



SERVICE OF HOLY COMMUNION

THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT

DECEMBER 17, 2023 † 8:30 A.M.

ST. JOHN'S LUTHERAN CHURCH † NORTHFIELD, MINNESOTA

Welcome to worship at St. John's!

We especially welcome all who are visiting this morning!

*All are invited to **sign the welcome sheets** in the black folders at the end of the pews.*

*Please pass them to the center and then back
so you can greet those worshipping around you.*

Ushers will gather these following worship.

*In the red hymnal (Evangelical Lutheran Worship), or purple hymnal
(All Creation Sings), hymn numbers are at the top of the page in the hymn section,
and page numbers are at the bottom of the page in the front section.*

An asterisk () invites you to stand as you are able.*

P Pastor, **L** Leader (Assisting Minister), **C** Congregation

Children are welcome to participate throughout our
worship service, including at Holy Communion.

*Parents, please assist children when they come forward for communion
to extend their hands if they are to receive the bread and wine.*

Children's Bibles and activity bags

*are available at both entrances to the Sanctuary
and scribble cards are available in the pews.*

Hearing assistance devices are available outside the Sanctuary or from an usher.

For those with hearing aids, the Sanctuary is equipped with a hearing loop.

Large print bulletins and hymns are available for worship services.



*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 — “Prepare the Royal Highway”

arr. Sondra Tucker

Rejoice Ringers

Welcome and Announcements

***Gathering Hymn** — ELW No. 264

“Prepare the Royal Highway”

***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.**

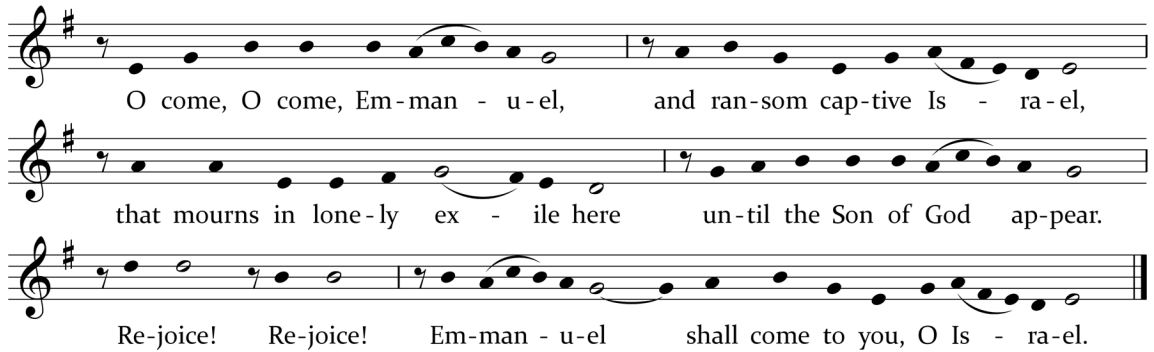
***Lighting of the Advent Wreath**

☐ Blessed are you, O Lord our God, ruler of the universe.
Your prophets spoke of a day when the desert would blossom and waters would break forth in the wilderness.
Bless us as we light the candles on this wreath.
Strengthen our hearts as we prepare for the coming of the Lord. May he give water to all who thirst,
for he is our light and our salvation.

☑ **Amen.**

*Response Hymn — “O Come, O Come, Emmanuel” *stanza 1*

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-joyce! Re-joyce! Em-man - u - el shall come to you, O Is - ra - el.

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

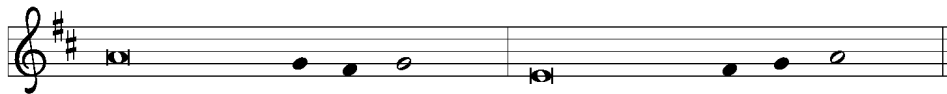
HEARING GOD’S WORD

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.

Antiphon: The LORD has done great things for us.



¹When the LORD restored the for-¹ tunes of Zion,
then were we like¹ those who dream.

²**Then was our mouth filled with laughter, and our tongue with¹ shouts of joy.
Then they said among the nations, “The LORD has done great¹ things for
them.”**

³The LORD has done great¹ things for us,
and we are¹ glad indeed.

⁴**Restore our for-¹ tunes, O LORD,
like the watercourses¹ of the Negeb. *Antiphon***

⁵Those who¹ sowed with tears
will reap with¹ songs of joy.

