

DECEMBER 14, 2025

THE WEEKLY WORD

ST. JOHN'S LUTHERAN CHURCH & SCHOOL



MEDITATION

Matthew 11:2-15

Chances are, you have found yourself in a dark place, unsure of where you need to go or where to find something important, like your phone or light switch. In those moments, all that matters is finding some sort of light. But sometimes, when we turn on the lights, we do not like what we see; other times, we are surprised by what we find. But whatever we may find, when we put light on something, it reveals the truth to us. Sometimes, though, we do not like the light. After all, bright lights hurt our eyes; sometimes it is easier to live in darkness than to see the reality of the situation. How many times have we heard something wheeze or squeal in our cars and just turned up the radio so as not to deal with it? It is easier to live in darkness sometimes than face costly realities.

Isaiah 9:2 tells us, "The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who dwelt in a land of deep darkness, on them has light shone." This light, first coming from the preaching of John the Baptist and later Jesus, was not always easy to hear. This teaching challenged old ways of thinking and forced people to confront the darkness within themselves. This love of darkness led to the execution of John the Baptist and later Jesus Himself.

But despite how hard it is to hear, this light of God's truth and hope changes lives. John 1:12-13 reads, "But to all who did receive him, who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God, who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God." This light of God's truth brings life, showing us our sins, but also showing us the hope we have in the darkness, Jesus.

As we prepare to welcome Jesus, we look at those who prepared the way and shone the light of God's truth into a dark world. And even as we hear that today, we hear our call to do the same, shine the light of Jesus into the darkest recesses of our lives and world, and see the transformation that only Christ can bring.

PRAYER

Almighty God, we thank you for sending Jesus into our dark world. Shine this light through Your Word into the darkest corners of my life and allow me to carry this light to those still dwelling in darkness so that they too may have the hope of the light of the world, Jesus the Christ. Amen.

Pastor Barry

THIS WEEK

Monday - December 15
Men's Bible Study 6:30am
Monday Night Meal 5:15pm
AA 7:00pm

Tuesday - December 16
Executive Council Meeting 6:30pm

Wednesday - December 17
Moms in the Word 9:30am
Last Midweek Advent Worship 4:15/6:30pm
MOP Choir Rehearsal 7:00pm
Contemporary Music Rehearsal 8:15pm

Thursday - December 18
K-8th Grade Christmas Service 6:30pm

Friday - December 19
AA 6:30pm

Saturday - December 20
Bible and Bacon Men's Bible Study 6:30am

Sunday - December 21
Worship 8:00/9:30/10:45am
NO EDUCATION HOUR



THE WEEKLY WORD

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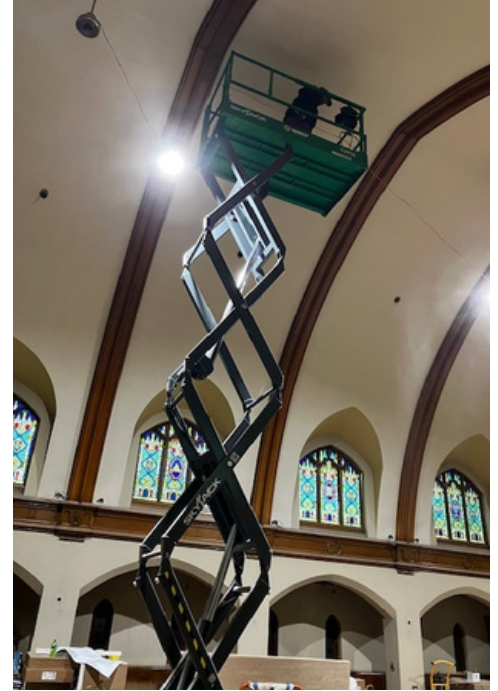
Construction Update



The wood flooring sub-contractor has removed the edge pieces of the existing maple flooring at the front of the Sanctuary, to tooth-in the additional maple flooring.



Installation of the balcony railing extension is underway. This extension is lower and as open as possible to allow better visibility. The metal portion of the extension will be painted a darker bronze tone and an oak cap will be added.



The fire sprinkler contractor has started cutting holes in the plaster ceiling for the sprinkler heads. These heads will be recessed and covered with flush caps.

Celebrating Christ's Birth in Word & Song

Sunday, December 7, was a wonderful day at St. John's! Our youngest students shared the Christmas story during the late service, and that evening our school and adult choirs lifted their voices at Vespers through music and Scripture. We are grateful for the many talents of those who helped proclaim the good news of Jesus' birth.



