



December 28, 2025

9:00 a.m.

**First Sunday of Christmas,
Lessons, Carols & Baptism Service**

St. John Ev. Lutheran Church, ELCA

Reverend Maggie Westaby

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CALL TO WORSHIP

God is in our joy.

God is in this room.

We have reason to celebrate.

We have a reason to sing.

Thanks be to God for the bright hope of this day.

GATHERING HYMN

Joy to the World



1 Joy to the world, the Lord is come! Let earth re -
2 Joy to the earth, the Sav - ior reigns! Let all their
3 No more let sin and sor - row grow nor thorns in -
4 He rules the world with truth and grace and makes the



ceive her king; let ev - 'ry heart pre - pare him
songs em - ploy, while fields and floods, rocks, hills, and
fest the ground; he comes to make his bless - ings
na - tions prove the glo - ries of his righ - teous -



room and heav'n and na - ture sing, and heav'n and na - ture
plains re - peat the sound - ing joy, re - peat the sound - ing
flow far as the curse is found, far as the curse is
ness and won - ders of his love, and won - ders of his



sing, and heav'n, and heav'n and na - ture sing.
joy, re - peat, re - peat the sound - ing joy.
found, far as, far as the curse is found.
love, and won - ders, won - ders of his love.

Text: Isaac Watts, 1674–1748

Music: ANTIOCH, English melody, 18th cent.; arr. Lowell Mason, 1792–1872

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

One of the most inherently joyful and beautiful moments in worship comes through the moment of confession. For when we are honest with God in the prayer of confession, we open ourselves up to receive God's grace and mercy. And that gift—that grace—is full to the brim with good news! So join me in this prayer of confession, not out of shame or guilt, but because there is a joy on the other side of this prayer that will take your breath away. Let us pray together. Joyful God,

You told us that in order to enter the kingdom of heaven, we must be like children. Did you mean that like children, we must practice unhindered joy? Did you mean that like children, we should lean into laughter, release our cynicism, and open ourselves to delight? In a world as broken and battered as ours, we admit, this often seems easier said than done. Forgive us, patient God, for the moments when we are so focused on the bad that we miss the good. Forgive us for hearing the nativity story and staying in our seats instead of jumping for joy. We know that even now you are sowing delight in our lives. Open our hearts up to it. With gratitude we pray, amen.

Siblings in Christ, hear and believe the good news of the Gospel: We are seen. We are loved. We are forgiven. That is news worth celebrating! That is news that should make us want to cheer, laugh, cry with relief, dance, & sing all at the same time! And so let us sing for joy, joining the choir of angels as we sing our next hymn:

Angels We Have Heard on High



- 1 An - gels we have heard on high, sweet - ly sing - ing o'er the plains,
- 2 Shep - herds, why this ju - bi - lee? Why your joy - ous strains pro - long?
- 3 Come to Beth - le - hem and see him whose birth the an - gels sing;



and the moun - tains in re - ply, ech - o - ing their joy - ous strains.
What the glad - some tid - ings be which in - spire your heav'n - ly song?
come, a - dore on bend - ed knee Christ the Lord, the new - born king.



Text: French carol; tr. H. F. Hemy, *The Crown of Jesus Music*, 1864
Music: GLORIA, French carol

PRAYER OF THE DAY

God of angel choruses and contagious laughter,
We know that you speak to us in the quiet. We know that when we bow our heads and fall to our knees, you are there, hovering close, calling our names. However, we also trust that when we throw our heads back in laughter, when we dance and clap with joy, when we skip and sing with gratitude, that even there, you are speaking. So on this Sunday morning we pray: open our ears and hearts to hear what it is that you are saying. Meet us in this joy. Meet us in this delight. Meet us in the hope of this Christmas season and reveal the wisdom we need to hear today. With hearts full of gratitude, we come to you. We laugh. We listen. We pray. **Amen.**

LESSON ONE – *LISTEN FOR JOY:*

Matthew 2:10 & Psalm 148

When they saw that the star had stopped, they were overwhelmed with joy. Praise the Lord! Praise the Lord from the heavens; praise God in the heights!
Praise God, and all God's angels. Praise God, sun and moon; praise God, all you shining stars!

