



SERVICE OF HOLY COMMUNION

FIRST SUNDAY OF CHRISTMAS

DECEMBER 31, 2023 † 10:00 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 — “La Nativité” from *Poèmes Évangéliques*

Jean Langlais

Each section of Jean Langlais’s “The Nativity” paints a musical picture of the evening of the Lord’s birth. The composer writes the accompanying text:

“In a humble manger on a silent night, Mary and Joseph awaited the birth of the Lord Christ. Once the child was born, the heavenly host in a gracious appearance, announced to the shepherds the event that took place in Bethlehem. The shepherds came to the manger and offered the child Jesus their most tender melodies as a sign of adoration. Thus the Holy Family found calm in the peace of the Lord.”

Welcome and Announcements

***Gathering Hymn** — ELW No. 269

“Once in Royal David’s City”

*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

- ☐ Almighty God, you wonderfully created the dignity of human nature and yet more wonderfully restored it. In your mercy, let us share the divine life of the one who came to share our humanity, Jesus Christ, your Son, our 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 61:10—62:3

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.

^{62:1}For Zion's sake I will not keep silent,
and for Jerusalem's sake I will not rest,
until her vindication shines out like the dawn,
and her salvation like a burning torch.

²The nations shall see your vindication,
and all the kings your glory;
and you shall be called by a new name
that the mouth of the LORD will give.

³You shall be a crown of beauty in the hand of the LORD,
and a royal diadem in the hand of your God.

℣ The word of the Lord.

✠ Thanks be to God.

Hymn of Praise — ELW No. 289

“Angels We Have Heard on High”

Second Reading — Galatians 4:4-7

⁴When the fullness of time had come, God sent his Son, born of a woman, born under the law, ⁵in order to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as children. ⁶And because you are children, God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, “Abba! Father!” ⁷So you are no longer a slave but a child, and if a child then also an heir, through God.

℣ The word of the Lord.

✠ Thanks be to God.

*Gospel Acclamation

Al - le - lu - ia. Lord, to whom shall we go?
You have the words of e - ter - nal life. Al - le - lu - ia.

*Gospel — Luke 2:22-40

Spark Story Bible, page 226

P The Holy Gospel according to Luke, the 2nd chapter.

C **Glory to you, O Lord.**

²²When the time came for their purification according to the law of Moses, [Joseph and Mary] brought [Jesus] up to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord ²³(as it is written in the law of the Lord, “Every firstborn male shall be designated as holy to the Lord”), ²⁴and they offered a sacrifice according to what is stated in the law of the Lord, “a pair of turtledoves or two young pigeons.”

²⁵Now there was a man in Jerusalem whose name was Simeon; this man was righteous and devout, looking forward to the consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit rested on him. ²⁶It had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not see death before he had seen the Lord’s Messiah. ²⁷Guided by the Spirit, Simeon came into the temple; and when the parents brought in the child Jesus, to do for him what was customary under the law, ²⁸Simeon took him in his arms and praised God, saying,

²⁹“Master, now you are dismissing your servant in peace,
according to your word;

³⁰for my eyes have seen your salvation,

³¹which you have prepared in the presence of all peoples,

³²a light for revelation to the Gentiles
and for glory to your people Israel.”

³³And the child’s father and mother were amazed at what was being said about him.

³⁴Then Simeon blessed them and said to his mother Mary, “This child is destined for the falling and the rising of many in Israel, and to be a sign that will be opposed ³⁵so that the inner thoughts of many will be revealed—and a sword will pierce your own soul too.”

³⁶There was also a prophet, Anna the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Asher. She was of a great age, having lived with her husband seven years after her marriage, ³⁷then as a widow to the age of eighty-four. She never left the temple but worshiped there with fasting and prayer night and day. ³⁸At that moment she came, and began to praise God and to speak about the child to all who were looking for the redemption of Jerusalem.

³⁹When they had finished everything required by the law of the Lord, they returned to

Galilee, to their own town of Nazareth. ⁴⁰The child grew and became strong, filled with wisdom; and the favor of God was upon him.

📖 The Gospel of the Lord.

🎵 Praise to you, O Christ.

