ings. Let your lights be shin - ing!

Text: Wayne L. Wold, b. 1954

Music: TIF IN VELDELE, Yiddish folk tune

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CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

A voice cries in the wilderness, "Prepare the way of the Lord; make God's way clear. Lift up every valley; lower every mountain. For the glory of the Lord shall be revealed." Let us prepare our way. Let us turn to God in repentance and confess our sins.

(Silence is kept for reflection)

God of Peace,

We confess that we have not led lives of holiness. We suffer from impatience, apathy, and greed; we have not been at peace. We repent of these offenses and turn to you in love. Forgive us and lead us. May we learn to prepare your way. Amen.

The grace of God, given to us in Christ Jesus, strengthens us to the end. Hear the good news: in Jesus † Christ you are already and always forgiven. Amen.

On Jordan's Bank the Baptist's Cry

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

that the Lord is nigh; a - wake and heark - en,
way for God with - in, and let us all our
and our great re - ward; with - out your grace we
rise to fall no more; oh, let your face up -
has our free - dom won, whom with the Fa - ther

for he brings glad tid - ings of 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.
on us shine and fill the world with love di - vine.
we a - dore, and Ho - ly Spir - it, ev - er - more.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Loving God,

You sent your prophet John to prepare your way among us, to call us to repentance and make our pathways straight. Stir up your power within our hearts. Teach us how to prepare, and how to share your peace. **Amen.**

READING: Isaiah 40:1-11

Comfort, O comfort my people, says your God.²Speak tenderly to Jerusalem, and cry to her that she has served her term, that her penalty is paid, that she has received from the LORD's hand double for all her sins.³A voice cries out: "In the wilderness prepare the way of the LORD, make straight in the desert a highway for our God.⁴Every valley shall be lifted up, and every mountain and hill be made low; the uneven ground shall become level, and the rough places a plain.⁵Then the glory of the LORD shall be revealed, and all people shall see it together, for the mouth of the LORD has spoken."

⁶A voice says, "Cry out!" And I said, "What shall I cry?" All people are grass, their constancy is like the flower of the field.⁷The grass withers, the flower fades, when the breath of the LORD blows upon it; surely the people are grass.⁸The grass withers, the flower fades; but the word of our God will stand forever.⁹Get you up to a high mountain, O Zion, herald of good tidings; lift up your voice with strength, O Jerusalem, herald of good tidings, lift it up, do not fear; say to the cities of Judah, "Here is your God!"¹⁰See, the Lord GOD comes with might, and his arm rules for him; his reward is with him, and his recompense before him.¹¹He will feed his flock like a shepherd; he will gather the lambs in his arms, and carry them in his bosom, and gently lead the mother sheep.

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

READING: 2 Peter 3:8-15a

⁸Do not ignore this one fact, beloved, that with the Lord one day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years are like one day. ⁹The Lord is not slow about his promise, as some think of slowness, but is patient with you, not wanting any to perish, but all to come to repentance. ¹⁰But the day of the Lord will come like a thief, and then the heavens will pass away with a loud noise, and the elements will be dissolved with fire, and the earth and everything that is done on it will be disclosed.

¹¹Since all these things are to be dissolved in this way, what sort of persons ought you to be in leading lives of holiness and godliness, ¹²waiting for and hastening the coming of the day of God, because of which the heavens will be set ablaze and dissolved, and the elements will melt with fire? ¹³But, in accordance with his promise, we wait for new heavens and a new earth, where righteousness is at home.

¹⁴Therefore, beloved, while you are waiting for these things, strive to be found by him at peace, without spot or blemish; ^{15a}and regard the patience of our Lord as salvation.

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.



Al - le - lu - ia! Lord and Sav - ior: o - pen now your sav - ing word.



Let it burn like fire with - in us; speak un - til our hearts are stirred.



Al - le - lu - ia! Lord, we sing for the good news that you bring.

GOSPEL: Mark 1:1-8

The holy gospel according to Mark.

Glory to you, O Lord.

