

St. John Evangelical Lutheran Church
A Family Connecting in Christ



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SERVICE OF THE WORD

IN OUR WORLD TODAY ... we live surrounded by a melting pot of languages, cultures, and nationalities. In our communities many of our neighbors are Hispanic.

IN OUR WORSHIP TODAY ... we welcome Rev. Timothy Flunker, WELS Hispanic Outreach Consultant, who will encourage us to share Jesus with our Hispanic neighbors. We are now blessed with two Hispanic ministries for our neighbors, Immanuel in Waukegan and St. Paul in Round Lake Park.

OPENING HYMN

"O Christians, Haste"
Hymn 570

O Christians, haste, your mission high fulfilling,
To tell to all the world that God is light,
That he who made all nations is not willing
One soul should perish, lost in shades of night. [Refrain]

Refrain:

Publish glad tidings, Tidings of peace,
Tidings of Jesus, Redemption and release.

Behold how many thousands still are lying
Bound in the dreary prison-house of sin
With none to tell them of the Savior's dying
Or of the life he died for them to win. [Refrain]

Proclaim to ev'ry people, tongue, and nation
That God, in whom they live and move, is love;
Tell how he stooped to save his lost creation
And died on earth that they might live above. [Refrain]

Send heralds forth to bear the message glorious;
Give of your wealth to speed them on their way;
Pour out your soul for them in prayer victorious;
O Christians, haste to bring the brighter day! [Refrain]

M: The grace of our Lord †Jesus Christ and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you.

C: **And also with you.**

+ CONFESSION OF SINS AND ABSOLUTION +

M: We have come into the presence of God, who created us to love and serve him as his dear children. But we have disobeyed him and deserve only his wrath and punishment. Therefore, let us confess our sins to him and plead for his mercy.

C: **Merciful Father in heaven, I am altogether sinful from birth. In countless ways I have sinned against you and do not deserve to be called your child. But trusting in Jesus, my Savior, I pray: Have mercy on me according to your unfailing love. Cleanse me from my sin, and take away my guilt.**

M: God, our heavenly Father, has forgiven all your sins. By the perfect life and innocent death of our Lord Jesus Christ, he has removed your guilt forever. You are his own dear child. May God give you strength to live according to his will.

C: **Amen.**

CHOIR

“Oh, How Good It Is”
Hymn 731 (New CW)



1 Oh, how good it is when the fam - 'ly of God
2 Oh, how good it is on this jour - ney we share
3 Oh, how good it is to em - brace his com - mand



dwells to - geth - er in spir - it, in faith and u - ni - ty.
to re - joice with the hap - py and weep with those who mourn.
to pre - fer one a - noth - er, for - give as he for - gives.



Where the bonds of peace, of ac - cep - tance and love
For the weak find strength, the af - flict - ed find grace
When we live as one we all share in the love



are the fruits of his pres - ence here a - mong us.
when we of - fer the bles - sing of be - long - ing.
of the Son with the Fa - ther and the Spir - it.



Refrain

So with one voice we'll sing to the Lord; and with one heart we'll



live out his Word. Till the whole earth sees the Re - deem - er has



come for he dwells in the pres - ence of his peo - ple.

PRAYER OF THE DAY (*Spoken Together*)

O God, you have made of one blood all the peoples of the earth and have sent your messengers to preach peace to those who are far off and to those who are near. Grant that by the witness of your Church many may be brought into your kingdom and worship you, the only true God; through Jesus Christ, your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

OLD TESTAMENT LESSON

Jeremiah 31:10-14

“Hear the word of the LORD, O nations;
 proclaim it in distant coastlands:
‘He who scattered Israel will gather them
 and will watch over his flock like a shepherd.’
For the LORD will ransom Jacob
 and redeem them from the hand of those stronger than they.
They will come and shout for joy on the heights of Zion;
 they will rejoice in the bounty of the LORD -
the grain, the new wine and the oil,
 the young of the flocks and herds.
They will be like a well-watered garden,
 and they will sorrow no more.
Then maidens will dance and be glad,
 young men and old as well.
I will turn their mourning into gladness;
 I will give them comfort and joy instead of sorrow.
I will satisfy the priests with abundance,
 and my people will be filled with my bounty,”
declares the LORD.