⁶**Those who go out weeping, carry-¹ ing the seed,
will come again with joy, shoulder-¹ ing their sheaves. *Antiphon***

Second Reading — 1 Thessalonians 5:16-24

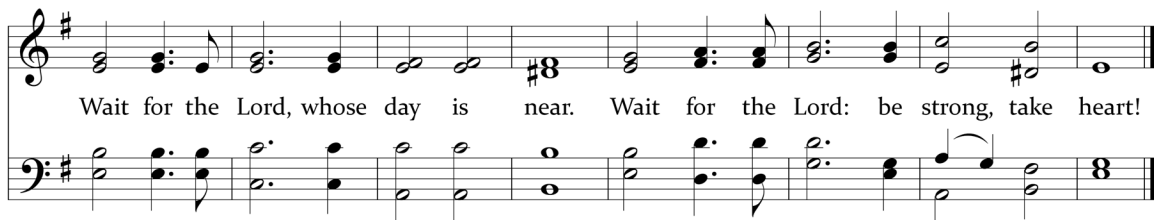
¹⁶Rejoice always, ¹⁷pray without ceasing, ¹⁸give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you. ¹⁹Do not quench the Spirit. ²⁰Do not despise the words of prophets, ²¹but test everything; hold fast to what is good; ²²abstain from every form of evil. ²³May the God of 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”

WAIT FOR THE LORD



Text: Taizé Community; Music: Jacques Berthier © 1984 Les Presses de Taizé, admin. GIA Publications

📖 The Holy Gospel according to John, the 1st chapter.

📖 **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.

📖 The Gospel of the Lord.

📖 **Praise to you, O Christ.**

Sermon

Pastor Pam Fickenscher

RESPONDING TO GOD’S WORD

Hymn of the Day — ELW No. 726

“Light Dawns on a Weary World”

*The Apostles’ Creed

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

**I believe in Jesus Christ, God’s 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 to the dead.
On the third day he rose again;
he ascended into heaven,
he is seated at the right hand of the Father,
and he will come to judge the living and the dead.

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

***Prayers of Intercession**

After each petition:

- ℣ Lord, in your mercy,
- ✎ 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

"I Wonder as I Wander"

arr. Peggy Bettcher

***Offering Hymn** — "Of the Father's Love Begotten" *stanza 1* DIVINUM MYSTERIUM

**Of the Father's love begotten ere the worlds began to be,
he is Alpha and Omega, he the source, the ending he,
of the things that are, that have been, and that future years shall see,
evermore and evermore.**

*Offering Prayer

L Let us pray.

C **Savior of the nations, come, and make your home here in us.
Feed us with your love, that our faith shines ever new
and our lives reveal your light. Amen.**

SHARING THE LORD'S SUPPER

*Great Thanksgiving

P The Lord be with you. **C** And al - so with you.
P Lift up your hearts. **C** We lift them to the Lord.

P Let us give thanks to the Lord our God. **C** It is right to give our thanks and praise.

P It is indeed right . . . we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of pow'r and God of might, heav-en and
earth are full of your glo - ry. Ho - san - na in the high - est.
Bless - ed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord. Ho - san - na, ho -
san - na in the high - est. Ho - san - na, ho - san - na in the high - est.

*Words of Institution

*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.**

*Communion will be received standing at stations in the front of sanctuary; ushers will direct you forward. **Gluten-free wafers** are available in the center. After you have been served the bread you will be offered wine or grape juice. The grape juice is white and is located in the center of the tray. **If you are unable to come forward, let an usher know, and communion will be brought to you.***

Music during Communion

"Lamb of God"

Lamb of God, you take a-way the sin of the world; have mer - cy on us.
Lamb of God, you take a-way the sin of the world; have mer - cy on us.
Lamb of God, you take a - way the sin of the world;
grant us peace, grant us peace.

Hymn — ELW No. 250

"Blessed Be the God of Israel"

Hymn — ELW No. 272

"Lo, How a Rose E'er Blooming"

***Post-Communion Blessing**

***Prayer after Communion**

- ℣ Generous God, in bread and cup you have revealed your glory for all people to see together. Nourished by this meal, send us out to proclaim your good news of liberation and release, brought to birth in Jesus Christ our Savior.
- ☩ Amen.

DEPARTING TO SERVE GOD’S WORLD

***Blessing**

Response:

- ☩ Amen.

***Sending Hymn** — ELW No. 248

“People, Look East”

***Dismissal**

- ℣ Go in peace. Serve the Lord.
- ☩ Thanks be to God!

Postlude — on BESANÇON

Kristina Langlois



Lectionary Readings for Next Week (December 24):

Fourth Sunday of Advent

2 Samuel 7:1-11, 16 † Psalm 89:1-4, 19-26 † Romans 16:25-27 † Luke 1:26-38

SERVING AT ST. JOHN'S TODAY:

Preaching	Pastor Pam Fickenscher
Presiding	Pastor Jonathan Davis
Assisting Minister	Ron Hebensperger
Organist	Nathan Proctor
Choir	Rejoice Ringers, David Sims and Will Fecko, directors
Communion Prep	Judy Smith
Communion Cleanup	Jill Enestvedt
Greeters	(8:30) TBD (10:45) TBD
Coffee Service	Herb and Pat Fick, Doug Johnson
Counters	Merilyn Calcutt, Reed Hagberg, Anne Olson, Michelle Kramer-Prevost
Ushers	John Ophaug, Kent Rommereim, Dave and Ruthie Neuger

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Cover image by Daniel Edwins, taken near Cannon Falls, March 2023.