¹The beginning of the good news of Jesus Christ, the Son of God.²As it is written in the prophet Isaiah, “See, I am sending my messenger ahead of you, who will prepare your way; ³the voice of one crying out in the wilderness: ‘Prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight,’”

⁴John the baptizer appeared in the wilderness, proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. ⁵And people from the whole Judean countryside and all the people of Jerusalem were going out to him, and were baptized by him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins. ⁶Now John was clothed with camel’s hair, with a leather belt around his waist, and he ate locusts and wild honey. ⁷He proclaimed, “The one who is more powerful than I is coming after me; I am not worthy to stoop down and untie the thong of his sandals. ⁸I have baptized you with water; but he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit.”

The gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

SERMON

HOLY BAPTISM

Candidates for baptism, sponsors, and parents gather with the minister at the font. The assembly is seated.

God, who is rich in mercy and love, gives us a new birth into a living hope through the sacrament of baptism. By water and Word God delivers us from sin and death and raises us to new life in Jesus Christ. We are united with all the baptized in the one body of Christ, anointed with the gift of the Holy Spirit, and joined in God's mission for the life of the world...

The presiding minister addresses the assembly:

People of St. John, do you promise to support Josie and pray for her in her new life in Christ?

*Response: **We do.***

PROFESSION OF FAITH

The presiding minister addresses sponsors and parents.

...

The presiding minister addresses sponsors, parents, and assembly.

People of St. John, do you believe in God the Father?

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

Do you believe in Jesus Christ, the Son of God?

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.

Do you believe in God the Holy Spirit?

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.

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

We give you thanks, O God, for in the beginning your Spirit moved over the waters and by your Word you created the world, calling forth life in which you took delight...

Josie June Hein, I baptize you in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.
Amen.

Let us pray...

Josie June Hein, child of God, you have been sealed by the Holy Spirit and marked with the cross of Christ forever. Amen.

Jesus said, I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will have the light of life. Let us welcome the newly baptized.

**We welcome you into the body of Christ and into the mission we share:
join us in giving thanks and praise to God and bearing God's creative and redeeming
word to all the world.**

Borning Cry



- 1 "I was there to hear your born-ing cry, I'll be there when you are old.
- 2 "When you heard the won - der of the Word I was there to cheer you on;
- 3 "In the mid - dle a - ges of your life, not too old, no lon - ger young,



I re - joiced the day you were bap-tized to see your life un - fold.
you were raised to praise the liv - ing Lord, to whom you now be - long.
I'll be there to guide you through the night, com-plete what I've be - gun.



I was there when you were but a child, with a faith to suit you well;
If you find some-one to share your time and you join your hearts as one,
When the eve - ning gent - ly clos - es in and you shut your wea - ry eyes,



in a blaze of light you wan-dered off to find where de-mons dwell."
I'll be there to make your vers - es rhyme from dusk till ris - ing sun."
I'll be there as I have al - ways been, with just one more sur - prise."



- 4 "I was there to hear your born-ing cry, I'll be there when you are old.



I re - joiced the day you were bap-tized to see your life un - fold."

Text: John C. Ylvisaker, b. 1937
Music: WATERLIFE, John C. Ylvisaker
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PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

Respond to “Merciful God,” with “receive our prayer.”

