

December 21, 2025 8:00am

Fourth Sunday in Advent

WELCOME AND INVOCATION

OPENING HYMN

“Savior of the Nations”

LSB 332, vv. 1-2, 4, 7

Savior of the nations, come,
Virgin’s Son, make here Your home!
Marvel now, O heav’n and earth,
That the Lord chose such a birth.

Then stepped forth the Lord of all
From His pure and kingly hall;
God of God, yet fully man,
His heroic course began.

Not by human flesh and blood,
By the Spirit of our God,
Was the Word of God made flesh—
Woman’s offspring, pure and fresh.

From the manger newborn light
Shines in glory through the night.
Darkness there no more resides;
In this light faith now abides.

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LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT WREATH

We praise you, O God, for this circle of light that numbers the days of preparation for Christ's coming again. As we light the fourth candle on this wreath, fill us with the love that comes from You so that we may be lights shining in the darkness of our world.

Give us the light of Your grace, so that by the power of the Holy Spirit, our hearts may be prepared to welcome Him with joy. We ask this through Christ, our Lord, whose coming is certain. Amen.

As we light our Advent wreath, we wait in hope for the One who comes - Jesus, the light of the world.

Come, Lord Jesus. Amen.

SONG

“We Light the Advent Candle”

Fourth candle is lit

4 We light the Ad - vent can - dle And share the won - drous
Word. With love, we tell of Je - sus Till
all a - round have heard. God's love is for each
na - tion Through - out His whole cre - a - tion. We
wait with grow - ing light Till God makes all things right!

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CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION

Let us confess our sins:

We pray for You to come to us, Lord Jesus, for our need is very great. Even as we prepare to welcome You, we continue to sin against You. We prepare our hearts for celebrations, but forget that it is Your birth that we celebrate. We must confess that we have not loved You the way we ought; we have sinned against You in our words and actions, and we have not done the things You command. Come and save us, Lord Jesus!

God has heard our prayer. Jesus Christ is in our midst as He promised. By His death and resurrection He forgives our sin and opens the gate of heaven to us. By our baptism, we have been given new life as children of God. At the command and promise of our Lord Jesus Christ, I, your Called and ordained pastor, forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. **Amen. Even so, Lord Jesus, come quickly!**

KYRIE

LSB 152

In peace let us pray to the Lord.



C Lord, have mer - cy.

For the peace from above and for our salvation let us pray to the Lord.



C Lord, have mer - cy.

For the peace of the whole world, for the well-being of the Church of God, and for the unity of all let us pray to the Lord.



C Lord, have mer - cy.

For this holy house and for all who offer here their worship and praise let us pray to the Lord.



C Lord, have mer - cy.

Help, save, comfort, and defend us, gracious Lord.



C A - men.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Open our eyes to see Your presence among us, O Immanuel, that we look forward in faith to follow where You have led the way, for You live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Amen.

OLD TESTAMENT READING**Isaiah 7:10-17**

Again the Lord spoke to Ahaz, "Ask a sign of the Lord your God; let it be deep as Sheol or high as heaven." But Ahaz said, "I will not ask, and I will not put the Lord to the test." And he said, "Hear then, O house of David! Is it too little for you to weary men, that you weary my God also? Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign. Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel. He shall eat curds and honey when he knows how to refuse the evil and choose the good. For before the boy knows how to refuse the evil and choose the good, the land whose two kings you dread will be deserted. The Lord will bring upon you and upon your people and upon your father's house such days as have not come since the day that Ephraim departed from Judah—the king of Assyria."

This is the Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

EPISTLE**Romans 1:1-7**

Paul, a servant of Christ Jesus, called to be an apostle, set apart for the gospel of God, which he promised beforehand through his prophets in the holy Scriptures, concerning his Son, who was descended from David according to the flesh and was declared to be the Son of God in power according to the Spirit of holiness by his resurrection from the dead, Jesus Christ our Lord, through whom we have received grace and apostleship to bring about the obedience of faith for the sake of his name among all the nations, including you who are called to belong to Jesus Christ, To all those in Rome who are loved by God and called to be saints: Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

This is the Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

HOLY GOSPEL

Matthew 1:18-25

The Holy Gospel according to St. Matthew, the first chapter.

