

**ST. JOHN'S LUTHERAN CHURCH - MISSOURI SYNOD
ST. JOHN'S EAGLE'S NEST PRESCHOOL**

MISSION STATEMENT
Fellowship of Hope, Teaching, Serving and
Proclaiming!

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THIRD SUNDAY IN ADVENT

"Rejoice Always!"



5:30PM — December 16, 2017

8:00AM — December 17, 2017

THOSE WHO SERVE US

Each Member of St. John's	A Minister
Rev. Ted Gall	Senior Pastor
Mrs. Sandy Esker.....	Preschool Director
Mr. Jamie Lotz	Organist
CHILDREN'S CHRISTMAS PROGRAM	10:30AM
Mr. Todd Zeigler.....	5:30PM Elder on Duty
Wes Radloff	5:30PM Acolyte
Mr. Jeff Stremming.....	8AM Elder on Duty
Makenna Duckwitz.....	8AM Acolyte
Mr. Gayland Bourland	10:30AM Elder on Duty
Tyler Budde & Camille Zeigler.....	10:30AM Acolytes
Mr. Gayland Bourland 343-4366	Elder on Duty for December 18-22, 2017
Missionaries from Pakistan	Younis Darshan and Raja Shaleem
Missionaries from India	Ajay Paul & Sonne
Sister Congregation	in Blidene, Latvia
Julie Scott 343-3047	Prayer Chain Coordinator

WELCOME To our friends who know us, we renew our welcome; to the stranger, we extend our sincere greeting. If you are a visitor, please understand that you are our guest and we want you to feel welcome and comfortable. We are happy you chose to be with us in this service, and pray you have been blessed by our Lord today as He has blessed us by your presence.

CHRIST is important to us

- in our worship
- in our study
- in our fellowship
- in our lives.

YOU are important to us

- in our worship
- in our study
- in our fellowship
- in our lives.

HIS VISION FOR US:

St. John's will be known for being involved in our changing community, for providing leadership in our changing world, and for serving others in Christian love.

We will welcome our diverse guests with open arms. Our friendly, loving and accepting people will engage our guests, mentor them in the faith, and inspire many to become members.

Our members will be motivated by the cross to be actively engaged in ministry, showing love and care to others. We will encourage one another, nurture one another, and enthusiastically serve our God together!

HIS GOAL FOR US:

We will pray and work with singleness of purpose to expand the impact of our ministry to God's children of all ages, with special emphasis on young families, by developing new ways to strengthen the relationship between St. John's, our members and our community, providing the facilities and resources to involve more people in ministry and outreach.

WELCOME CENTER Greeters are present at the Welcome Center in the atrium adjacent to our sanctuary before and after the service to answer any questions you may have, provide directions to restrooms, classrooms, etc. If you are a first time guest, we also have a gift for you. If you live in our community or surrounding area and you do not have a church home, we welcome your consideration.

ATTENDANCE REGISTER Kindly fill out a registration card (welcome side) located in the pew rack. Our guests are also asked to complete the address and phone number portion. Please pass your card to the center aisle to be gathered during the offering.

AS WE GATHER If you light the candles of an Advent wreath at church or at home, it's likely that the color of the candle you light this Sunday is pink. It's also likely that this is the only pink candle on the wreath. Pink is a color of joy. In fact, this Third Sunday in Advent is commonly referred to as "Rejoice Sunday." But don't confuse the joy we celebrate this Advent with a passing happiness. No, the joy we have this Advent is greater. It lasts always. That's what today's Epistle assures us when Paul writes, "Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in

Christ Jesus for you” (1 Thessalonians 5:16–18). Only in Jesus, the coming Savior, can we rejoice in good times and bad times, busy times and quiet times, sick times and healthy times. In Christ, we rejoice always!

RINGING OF THE BELLS

PRELUDE

ANNOUNCEMENTS

+ PREPARATION +

OPENING HYMN..... “Life Up Your Heads, Ye Mighty Gates”..... [LSB 341]

OPENING SENTENCES 1 Thessalonians 5:16–18

Pastor: Rejoice always,

People: pray without ceasing,

Pastor: give thanks in all circumstances;

People: for this is the will of God

All: in Christ Jesus for you.