PEACE

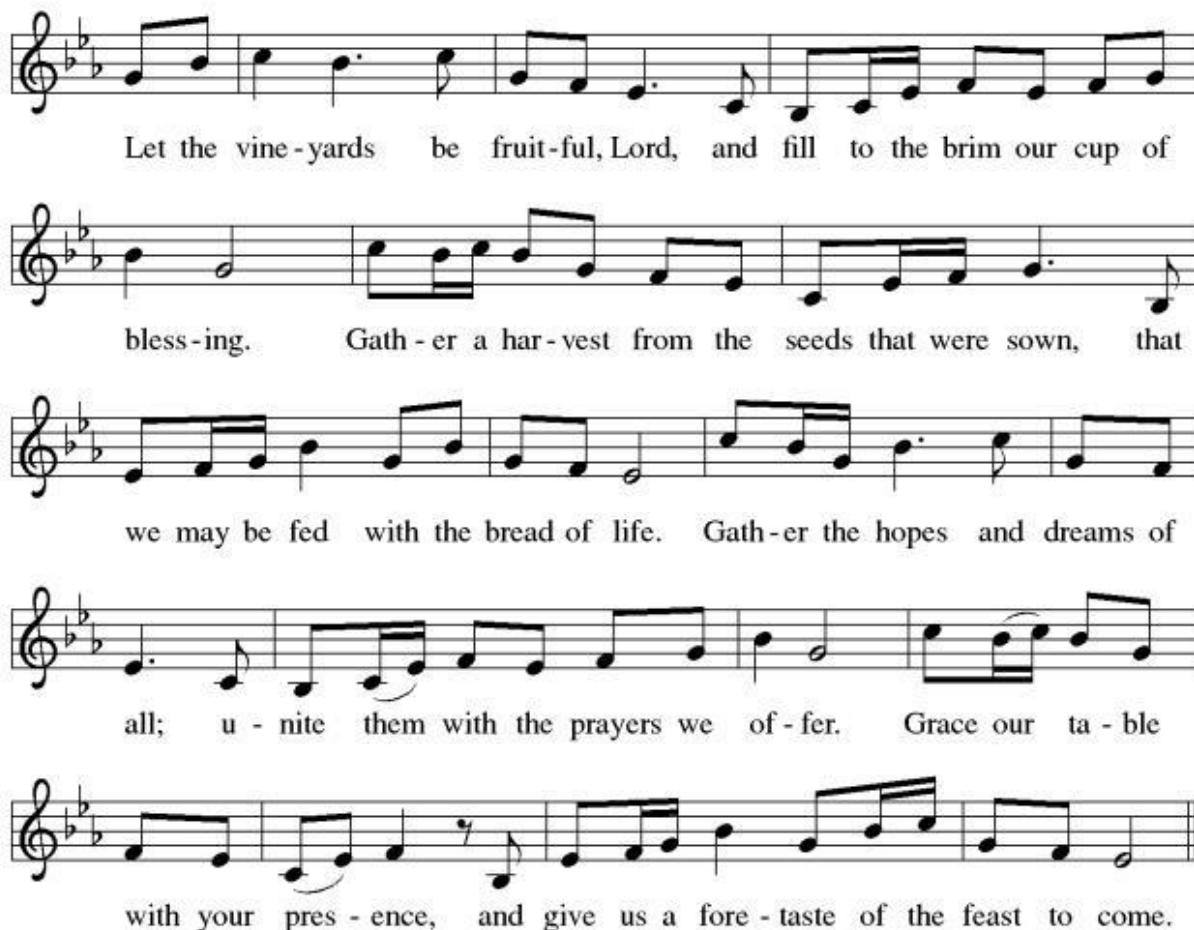
The peace of Christ be with you always.

And also with you.

INVITATION TO THE OFFERING

At this time of year, the abundance of some and the needs of many stands in marked contrast. May Christ’s heart rejoice and the needs of others be tended to, through our offering.

Let the Vineyards Be Fruitful *Offering Song*



Let the vine-yards be fruit-ful, Lord, and fill to the brim our cup of
bless-ing. Gath-er a har-vest from the seeds that were sown, that
we may be fed with the bread of life. Gath-er the hopes and dreams of
all; u-nite them with the prayers we of-fer. Grace our ta-ble
with your pres-ence, and give us a fore-taste of the feast to come.

Text: John W. Arthur, 1922-1980

Music: Ronald A. Nelson, b. 1927

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OFFERING PRAYER

God of all goodness, by your merciful hand abundance springs up from the earth. Receive and bless these gifts. May they be a sign of your steadfast love and faithfulness for all people, through Jesus Christ our Savior. **Amen.**

GREAT THANKSGIVING DIALOGUE

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

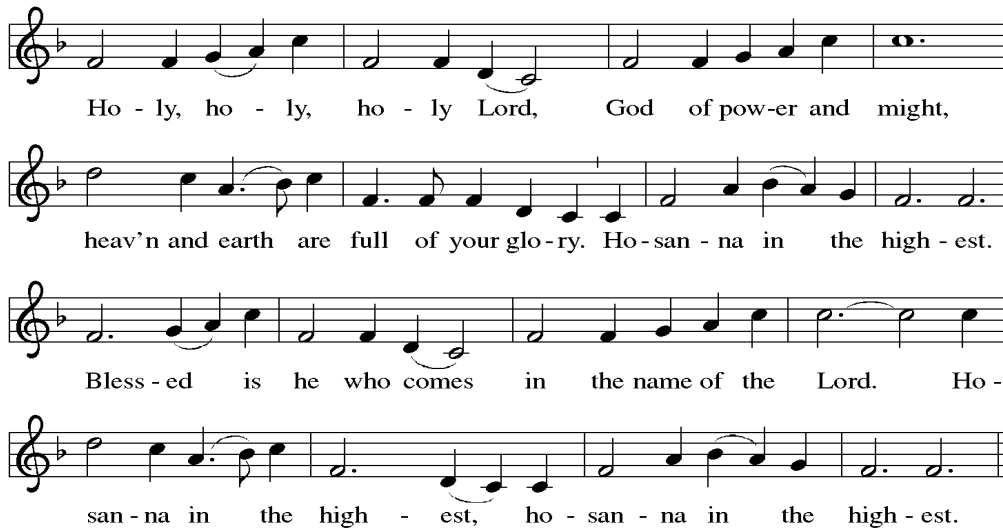
We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