Glory to You, O Lord.

Now the birth of Jesus Christ took place in this way. When his mother Mary had been betrothed to Joseph, before they came together she was found to be with child from the Holy Spirit. And her husband Joseph, being a just man and unwilling to put her to shame, resolved to divorce her quietly. But as he considered these things, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, "Joseph, son of David, do not fear to take Mary as your wife, for that which is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. She will bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins." All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had spoken by the prophet: "Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall call his name Immanuel" (which means, God with us). When Joseph woke from sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded him: he took his wife, but knew her not until she had given birth to a son. And he called his name Jesus.

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to You, O Christ.

GOSPEL RESPONSE "Jesus, Name Above All Names"

LSB 970

Je - sus, name a - bove all names, Beau - ti - ful
Sav - ior, glo - ri - ous Lord. Em -
man - u - el, God is with us, Bless - ed Re -
deem - er, liv - ing Word.

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CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

HYMN OF THE DAY "O Come, O Come, Emmanuel" LSB 357, vv. 1-3, 7

O come, O come, Emmanuel,
And ransom captive Israel,
That mourns in lonely exile here
Until the Son of God appear. **Refrain**

O come, O come, Thou Lord of might,
Who to Thy tribes on Sinai's height
In ancient times didst give the Law
In cloud and majesty and awe. **Refrain**

Refrain

Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel
Shall come to thee, O Israel!

O come, Desire of nations, bind
In one the hearts of all mankind;
Bid Thou our sad divisions cease,
And be Thyself our King of Peace. **Refrain**

O come, Thou Wisdom from on high,
Who ord'rest all things mightily;
To us the path of knowledge show,
And teach us in her ways to go. **Refrain**

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SERMON

"Faith. Strength. Compassion."

Pastor Barry

NICENE CREED

I believe in one God, the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth and of all things visible and invisible.

And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Son of God, begotten of His Father before all worlds, God of God, Light of Light, very God of very God, begotten, not made, being of one substance with the Father, by whom all things were made; who for us men and for our salvation came down from heaven and was incarnate by the Holy Spirit of the virgin Mary and was made man; and was crucified also for us under Pontius Pilate. He suffered and was buried. And the third day He rose again according to the Scriptures and ascended into heaven and sits at the right hand of the Father. And He will come again with glory to judge both the living and the dead, whose kingdom will have no end.

And I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord and giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son, who with the Father and the Son together is worshiped and glorified, who spoke by the prophets. And I believe in one holy Christian and apostolic Church, I acknowledge one Baptism for the remission of sins, and I look for the resurrection of the dead and the life of the world to come. Amen.

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH

Let us pray for the whole people of God in Christ Jesus and for all people according to their needs.

The angel Gabriel proclaimed the promise of Your Son who was conceived within the womb of the virgin mother Mary. Let Your Word dwell in our hearts that faith may be born in us; Lord, in Your mercy,
hear our prayer.

The holy season of our Savior's birth is soon upon us; keep us from being distracted and turn us to the true gift of Your Son as our Savior and Lord; Lord, in Your mercy,
hear our prayer.

We know that we live amid so many distractions; help us that we may be renewed in faith and hope by the celebration of Your Son's birth; Lord, in Your mercy,
hear our prayer.

We remember before You those who lead and govern us here on earth; bless them with wisdom and courage that they may serve well the trust placed in them; Lord, in Your mercy,
hear our prayer.

We pray for the Church, for this congregation, for our pastors, all church workers, missionaries, and lay leaders, as well as each of us here assembled, that we may joyfully proclaim the mystery of Jesus Christ and the salvation He has made known; Lord, in Your mercy,
hear our prayer.

We pray for the sick and the suffering... May God give them grace and grant them healing and comfort in accordance with His gracious will; and we pray for the grieving and the dying that they may be comforted by Christ, the resurrection and the life; Lord, in Your mercy,
hear our prayer.