Praise to the highest heavens and waters above the heavens! Let all praise the name of the Lord, for God commanded and they were created.

God established them forever and ever; God fixed their bounds, which cannot be passed.

Praise the Lord from the earth, you sea monsters and all deeps, fire and hail, snow and frost, stormy wind fulfilling his command!

Mountains and all hills, fruit trees and all cedars! Wild animals and all cattle, creeping things and flying birds!

Kings of the earth and all peoples, princes and all rulers of the earth! Young men and women alike, old and young together!

Let them praise the name of the Lord, for God's name alone is exalted; God's glory is above earth and heaven.

Praise for all God's faithful people. Praise the Lord!

HYMN

O, Come, All Ye Faithful



1 O come, all ye faith - ful, joy - ful and tri - um - phant! O
2 The high - est, most ho - ly, light of light e - ter - nal,
3 Sing, choirs of an - gels, sing in ex - ul - ta - tion,
4 Yea, Lord, we greet thee, born this hap - py morn - ing;



come ye, O come ye to Beth - le - hem;
born of a vir - gin, a mor - tal he comes;
sing, all ye cit - i - zens of heav - en a - bove!
Je - sus, to thee be . . . glo - ry giv'n!



come and be - hold him, born the king of an - gels:
Son of the Fa - ther now in flesh ap - pear - ing!
Glo - ry to God . . . in . . . the . . . high - est:
Word of the Fa - ther, now in flesh ap - pear - ing:

Refrain



Ve - ni - te a - do - re - mus, ve - ni - te a - do - re - mus,
O come, let us a - dore him, O come, let us a - dore him,



ve - ni - te a - do - re - mus Do - mi - num.
O come, let us a - dore him, Christ the Lord!

Text: attr. John Francis Wade, 1711–1786; tr. Frederick Oakeley, 1802–1880, sts. 1, 3–4; tr. unknown, st. 2
Music: ADESTE FIDELES, attr. John Francis Wade

LESSON TWO – *LISTEN FOR JOY:*

Psalm 126:1-3; Isaiah 55:12-13

When the Lord restored the fortunes of Zion, we were like those who dream. Then our mouth was filled with laughter and our tongue with shouts of joy; then it was said among the nations, “The Lord has done great things for them.” The Lord has done great things for us, and we rejoiced. For you shall go out in joy and be led back in peace; the mountains and the hills before you shall burst into song, and all the trees of the field shall clap their hands. Instead of the thorn shall come up the cypress; instead of the brier shall come up the myrtle, and it shall be to the Lord for a memorial, for an everlasting sign that shall not be cut off.

HYMN

Hark! The Herald Angels Sing



1 Hark! The her - ald an - gels sing, "Glo - ry to the new - born king;
2 Christ, by high - est heav'n a - dored, Christ, the ev - er - last - ing Lord,
3 Hail the heav'n - born Prince of peace! Hail the Sun of righ - teous - ness!



peace on earth, and mer - cy mild, God and sin - ners rec - on - ciled."
late in time be - hold him come, off - spring of a vir - gin's womb.
Light and life to all he brings, ris'n with heal - ing in his wings.



Joy - ful, all you na - tions, rise; join the tri - umph of the skies;
Veiled in flesh the God - head see! Hail, in - car - nate de - i - ty!
Mild he lays his glo - ry by, born that we no more may die,



with an - gel - ic hosts pro - claim, "Christ is born in Beth - le - hem!"
Pleased as man with us to dwell, Je - sus, our Em - man - u - el!
born to raise each child of earth, born to give us sec - ond birth.



Hark! The her - ald an - gels sing, "Glo - ry to the new - born king!"

Text: Charles Wesley, 1707–1788, alt.

Music: MENDELSSOHN, Felix Mendelssohn, 1809–1847; arr. William H. Cummings, 1831–1915

LESSON THREE – *LISTEN FOR JOY:*

Romans 12:12 & Jeremiah 29:11-13

Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, and faithful in prayer. For surely I know the plans I have for you, says the Lord, plans to prosper you and not for harm, to give you a future with hope. Then when you call upon me and come and pray to me, I will hear you. When you search for me, you will find me; if you seek me with all your heart.