PREFACE

It is indeed right, our duty and our joy, that we should at all times and in all places give thanks and praise to you, almighty and merciful God, through our Savior Jesus Christ; who on this day overcame death and the grave, and by his glorious resurrection opened to us the way of everlasting life. And so, with all the choirs of angels, with the church on earth and the hosts of heaven, we praise your name and join their unending hymn:



Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of pow-er and might,
heav'n 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

LORD'S PRAYER

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.

INVITATION TO COMMUNION

As we journey through this sacred season of Advent, a time of anticipation and reflection, we gather today in the spirit of peace. Peace that is made flesh in Christ, given and shed for you. Come, taste and see God's peace.



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



us. Lamb of God, you take a-way the sin of the world; have



mer-cy on us. Lamb of God, you take a-way the

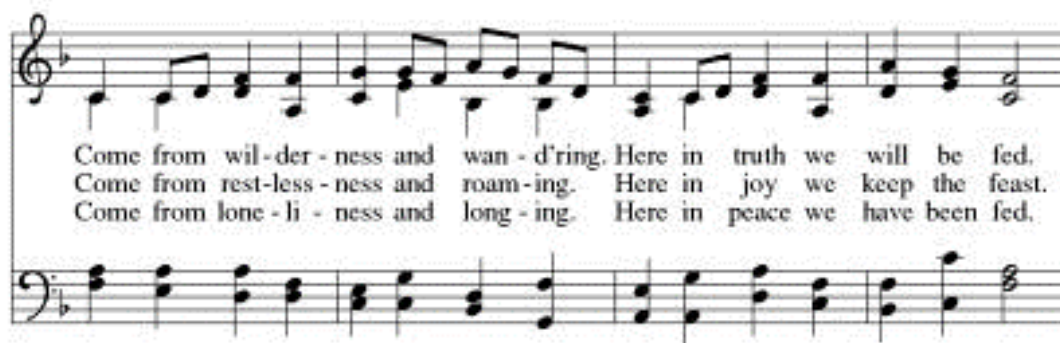


sin of the world; grant us peace, grant us peace.

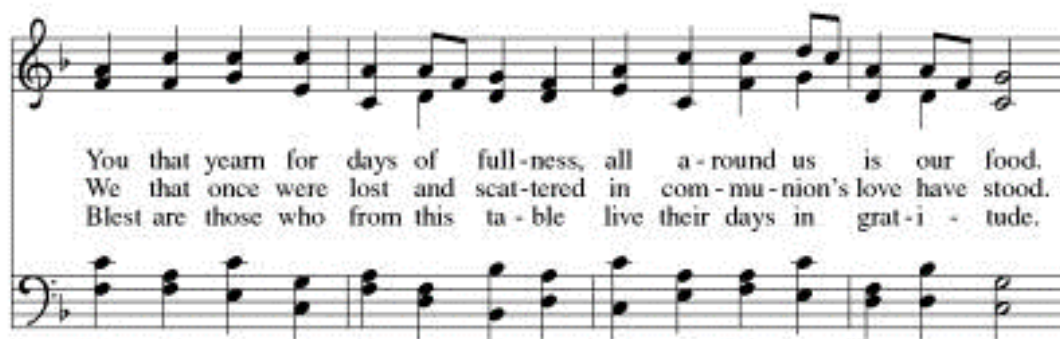
All Who Hunger, Gather Gladly



1 All who hun-ger, gath-er glad-ly; ho-ly man-na is our bread.
2 All who hun-ger, nev-er strang-ers; seek-er, be a wel-come guest.
3 All who hun-ger, sing to- geth-er, Je- sus Christ is liv- ing bread.