Into Your hands, O Lord, we commend ourselves and all for whom we pray, trusting in Your mercy; through Jesus Christ.

Amen.

OFFERING

Musical Offering

"A Stable in Bethlehem"

Douglas E. Wagner
Messengers of Praise

OFFERTORY

"What Child Is This"

LSB 370, v. 3

So bring Him incense, gold, and myrrh; Come, peasant, king, to own Him.
The King of kings salvation brings; Let loving hearts enthrone Him.
Raise, raise the song on high, The virgin sings her lullaby;
Joy, joy, for Christ is born, The babe, the son of Mary!

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PREFACE

LSB 160

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them to the Lord.

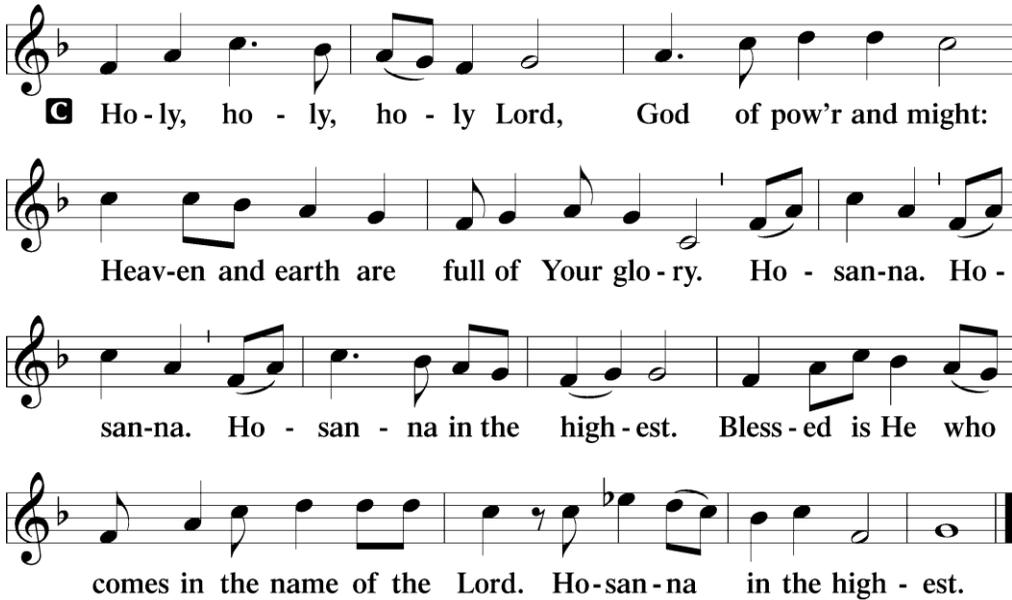
Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give Him thanks and praise.

It is truly good, right, and salutary that we should at all times and in all places give thanks to You, holy Lord, almighty Father, everlasting God, through Jesus Christ, our Lord, whose coming John the Baptist proclaimed in the wilderness and by whose death and resurrection calls us to repent, turning again and again to the font of His mercy, so that our lives bear fruit worthy of repentance. Therefore with angels and archangels and with all the company of heaven we laud and magnify Your glorious name, evermore praising You and saying:

SANCTUS

LSB 161



C Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of pow'r and might:
Heav-en and earth are full of Your glo-ry. Ho - san-na. Ho -
san-na. 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.

PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

Thank You, Lord of all creation, for this gift of our Lord's Supper, by which You prepare us to journey through the wilderness of our lives assured of Your presence and promise. Hear us as we pray in Jesus' name the very words He teaches us to pray:

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.

THE WORDS OF OUR LORD

PAX DOMINI

The peace of the Lord be with you always.
Amen.

LSB 163

AGNUS DEI

LSB 163

C 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.

Please be seated.