LIGHTING THE ADVENT CANDLE *John 8:12; John 1:5; 1 Corinthians 4:5;
2 Corinthians 4:6*

Pastor: Jesus Christ is the Light of the world,

People: the light no darkness can overcome.

Pastor: Let Your light scatter the darkness

People: and illumine Your Church.

INVOCATION

Pastor: In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

People: Amen.

CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION *1 Thessalonians 5:21–23*

Pastor: “But test everything; hold fast what is good. Abstain from every form of evil.” Since we are gathered to hear God’s Word, call upon Him in prayer and praise. Let us first consider our unworthiness and confess before God and one another that we have sinned in thought, word, and deed, and that we cannot free ourselves from our sinful condition. Together as His people, let us take refuge in the infinite mercy of God, our heavenly Father, seeking His grace for the sake of Christ, and saying: God, be merciful to me, a sinner.

People: **Almighty God, have mercy upon us, forgive us our sins, and lead us to everlasting life. Amen.**

Pastor: “Now may the God of peace Himself sanctify you completely, and may your whole spirit and soul and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.” Upon this your confession, I, by virtue of my office, as a called and ordained servant of the Word, announce the grace of God unto all of you, and in the stead and by the command of my Lord Jesus Christ I forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

People: **Amen.**

+ WORD +

ADVENT VERSE..... “O Come, O Come, Emmanuel”..... [Sts. 5–6: LSB 357]

SALUTATION

Pastor: The Lord be with you.

People: **And also with you.**

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Pastor: Let us pray. Lord Jesus Christ,

People: **we implore You to hear our prayers and to lighten the darkness of our hearts by Your gracious visitation;**

Pastor: for You live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

People: **Amen.**

OLD TESTAMENT READING..... Isaiah 61:1-4, 8-11

(“The Lord has anointed me to bring good news.”)

The Spirit of the Lord GOD is upon me, because the LORD has anointed me to bring good news to the poor; he has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to those who are bound; ²to proclaim the year of the LORD's favor, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all who mourn; ³to grant to those who mourn in Zion—to give them a beautiful headdress instead of ashes, the oil of gladness instead of mourning, the garment of praise instead of a faint spirit; that they may be called oaks of righteousness, the planting of the LORD, that he may be glorified.⁴ They shall build up the ancient ruins; they shall raise up the former devastations; they shall repair the ruined cities, the devastations of many generations. For I the LORD love justice; I hate robbery and wrong; I will faithfully give them their recompense, and I will make an everlasting covenant with them.⁹ Their offspring shall be

known among the nations, and their descendants in the midst of the peoples; all who see them shall acknowledge them, that they are an offspring the LORD has blessed.

¹⁰ I will greatly rejoice in the LORD; my soul shall exult in my God, for he has clothed me with the garments of salvation; he has covered me with the robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decks himself like a priest with a beautiful headdress, and as a bride adorns herself with her jewels.¹¹ For as the earth brings forth its sprouts, and as a garden causes what is sown in it to sprout up, so the Lord GOD will cause righteousness and praise to sprout up before all the nations.

Pastor: This is the Word of the Lord.

People: **Thanks be to God.**

EPISTLE 1 Thessalonians 5:16-24

(“Rejoice always. Do not quench the Spirit.”)

¹⁶ Rejoice always, ¹⁷ pray without ceasing, ¹⁸ give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you. ¹⁹ Do not quench the Spirit. ²⁰ Do not despise prophecies, ²¹ but test everything; hold fast what is good. ²² Abstain from every form of evil. ²³ Now may the God of peace himself sanctify you completely, and may your whole spirit and soul and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. ²⁴ He who calls you is faithful; he will surely do it.

Pastor: This is the Word of the Lord.

People: **Thanks be to God.**

5:30PM & 8AM MINISTRY OF MUSIC..... “Silent Night”..... by Crosstones

GOSPEL VERSE..... “Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus” [St. 1: LSB 338]

Come, Thou long-expected Jesus, Born to set Thy people free;

From our fears and sins release us; Let us find our rest in Thee.