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JOIN US FOR
ST. JOHN'S CHRISTMAS
WORSHIP SERVICES

Dec. 24: Fourth Sunday of Advent	10:00 a.m.
Christmas Eve Vespers:	3:00 p.m.
Christmas Eve Candlelight:	5:00 p.m.
Christmas Day:	10:00 a.m.
December 31:	10:00 a.m.

Livestream at
www.StJohnsNorthfield.org
or on KYMN 1080AM/95.1FM



Announcements

Additional announcements can be found in the weekly E-Voice.

Today's Radio Broadcast is given in memory of Ken Peterson and Loren Mathre by Rachel Peterson. Sunday services are broadcast on KYMN Radio 1080AM / 95.1FM at 8:30 a.m. on Sundays. If you would like to sponsor a broadcast (cost is \$160), please contact Leah Garlie at 507-645-4429 or office@StJohnsNorthfield.org. Available Dates: January 21 & 28.

Stewardship 2024 Appeal

Thanks to those who have returned their 2024 pledge card. We still need to hear from more of you in the next few weeks in order for leadership to craft a budget. You can scan the QR Code on the right, [complete the online pledge form](#) on our website, return a card to the church office or in the offering plate, or email your intent to Leah Garlie at office@StJohnsNorthfield.org. If you give electronically through automatic transfer, please review your giving and let us know your 2024 intent, even if it is to remain the same.



New Wellspring Circle Gathering Between Services in St. John's Hall

All younger-than-boomer women are welcome to join us during coffee hour to socialize and learn about our plans for 2024. Contact Jill Enestvedt (jillenestvedt@gmail.com) for more information.

Poinsettia Orders—Today is the Last Day to Order!

The Chancel Guild will be taking orders for poinsettias again this year. The flowers will be used to decorate the church for the 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, the order form is available in the Commons and [on the church website](#).

Annual Meeting Reports

For all those who are submitting information for the Annual Report, please turn in your report by Friday, December 22, and mark your calendar for the annual meeting on Sunday, January 28. (Watch future publications for more details regarding the annual meeting.)

Bandage Rolling Ministry Needs Your Help!

Help us turn clean, used sheets into bandages which Global Health Ministries distributes to hospitals and clinics in need. Join us on Thursday mornings in Fellowship Hall anytime between 9:00 a.m. and noon. It's easy to do while seated at a table. If this time doesn't work for you, or you have questions, contact Sara Bright.

Announcements (continued)

St. John's Community Christmas Day Dinner

December 25, 11:15 a.m.–1:30 p.m., St. John's Hall

We are excited to be hosting this wonderful holiday meal to all! We've filled our kitchen and dining hall volunteer slots—thank you to all who have signed up! **We still need a few more specific food donations:** 3 hash brown bakes (pan & recipe provided), 5 non-leafy cold salads (e.g. pasta, fruit, waldorf, quinoa, rice, coleslaw, bean, etc.), 1 dozen lefse (buttered and sugared), 3 pies (any kind), 4 dozen cookies or bars (any kind). All donated food can be store-bought or homemade. Paper sign-ups are available in the Commons or you can sign up online in the CCB Group “Christmas Dinner 2023,” (a link to this is located in the week E-Voice). You can also sign up by emailing Angie Gehring at sharedministry@StJohnsNorthfield.org or by calling the church office.

St. John's Women Annual Holiday Luncheon and Carols

Saturday, January 6, 2024, 11:30 a.m.–1:00 p.m., Ruth's On Stafford

Please join us for a time of fellowship, delicious food with a Norwegian theme to honor the heritage of our church, and festive holiday music presented by Carol Benson and others! All women of St. John's are invited! Cost is \$25 paid in advance. Watch for a registration table between services in December, or mail/bring a check to the church office, or you may email your reservation to womenstjohns500@gmail.com, and pay with PayPal—www.StJohnsNorthfield.org/women.

Year-End Giving

Year-end giving typically provides an outsize portion of St. John's annual budget. If you have not yet been able to contribute in 2023 and can at this time, your gifts to our operating funds will be much appreciated! Mailed checks need to be postmarked by December 30. Online gifts can be given by December 27 at www.StJohnsNorthfield.org. Thank you!