COMMUNION AT ST. JOHN'S

The Lord's Supper is celebrated at this congregation in the confession and glad confidence that, as He says, our Lord gives into our mouths not only bread and wine, but His very body and blood. This we eat and drink for the forgiveness of sins and to strengthen our union with Him and with one another. Our Lord invites to His table those who trust His words, repent of all sin, and set aside any refusal to forgive and love as He forgives and loves us, that they may show forth His death until He comes. Because those who eat and drink our Lord's body and blood unworthily do so to their great harm, and because Holy Communion is a confession of the faith which is confessed at this altar, any who are not yet instructed, in doubt, or who hold to a confession differing from that of this congregation and The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod, and yet desire to receive the sacrament, are asked to first speak with the pastor or an elder. For further readings in Scripture, we suggest Matthew 5:23f.; 10:32f.; 18:15-35; 26:26-29; 1 Cor. 11:17-34.

- **Communicants will receive elements in a continuous fashion.**
- **If you would like the pastor to bring communion to you, please inform an usher anytime during the service.**
- **Children of all ages may join their parents and receive a special blessing.**
- **For those who desire it, non-alcoholic wine is available in the center ring of the tray of individual cups.**

DISTRIBUTION

HYMN**“O Sing of Christ”****LSB 362**

O sing of Christ, whose birth made known The kindness of the Lord,
 Eternal Word made flesh and bone So we could be restored.
 Upon our frail humanity God’s finger chose to trace
 The fullness of His deity, The icon of His grace.

What Adam lost, none could reclaim, And Paradise was barred
 Until the second Adam came To mend what sin had marred.
 For when the time was full and right God sent His only Son;
 He came to us as life and light And our redemption won.

He came to that which was His own, But He was not received;
 Yet still through Him God’s glory shone, And some His name believed.
 To these He gave the right to be The heirs of heav’n above,
 Born not of human ancestry But born of God in love.

Lord Jesus Christ, You deigned to dwell Among us here on earth
 As God with us, Emmanuel, To bring this holy birth.
 Though rich, You willingly became One with our poverty,
 That we might share Your wealth and name For all eternity!

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HYMN**“From Heaven Above to Earth I Come”****LSB 358, vv. 1-3, 5-6**

“From heav’n above to earth I come
 To bear good news to ev’ry home;
 Glad tidings of great joy I bring,
 Whereof I now will say and sing:

“These are the signs that you shall mark:
 The swaddling clothes and manger dark.
 There you will find the infant laid
 By whom the heav’ns and earth were made.”

“To you this night is born a child
 Of Mary, chosen virgin mild;
 This little child of lowly birth
 Shall be the joy of all the earth.

How glad we’ll be to find it so!
 Then with the shepherds let us go
 To see what God for us has done
 In sending us His own dear Son.

“This is the Christ, our God Most High,
 Who hears your sad and bitter cry;
 He will Himself your Savior be
 From all your sins to set you free.

Text: Public domain



1 Of the Fa - ther's love be - got - ten Ere the worlds be -
 2 Oh, that birth for - ev - er bless - ed, When the vir - gin,
 3 This is He whom seers in old time Chant - ed of with
 4 O ye heights of heav'n, a - dore Him; An - gel hosts, His
 Δ 5 Christ, to Thee, with God the Fa - ther, And, O Ho - ly



gan to be, He is Al - pha and O - me - ga,
 full of grace, By the Ho - ly Ghost con - ceiv - ing,
 one ac - cord, Whom the voic - es of the proph - ets
 prais - es sing. Pow'rs, do - min - ions, bow be - fore Him
 Ghost, to Thee Hymn and chant and high thanks - giv - ing



He the source, the end - ing He, Of the things that are, that
 Bore the Sav - ior of our race, And the babe, the world's Re -
 Prom - ised in their faith - ful word. Now He shines, the long - ex -
 And ex - tol our God and King. Let no tongue on earth be
 And un - end - ing prais - es be, Hon - or, glo - ry, and do -



have been, And that fu - ture years shall see
 deem - er, First re - vealed His sa - cred face
 pect - ed; Let cre - a - tion praise its Lord
 si - lent, Ev - 'ry voice in con - cert ring
 min - ion, And e - ter - nal vic - to - ry



Ev - er - more and ev - er - more.
 Ev - er - more and ev - er - more.
 Ev - er - more and ev - er - more.
 Ev - er - more and ev - er - more.
 Ev - er - more and ev - er - more.