Come from wil-der-ness and wan-d'ring. Here in truth we will be fed.
Come from rest-less-ness and roam-ing. Here in joy we keep the feast.
Come from lone-li-ness and long-ing. Here in peace we have been fed.



You that yearn for days of full-ness, all a-round us is our food.
We that once were lost and scat-tered in com-mu-nion's love have stood.
Blest are those who from this ta-ble live their days in grat-i-tude.



Taste and see the grace e-ter-nal. Taste and see that God is good.
Taste and see the grace e-ter-nal. Taste and see that God is good.
Taste and see the grace e-ter-nal. Taste and see that God is good.

Text: Sylvia G. Dunstan, 1955–1993

Music: HOLY MANNA, W. Moore, *Columbia Harmonie*, 1825; arr. hymnal version

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Savior, like a Shepherd Lead Us



1 Sav-ior like a shep-herd lead us; much we need your ten - der care.
 2 We are yours; in love be - friend us, be the guard-ian of our way;
 3 You have prom-ised to re - ceive us, poor and sin - ful though we be;
 4 Ear - ly let us seek your fa - vor, ear - ly let us do your will;



In your pleas-ant pas-tures feed us, for our use your fold pre-pare.
 keep your flock, from sin de - fend us, seek us when we go a - stray.
 you have mer - cy to re - lieve us, grace to cleanse, and pow'r to free.
 bless - ed Lord and on - ly Sav - ior, with your love our spir - its fill.



Bless-ed Je - sus, bless-ed Je - sus, you have bought us; we are yours.
 Bless-ed Je - sus, bless-ed Je - sus, hear us chil - dren when we pray.
 Bless-ed Je - sus, bless-ed Je - sus, ear - ly let us turn to you.
 Bless-ed Je - sus, bless-ed Je - sus, you have loved us, love us still.



Bless-ed Je - sus, bless-ed Je - sus, you have bought us; we are yours.
 Bless-ed Je - sus, bless-ed Je - sus, hear us chil - dren when we pray.
 Bless-ed Je - sus, bless-ed Je - sus, ear - ly let us turn to you.
 Bless-ed Je - sus, bless-ed Je - sus, you have loved us, love us still.

Text: attr. Dorothy A. Thrupp, 1779–1847
 Music: BRADBURY, William B. Bradbury, 1816–1868

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Faithful God,

In this meal you shared with us your mercy, bringing heaven to earth in the body and blood of Christ. As we wait for the day when all your promises will be fulfilled, sustain us and strengthen us by this holy mystery. Guide us toward your promised future, coming to birth in Jesus Christ our Savior. **Amen.**

ANNOUNCEMENTS

BLESSING

May the peace of God be in your heart,

May the grace of God be in your words,

May the love of God be in your hands,

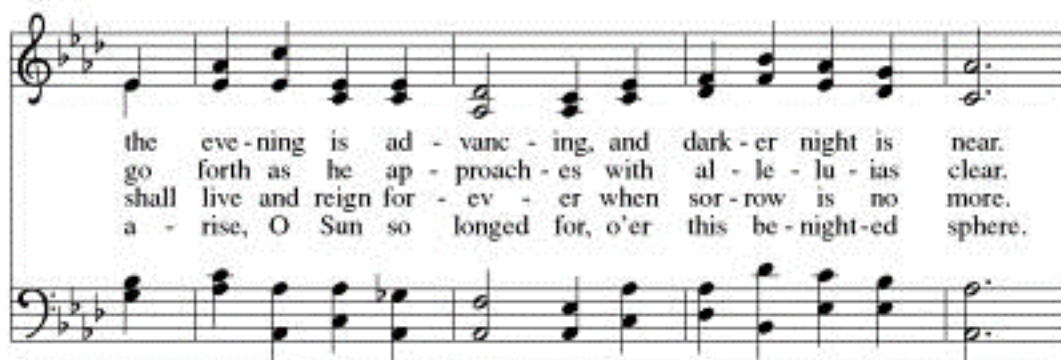
May the joy of God be in your soul, and in the song that your life sings.

