

St. John Evangelical Lutheran Church
A Family Connecting in Christ



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WELCOME TO ST. JOHN EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH

At this time our services are for people wearing masks and social distancing!

Please know that even as we experience this awkwardness, your Good Shepherd holds you close to his heart and goes with you to share his love!

To Our Guests

- We pray 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.

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.

- 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.

February 14, 2021

NEW MORNING PRAISE

IN OUR WORLD TODAY... we celebrate the feelings of the human heart.

IN OUR WORSHIP TODAY... Jeremiah warns us about the feelings of the human heart, and then on the Mount of Transfiguration, our wise and loving Father points us to a so much more reliable guide for our life - our Savior Jesus! As we observe Transfiguration Sunday, our lessons prepare us for the hard season of Lent; the Truths of Lent are not easy to accept, but listen to the One approved by God!

OPENING HYMN

"Speak, O Savior; I Am Listening"

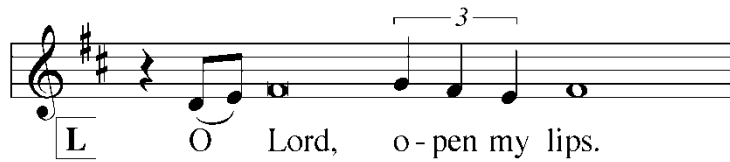
Hymn 283

Speak, O Savior; I am list'ning, As a servant to his lord.
Let me show respect and honor To your holy, precious Word,
That each day, my whole life through, I may serve and follow you.
Let your Word e'er be my pleasure And my heart's most precious
treasure.

Oh, what blessing to be near you And to listen to your voice!
Let me ever love and fear you; Let your Word still be my choice.
Many hardened sinners, Lord, Flee in terror at your Word,
But to all who feel sin's burden You give peace and words of pardon.

Lord, your words are waters living Where I quench my thirsty needs.
Lord, your words are bread life-giving; On your words my spirit feeds.
Lord, your words will be my light Through death's cold and dreary night;
Yes, they are my sword prevailing And my cup of joy unfailing.

As I pray, dear Jesus, hear me; Let your words in me take root.
May your Spirit e'er be near me That I bear abundant fruit.
May I daily sing your praise, From my heart glad anthems raise,
Till my highest praise is given In the endless joy of heaven.



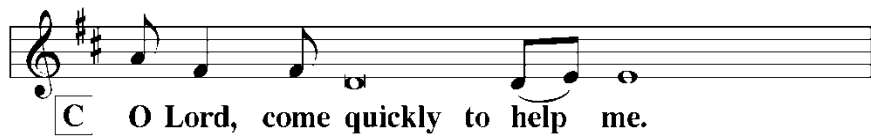
L O Lord, o - pen my lips.



C And my mouth shall de - clare your praise.



L Hasten to save me, O God.



C O Lord, come quickly to help me.

CONFESSION & ABSOLUTION OF SINS

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.**



L Give glory to God, our light and our life.



C Come, oh, come, let us wor - ship.

COME, OH, COME, LET US SING TO THE LORD

①

Come, oh, come, let us sing to the Lord,

②

let us shout with joy to our sav - ing Rock;

③

come, en - ter in with our songs of praise,

Repeat for use with canon

come, en - ter in with thanks - giv - ing.

Verses

1. You are a great and a won - drous God,
2. Come, let us wor - ship and, bow - ing low,

cup - ping in your hands all the depths of earth.
kneel be - fore the One who has made us all.

You made the hills and the moun - tains high,
You are the God whom we call our own,

to Refrain

you made the seas and the dry land.
we are the flock that you shep - herd.

PSALM 63

Refrain



In the morn-ing I will sing, I will
sing glad songs to you, I will sing glad songs of praise to
you. I will sing glad songs of praise to you.