Sermon

Rev. Amanda Simons

RESPONDING TO GOD'S WORD

Hymn of the Day — ELW No. 313

“O Lord, Now Let Your Servant”

*The Nicene Creed

We believe in one God,
the Father, the Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth,
of all that is, seen and unseen.

We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ,
the only Son of God,
eternally begotten of the Father,
God from God, Light from Light,
true God from true God, begotten, not made,
of one Being with the Father;
through him all things were made.

For us and for our salvation

he came down from heaven,
was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the virgin Mary
and became truly human.

For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate;
he suffered death and was buried.

On the third day he rose again
in accordance with the scriptures;
he ascended into heaven and is
seated at the right hand of the Father.

He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead,
and his kingdom will have no end.

**We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life,
who proceeds from the Father and the Son,
who with the Father and the Son is worshiped and glorified,
who has spoken through the prophets.
We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic church.
We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.
We look for the resurrection of the dead,
and the life of the world to come. 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

on DIVINUM MYSTERIUM

Alfred V. Fedak

***Offering Hymn** — “Of the Father’s Love Begotten” *stanza 2* DIVINUM MYSTERIUM

**Oh, that birth forever blessed, when the virgin, full of grace,
by the Holy Ghost conceiving, bore the Savior of our race,
and the babe, the world’s redeemer, first revealed his sacred face,
evermore and evermore.**

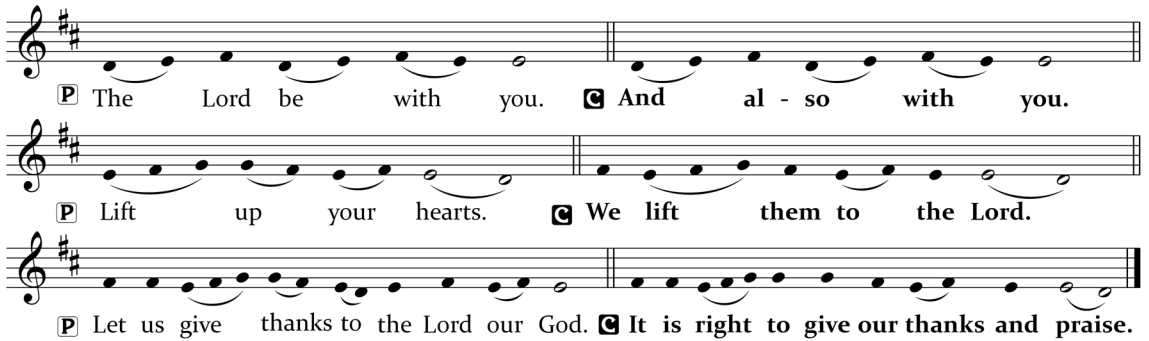
*Offering Prayer

L Let us pray.

C Gracious God, your Word-made-flesh brings harmony to the earth. As we offer ourselves and these your gifts, prepare us to receive the grace and truth you offer at this table and renew in us the song of your salvation, in Jesus Christ our Savior. Amen.

