

St. John Evangelical Lutheran Church

A Family Connecting in Christ



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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.

Service of Word and Prayer

IN OUR WORSHIP TODAY ... we welcome retired pastor Rev. George Swanson, as we celebrate the Good News of Epiphany (January 6) that we have a Christ, a King, for all peoples of the world!

OPENING HYMN

"As with Gladness Men of Old"

Hymn 372

As with gladness men of old did the guiding star behold,
as with joy they hailed its light, leading onward, beaming bright,
so, most gracious Lord, may we evermore be led by thee.

As with joyful steps they sped, Savior, to thy lowly bed,
there to bend the knee before thee, whom heav'n and earth adore,
so may we with willing feet ever seek thy mercy seat.

As they offered gifts most rare at thy cradle, rude and bare,
so may we with holy joy, pure and free from sin's alloy,
all our costliest treasures bring, Christ, to thee, our heav'nly King.

Holy Jesus, ev'ry day keep us in the narrow way;
and, when earthly things are past, bring our ransomed souls at last
where they need no star to guide, where no clouds thy glory hide.

In the heav'nly country bright need they no created light;
thou its light, its joy, its crown, thou its sun which goes not down.
There forever may we sing alleluias to our King!

P: I rejoiced with those who said to me,

C: **"Let us go to the house of the Lord."**

P: How lovely is your dwelling place, Lord Almighty!

C: **Blessed are those who dwell in your house; they are ever praising you.**

P: The Lord is near to all who call on him,

C: **to all who call on him in truth.**

P: Show us your unfailing love, Lord,

C: **and grant us your salvation.**

P: The glory of the Lord will be revealed,

C: **and all people will see it together.**

P: The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us.

C: **We have seen his glory, the glory of the one and only Son, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.**

P: Let us pray.

P: Blessed Lord, you have given us your Holy Scriptures for our learning. May we so hear them, read, learn, and take them to heart that, being strengthened and comforted by your holy Word, we may cling to the blessed hope of everlasting life; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C: **Amen.**

FIRST LESSON

Isaiah 42:1-7

“Here is my servant, whom I uphold,
my chosen one in whom I delight;
I will put my Spirit on him
and he will bring justice to the nations.
He will not shout or cry out,
or raise his voice in the streets.
A bruised reed he will not break,
and a smoldering wick he will not snuff out.
In faithfulness he will bring forth justice;
he will not falter or be discouraged
till he establishes justice on earth.
In his law the islands will put their hope.”

This is what God the LORD says -
he who created the heavens and stretched them out,
who spread out the earth and all that comes out of it,
who gives breath to its people,
and life to those who walk on it:

"I, the LORD, have called you in righteousness;
I will take hold of your hand.
I will keep you and will make you
to be a covenant for the people
and a light for the Gentiles,
to open eyes that are blind,
to free captives from prison
and to release from the dungeon those who sit in darkness.

P: The Word of the Lord.

C: **Thanks be to God.**

HYMN

"Hail to the Lord's Anointed"

Hymn 384

Hail to the Lord's Anointed, Great David's greater Son!
Hail, in the time appointed, His reign on earth begun!
He comes to break oppression, To set the captive free,
To take away transgression, And rule in equity.

He comes with rescue speedy To those who suffer wrong,
To help the poor and needy And bid the weak be strong,
To give them songs for sighing, Their darkness turn to light
Whose souls, condemned and dying, Are precious in his sight.

Kings shall bow down before him And gold and incense bring;
All nations shall adore him; His praise all people sing.
To him shall prayer unceasing And daily vows ascend,
His kingdom still increasing, A kingdom without end.

O'er ev'ry foe victorious, He on his throne shall rest,
From age to age more glorious, All blessing and all-blest.
The tide of time shall never His covenant remove;
His name shall stand forever -- That name to us is Love.

SECOND LESSON

Acts 10:34-38

Then Peter began to speak: "I now realize how true it is that God does not show favoritism but accepts men from every nation who fear him and do what is right. You know the message God sent to the people of Israel, telling the good news of peace through Jesus Christ, who is Lord of all. You know what has happened throughout Judea, beginning in Galilee after the baptism that John preached - how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and power, and how he went around doing good and healing all who were under the power of the devil, because God was with him.

P: The Word of the Lord.

C: **Thanks be to God.**

GOSPEL LESSON

Matthew 2:1-12

After Jesus was born in Bethlehem in Judea, during the time of King Herod, Magi from the east came to Jerusalem and asked, "Where is the one who has been born king of the Jews? We saw his star in the east and have come to worship him."