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1. O God, you are my God; for you I long; for you my soul is thirsting.
My body pines for you like a dry, weary land without water.
So I gaze on you in the sanctuary to see your strength and your glory.
Refrain
2. For your love is better than life, my lips will speak your praise.
So I will bless you all my life, in your name I will lift up my hands.
My soul shall be filled as with a banquet,
my mouth shall praise you with joy. *Refrain*
3. On my bed I remember you. On you I muse through the night,
for you have been my help; in the shadow of your wings I rejoice.
My soul clings to you; your right hand holds me fast.
Refrain

FIRST LESSON

Jeremiah 17:9

The heart is deceitful above all things
and beyond cure.
Who can understand it?

VERSE OF THE DAY

“For from within, out of men’s hearts, come evil thoughts, sexual immorality, theft, murder, adultery, greed, malice, deceit, lewdness, envy, slander, arrogance and folly. All these evils come from inside and make a man ‘unclean.’” (Mark 7:21-23)

GOSPEL LESSON

Mark 9:2-9

After six days Jesus took Peter, James and John with him and led them up a high mountain, where they were all alone. There he was transfigured before them. His clothes became dazzling white, whiter than anyone in the world could bleach them. And there appeared before them Elijah and Moses, who were talking with Jesus.

Peter said to Jesus, “Rabbi, it is good for us to be here. Let us put up three shelters - one for you, one for Moses and one for Elijah.” (He did not know what to say, they were so frightened.)

Then a cloud appeared and enveloped them, and a voice came from the cloud: “This is my Son, whom I love. Listen to him!”

Suddenly, when they looked around, they no longer saw anyone with them except Jesus.

As they were coming down the mountain, Jesus gave them orders not to tell anyone what they had seen until the Son of Man had risen from the dead.

APOSTLES’ CREED

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

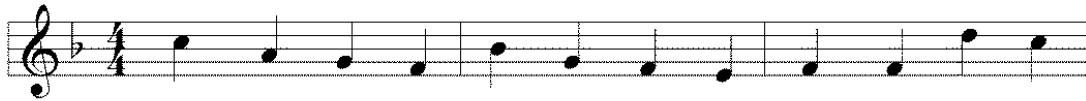
I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried. He descended into hell. The third day he rose again from the dead. He ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand 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.

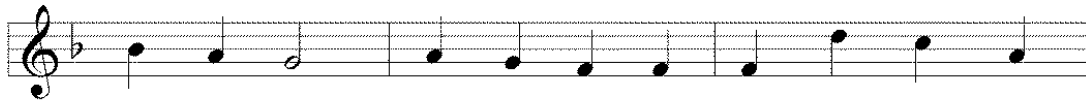
HYMN

"Jesus, Take Us to the Mountain"

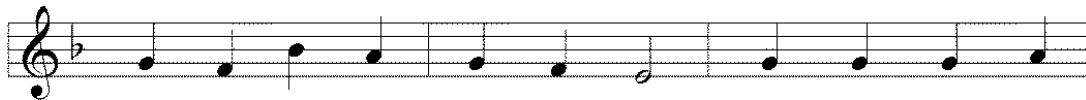
Hymn 712



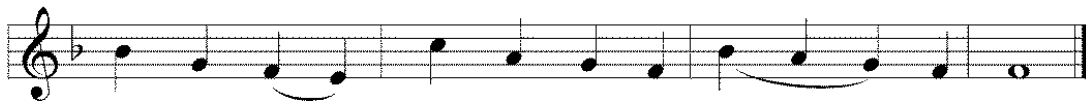
1 Je - sus, take us to the moun-tain Where, with Pe - ter,
2 What do you want us to see there That your close com -
3 What do you want us to hear there That your dear dis -
4 Take us to that oth - er moun-tain Where we see you
5 We who have be - held your glo - ry, Ris - en and as -



James, and John, We are daz - zled by your glo - ry,
pan - ions saw? Your di - vin - i - ty re - vealed there
ci - ples heard? Once a - gain the voice from heav - en
glo - ri - fied, Where you shout - ed, "It is fin - ished!"
cend - ed Lord, Can - not help but tell the sto - ry,



Light as blind - ing as the sun. There pre - pare us
Fills us with the self - same awe. Clothed in flesh like
Says of the in - car - nate Word: "Lis - ten, lis - ten,
Where for all the world you died. Hear the stunned cen -
All that we have seen and heard, Say with Pe - ter,



for the night By the vi - sion of that sight.
ours you go, Matched to meet our dead - liest foe.
ev - 'ry - one; This is my be - lov - ed Son!"
tu - ri - on: "Tru - ly this was God's own Son!"
James, and John: "You are God's be - lov - ed Son!"