The Northfield ELCA congregations are considering a coordinated visit to Holden Village in early August of 2024. Households must still register individually, but a coordinated visit gives us opportunities to share travel plans and wisdom in planning a Holden journey. If you are interested, contact Pastor Pam and explore Holden's website at holdenvillage.org. Registration for summer 2024 will open in January.

Children and Youth

Christmas and New Year's Break

No Wednesday Programming on December 27 and January 3, or Sunday School and Sunday Youth Gathering on December 24 & 31.

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

Shirley Anderson, Jo Dahlin, John Ferguson, Darlene Hand, Roberta Morse,
Kent Rommereim, Wendy Scholz, Jean Wakely, Gail Nemy (mother of Lori Skoglund),
George Schneider (father of Betsy Gasior)

Those with ongoing health concerns

Jo Chambers, Billi Faillettaz, Bob Flaten, Jane Gelle, Greta Matzner-Gore, Donna James,
Carolyn Jennings, Dolores Nelson, Becky Ness, Paul Peterson, Scott Quinnell, Alice Rickert,
Laila Burns Hedstrom, Bruce Hella, Karl Jacobson (son of Pastor Del Jacobson)

All who are homebound, including

David and Pat Halsor, Elouise Quinnell

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; Katie Larson, ELCA missionary in Colombia

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.

Wednesday Night



**Served from 5:15–6:15 p.m.
in St. John's Hall**

Wednesday Night Meals Take a Break
Meals Resume January 10

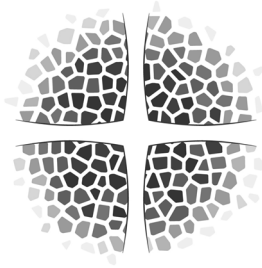
All are welcome!

*Wednesday Meals are made and served completely by people donating their time and talents.
Dessert contributions are always welcome and needed!*

This Week At-a-Glance

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

Monday, Dec. 18	12:00 p.m. 7:00 p.m.	Lunchtime Text Study via Zoom Stephen Ministers, Fireside Room
Tuesday, Dec. 19	7:45 a.m. 9:00 a.m. 10:00 a.m. 1:00 p.m. 5:00 p.m. 6:30 p.m. 7:00 p.m.	Tai Chi Class, Fellowship Hall S.A.I.L. Exercise Class, Fellowship Hall Staff Meeting, Fireside Room Worship Planning for Staff, Fireside Room Laura Baker Services Association - Holiday Party, St. John's Hall Stephen Ministers, St. John's Library Church Council, Undercroft NAMI (National Alliance on Mental Illness), Youth Room
Wednesday, Dec. 20	10:00 a.m. 11:00 a.m. 12:00 p.m. 3:45 p.m. 6:00 p.m. 6:15 p.m.	Visitation - Judith Stoutland, Commons Funeral - Judith Stoutland, Sanctuary Men's Bible Study, Fireside Room Afterschool Programming (Kindergarten-Grade 5), St. John's Evening Knitters, St. John's Library Confirmation (Grades 6-8), Undercroft High School Youth Group (Grades 9-12), Youth Room
Thursday, Dec. 21	7:45 a.m. 9:00 a.m.	Tai Chi Class, Fellowship Hall Quilting & Bandage Rolling, Fellowship Hall
Friday, Dec. 22	9:00 a.m. 7:00 p.m.	S.A.I.L. Exercise Class, Fellowship Hall NAMI Support Group, Fireside Room
Saturday, Dec. 23		No Scheduled Activities - Building Closed
Sunday, Dec. 24	10:00 a.m. 3:00 p.m. 5:00 p.m.	Worship / Nursery, Sanctuary Christmas Eve Vespers, Sanctuary Christmas Candlelight and Communion, Sanctuary
Monday, Dec. 25	10:00 a.m. 11:15 a.m.	Festive Christmas Eucharist, Sanctuary Christmas Day Dinner, St. John's Hall



St. John's
ELCA NORTHFIELD MN

**500 Third Street West
Northfield, MN 55057
507-645-4429
office@StJohnsNorthfield.org
www.StJohnsNorthfield.org**

*Pam Fickenscher, Senior Pastor
Jonathan Davis, Associate Pastor
Green Bouzard, Jubilate Choir Director
Julie Brehmer, Director of Children's Ministry
Steve Harner, Facility Manager
Leah H. Garlie, Office Manager / Finance Manager
Angie Gehring, Shared Ministry Coordinator
Sally Lindell, Parish Nurse
Arielle Loy, Alleluia Choir Director and Early Childhood Specialist
Kristin Partlo, Director of Ministry with Youth & Families
Nathan Proctor, Organist and Director of Worship, Music & Arts
David Sims and Will Fecko, Directors of Rejoice Ringers*

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

*St. John's Lutheran Church stands on the
ancestral homelands of the Wahpekute band of the Dakota nation.
We respect and are grateful for the generations of native people who have cared for this land.*