When King Herod heard this he was disturbed, and all Jerusalem with him. When he had called together all the people's chief priests and teachers of the law, he asked them where the Christ was to be born. "In Bethlehem in Judea," they replied, "for this is what the prophet has written:

"But you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah,
are by no means least among the rulers of Judah;
for out of you will come a ruler
who will be the shepherd of my people Israel.' "

Then Herod called the Magi secretly and found out from them the exact time the star had appeared. He sent them to Bethlehem and said, "Go and make a careful search for the child. As soon as you find him, report to me, so that I too may go and worship him."

After they had heard the king, they went on their way, and the star they had seen in the east went ahead of them until it stopped over the place where the child was. When they saw the star, they were overjoyed. On coming to the house, they saw the child with his mother Mary, and they bowed down and worshiped him. Then they opened their treasures and presented him with gifts of gold and of incense and of myrrh. And having been warned in a dream not to go back to Herod, they returned to their country by another route.

P: The Gospel of the Lord.

C: **Praise be to you, O Christ!**

HYMN OF THE DAY

"How Lovely Shines the Morning Star"

Hymn 370

How lovely shines the Morning Star! The nations see and hail afar
The light in Judah shining. O David's Son of Jacob's race,
My Bridegroom and my King of grace, For you my heart is pining.
Lowly, Holy,
Great and glorious, O victorious
Prince of graces, Filling all the heav'nly places.

O highest joy by mortals won, True Son of God and Mary's Son,
The highborn King of ages! In your blest body let me be,
E'en as the branch is in the tree, Your life my life supplying.
Sighing, Crying
For the savor Of your favor
Resting never Till I rest in you forever.

O mighty Father, in your Son You loved me ere you had begun
This ancient world's foundation. Your Son has made a friend of me,
And when in spirit him I see, I joy in tribulation.
What bliss Is this!
He is living, To me giving
Life forever; Nothing me from him can sever.

Oh, joy to know that you, my Friend, Are Lord, beginning without end,
The first and last, eternal! And you at length -- O glorious grace --
Will take me to that holy place, The home of joys supernal.

Amen, Amen!

Come and meet me, Quickly greet me!

With deep yearning, Lord, I look for your returning.

Lift up the voice and strike the string, Let all glad sounds of music ring
In God's high praises blended. Christ will be with me all the way,
Today, tomorrow, ev'ry day Till trav'ling days are ended.

Sing out, Ring out

Triumph glorious, O victorious

Chosen nation; Praise the God of your salvation.

SERMON

"Like Ebony and Ivory"

Acts 10:34-38

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.

PRAYER

P: Lord, hear my prayer, listen to my cry for mercy;

C: **in your faithfulness and righteousness, come to my relief.**

P: Spare us, Lord, from the lies of the devil and the attacks of our conscience. Comfort and save us in your patient compassion.

C: **Have mercy on us, Jesus.**

P: Guide us, Lord, to the wisdom of your Word and the power of your promises. Take away our confusion and doubt.

C: **Have mercy on us, Jesus.**

P: Hear us, Lord, when we come to you in prayer. Make us confident to take you at your word and to follow you in faith.

C: **Have mercy on us, Jesus.**

P: Empower us, Lord, to walk in your ways and live in your truth. Fill us with your love, that we may love you and one another.

C: **Have mercy on us, Jesus.**

PRAYER OF THE DAY

P: Almighty God, you gave your only Son to take on our humanity and to dwell among us. Grant that we, who have been born again and made your children in Baptism, may daily be renewed by your Holy Spirit; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

C: **Amen.**

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.

BLESSING

P: The almighty and merciful Lord - the Father, the + Son, and the Holy Spirit
- bless and keep us.

C: **Amen.**

CLOSING HYMN

"Beautiful Savior"

Hymn 522

Beautiful Savior, King of creation,
Son of God and Son of Man! Truly I'd love thee,
Truly I'd serve thee, Light of my soul, my joy, my crown.

Fair are the meadows, Fair are the woodlands,
Robed in flow'rs of blooming spring; Jesus is fairer,
Jesus is purer; He makes our sorr'wing spirit sing.

Fair is the sunshine, Fair is the moonlight,
Bright the sparkling stars on high; Jesus shines brighter,
Jesus shines purer, Than all the angels in the sky.

Beautiful Savior, Lord of the nations,
Son of God and Son of Man! Glory and honor,
Praise, adoration, Now and forevermore be thine!

OFFERING

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Prayer **How Lovely Shines the Morning Star** Text: Philipp Nicolai, 1556-1608, abr., adapts; tr. The Lutheran Hymnal, 1941, alt.
Tune: Philipp Nicolai, 1556-1608; setting: Choralbuch zum Evangelischen Kirchengesangbuch, 1955, alt. Text and tune: public domain
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