

**STAFF**

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**\*\*\*The Pastors are off on Fridays\*\***



# Christmas Day Service

December 25, 2023

Welcome to St. John's—we are glad you're here!

*(Please take a moment to silence all electronics. Thank you!)*

*(Hymns are taken from Evangelical Lutheran Worship, the red book in the pew rack.)*

## WELCOME

*(Please stand as you are able.)*

## CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

Blessed be the holy Trinity, ✙ one God,  
the Word made flesh,  
our life and our salvation.

**Amen.**

Trusting the goodness and lovingkindness of God our Savior,  
let us confess our sin.

*(Silence is kept for reflection.)*

God of life,  
**you promise good news of great joy for all people,  
and call us to be messengers of your peace.  
We confess that too often we hoard our joy,  
our resources, and our security.  
We nurture conflict and build barriers.  
We neglect the needs of our neighbors  
and ignore the groaning of creation.  
Have mercy on us.  
Where we are self-centered, open our hearts.  
Where we are reluctant, give us courage.  
Where we are cynical, restore our trust.  
Renew us with your grace  
and give us again the hope of eternal life in you.  
Amen.**

Hear the good news:  
We are children of God and heirs of God's promises  
through the outpouring of the Holy Spirit.  
In ✙ Jesus we are forgiven and redeemed.  
Sing with joy, for all the ends of the earth  
shall know the salvation of God.  
**Amen.**

## COMMUNION

*All are welcome at Christ's table. Bread is received in the hands. Gluten-free wafers are available—if you need one, please ask the pastor. To receive the wine, take an empty cup and the communion assistant will fill it with a sip of wine. The cups that are already filled contain grape juice. After drinking, place the used cup in the basket on your way back to your seat.*

*If you are not communing you are welcome to come forward for a blessing,  
crossing your arms over your chest.*

## PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

God our redeemer,  
You have fed us at this table  
with gifts of grace, truth, and life.  
As you have gathered us in joy,  
send us forth as messengers of your peace.  
Make us shine with the good news of your glory,  
born to us in Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.  
**Amen.**

## SENDING

## BLESSING

*The Lord now bless and keep you; God's love in you increase  
By God's own face, with shining grace, grant you eternal peace  
To Father, Son, and Spirit, ✙ eternal One-in-Three  
Be thanks and praise through all our days, into eternity. Amen.*

## SENDING HYMN

*Joy to the World*

*ELW 267*

*(Text: Isaac Watts, 1674-1748; Music: English melody, 18<sup>th</sup> cent.; arr. Lowell Mason, 1792-1872)*

## DISMISSAL

Christ the Savior is born!  
Go in peace. Proclaim this good news.  
**Thanks be to God.**

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With this bread and cup  
we remember your Word dwelling among us,  
full of grace and truth.  
We remember our new birth in his death and resurrection.  
We look with hope for his coming. Come, Lord Jesus.  
**Come, Lord Jesus.**

Holy God, we long for your Spirit.  
Come among us.  
Bless this meal.  
May your Word take flesh in us.  
Awaken your people.  
Fill us with your light.  
Bring the gift of peace on earth. Come, Holy Spirit  
**Come, Holy Spirit.**

All praise and glory are yours,  
Holy One of Israel,  
Word of God incarnate,  
Power of the Most High,  
one God, now and forever.  
**Amen.**

Let us pray together.

**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 assembly is seated.)*

#### INVITATION TO COMMUNION

Glory to God in the highest!  
Come to the table of peace.

**GATHERING HYMN**                      *O Come All Ye Faithful*                      **ELW 283**  
*(Text and music: attr. John Frances Wade, 1711-1786; tr. Frederick Oakeley, 1802-1880)*

#### GREETING

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.  
**And also with you.**

#### PRAYER OF THE DAY

All-powerful and unseen God, the coming of your light into our world has brightened weary hearts with peace. Call us out of despair, and empower us to proclaim the birth of your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.  
**Amen.**

*(The assembly is seated.)*

#### CHILDREN'S SERMON

#### WORD

**PSALM**                      *(Read responsively; congregation reads bold verses)*                      **Psalm 97**

The LORD reigns; let the earth rejoice;  
let the multitude of the isles be glad.  
**Clouds and darkness surround the LORD,  
righteousness and justice are the foundations of God's throne.**  
Fire goes before the LORD,  
burning up enemies on every side.  
**Lightnings light up the world;  
the earth sees and trembles.**  
The mountains melt like wax  
before the Lord of all the earth.  
**The heavens declare your righteousness, O LORD,  
and all the peoples see your glory.**  
Confounded be all who worship carved images and delight in false gods!  
Bow down before the LORD, all you gods.  
**Zion hears and is glad, and the cities of Judah rejoice,  
because of your judgments, O LORD.**  
For you are the LORD, most high over all the earth;  
you are exalted far above all gods.  
**You who love the LORD, hate evil!**  
**God guards the lives of the saints and rescues them from the hand of the wicked.**

Light dawns for the righteous,  
and joy for the honest of heart.  
**Rejoice in the LORD, you righteous,  
and give thanks to God's holy name.**

*(Please stand as you are able.)*

## GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Alleluia. A holy day has dawned upon us.  
**Come, you nations, and adore the Lord.  
For today a great light has come upon the earth. Alleluia.**

## GOSPEL

**Luke 2:1-20**

The Holy Gospel according to Luke.

**Glory to you, O Lord.**

The Gospel of the Lord.

**Praise to you, O Christ.**

*(The assembly is seated.)*

## SERMON

*(Please stand as you are able.)*

**HYMN OF THE DAY**     *Angels, from the Realms of Glory*     **ELW 275**

*(Text: James Montgomery, 1771-1854, alt., sts. 1-3; Salisbury Hymn Book, 1857, st. 4)*

## PRAYERS OF THE CHURCH

*After each petition*     Hear us, O God.  
**Your mercy is great.**

**PEACE**     The peace of Christ be with you always.  
**And also with you.**

*(We offer each other a sign of God's peace. Afterwards, the assembly is seated.)*

## MEAL

*(An offering is gathered for the mission and ministry of God's Church.)  
(Please stand as you are able.)*

## OFFERING PRAYER

God of abundance,  
receive and bless these gifts we have offered.  
Join our hearts with the song of the angels,  
and gather us at your table of celebration.

Strengthen us to share with all the world  
the abundance of your grace upon grace,  
poured out in Jesus Christ, the Word made flesh.  
**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. In the wonder and mystery of the Word made flesh you have opened the eyes of faith to a new and radiant vision of your glory, that, beholding the God made visible, we may be drawn to love the God whom we cannot see. 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:

### HOLY, HOLY, HOLY

### THANKSGIVING AT THE TABLE

Holy One, the beginning and the end, the giver of life:  
Blessed are you for the birth of creation.  
Blessed are you in the darkness and in the light.  
Blessed are you for your promise to your people.  
Blessed are you in the prophets' hopes and dreams.  
Blessed are you for Mary's openness to your will.  
Blessed are you for your Son Jesus,  
the Word made flesh.

In the night in which he was betrayed...

Let us proclaim the mystery of faith:  
**Christ has died.**  
**Christ is risen.**  
**Christ will come again.**