In the name of the Father, † Son, and Holy Spirit. **Amen**

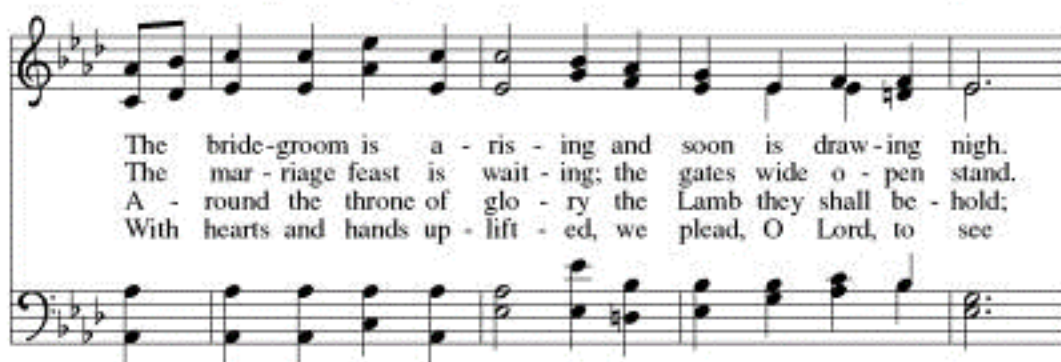
Rejoice, Rejoice, Believers



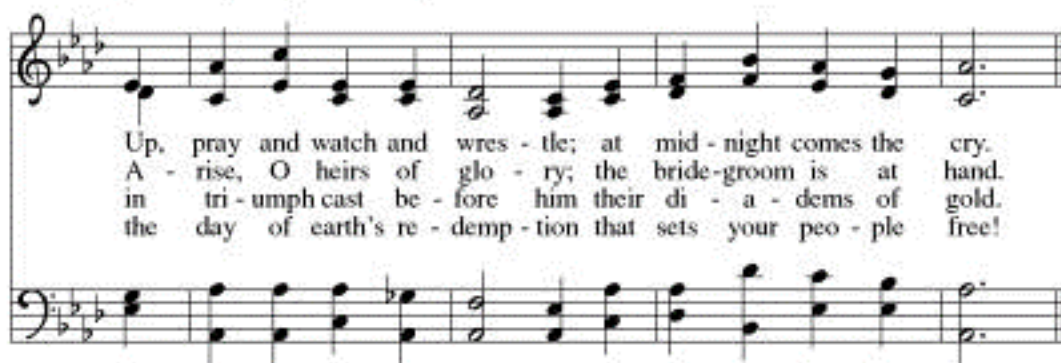
1 Re - joice, re - joice, be - liev - ers, and let your lights ap - pear;
 2 The watch - ers on the moun - tain pro - claim the bride - groom near;
 3 The saints, who here in pa - tience their cross and suf - f'ings bore,
 4 Our hope and ex - pec - ta - tion, O Je - sus, now ap - pear;



the eve - ning is ad - vanc - ing, and dark - er night is near.
 go forth as he ap - proach - es with al - le - lu - ias clear.
 shall live and reign for - ev - er when sor - row is no more.
 a - rise, O Sun so longed for, o'er this be - night - ed sphere.



The bride - groom is a - ris - ing and soon is draw - ing nigh.
 The mar - riage feast is wait - ing; the gates wide o - pen stand.
 A - round the throne of glo - ry the Lamb they shall be - hold;
 With hearts and hands up - lift - ed, we plead, O Lord, to see



Up, pray and watch and wres - tle; at mid - night comes the cry.
 A - rise, O heirs of glo - ry; the bride - groom is at hand.
 in tri - umph cast be - fore him their di - a - dems of gold.
 the day of earth's re - demp - tion that sets your peo - ple free!

Text: Laurentius Laurenti, 1660-1722; tr. Sarah B. Findlater, 1823-1907
 Music: HAF TRONES LAMPA FÄRDIG, Swedish folk tune

DISMISSAL

Go in peace. God is at work in you.

Thanks be to God.

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Welcome to all! The prophet Isaiah and John the Baptist call through the ages: “Prepare the way of the Lord!” This second Sunday of Advent we gather to do just that. Welcome.

Shepherding God, thank you for feeding your flock with love, gathering us lambs in your arms and carrying us close to your heart. (See Isaiah 40:11.)