SERMON

Jeremiah 17:9

I fear today is the day I'm going to ruin Valentine's Day for you. It's the season of hearts, red hearts, white hearts, silver hearts, gold hearts, chocolate hearts, Cheerio hearts, and almost best of all - pizza hearts. And what is the lesson that I pick for today? Jeremiah - **"The heart is deceitful above all things and beyond cure. Who can understand it?"** Jeremiah must have been the Valentine's Day Scrooge. And what does that make me? I suppose I'm a Valentine's Day Scrooge too.

Let's hear Jeremiah again: **"The heart is deceitful above all things and beyond cure. Who can understand it?"** What do you think of that? I see some of you agreeing. And you who are agreeing, you don't all look like Valentine's Day Scrooges. But I can also imagine some of you might not be feeling what Jeremiah is saying.

What kind of people disagree with Jeremiah's assessment: "the heart is deceitful above all things and beyond cure"?

Why is that? I googled some heart stuff. And Oprah.com says I'm wrong. I googled, and Oprah.com says that Jeremiah is wrong. Can you believe that? Oprah.com told me: "Listen to your heart. Follow your heart. It won't lead you wrong." We live in an Oprah.com world, don't we? We want to listen to our hearts; we want to follow our hearts; we want to think that our hearts won't lead us wrong. So Nike says: "Just do it." McDonalds says: "You deserve a break today." Burger King: "Have it your way."

What are some other messages that encourage us to follow our hearts?

When someone senses a "red flag" about a person or a relationship, we often hear people say: "Listen to your heart." When people sense those "red flags," what do we want to encourage? Is there a better way to affirm someone's "inner caution" than to say "follow your heart"?

We want to follow our hearts. So more and more, how do we determine right from wrong? The feelings of our hearts - if it feels good and right inside it must be good and right. Do you see a problem there? Some days, what feels good and right is making someone else feel bad. Some days, what feels good to some people is punching a wall or a face. Some days what feels good and right is feeling bad. Some days, what feels good is being contrary, rebellious, against whatever anyone else thinks. And some days, what feels good is living a make-believe life with a make-believe identity. What does that mean for our world? We live in a world where gender isn't determined by biology, but by feelings; truth isn't determined by facts, but by feelings; right and wrong isn't determined by God, but by feelings.

All this is nothing new; it goes all the way back to Adam and Eve. Eve, instead of listening to God, listened to Satan and the new feelings in her heart and chose to trust her feelings instead of trusting God. Adam and Eve's first child, Cain, instead of listening to God, he listened to the feelings in his heart, the anger, the hatred in his heart, and killed his brother. David, instead of listening to God, listened to the lust in his heart and took Bathsheba and killed her husband Uriah.

And it's not just in the Bible where the heart goes bad, is it? It's not just in the Bible where the heart leads wrong. Divorce lawyers aren't so busy because the heart won't lead wrong. Our teens aren't so hurting because the heart won't lead wrong. Morning-after pills aren't in such high demand because the heart won't lead wrong. Our capital in Washington doesn't have a fence around it because the heart won't lead wrong. No, the more we insist the heart won't lead wrong, the more we live in a broken and hurting world. And worse, the more we insist the heart won't lead wrong, the farther we find ourselves from God, rejecting his plan and his grace and daring him to judge. Daring God to judge. That's never been a winning move, even if it feels good and right.

In what ways might we be especially susceptible to having our hearts led wrong?