A - men.

Text and tune: Public domain

DISMISSAL

POST-COMMUNION COLLECT

Thank You, Lord, for this gift of Christ's body and blood. Prepare our hearts by this great gift to love You and to serve our neighbor; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Amen.

BENEDICTION

CLOSING HYMN "Savior of the Nations, Come" LSB 332, vv. 6, 8

| | |
|---------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| For You are the Father's Son | Glory to the Father sing, |
| Who in flesh the vict'ry won. | Glory to the Son, our king, |
| By Your mighty pow'r make whole | Glory to the Spirit be |
| All our ills of flesh and soul. | Now and through eternity. |

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SENDING

Go in peace. Serve the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

THANK YOU FOR WORSHIPING WITH ST. JOHN'S TODAY! If this is your first time at St. John's, we encourage you to fill out a CONNECTCard located on the Welcome Desk. We want an opportunity to get to know you.

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WORSHIP ASSISTANTS

Acolytes: 8:00 Maddy Leao

Eucharistic Assistants: 8:00 Chris Mundal, Paul DeRocher, Jim Hofer

Elders: 8:00 Zac Lewis

Usher Team: 8:00 Josh Kulzer

Welcome Team: 8:00 Gayle Degler

Tech Crew: 8:00 Hunter Krueger

| UPCOMING WEEK | |
|------------------------|---|
| Monday, December 22 | Men's Bible Study 6:30am |
| | Blood Drive 10:00am – 4:00pm |
| | Monday Night Meal 5:15pm |
| | AA 7:00pm |
| Wednesday, December 24 | Christmas Eve Service with Communion 2:00pm (Livestreamed on church website) |
| | Christmas Eve Service with Communion 4:00pm |
| | Christmas Candlelight Service with Communion 10:00pm |
| Thursday, December 25 | Christmas Day Service with Communion 9:30am |
| Friday, December 26 | AA 6:30pm |
| Sunday, December 28 | Worship 8:00/9:30/10:45am |
| | * No Education Hour |

Celebrating Birthdays

12/21
Lexi Kirchoff
Jill McGlothlin
Kari Peterson
Donald Rasmussen
12/22
Ryder Doucet
Julie Wolter

12/23
Donnave Bartsch
Jodi Christiansen
Anna Tucker
12/24
Landon Larson
Ryan Smith
Addison Sutherland

12/26
Anita Doss
Winston King-Ellison
Chad Reisner
12/27
Linee Molderhauer

Celebrating Anniversaries

12/27 Mark and Crystal Beussman

12/27 Tony and Beth Kucera

Expectant Moms

Brenda Simpson

Izzy King

Nicole Stockey

Kourtney Vipond

Katelyn Olson

Amy Peterson

Prayers for Healing and Strength

Matthew Swanson

Jon Thom

Joel Landskroener

Sandy Sprengeler

Holly Walters

Marilyn Lenzen

Jolene Berg

Gary Anderson

Ongoing Prayers

Carol Affeldt

John Barney

Merlin Bentz

Jack Boman

Jimann Campbell

Julie Carver

Marguerite Craighead

Sunnie Deis

Anita Doss

Sid & Merna Fjelstad

Dennis Gaarder

Bernie Gnan

Ruth Harms

Eugene Henke

Carol Jones

Len Kallsen

Gretchen Laubach

Melinda Meuwissen

Gina Niesche

Steve Pond

Austin Rannow

Val Schlefsky

Cliff Waller

Ruth Ziegler

In Sympathy

Helen Anderson and family, upon the passing of her husband, Gary.

Christmas and New Year's at St. John's Upcoming Worship Schedule

Christmas Eve – December 24

Worship with Communion
*2:00pm (livestreamed), 4:00pm,
& 10:00pm (candlelight)*

Christmas Day – December 25

Worship with Communion
9:30am

First Sunday of Christmas – December 28

8:00am, 9:30am, & 10:45am

New Year's Eve – December 31

Worship with Communion
5:00 pm