Please remember to silence pagers and cell phones during services.

To those who are visiting: Welcome to St. John and thank you for joining us! You are welcome to sign our registry in the narthex. May God bless you today and all days.

Reminder! If you are in need of Pastoral care, please contact St. John’s at (715) 675-6950

Holy Communion is celebrated every Sunday. All are welcome to the Lord’s Supper.

Food Basket. Each week you are invited to bring non-perishable grocery items to be given to a local food pantry. Place your gift in the *Food Basket* next to the main entrance.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

2024 Time & Talent sheet is ready for you to select area(s) that you would like to help share your time and talent with your church! There are so many options, and the wonderful thing is that most have very little time investment for you, but the benefit is great to our church! Please take a moment to look over the Time & Talent sheet, it is divided into different areas of service, with the council chairperson’s contact info listed, for you to reach out to with any questions you may have. Please fill out and return your sheet in the offering plate on any Sunday, leave in Mary’s (secretaries) mailbox, or even call / email me and we’ll get you signed up! Please take time to fill out a Time & Talent sheet, even if you already serve in areas of the church. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact Lane Bahr.

St. John Quilting Wishlist. Left over fabric or never used fabric, light weight denim, cotton or flannel sheets, pillow cases, cotton curtains (unlined), cotton shower curtains. If you are interested, come join us! You can also sew a quilt top from home. Size needed is 60 x 80. They do not need to be fancy. Thank you!

Advent Resources Available. ELCA Advent Devotionals & Advent Calendars are in the Narthex. If you are interested in Kate Bowler’s Advent Devotional, see Pastor Maggie.

Men’s Breakfast. Pastor Will from Trinity in Stettin and St. Peter’s in Marathon has invited all men from St. John to meet the second Saturday of the month at 9 a.m. At LC Restaurant, in Marathon (Formerly the Village Inn).

Tuesday, December 12 at 5:00 p.m. St. John’s Sisterhood Ladies Christmas Gathering. Please consider joining the Sisterhood crew for our annual Christmas gathering at 2510 Restaurant. “Happy Hour” starts at 5:00 p.m. with dinner to follow at 6:00 p.m. As per tradition, we will be collecting non-perishable items for the Women’s Community (toiletries, toothpaste, shampoo/conditioner, etc.) and holding our annual white elephant gift exchange... so start looking in those storage rooms and basements (this exchange will be held after dinner – don’t forget to wrap your ‘gift’!). A sign-up sheet and additional information are located in the Narthex.

Saturday, December 16 9:30-10:30 a.m. Dress Rehearsal for Children’s Christmas Program

Sunday, December 17 worship is at 10:00 a.m. for our Children’s Christmas Program! Potluck to follow!
Bring an appetizer or dessert to share.

Monday, December 18 at 6:30 p.m. Blue Christmas. A prayerfully cultivated service for those who have lost loved ones, for those who find the holidays to be a lonely time, and for those who would like to spend more time in prayer. This service will have candle lighting, music, prayers, and a sermon. All are welcome.

Sunday, December 24. Christmas Eve Worship will be at 4:00 & 6:30 only. We will not have a 9:00 a.m. Worship Service.

Wednesday, December 27 at 6:00 p.m. Christmas Pizza & PJ Party. Pizza served at 6, "Mickey's Christmas Carol" and "A Muppet Family Christmas" from 6:30-8. Kids are welcome to bring a friend!

Live Streaming and Photography Notice. When you enter a St. John Lutheran Church service or event, you will be entering an area where photography, video and audio recording or live streaming may occur. If you prefer not to be recognized on camera, the back row inside the church is not within viewing distance of a camera and communion will typically be only on a wide shot where it may be difficult to recognize congregants. Parents, please note our children's sermons are being recorded and live streamed. If you do not want your child to be recognized on camera, please refrain from having them participate.

Coming This Week @ St. John December 3 – December 10

Today

- 9:00 a.m. Worship
- 10:15 a.m. Sunday School/Christmas Program Practice
- 3:30 p.m. Community Dinner

December 5

- 8:30 a.m. Quilting
- 9:00 a.m. Pr. Maggie @ Pr. Meeting

December 6

- 6:30 p.m. Confirmation

December 10

- 9:00 a.m. Worship
- 10:15 a.m. Sunday School/Christmas Program Practice