Jeremiah says: **“The heart is deceitful above all things and beyond cure. Who can understand it?”** What does that have to do with Transfiguration Sunday? Just days before our lesson, Jesus was telling his disciples about the cross. Peter let his heart get the better of him. Jesus and the cross didn't make sense to him. It didn't feel right to him. So he argued. We've done the same thing, haven't we? One way or another, God does something or says something we don't like. It doesn't make sense to us. It doesn't feel right to us. So what do we do? Some days we might argue, telling God how wrong he is. Other days we might shut our ears to God and go off and do our own thing. Do you remember how Jesus answered Peter? **“Get behind me, Satan. You do not have in mind the things of God but the things of man.”** Ouch.

But Jesus didn't leave it there. Today in our lesson, Jesus takes Peter, along with James and John, along with him up a mountain. And there we see - with Peter, James, and John - Jesus isn't just some guy sharing his opinions, his feelings, his version of truth. Jesus is the Son of God with all the glory of God. Jesus is the Son of God with all the authority of God. So God the Father himself says: “Listen to him.”

What lesson can we learn from Jesus in what he did for Peter after he cut Peter's arguing short? When you're on the front lines with someone arguing against God or questioning God, when it's your turn to speak, how might you do what Jesus did?

Listen to him when he says “do”; listen to him when he says “don’t.” Listen to him when he says “done.” When he says “do” and “don’t,” he’s not looking to make our hearts miserable; he’s looking to give our hearts a safe place, a safe way to love and be loved. Like Eve, we don’t always appreciate that. With the world, we might think there is a better way for us to love and be loved. But what does the world’s way work? Hurt, heartache, guilt - not just the feeling of guilt, but the guilt that damns before God. When you’re getting a taste of that hurt and heartache - as we all do - when you’re getting a taste of that guilt - “listen to him.” Look to the cross, and listen to Jesus say “done.” “Done” is the guilt that would put you on the wrong side of God. “Done” is God’s anger that would judge you and condemn you. That’s right, with Jesus, “Done” is what needs to be done to be right with God. Why? Not because God feels it. No, because with his life and death Jesus has taken your place and satisfied God’s law for you. And with his death on the cross, Jesus has taken our place and satisfied justice for you. So listen to Jesus say “done,” and hear Jesus what Jesus has to say to you - with the approval of the Father - “We love you; we forgive you; we have you safe in our hearts - today and forever.”

Is there a special “do,” “don’t,” “done” that you need to hear at times? How do you set yourself up to hear the “do,” “don’t,” “done” that you need?

“We love you; we forgive you; we have you safe in our hearts - today and forever.” That sounds like heart talk, love talk, even feelings, doesn’t it? Well, God isn’t against hearts or love or even feelings. In fact, God is so much in favor of hearts and love and feelings of love and joy that he created us to have them. Not just once, but twice. Because we soiled and poisoned and twisted our first hearts, God has given us new hearts. That’s right, God has given you a new heart; God lives in you with his heart so that you can love with God’s love. He’s given you a new heart; he lives in you with his heart so you can know his love and joy and peace.

Paul writes of this in Galatians 2:20 - “I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.” What does this verse mean for you?

Having an old heart and a new heart can be confusing sometimes - am I feeling my old heart or my new heart? Am I hearing my old heart or my new heart? Am I following my old heart or my new heart? How can you know? Don’t settle for a feeling. “Listen to him.”

What voices in your life feed and echo your old heart? What voices in your life feed and echo your new heart?

I know, some days he'll call us up short. Some days he'll say things that don't sit well with our old heart. But that's ok, because some day he will call you up to heaven and welcome you home to a new life where you and your new heart will be perfectly at peace and perfectly at home. Sounds good, doesn't it? Amen.

HYMN- See Last Page

"Speak, O Lord" Hymn 735

PRAYER AND LORD'S PRAYER

We praise you, O Father, for the precious gift of you Son and for his glorious transfiguration on the holy mountain. Give us the firm resolve to listen to your Son, the eager readiness to believe his promises, and the joyful willingness to heed his commandments. By the sign of Moses and Elijah, show us that blessed are the dead who die in faith, for they shall know the power of Christ's resurrection and shall be "changed from glory into glory."

