



SERVICE OF THE WORD

THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT

DECEMBER 13, 2020 † 9:00 A.M.

ST. JOHN'S LUTHERAN CHURCH † NORTHFIELD, MINNESOTA

Welcome to worship at St. John's!

We especially welcome all who are listening this morning!

During the season of COVID-19 pandemic, St. John's will continue to follow state and federal guidance for public gatherings. We deeply miss seeing our community in person and eating at the Lord's table together. We hold fast to the knowledge that we are not the first generation to experience fear of deadly disease, and we are not the first community separated unwillingly by circumstances.

We know that the resources of our faith can sustain us as we are apart.

Our prayer is that in this broadcast you can hear the Holy Spirit speaking to you through the Word; that you can sing along and join in fervent prayer for our world, and that as we share the peace, you can set an intention to reach out, in whatever ways this moment allows, to share God's love with someone else.



St. John's Lutheran Church is a community grounded in the promise of God's grace and called to extend Christ's welcome to all people. Every day, Christ meets us all just as we are, extending love to people of every age, race or ethnicity, physical appearance, sexual orientation, gender identity, physical or mental ability, marital or relationship status, economic circumstance, educational achievement, political affiliation, or religious background.

While we do not always agree, we choose to walk and grow in faith together, believing that God creates diversity, and loves and welcomes us.

We warmly welcome you here.

GATHERING IN GOD'S PRESENCE

Prelude — <i>Love, the Guest</i> : “He Comes to Us as One Unknown”	Robert Powell
<i>Love, the Rose</i> : “Lo, How a Rose E'er Blooming”	John Ferguson
<i>Love, the Star</i> : “O Morning Star, How Fair and Bright”	Paul Manz
<i>Love, the Lord</i> : “People, Look East”	David Sims

Welcome and Announcements

*Confession and Forgiveness

☞ Blessed be God, † Son, and Holy Spirit,
whose forgiveness is sure
and whose steadfast love endures forever.

☞ **Amen.**

Let us confess our sin, calling for God's transforming power.

Silence for reflection and self-examination.

☞ Loving and forgiving God,

☞ **we confess that we are held captive by sin.
Even with our best efforts, we have gone astray.
We have not welcomed the stranger;
we have not loved our neighbor;
we have not been Christ to one another.
Restore us, O God.**

**Wake us, turn us from our sins,
and renew us each day in the light of Christ.**

☞ People of God, hear this glad news:
by God's endless grace
your sins are forgiven and you are free—
free from all that holds you back,
and free to live in the peaceable realm of God.
May you be strengthened in God's love,
† comforted by Christ's peace,
and accompanied with the power of the Holy Spirit.

☞ **Amen.**

*Gathering Hymn — “People, Look East” (#248)

BESANÇON



Peo - ple, look east. The time is near of the crown - ing
Fur - rows, be glad. Though earth is bare, one more seed is
Stars, keep the watch. When night is dim, one more light the
An - gels an - nounce with shouts of mirth him who brings new



of the year. Make your house fair as you are a - ble,
plant - ed there. Give up your strength the seed to nour - ish,
bowl shall brim, shin - ing be - yond the frost - y weath - er,
life to earth. Set ev - 'ry peak and val - ley hum - ming



trim the hearth and set the ta - ble. Peo - ple, look
that in course the flow'r may flour - ish. Peo - ple, look
bright as sun and moon to - geth - er. Peo - ple, look
with the word, the Lord is com - ing. Peo - ple, look



east, and sing to - day— Love, the Guest, is on the way.
east, and sing to - day— Love, the Rose, is on the way.
east, and sing to - day— Love, the Star, is on the way.
east, and sing to - day— Love, the Lord, is on the way.

Text: Eleanor Farjeon, © Miss E. Farjeon Will Trust, by permission of David Higham Associates; Music: French carol; arr. Barry Rose, © 1999 Novello & Co.

*Lighting of the Advent Wreath

- ☐ We light candles during Advent, praying that our preparation for Christmas may help us look outward in love and look forward in hope.