BAPTISM MESSAGE

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...

The presiding minister addresses the assembly:

People of God, do you promise to support Chloe 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 God, 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. Amen.

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 & praise...

BAPTISM

PRESENTATION OF CANDLE TO SPONSORS

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.

BAPTISM HYMN

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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PEACE

As we heard in our third lesson from Isaiah, we shall go out in joy and be led back in peace. This is the good news of Christ. The good news that became flesh and lived among us. The good news that brings us hope, peace, joy, and love – not only during the season of Christmas, but always. As a reminder of this good news, and as a reminder of this peace, let us share our peace with one another. May the peace of Christ be with you always.

And also with you.

INVITATION TO THE OFFERING

Let us offer our gifts today as a response to God's good news of great joy for all people.

<https://secure.myvanco.com/L-ZEVQ/home>

Give Thanks

Give thanks with a grate - ful heart, give thanks to the Ho - ly One,
give thanks be - cause he's giv - en Je - sus Christ, his Son.

Give thanks with a grate - ful heart, give thanks to the Ho - ly One,
give thanks be - cause he's giv - en Je - sus Christ, his Son.

And now let the weak say, "I am strong," let the poor say, "I am
rich," be - cause of what the Lord has done for us. And
now let the weak say, "I am strong," let the poor say, "I am
rich," be - cause of what the Lord has done for us. Give thanks!

Text: Henry Smith

Music: GIVE THANKS, Henry Smith

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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 PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

With-us God, we live in a fragile world. If we're honest, we come to this table today with the taste of uncertainty on our tongues. We come carrying our anxiety. We come asking for guidance. We come filled with all of life's "what-ifs." But you do not disregard our fear. You do not brush it under the rug or call us foolish. You do not ignore the realities in front of us. Instead, you meet us here. You remind us that we are not alone. You surround us with people who love us. You show us where we are strong. You walk beside us. You give us a new song to sing. As we come to this table, pour out your Spirit on this bread and cup. Remind us that even in an uncertain world, you are on the move. Living even here, in the Words that Jesus said.

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 & ever. Amen.

INVITATION TO COMMUNION

God meets us in in the bread and wine, but that is not the only place. God meets us in the night—before the sun rises, before there are answers, before there is closure. God meets us in the light—where joy is effervescent, where laughter is contagious, where icicles shimmer in frigid sunbeams. God meets us in between—in falling snow where sky and earth touch, where winter forests lean into frozen fields, on the edge of faith. This is why good news is louder than fear; God meets us everywhere. Here hope takes on flesh in bread and wine. Come, taste and see this good news, given and shed for you.

LAMB OF GOD (page 154)

Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world; have mercy on us. Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world; have mercy on us. Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world; grant us peace, grant us peace.

COMMUNION HYMNS

What Child Is This



- 1 What child is this, who, laid to rest, on Mar - y's lap is sleep - ing?
- 2 Why lies he in such mean es - tate where ox and ass are feed - ing?
- 3 So bring him in - cense, gold, and myrrh; come, peas - ant, king, to own him.



Whom an - gels greet with an - thems sweet while shep - herds watch are keep - ing?
Good Chris - tian, fear; for sin - ners here the si - lent Word is plead - ing.
The King of kings sal - va - tion brings; let lov - ing hearts en - throne him.



This, this is Christ the king, whom shep - herds guard and an - gels sing;
Nails, spear shall pierce him through, the cross be borne for me, for you;
Raise, raise the song on high, the vir - gin sings her lul - la - by;



haste, haste to bring him laud, the babe, the son of Mar - y!
hail, hail the Word made flesh, the babe, the son of Mar - y!
joy, joy, for Christ is born, the babe, the son of Mar - y!

Text: William C. Dix, 1837-1898

Music: GREENSLEEVES, English ballad, 16th cent.

Away in a Manger



1 A - way in a man - ger, no crib for his bed, the lit - tle Lord
2 The cat - tle are low - ing; the ba - by a - wakes, but lit - tle Lord
3 Be near me, Lord Je - sus; I ask you to stay close by me for -



Je - sus laid down his sweet head; the stars in the bright sky looked
Je - sus, no cry - ing he makes. I love you, Lord Je - sus; look
ev - er and love me, I pray. Bless all the dear chil - dren in



down where he lay, the lit - tle Lord Je - sus a - sleep on the hay.
down from the sky and stay by my cra - dle till morn - ing is nigh.
your ten - der care and fit us for heav - en, to live with you there.