Israel’s strength and consolation, Hope of all the earth Thou art,

Dear desire of ev’ry nation, Joy of ev’ry longing heart. Text: Charles Wesley, 1707–88, alt. Public domain

HOLY GOSPEL..... John 1:6-8, 19-28

(“Make straight the way of the Lord.”)

⁶ There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. ⁷ He came as a witness, to bear witness about the light, that all might believe through him. ⁸ He was not the light, but came to bear witness about the light. ¹⁹ And this is the testimony of John, when the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, “Who are you?” ²⁰ He confessed, and did not deny, but confessed, “I am not the Christ.” ²¹ And they asked him, “What then? Are you Elijah?” He said, “I am not.” “Are you the Prophet?” And he answered, “No.” ²² So they said to him, “Who are you? We need to give an answer to those who sent us. What do you say about yourself?” ²³ He said, “I am the voice of one crying out in the

wilderness, 'Make straight the way of the Lord,' as the prophet Isaiah said." ²⁴ (Now they had been sent from the Pharisees.) ²⁵ They asked him, "Then why are you baptizing, if you are neither the Christ, nor Elijah, nor the Prophet?" ²⁶ John answered them, "I baptize with water, but among you stands one you do not know, ²⁷ even he who comes after me, the strap of whose sandal I am not worthy to untie." ²⁸ These things took place in Bethany across the Jordan, where John was baptizing.

Pastor: This is the Gospel of the Lord.

People: **Praise to You, O Christ.**

APOSTLES' CREED

HYMN OF THE DAY **"Once He Came In Blessing"**..... [LSB 333]

SERMON..... **"A Gift That Changes Lives"** by Rev. Gary Fortkamp
John 3:15; John 13:34-35; 1 Corinthians 12:27

OFFERING/OFFERTORY **"Hark The Glad Sound"** [St. 1: LSB 349]

Hark the glad sound! The Savior comes, The Savior promised long;
Let ev'ry heart prepare a throne And ev'ry voice a song.

Text: Philip Doddridge, 1702–51. Public domain

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH

Pastor: Let us come before our Lord in prayer, asking Him to hear our prayer and grant us joy. Lord of joy, during this season of Advent, prepare our hearts that we would be made ready to receive Your Son as He comes in His incarnation and birth, but also in His body and blood. Make us ever ready for His final coming on the Last Day. Lord, in Your mercy,

People respond: hear our prayer and grant us joy.

Pastor: Lord of joy, You have called Your Church to bear witness to Christ's redeeming work. Grant that we boldly proclaim the Good News of the One who brings joy to the world through His life, death, and resurrection, that all who hear it may receive the gift of salvation. Lord, in Your mercy,

Pastor: Lord of joy, You have instructed us to pray for workers in Your harvest field. Raise up faithful and loving teachers of Your Word so that Christ may be proclaimed near and far. Make us Your instruments to encourage and equip individuals for work in Your Church. Lord, in Your mercy,

Pastor: Lord of joy, we ask that You stretch forth Your almighty arm to protect the men and women who serve in the Armed Forces of our land. Support them,

granting them courage and loyalty. Strengthen them to serve with integrity and honor. Lord, in Your mercy,

Pastor: Lord of joy, You are the creator and sustainer of all things. According to Your will, grant healing to those who suffer in body and mind. Look with favor upon Your servants, [especially . . .], and if it is Your will, restore them to health, or give them grace to accept tribulation, knowing that Your grace is sufficient for them. Lord, in Your mercy,

Pastor: Into Your hands we commend all for whom we pray, trusting in Your mercy and Your promise to hear us for the sake of the One in whose name we come, Your Son, Jesus Christ.

People: **Amen.**

LORD'S PRAYER

BENEDICTION 1 Thessalonians 5:16–18

Pastor: Rejoice always,

People: **pray without ceasing,**

Pastor: give thanks in all circumstances;

People: **for this is the will of God**

All: **in Christ Jesus for you.**

Pastor: The Lord bless you and keep you. The Lord make His face shine on you and be gracious to you. The Lord look upon you with favor and give you peace.

Numbers 6:24–26

People: **Amen.**

HYMN..... **“Children Of The Heavenly Father”**..... **[LSB 725]**

SILENT PRAYER

GREETING OF PEACE

POSTLUDE

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