St. John's Giving Tree

Join us as we partner with Mi CASA to bless 10 local families this Christmas! Pick a stocking from the Giving Tree outside the church office, and purchase gifts for the individual listed on it. Gift ideas are suggestions (choose what you feel led to give). Please return all **unwrapped gifts** (with the stocking/tag attached) to the church and place them under the Giving Tree by **December 14th**. Any gift cards may be turned in at the church office.

Christmas Poinsettias

Help us celebrate Christ's birth by donating the cost of a poinsettia (\$15) to help decorate our Christmas services. Envelopes to purchase the plants can be found at the information center. The deadline to purchase is December 14th. The poinsettias may be taken home for your personal enjoyment after the late service on Sunday, January 4th.

Monday Night Meal Fundraiser at Culver's

Join us at Culver's in Chaska on **Tuesday, December 16, from 5-8pm!** During this time, 10% of the sales will go to support the Monday Night Meal. Stop by, enjoy a meal, and say hello! The Monday Night Meal team will be on-site delivering meals out to cars! If you'd like to support the ministry directly, you can donate by scanning the QR code.



K - 8th Grade Christmas Service

Join us on **Thursday, December 18 at 6:30pm** as our K - 8th Grade students share the Christmas message. This service will also be streamed LIVE on our church website!

No Sunday School or Education Hour on December 21 & 28

A friendly reminder that there will be no Sunday School or Education Hour Bible studies on December 21 or December 28. Classes will resume at their normally scheduled times on January 4th.



Christmas at St. John's

Christmas Eve - Wednesday, December 24
Worship with Communion at 2:00pm (livestreamed), 4:00pm, & 10:00pm (candlelight service)

Christmas Day - Thursday, December 25
Worship with Communion at 9:30am

New Year's Eve - Wednesday, December 31
Worship with Communion at 5:00pm

WORSHIP SCHEDULE

Sundays at 8:00/9:30/10:45am in the Gymnasium
(Livestream at the 8:00am Service)

CHURCH OFFICE HOURS

Monday - Friday 8:00am-4:30pm

Want to receive the Weekly Word and church communications by email?

Contact churchoffice@stjohns-chaska.org or call the church office.



PRAYER LIST

Please continue to share your prayer requests by filling out the back of a Connect Card located on the information desks in the upper gathering and main level common areas or by going to www.stjohns-chaska.org and clicking on "How can we pray for you?" You can also contact the church office: email: churchoffice@stjohns-chaska.org or by phone 952-448-2433

HAPPY BIRTHDAY

12/14		12/20
Becky Lutz		Robert Beach
12/15	12/17	Julie Herrmann
Jackie Oelfke	Gretchen Dolan	Rick Panning
12/16	Christine Poppitz	Colston Reinke
Jill Huwe	Deana Stillman	Emily Saba
Daniel Wittenberg	12/19	Kreg Schmidt
	Caden Becker	
	Tristan Lainhart	
	Wade Mesenbring	
	Simon Wiegert	

FOR HEALING AND STRENGTH

Jon Thom	Sandy Sprengeler	Jolene Berg
Julie Bruce	Holly Walters	Joann Mueller
Joel Landskroener	Marilyn Lenzen	Gary Anderson

IN SYMPATHY

The family of Todd Nikolai, upon his passing



EXPECTANT MOMS

Brenda Simpson
Izzy King
Nicole Stockey
Kourtney Vipond
Katelyn Olson
Amy Peterson

CELEBRATING ANNIVERSARIES

12/14 Paul and Ashley Trahms
12/18 Jim and Leanne Backlund
12/18 Jim and Sarah Dewaard
12/19 Tim and Joan Bode
12/20 Bryon and Barbara Frye
12/20 John and Mary Stuewe

ONGOING PRAYERS

Carol Affeldt	Sunnie Deis	Carol Jones	Austin Rannow
John Barney	Anita Doss	Len Kallsen	Val Schlefsky
Jack Boman	Sid & Merna Fjelstad	Gretchen Laubach	Cliff Waller
Jimann Campbell	Dennis Gaarder	Melinda Meuwissen	Ruth Ziegler
Julie Carver	Bernie Gnan	Gina Niesche	Merlin Bentz - brother of Linda Knox
Marguerite Craighead	Eugene Henke	Steve Pond	Ruth Harms - sister-in-law of Marilyn Lenzen