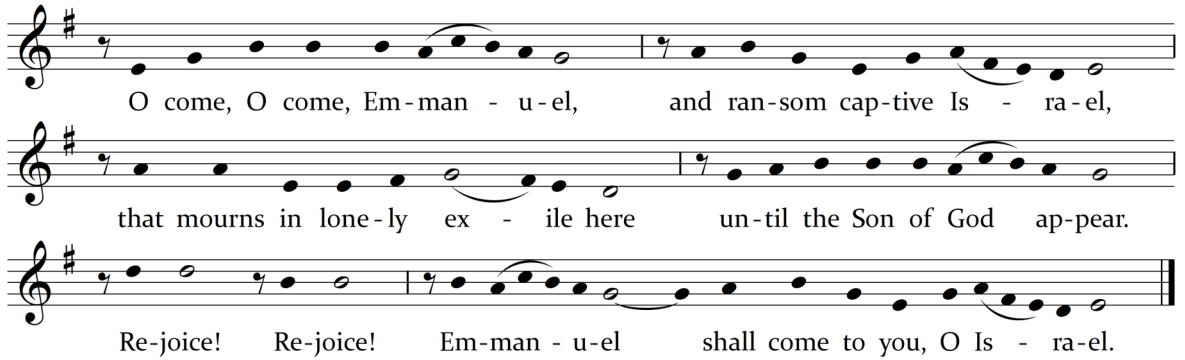
The prophet Isaiah tells us God comes
through someone who receives God's spirit,
and through a community that hears the good news.
The Spirit of the Living God is upon me, because God has anointed me
to announce good news to the humble, bind up the broken-hearted,
proclaim liberty to captives and release to those in prison,
to comfort all who mourn, to give them garlands instead of ashes,
oil of gladness instead of mourners' tears.

We light our third candle as a sign of hope that the Spirit of God may anoint us to show God's liberating love.

- ☑ **Risen Christ, Light of the world, shine in our lives and shine among us now.**

***Response Hymn** — “O Come, O Come, Emmanuel” (#257)

VENI, EMMANUEL



O come, O come, Em-man - u - el, and ran-som cap-tive Is - ra - el,
that mourns in lone-ly ex - ile here un-til the Son of God ap-pear.
Re-joice! Re-joice! Em-man - u - el shall come to you, O Is - ra - el.

Text: Psalterium Cantionum Catholicarum, 1710, tr. composite; Music: French processional, 15th cent.

***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**

- ☐ Stir up the wills of your faithful people, Lord God, and open our ears to the words of your prophets, that, anointed by your Spirit, we may testify to your light; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.
- ☑ **Amen.**

HEARING GOD'S WORD

Children's Message

First Reading — Isaiah 61:1-4, 8-11

¹The spirit of the Lord GOD is upon me, because the LORD has anointed me; he has sent me to bring good news to the oppressed, to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and release to the prisoners; ²to proclaim the year of the LORD's favor, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all who mourn; ³to provide for those who mourn in Zion—to give them a garland instead of ashes, the oil of gladness instead of mourning, the mantle of praise instead of a faint spirit. They will be called oaks of righteousness, the planting of the LORD, to display his glory. ⁴They shall build up the ancient ruins, they shall raise up the former devastations; they shall repair the ruined cities, the devastations of many generations.

⁸For I the LORD love justice, I hate robbery and wrongdoing; I will faithfully give them their recompense, and I will make an everlasting covenant with them. ⁹Their descendants shall be known among the nations, and their offspring among the peoples; all who see them shall acknowledge that they are a people whom the LORD has blessed. ¹⁰I will greatly rejoice in the LORD, my whole being 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 with a garland, and as a bride adorns herself with her jewels. ¹¹For as the earth brings forth its shoots, and as a garden causes what is sown in it to spring up, so the Lord GOD will cause righteousness and praise to spring up before all the nations.

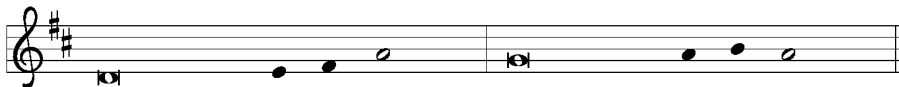
☐ The word of the Lord.

☑ Thanks be to God.

Psalmody — Psalm 126

Antiphon: David Sims

*Antiphon: When the Lord restored the fortunes of Zion,
then were we like those who dream.*



¹When the LORD restored the for- | tunes of Zion,
then were we like | those who dream.

²**Then was our mouth filled with laughter, and our tongue with | shouts of joy.
Then they said among the nations, “The LORD has done great | things for them.”**

³The LORD has done great | things for us,
and we are | glad indeed. *Antiphon*

⁴**Restore our for- | tunes, O LORD,
like the watercourses | of the Negeb.**

⁵Those who | sowed with tears
will reap with | songs of joy.

⁶**Those who go out weeping, carry- | ing the seed,
will come again with joy, shoulder- | ing their sheaves. *Antiphon***

Second Reading — 1 Thessalonians 5:16-24

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

- L** The word of the Lord.
- C** Thanks be to God.