CHOIR

"This Is My Word"

*As the snow falls from heaven,
As it comes in swirling showers from the sky,
So is my Word.*

*As the rains bring the water to the earth that is thirsty and dry,
So is my Word.*

*And the Word of my mouth, it shall not return empty:
It will bless the earth wherever it is heard.
This is my Word.*

*As the rain brings renewal
And the tender buds begin to come alive,
So is my Word.
Giving seed to the sower,
And the bread to the hungry 'til they thrive,
So is my Word.*

*And the Word of my mouth, it shall not return empty;
It will bless the earth wherever it is heard.
This is my Word.*

*O Lord, when I am weary,
When I feel the days I'm living are in vain,
My God, help me be faithful to the Word You have given to proclaim.
Proclaim the Word, and you will go out in joy,
And be led forth in peace,
And the hills will break before you into song.
So be faithful, brave and true,
For I will go before you,
And when your earthly journey here is done.
I'll say well done, well done!*

*As the snow falls from heaven,
And the rain comes in showers from the sky,
This is my Word.*

EPISTLE LESSON

1 Peter 3:13-22

Who is going to harm you if you are eager to do good? But even if you should suffer for what is right, you are blessed. "Do not fear what they fear; do not be frightened." But in your hearts set apart Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect, keeping a clear conscience, so that those who speak maliciously against your good behavior in Christ may be ashamed of their slander. It is better, if it is God's will, to suffer for doing good than for doing evil. For Christ died for sins once for all, the righteous for the unrighteous, to bring you to God. He was put to death in the body but made alive by the Spirit, through whom also he went and preached to the spirits in prison who disobeyed long ago when God waited patiently in the days of Noah while the ark was being built. In it only a few people, eight in all, were saved through water, and this water symbolizes baptism that now saves you also - not the removal of dirt from the body but the pledge of a good conscience toward God. It saves you by the resurrection of Jesus Christ, who has gone into heaven and is at God's right hand - with angels, authorities, and powers in submission to him.

VERSE OF THE DAY

Alleluia. Declare his glory among the nations,
his marvelous deeds among all peoples. Alleluia.
(Psalm 96:3)

♪ Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!
These words are written that we may believe that
Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God.
Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!

GOSPEL LESSON

Luke 15:1-7

Now the tax collectors and “sinners” were all gathering around to hear him.

But the Pharisees and the teachers of the law muttered, “This man welcomes sinners and eats with them.”

Then Jesus told them this parable: “Suppose one of you has a hundred sheep and loses one of them. Does he not leave the ninety-nine in the open country and go after the lost sheep until he finds it? And when he finds it, he joyfully puts it on his shoulders and goes home. Then he calls his friends and neighbors together and says, ‘Rejoice with me; I have found my lost sheep.’ I tell you that in the same way there will be more rejoicing in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine righteous persons who do not need to repent.”

APOSTLES’ CREED

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

I believe in Jesus Christ, his 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 into hell. The third day he rose again from the dead. He ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of God the Father almighty. From there he will come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy Christian Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

HYMN

“Lord, Speak to Us that We May Speak”

Hymn 561

Lord, speak to us that we may speak
In living echoes of your tone.
As you have sought, so let us seek
Your straying children, lost and lone.

Oh, lead us, Lord, that we may lead The wand'ring and the wav'ring feet.
Oh, feed us, Lord, that we may feed
Your hung'ring ones with manna sweet.

Oh, teach us, Lord, that we may teach
The precious truths which you impart,
And wing our words that they may reach
The hidden depths of many a heart.

Oh, fill us with your fullness, Lord, Until our very hearts o'erflow
In kindling thought and glowing word
Your love to tell, your praise to show.