Text: North American, 19th cent.

Music: AWAY IN A MANGER, James R. Murray, 1841–1905

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

Praise God, from whom all blessings flow!

Praise God, all creatures here below!

You are the shepherds telling the story.

We tell it in the streets and across the land.

You are the wise ones worshiping with thanksgiving.

We worship with gifts of song and service, talents and treasures.

You are the angels announcing peace.

We live with joy and go now in peace.

Almighty God, Father, † Son, and Holy Spirit, bless you now and forever.

Amen.

SENDING HYMN

Good Christian Friends, Rejoice



- 1 Good Chris - tian friends, re - joice with heart and soul and voice;
- 2 Good Chris - tian friends, re - joice with heart and soul and voice;
- 3 Good Chris - tian friends, re - joice with heart and soul and voice;



give ye heed to what we say: Je - sus Christ is born to - day;
now ye hear of end - less bliss: Je - sus Christ was born for this!
now ye need not fear the grave; Je - sus Christ was born to save!



ox and ass be - fore him bow, and he is in the man - ger now.
He has o - pened heav - en's door, and we are blest for - ev - er - more.
Calls you one and calls you all to gain the ev - er - last - ing hall.



Christ is born to - day! Christ is born to - day!
Christ was born for this! Christ was born for this!
Christ was born to save! Christ was born to save!

Text: Medieval Latin carol; tr. John Mason Neale, 1818–1866
Music: IN DULCI JUBILO, German carol, 14th cent.

DISMISSAL Go in joy. God is at work in you. **Thanks be to God.**

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Thank You, Louie Reissman for the beautiful Christmas Tree!



Welcome to all! Please remember to silence pagers and cell phones.

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.

Holy Communion is celebrated every Sunday. All are welcome to Christ's Table.

Reminder! If you are in need of Pastoral care, please contact St. John (715) 675-6950
If you or a loved one is in the hospital and would like a visit from Pastor Maggie, please contact St. John.

Baptism - Today we celebrate the Baptism of Chloe Margaret Dellenbach. She is the daughter of Michael & Kimberly Dellenbach. Chloe was born on December 28th, 2023. Chloe's sponsors are Kelly Meverden and Daniel Dellenbach. May God's blessings be with Chloe throughout her life.

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 *Shopping Cart* next to the main entrance.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Friday, January 2nd 5:00 p.m. – 10:00 p.m. Winter Youth Night for all middle & high school students! Pizza dinner at 5:00 p.m. followed by lots of fun: Broomball Outside (bring boots & warm clothes), Church Scavenger Hunt, Taylor Swift vs Lamentations Trivia, Minute-To-Win-It Games, Ice Cream Social, Movie vs Gaming vs Board Games!

Noisy offering! The 2nd Sunday of the month! Next Noisy offering:

Sunday, January 11th bring your coins (bills also accepted 😊).

Money will be raised and donated quarterly. This noisy offering will go to:
Community Dinners for the Houseless.

Sunday, January 11 at 10:15 a.m. Town Hall meeting - Meeting to discuss name change.

Monday, January 12th at 6:30 p.m. Adult Study will discuss Chapters 9:17 – 14 of the Gospel of Luke.

Monday, January 26th at 6:30 Pastor Maggie's Book Club will discuss *Lessons in Chemistry* by Bonnie Garmus.

Kwik Trip Gift Cards Sign-up in the Fellowship Hall or on our website! Help support St. John when buying groceries, gas, or getting your car washed at Kwik Trip! <https://stjohnwausau.org/fundraising/>

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 28th – January 4th

Today - Sunday, December 28th

9:00 a.m. Worship
No Sunday School

Tuesday, December 30th

9:00 a.m. Pastors Meeting

Wednesday, December 31st

No Quilters Meeting
No Confirmation Class

Thursday, January 1st

Church Closed – Happy New Year

Sunday, January 4th

9:00 a.m. Worship
No Sunday School

11:30 am Bells Practice