O God and Father, let your Holy Spirit find a dwelling in our poor bodies and transform our weak, sinful lives into the radiance of goodness, purity, and righteousness. Transform our minds, our understanding, our judgments, yes, our whole persons to reflect the mind of Christ. Take our sickness and pain, our disappointments and despair, our sorrows and mourning, our pride and anger, our selfishness and envy, our hate and fear: take all these, O Father, and transform them by the healing touch of Jesus into noble impulses, pure motives, kind thoughts, constructive deeds, high courage, and true faith.

Special prayers and intercessions may follow.

Hear us, Lord, as we bring you our private petitions.

Silent prayer.

Look on your Church, O Lord, here and in every place, and grant that we and all who bear the name of Christ may daily offer up to you the acceptable sacrifices of repentance, thanksgiving, and loving obedience. Hear our prayer, and by your mercy grant our petitions for Christ's sake. Amen.

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, our heavenly Father, almighty and everlasting God, you have brought us safely to this new day. Defend us with your mighty power, and grant that this day we neither fall into sin nor run into any kind of danger; and in all we do, direct us to what is right in your sight, through Jesus Christ, your Son, our Lord. Amen.

BLESSING



L The Lord bless and keep you.



C A - men.



L The Lord's face ev - er shine up - on you.



C A - men.



L The Lord grant you peace for all your days.



FAREWELL TO ALLELUIA ...

M: Brothers and sisters in Christ, when we next gather for worship, it will be Ash Wednesday, the first day of Lent. On that day we will begin our solemn journey to the Savior's cross. While the joy of faith remains undiminished throughout the year, our rejoicing during Lent is muted and quiet. For centuries, therefore, the Christian churches have omitted their most jubilant songs during this season, including the word *alleluia*, which means, "praise the Lord."

Now for a time we say farewell to *alleluia*. We do this to prepare ourselves for the quieter days of Lent. The *alleluias* will return on Easter dawn as we gather to shout our praise to the risen Lord.

CLOSING HYMN

"Farewell to Alleluia"

(Tune Hymn 122)

Alleluia, song of triumph, sound of joy that cannot die;
 Alleluia is the anthem ever dear to choirs on high;
 Saints adorned in robes of glory join the great angelic cry.

Alleluia we are singing, voicing hymns in pure accord,
 With Christ's holy Church united, justified, redeemed, restored,
 And with all his faithful people raise our songs to praise the Lord.

Alleluia cannot always be our song while here below;
 Alleluia our transgressions make us for a while forego.
 For the solemn time is coming when our tears for sin must flow.

May our hymns be filled with longing – hear us, Holy Trinity –
 As we look to your blest Easter, here, and then eternally,
 When we shall once more be singing alleluia joyfully.

OFFERING

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Prayer Response, "You Are God; We Praise You" ...Marty Haugen. Text, Tune, Setting: © 1995, 1996 by GIA Publications, Inc.

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1 Speak, O Lord, as we come to you To re-
 2 Teach us, Lord, full o - be - di - ence, Ho - ly
 3 Speak, O Lord, and re - new our minds; Help us



ceive the food of your Ho - ly Word.
 rev - er - ence, true hu - mil - i - ty.
 grasp the heights of your plans for us.



Take your truth, plant it deep in us; Shape and
 Test our thoughts and our at - ti - tudes In the
 Truths un - changed from the dawn of time, That will



fash - ion us in your like - ness That the
 ra - di - ance of your pur - i - ty. Cause our
 e - cho down through e - ter - ni - ty. And by



light of Christ might be seen to-day In our acts of
 faith to rise, cause our eyes to see Your ma - jes - tic
 grace we'll stand on your pro - mis-es, And by faith we'll



love and our deeds of faith. Speak, O Lord, and ful -
 love and au - thor - i - ty. Words of pow'r that can
 walk as you walk with us. Speak, O Lord, as your



fill in us All your pur - pos-es for your
 nev - er fail, Let their truth pre-vail o - ver
 Church is built And you fill the earth with your



glo - ry.
 un - be-lief.
 glo - ry.