SERMON

"The 'Other' Sheep"

HYMN

"Good News of God Above"
Hymn 568

Good news of God above Is ours to tell abroad,
The Father's everlasting love In Christ the risen Lord.
For neighbors near and far The seed of life is sown;
Then spread the seed By word and deed
To make the Savior known.

The love of Christ proclaim Who left his home on high;
To live our human life he came, Our human death to die.
The Father's only Son Became the sinners' friend,
Our lot to share, Our sin to bear,
And death's dominion end.

The Lord of Glory lives! From cross and death and grave
His own abundant life he gives To those he died to save.
His righteousness and peace Declare from sea to sea;
His praises sound The world around
For Christ has made us free.

Hear now the Master's word To those who bear his name:
"So send I you; till all have heard, Make known, declare, proclaim!"
Go forth in all the earth; Embrace the path he trod
With Christ beside As friend and guide
To bring good news of God.

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH

M: Eternal God and Father, we give you thanks for the blessings we share as members of your holy Church, for your gracious Word and sacraments, for opportunities to worship and to grow in faith and knowledge, for occasions to serve and be served, for fellowship with believers in our congregation and in our synod.

C: **Help us to rejoice in these blessings, dear Lord, and to use them faithfully.**

M: Jesus Christ, Lord of the Church, you give grace to your people by calling us to be your witnesses in the world. Open our eyes to see the great and noble mission that lies before us. In the hurting eyes of the lonely, in the pained eyes of the sick, and in the searching eyes of the lost, help us to see your face, O Jesus, and to serve others as we would serve you.

C: **Awaken us to the opportunities you give to proclaim your message of love.**

M: Holy Spirit, giver of life, through Word and sacrament bestow on us the wisdom and power we need to witness clearly and to act boldly. Help us to speak the truth in love, to give the reason for the hope we have, and to conduct ourselves with gentleness and respect.

C: **Set our hearts on fire as we work and witness for Christ.**

M: Hear us, Lord, as we pray for a family member, an acquaintance, a neighbor, or a friend who does not believe in you, or whose faith is weak or troubled.

Silent prayer.

M: Bless the Church with men and women who are willing to proclaim your Word in places where we cannot go. Keep them and their loved ones in your care, and let nothing hinder their work. By the power of the gospel, restore their spirits each day, so that they do not lose heart as they serve us and others.

C: Move us to support them with our sincere prayers and generous offerings.

Special prayers and intercessions may follow.

M: Wherever your Word is proclaimed, O Lord, grant it success. Let your kingdom come to us and others, so that we and many more might join the assembly of saints and angels to sing your praise forever.

C: Savior of all, hear our prayer and help us in our mission. Amen.

THE 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.

M: O Lord God, our heavenly Father, pour out the Holy Spirit on your faithful people. Keep us strong in your grace and truth, protect and comfort us in all temptation, and bestow on us your saving peace, through Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

BLESSING

M: Brothers and sisters, go in peace. Live in harmony with one another. Serve the Lord with gladness.

The Lord bless you and keep you.

The Lord make his face shine on you and be gracious to you.

The Lord look on you with favor and † give you peace. Amen.

CLOSING HYMN

"Hark! The Voice of Jesus Crying"

Hymn 573

Hark! the voice of Jesus crying, "Who will go and work today?
Fields are ripe and harvests waiting; Who will bear the sheaves away?"
Loud and long the Master calleth; Rich reward he offers thee.
Who will answer, gladly saying, "Here am I— send me, send me?"

If you cannot speak like angels, If you cannot preach like Paul,
You can tell the love of Jesus; You can say he died for all.
If you cannot rouse the wicked With the Judgment's dread alarms,
You can lead the little children To the Savior's waiting arms.

If you cannot be a watchman, Standing high on Zion's wall,
Pointing out the path to heaven, Off'ring life and peace to all,
With your prayers and with your off'rings You can do what God demands;
You can be like faithful Aaron, Holding up the prophet's hands.

Let none hear you idly saying, "There is nothing I can do,"
While the multitudes are dying, And the Master calls for you.
Take the task he gives you gladly; Let his work your pleasure be.
Answer quickly when he calleth, "Here am I— send me, send me!"