*Gospel Acclamation — “Wait for the Lord” (#262)

WAIT FOR THE LORD

The musical score is written for voice and piano. It features a treble and bass clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#). The melody is simple and repetitive, with lyrics: "Wait for the Lord, whose day is near. Wait for the Lord: be strong, take heart!" The piano accompaniment consists of chords and single notes that support the vocal line.

Text: Taizé Community; Music: Jacques Berthier © 1994 Les Presses de Taizé, admin. GIA Publications

*Gospel — John 1:6-8, 19-28

- P** The Holy Gospel according to John, the 1st chapter.
- C** Glory to you, O Lord.

⁶There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. ⁷He came as a witness to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him. ⁸He himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light.

¹⁹This is the testimony given by John when the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, “Who are you?” ²⁰He confessed and did not deny it, but confessed, “I am not the Messiah.” ²¹And they asked him, “What then? Are you Elijah?” He said, “I am not.” “Are you the prophet?” He answered, “No.” ²²Then they said to him, “Who are you? Let us have an answer for those who sent us. What do you say about yourself?” ²³He said, “I am the voice of one crying out in the wilderness, ‘Make straight the way of the Lord,’ ” as the prophet Isaiah said. ²⁴Now they had been sent from the Pharisees. ²⁵They asked him, “Why then are you baptizing if you are neither the Messiah, nor Elijah, nor the prophet?” ²⁶John answered them, “I baptize with water. Among you stands one whom you do not know, ²⁷the one who is coming after me; I am not worthy to untie the thong of his sandal.” ²⁸This took place in Bethany across the Jordan where John was baptizing.

- P** The Gospel of the Lord.
- C** Praise to you, O Christ.

RESPONDING TO GOD'S WORD

Hymn of the Day — "It Came upon the Midnight Clear" (#282)

CAROL



It came up - on the mid - night clear, that glo - rious song of old,
Still through the clo - ven skies they come with peace - ful wings un - furled,
And you, be - neath life's crush - ing load, whose forms are bend - ing low,
For lo! The days are has - t'ning on, by proph - ets seen of old,



from an - gels bend - ing near the earth to touch their harps of gold;
and still their heav'n - ly mu - sic floats o'er all the wea - ry world.
who toil a - long the climb - ing way with pain - ful steps and slow;
when with the ev - er - cir - cling years shall come the time fore - told,



"Peace on the earth, good will to all, from heav'n's all - gra - cious king."
A - bove its sad and low - ly plains they bend on hov - 'ring wing,
look now, for glad and gold - en hours come swift - ly on the wing;
when peace shall o - ver all the earth its an - cient splen-dors fling,



The world in sol - emn still - ness lay to hear the an - gels sing.
and ev - er o'er its ba - bel sounds the bless - ed an - gels sing.
oh, rest be - side the wea - ry road and hear the an - gels sing.
and all the world give back the song which now the an - gels sing.

Text: Edmund H. Sears; Music: Richard S. Willis

*Prayers of Intercession

After each petition:

- L** Lord, in your mercy,
- C** hear our prayer.

***Peace**

☐ The peace of Christ be with you always.

☑ **And also with you.**

You are invited to share God's peace with those around you.

Offering of Our Gifts

Music at the Offering:

"O Come, O Come, Emmanuel"

Gerhard Krapf

***Thanksgiving for the Word**

☐ Holy God, the Beginning and the Ending, our Hope as we wait,
we praise you for joining us to your people of old.
We bless you for your prophets who call us to righteousness
and promise a new earth with peace for all.

We praise you for the coming of Jesus our Lord,
who lifts up the lowly, heals the suffering world,
and proclaims your way of mercy and truth.

Send your Spirit on all who receive your Word.
Nurture our faith with your grace,
accompany us with your might,
and empower our zeal for your justice and joy.
For your Word through the church, we praise you, O God.

☑ **Amen.**

***The Lord's Prayer**

**Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven.**

Give us today our daily bread.

Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us.

Save us from the time of trial and deliver us from evil.

**For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours,
now and forever. Amen.**

DEPARTING TO SERVE GOD'S WORLD

*Blessing

Response:

☩ Amen.

*Sending Hymn — “Hark, the Glad Sound!” (#239)

CHESTERFIELD



Hark, the glad sound! The Sav - ior comes, the Sav - ior
He comes the pris - 'ners to re - lease, in Sa - tan's
He comes the bro - ken heart to bind, the bleed - ing
Our glad ho - san - nas, Prince of peace, your wel - come



prom - ised long; let ev - 'ry heart pre -
bond - age held. The gate of brass be -
soul to cure, and with the trea - sures
shall pro - claim, and heav'n's e - ter - nal



pare a throne and ev - 'ry voice a song.
fore him burst, the i - ron fet - ters yield.
of his grace to en - rich the hum - ble poor.
arch - es ring with your be - lov - ed name.