SHARING THE LORD'S SUPPER

*Great Thanksgiving

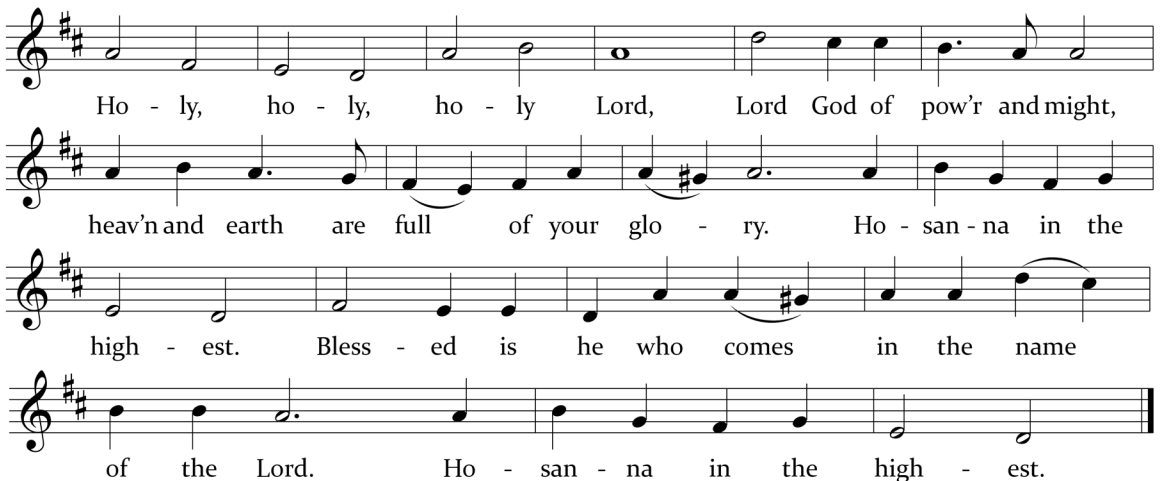


P The Lord be with you. **C** And al - so with you.

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

*Words of Institution

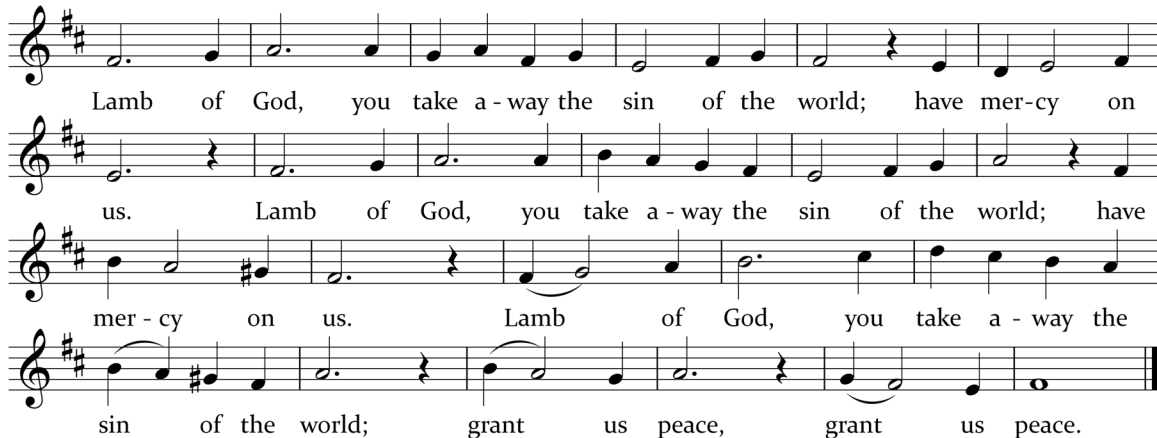
*The Lord's Prayer

**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. 296

“What Child Is This”

*Post-Communion Blessing

***Prayer at the Beginning of the Year**

- ℣ Eternal God, you have placed us in a world of space and time, and through the events of our lives you bless us with your love. Grant that in the new year we may know your presence, see your love at work, and live in the light of the event that gives us joy forever—the coming of your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.
- ☩ Amen.

DEPARTING TO SERVE GOD’S WORLD

***Blessing**

Response:

- ☩ Amen.

***Sending Hymn** — ELW No. 267

“Joy to the World”

***Dismissal**

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

Postlude — “Joy to the World”

Craig Phillips



Lectionary Readings for Next Week (January 7):

Baptism of Our Lord

Genesis 1:1-5 † Psalm 29 † Acts 19:1-7 † Mark 1:4-11

SERVING AT ST. JOHN'S TODAY:

Preaching	Rev. Amanda Simons
Presiding	Pastor Pam Fickenschler
Assisting Minister	Rev. Mark Rydberg
Organist	Joanne Rodland
Communion Service	David and Debby Nitz
Greeters	TBD
Ushers	Doug Johnson, Leif Knecht, John Ophaug

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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Learning and Fellowship Between Services

Next Week (January 7)

Coffee and Fellowship, St. John's Hall

Fair Trade Sales of Coffee and More, Commons

Sunday School: Preschool–Grade 5 (9:45–10:30 a.m., Lower Level)

Sunday Youth Gathering: Grades 6–12 (9:45–10:30 a.m., Youth Room)

Announcements

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

Today's Radio Broadcast is given by Cindy Clauson in memory of Merle & Idella Clauson and Michael Clauson. 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.