OFFERING

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Acknowledgments

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An update from Vietnam

WELS Director of Missions Operations Mr. Sean Young just returned from a month-long visit to Vietnam to discuss next steps for the theological education center in Hanoi. Hmong Asia Ministry Coordinator Rev. Bounkeo Lor accompanied him. The Board for World Missions released this report about the trip:

From the beginning of this initiative, WELS has known that that there would be potential challenges and unexpected setbacks due to this being a brand new mission field in an unfamiliar country. COVID also complicated the process, but we're thankful that the Lord continues to guide these efforts and "work all things for the good of those who love him" (Romans 8:28).

This was the first visit to Vietnam since COVID-19 shut down international travel in March 2020. Certain conversations and building plan discussions were held via Zoom, but concrete plans for the next steps needed to be discussed in-person. Conversations with the Hmong Fellowship Church leadership went well and continue at the time of this writing. If all goes as planned, it is WELS World Missions' goal to have the theological education center open by Easter 2022, pending no other COVID-19 complications.

Rev. Dr. Terry Schultz from Multi-Language Productions and Rev. Ger Lor from Grace Hmong Lutheran Church in Kansas City, Kan., accompanied Rev. Bounkeo Lor and Mr. Sean Young on the trip. Schultz trained Hmong Fellowship Church leaders how to use evangelism materials he created to train their members, and he gained valuable insight into the Hmong culture for the creation of future materials. Multi-Language Productions will be purchasing flip-book versions of these visual teaching aids. They also identified three Hmong Fellowship Church students with drawing skills who potentially could help develop future educational resources.

In the meantime, the second wave of visiting professors are currently in Vietnam to have their religious visas renewed/approved and conduct training. Rev. Joel Nitz is there for the first time since being called to serve the Hmong in Vietnam in February 2020. Training continues, in-person (thank the Lord!) and via Zoom, for the first 60 men who will prayerfully be ordained as pastors. These men also continue to lead rural training workshops throughout the 13 districts to share what they are learning with other Hmong Fellowship Church members.

The Hmong Fellowship Church grew by 12,000 people in 2020, and the church body now numbers 138,000 members. Stay updated on progress and learn more about Hmong outreach in Vietnam at wels.net/vietnamhmongoutreach.

Serving with you in Christ,
President Mark Schroeder

WELCOME TO ST. JOHN EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH

Masked

With the renewed mask mandate across Illinois, we now offer masked worship - Saturdays at 5 and Sundays at 9. If you have questions, please ask!

To Our Guests

- We pray that you receive a warm welcome and are blessed by the message of God's Word in our lessons and hymns. If you have questions, please ask!
- Our service is designed to focus us on Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior. The Holy Spirit does that by exposing our need for Christ and by showing us the wonders of God's grace in Christ – forgiveness and peace, help, and hope for life in this world, and life forever with God in heaven.
- Please join us after Sunday service for fellowship and Family Bible Hour.

Our Communion Practice

We practice close communion, the Biblical and ancient practice of the church. We invite our congregation members and visitors from sister WELS or ELS congregations to join us, but ask Christians from other denominations to kindly respect our practice. Further explanation is in the pew racks or from our pastor.

We Care about Your Children

We love to have children with us in worship.

- Children's worship bulletins and "church bags" (with paper, colors, and Bible story books) are available in the Narthex Gathering Area.
- If your children are crying loudly, our nursery, Gathering Area (back of church), and downstairs Fellowship Hall are audio-equipped for you and your young children. When your children are ready, come back so we can worship together.

We Care about Your Special Needs

- **Large Print** Service Folders are available from an usher.
- **Hearing Assistance** for those with hearing aids is provided through our Hearing Loop or personal hearing devices available at the "sound table."
- A **wheelchair lift** is available for your assistance; please ask an usher.



Our Facilities

Restrooms are in our Fellowship Hall, downstairs and to the right of the kitchen.

Our Ministry

St. John offers an excellent preschool-8th grade school program. We are members of the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod (WELS) - www.wels.net.