Text: Philip Doddridge; Music: Thomas Haweis

*Dismissal

☩ Go in peace. Serve the Lord.

☩ Thanks be to God.

Postlude — “Fanfare”

Michael Helman



SERVING AT ST. JOHN'S TODAY:

Presiding	Pastor Pam Fickenscher
Preaching	Pastor Jonathan Davis
Assisting Ministers	Jaida and Dylan Gehring
Organist	Nathan Proctor
Cantor	David Sims

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Cover photograph of the St. John's Advent banner by John Maakestad; text by Bobbie Maakestad
Confirmation banner by Judy Swanson

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Announcements

Today's Radio Broadcast is given in loving memory of Bob Matta by his family. Sunday services are broadcast on KYMN Radio 1080AM / 95.1FM from 9:00-10:00 a.m. on Sundays. If you would like to sponsor a broadcast (cost is \$160), please contact the church office. Next available dates: February 28 and March 21 & 28. Video broadcasts can be seen on Northfield Community Television (NTV)-cable channel 187, Mondays at 7:30 p.m., Tuesdays at 12:00 a.m. and 9:00 a.m., Wednesdays at 2:00 p.m., and Fridays at 7:00 p.m.

Our Stewardship Appeal for 2021 Continues

Knowing members' intentions helps us plan next year's ministry. Please submit your giving intention for next year via the online form on our website or contact Leah Garlie directly at office@StJohnsNorthfield.org or 612-532-6863.

Poinsettia Orders for 2020

There are still a number of poinsettias available for purchase to decorate the Sanctuary for Christmas Eve and Christmas Day services. If you would like to order a poinsettia in honor or memory of someone, or in celebration of Christmas, please contact Leah Garlie at office@StJohnsNorthfield.org or 612-532-6863.

Stephen Ministers Host Gathering Featuring Naomi Bartley via Zoom—All are Welcome! Tuesday, December 15, 7:00 p.m.

Stephen Ministers have invited Naomi Bartley, a licensed professional clinical counselor (<http://naomibartley.com>) and a member of our congregation, to lead a virtual gathering. Measures of physical health, of recovery and death, are the headlines every day, and our mental health shapes how we manage that information—as well as our own possible COVID-19 experiences. Naomi will offer help for handling the losses and fears that characterize daily life as we now know it. Sally Lindell, our Parish Nurse, will also be involved. Everyone is welcome to join the meeting! Check the church calendar on our website for the Zoom link.

Thank You to All Who Participated in our Advent Fair Drive-Thru Event on December 2

It was so wonderful to see you! It is estimated that around 100 cars showed up to drive the course and stop at the various stations that had been set up in our church parking lots. Over 25 lawn-sized bags of winter outerwear, 2 large grocery carts full of food, and over \$450 in cash/check donations were collected for the Community Action Center. Thank you to all of the volunteers who helped make this evening run as smoothly as possible by assisting in various ways. We are so grateful for our amazing and generous congregation!

Announcements (continued)

Thank You for supporting the Blessing Box at St. John's!

The Blessing Box is located on the north side of St. John's and contains hygiene and food products as a "stop and go" location for anyone needing a helping hand. It's been a busy site this fall and the need is great at this time! All donations have been greatly appreciated. Items that go quickly are: toilet paper, hand soap/sanitizer, toothpaste and toothbrushes, deodorant and feminine products, as well as take and eat food items. Feel free to donate items directly to the Blessing Box. Questions? Email Julie Brehmer at children@StJohnsNorthfield.org.

Courageous Conversations Book Group

We will discuss Alicia Garza's new book: *Purpose of Power: How We Come Together When We Fall Apart* starting in January. It is available at Content in Northfield - a discount applies when you mention the book group. We will meet via Zoom on 2nd and 4th Thursdays from 6:30-8:00 p.m., January 14 & 28, February 11 & 25, March 11 & 25. Contact dawn.tommerdahl@gmail.com for more information or to sign up.

Holden Village in 2021?

With a hopeful stance toward next summer, we are pondering a St. John's trip to Holden Village in 2021. If pandemic-possible, Holden would be open to cohorts for 5 night stays. An all-inclusive price would include the boat ticket meals, room, and programming. Guests would be responsible for their own travels to and from Chelan Washington (Field's Point). If you are interested in being part of a group that could gather at Holden please contact Pastor Pam Fickenscher. Registration has not been opened, but we want to be ready when it is.