St. John's welcomes the Rev. Amanda Simons as our preacher today. Pastor Simons is the Director of Church Partnerships and Volunteerism at Lutheran Social Services of Minnesota.

The Church Building will be closed tomorrow, Monday, January 1, 2024.

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, 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! Thank you!

We welcome the St. Olaf Choir and its director, Dr. Anton Armstrong, to worship services on Sunday, January 14. This is a long-standing and deeply beloved tradition at St. John's as we welcome the choir back to the place of its birth and are blessed by their wonderful leadership and music. A reception in honor of the choir will be held between services in St. John's Hall.

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.

The Solar Panel Project approved by the congregation in August 2023 has been fast-tracked!

We expect installation in spring of 2024. If you would like to donate in 2023 to this capital appeal, please mark your donation "capital projects" or "solar panels."

Announcements (continued)

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.



The Adult Ministry & Education Board encourages you to save the evening of Tuesday, January 9, to hear Amy Jill Levine's 2024 Fretheim Lecture at Luther Seminary.

Amy Jill Levine is the author of the books we are reading for the Advent and Lenten Book reads (*Light of the World; The Misunderstood Jew*). We will organize carpooling for those who want to attend in person, and live-streaming at St. John's who prefer this option. Send an email to rob.quanbeck@gmail.com if you are interested in either option. More details to come!

Children and Youth

Christmas and New Year's Break

No Wednesday Programming on January 3.

Northfield Week at Good Earth Village along with Bethel and St. Peter's Churches

June 23–28, 2024

Good Earth Village offers camps for grades 2–7 with 2 or 5 night options (depending on grade). Use code NORTHFIELD24 for an additional \$100 off a full week or \$50 off a half week as a “campership” from St. John's. Visit <https://goodearthvillage.org/northfield> for details or contact Julie or Kristin with questions.

Attention Youth: Coming Soon—Sign-Ups for the Summer Amnicon Trip July 7–12

Contact information for Children and Youth

Julie Brehmer, Director of Children's Ministry at childrens@StJohnsNorthfield.org.

Kristin Partlo, Director of Ministry with Youth & Families at youth@StJohnsNorthfield.org

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, Roberta Morse, Wendy Scholz,
Jean Wakely, Gail Nemy (mother of Lori Skoglund)

Those mourning the loss of a loved one

Family of Van Miller

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), George Schneider (father of Betsy Gasior)

All who are homebound, including

VaLois Mandsager, Richard Olson, Louise 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

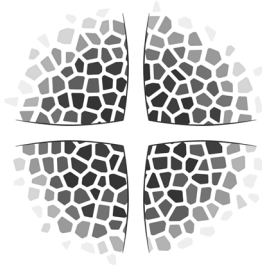
All are welcome!

*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, Jan. 1		<i>New Year's Day ~ Church Office and Building Closed</i>
Tuesday, Jan. 2	7:45 a.m. 9:00 a.m. 10:00 a.m. 1:00 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 Stephen Ministers, Fireside Room NAMI (National Alliance on Mental Health), Youth Room Northfield Rotary, St. John's Library
Wednesday, Jan. 3	11:00 a.m. 12:00 p.m. 6:00 p.m. 6:15 p.m. 6:30 p.m.	Personnel Committee, Undercroft Men's Bible Study, Fireside Room Evening Knitters, St. John's Library J-Term Confirmation (Grades 6-8), Locations Vary High School Youth Group (Grades 9-12), Youth Room Where Politics and Faith Meet: A Conversation, Fireside Room
Thursday, Jan. 4	7:45 a.m. 9:00 a.m. 9:30 a.m. 10:30 a.m.	Tai Chi Class, Fellowship Hall Quilting & Bandage Rolling, Fellowship Hall Communion at Millstream Commons, Offsite Communion at Benedictine Living Community, Offsite
Friday, Jan. 5	9:00 a.m. 7:00 p.m.	S.A.I.L. Exercise Class, Fellowship Hall NAMI Support Group, Fireside Room
Saturday, Jan. 6		St. John's Women Annual Christmas & Carols Luncheon, Offsite
Sunday, Jan. 7	8:30 a.m. 10:45 a.m.	Worship, Sanctuary (For the schedule between services, please see page 11.) Worship, Sanctuary



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.*