Habitat for Humanity

In 2021, Habitat for Humanity of Rice County will launch new Faith Builds projects in Northfield. They are seeking local faith communities to surround this effort with 365 days of prayers from December 1, 2020 through November 30, 2021. You can sign up to be one of the 365 people praying by going to <http://habitatricecounty.org/>.

Fair Trade Coffee, Tea, & Chocolates and Thistle Farms Hand Soaps

Contact dawn.tommerdahl@gmail.com to place your order for contactless delivery.

St. John's Website

Please check out our website at www.StJohnsNorthfield.org. Our website contains additional information regarding events and programs, along with a link to our online church directory in the top right hand corner. You can also access the church calendar.

Prayer Requests

We are called to remember one another in prayer. The church office has been made aware of the following persons for whom we pray today. This list is also for your use this week.

Healing and Support

Those in the hospital or in need of healing

Rae Pearson

Those with ongoing health concerns

Marlene Engstrom, Mary Ingbritsen, Donna James, Delores Nelson, Becky Ness,
Susan Nissen, John Quam, Jim Thompson, Julie Westerback, Laila Burns Hedstrom

All who are homebound, including

Elaine Feroe, Tom Fjelde, Lois Pearson

Involved in the mission of the church who have ties to St. John's

The Savior (El Salvador) Lutheran Church in El Cocuy, Colombia;

Iambi Lutheran Church in Iambi, Tanzania;

Mark Rich and Cynthia Holder Rich, ELCA missionaries in Tanzania

Prayer Requests / Stephen Ministry Requests

Stephen Ministry Requests

Call one of the pastors at 507-645-4429.

Prayer Chain Requests

Contact Mary Cisar at 507-663-1097 or macisar@gmail.com, or contact a pastor.

Lectionary Readings for Next Week (December 20):

Fourth Sunday of Advent

2 Samuel 7:1-11, 16 † Romans 16:25-27 † Luke 1:26-38 † Luke 1:46b-55

This Week At-a-Glance

The full calendar of events and building usage can be accessed on our website at www.StJohnsNorthfield.org.

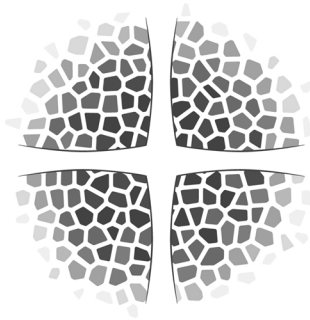
Our radio worship schedule will continue with broadcasts on Sundays at 9:00 a.m. (www.kymnradio.net).

Monday, Dec. 14	12:00 p.m.	Virtual Manna and Mercy Text Study via Zoom
Tuesday, Dec. 15	10:00 a.m.	Staff Meeting via Zoom
	1:00 p.m.	Worship Planning for Staff via Zoom
	7:00 p.m.	Church Council via Zoom
		Stephen Ministers Host Gathering with Naomi Bartley via Zoom
Wednesday, Dec. 16	10:00 a.m.	Wednesday Zoom Coffee Break
	6:30 p.m.	Advent Vespers Worship via Livestream
Thursday, Dec. 17		No Scheduled Activities
Friday, Dec. 18		No Scheduled Activities
Saturday, Dec. 19		No Scheduled Activities
Sunday, Dec. 20	9:00 a.m.	Worship via Radio Broadcast and Livestream
	10:00 a.m.	Virtual Sunday School via Zoom
		Virtual Youth Group via Zoom
	10:30 a.m.	Coffee Hour via Zoom

Worship with Us on Sundays via Livestream

Worship at 9:00 a.m. is livestreamed via our website.
We hope you'll join us via livestream or radio on KYMN.

Video of the service will still be available on the website later in the week.



St. John's

ELCA NORTHFIELD · MN

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Northfield, MN 55057

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office@StJohnsNorthfield.org

www.StJohnsNorthfield.org

Pam Fickenscher, *Senior Pastor*

Jonathan Davis, *Associate Pastor*

Carol Benson, *Director of Jubilate Choir*

Julie Brehmer, *Director of Children's Ministry*

Tim Byers, *Facility Manager*

Leah H. Garlie, *Office Manager / Finance Manager*

Angie Gehring, *Shared Ministry Coordinator*

Christy Hall-Holt, *Welcome Ministry Coordinator*

Emmanuel Kaghondi, *Director of Ministry with Youth & Families*

Sally Lindell, *Parish Nurse*

Arielle Loy, *Director of Alleluia Choir*

Zachery Pelletier, *Director of Rejoice Ringers*

Jaida Gehring / Marvin Perez, *Security and Custodial Assistants*

Nathan Proctor, *Organist and Director of Worship, Music & Arts*

Call the church office or check the website for a complete listing of staff emails.