

St. James Evangelical **Lutheran Church** November 26, 2023 1st Sunday of Advent

Worship every Sunday 10:45 AM

Welcome

We welcome all visitors who come to worship with us today. We are delighted that you have come to share in the prayer and praise of our Lord and invite you to return and add your voice to ours in holy celebration. If you have a special need or prayer write it on the prayer card in the pew rack and place it in the offering plate. Before you leave us today, we ask that vou please sign our quest book.

Pulpit Supply: Vice Pastor Drew McCaffery Church Organist/Choir Director: Patricia McConnell Administrative Assistant: Tim Surkovich

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St. James Mission Statement: To make disciples of Jesus Christ through Word and Sacrament by the Holy Spirit.

Announcements: If you cannot read the hymns, you can turn to the hymn in the red ELW hymnal in the pew racks.

Prelude: The Angel Gabriel From Heaven Came arr. Mark Sedio (We take this time to silently prepare our hearts and minds for worship)

PLEASE STAND

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

All may make the sign of the cross, the sign marked at baptism, as the presiding minister begins.

In the name of the Father, and of the + Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

Almighty God, to whom all hearts are open, all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hid. Cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love you and worthily magnify your holy name, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

Let us confess our sin in the presence of God and of one another.

An extended silence may be kept.

Most merciful God.

We confess that we are captive to sin and cannot free ourselves. We have sinned against you in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done and by what we have left undone. We have not loved you with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. For the sake of your Son, Jesus Christ, have mercy on us. Forgive us, renew us, and lead us, so that we may delight in your will and walk in your ways, to the glory of your holy name. Amen.

In the mercy of almighty God, Jesus Christ was given to die for us, and for his sake God forgives us all our sins. As a called ordained minister of the Church of Christ, and by his authority, I therefore declare to you the entire forgiveness of all your sins, in the name of the Father, and the Son, and of the Holy Sprit. **Amen.**

We Gather

*GATHERING SONG:

O Lord. How Shall I Meet You

ELW 241

O Lord, How Shall I Meet You



Text: Paul Gerhardt, 1607-1676; tr. composite Music: WIE SOLL ICH DICH EMPFANGEN, Johann Crüger, 1598-1662

*GREETING:

P: The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

C: And also with you.



Glory to God



*PRAYER OF THE DAY:

P: Let us pray.

Stir up your power, Lord Christ, and come. By your merciful protection awaken us to the threatening dangers of our sins, and keep us blameless until the coming of your new day, for you live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen

* LIGHTING OF 1ST ADVENT CANDLE

*Candle Lighting Hymn Light One Candle to Watch for Messiah ELW 240

Light One Candle to Watch for Messiah



1 Light one can-dle to watch for Mes-si - ah: let the light ban-ish dark - ness.



Text: Wayne L. Wold, b. 1954

Music: TIF IN VELDELE, Yiddish folk tune Text © 1984 Fortress Press, admin. Augsburg Fortress.

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We Listen to the Word

First Reading: Isaiah 64:1-9

A reading from Isaiah.

¹O that you would tear open the heavens and come down, so that the mountains would quake at your presence—² as when fire kindles brushwood and the fire causes water to boil—to make your name known to your adversaries, so that the nations might tremble at your presence! ³When you did awesome deeds that we did not expect,

you came down, the mountains quaked at your presence. ⁴From ages past no one has heard, no ear has perceived, no eye has seen any God besides you, who works for those who wait for him. ⁵You meet those who gladly do right, those who remember you in your ways. But you were angry, and we sinned; because you hid yourself we transgressed. ⁶We have all become like one who is unclean, and all our righteous deeds are like a filthy cloth. We all fade like a leaf, and our iniquities, like the wind, take us away. ⁷There is no one who calls on your name, or attempts to take hold of you; for you have hidden your face from us, and have delivered us into the hand of our iniquity. ⁸Yet, O LORD, you are our Father; we are the clay, and you are our potter; we are all the work of your hand. ⁹Do not be exceedingly angry, O LORD, and do not remember iniquity forever. Now consider, we are all your people.

The word of the Lord Thanks be to God.

PSALM Psalm 80:1-7, 17-19

¹Hear, O Shepherd of Israel, leading Joseph like a flock; shine forth, you that are enthroned upon the cherubim.

²In the presence of Ephraim, Benjamin, and Manasseh, stir up your strength and come to help us.

³Restore us, O God; let your face shine upon us, and we shall be saved.

⁴O LORD God of hosts, how long will your anger fume when your people pray?

⁵You have fed them with the bread of tears; you have given them bowls of tears to drink.

⁶You have made us the derision of our neighbors, and our enemies laugh us to scorn.

⁷Restore us, O God of hosts; let your face shine upon us, and we shall be saved.

- ¹⁷Let your hand be upon the one at your right hand, the one you have made so strong for yourself.
- ¹⁸And so will we never turn away from you; give us life, that we may call upon your name.
- ¹⁹Restore us, O LORD God of hosts; let your face shine upon us, and we shall be saved.

Second Reading:

1 Corinthians 1:3-9

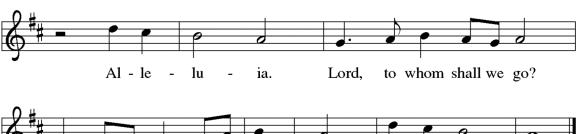
A reading from 1 Corinthians.

³Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. ⁴I give thanks to my God always for you because of the grace of God that has been given you in Christ Jesus, ⁵for in every way you have been enriched in him, in speech and knowledge of every kind—⁶just as the testimony of Christ has been strengthened among you—⁷so that you are not lacking in any spiritual gift as you wait for the revealing of our Lord Jesus Christ. ⁸He will also strengthen you to the end, so that you may be blameless on the day of our Lord Jesus Christ. ⁹God is faithful; by him you were called into the fellowship of his Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

*GOSPEL ACCLAMATION



You have the words of e - ter - nal life. Al - le - lu - ia.

*GOSPEL: Mark 13:24-37

The Holy Gospel according to Mark.



[Jesus said:] ²⁴"In those days, after that suffering, the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light, ²⁵ and the stars will be falling from heaven, and the powers in the heavens will be shaken. ²⁶Then they will see 'the Son of Man coming in clouds' with great power and glory. ²⁷Then he will send out the angels, and gather his elect from the four winds, from the ends of the earth to the ends of heaven. ²⁸"From the fig tree learn its lesson: as soon as its branch becomes tender and puts forth its leaves, you know that summer is near. ²⁹So also, when you see these things taking place, you know that he is near, at the very gates. ³⁰Truly I tell you, this generation will not pass away until all these things have taken place. 31 Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away. 32"But about that day or hour no one knows, neither the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father. ³³Beware, keep alert: for you do not know when the time will come. 34It is like a man going on a journey, when he leaves home and puts his slaves in charge, each with his work, and commands the doorkeeper to be on the watch. ³⁵Therefore, keep awake—for you do not know when the master of the house will come, in the evening, or at midnight, or at cockcrow, or at dawn, ³⁶or else he may find you asleep when he comes suddenly. 37 And what I say to vou I sav to all: Keep awake."

The Gospel of the Lord.



Sermon

*Hymn of the Day:

ELW 250

Blessed Be the God of Israel



Text: Carl P. Daw Jr., b. 1944

Music: FOREST GREEN, English folk tune; arr. Ralph Vaughan Williams, 1872-1958
Text © 1989 Hope Publishing Company, Carol Stream, IL 60188. All rights reserved. Used by permission.
Outside USA: Arr. from *The English Hymnal*. © Oxford University Press 1906. All rights reserved.

*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.

*Sharing of the Peace

- **P** The peace of the Lord be with you always.
- C And also with you.

We Offer Our Gifts

*Offering Prayer:

Blessed are you, O God, maker of all things. Through your goodness you have blessed us with these gifts; ourselves, our time, and our possessions. Use us and what we have gathered, in feeding the world with your love, through the One who gave Himself for us, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

C: Amen.

Prayers of Intercession

With hope and expectation, we offer our prayers for the church, the world, and all who await God's day of restoration.

A brief silence.

Call your church into holy fellowship as we await the restoration of all things. Reenergize your faithful people to live with hope and compassion, especially those who serve as missionaries near and far. Center us on your promise to come among us and make all things new. Merciful God,

receive our prayer.

All creation signals your presence, O God: the vastness of the cosmos, the turn of the seasons, and living things that both rest and flourish. Rekindle our commitment to care for the earth. Merciful God.

receive our prayer.

Let the nations tremble at your holy presence, that justice and liberation prevail in all corners of the earth. Restore peace to nations in conflict, teach righteousness to corrupt leaders and systems, and bring stability to areas facing uncertain futures. Merciful God,

receive our prayer.

Enrich the spirits of all who feel hopeless, fearful, or despairing. Stay close to those who await healing or relief (*especially*). Deliver all in any need. Merciful God.

receive our prayer.

Be with those who keep awake at night: nurses working overnight shifts, caregivers of newborns and aging adults, stargazers, those who are anxious, or those who are traveling. Reveal to all that the dark can be a place of calm and comfort filled with your presence. Merciful God,

receive our prayer.

Here other intercessions may be offered.

You have sent out your angels and gathered your faithful people from every time and place, calling them into one fellowship of saints. Bless the witness of those who dwell in your eternal presence (especially Francis Xavier, whom we commemorate today). Merciful God,

receive our prayer.

Listen to these and all our prayers, O God of hosts, and restore us with your great and everlasting mercy.

Amen.

Lord remember us in your kingdom, and teach us to pray:

*The 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.

We Are Sent

*Blessing

The Lord bless you and keep you. The Lord's face shine on you with grace and mercy. The Lord look upon you with favor and give you peace. In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

*Sending Song: On Jordan's Bank the Baptist's Cry ELW 249 NEXT PAGE

*Dismissal

P: Go in peace. Serve the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God!

Recessional: Es Ist Ein Rose arr. Gerhard Krapf

On Jordan's Bank the Baptist's Cry



Text: Charles Coffin, 1676-1749; tr. composite Music: PUER NOBIS, European tune, adapt. Michael Praetorius, 1571-1621

CHURCH ANNOUNCEMENTS

IN THE CASE OF A PASTORAL EMERGENCY,

In the event of a Pastoral Emergency, please contact Pastor Drew McCaffery

Work: 814-944-7560 Cell: 814-538-9036 Email: pastordrew0604@gmail.com

The church office email is stjamesaltoona@gmail.com The church's website is www.stjamesaltoona.org

On Facebook—St. James Lutheran Church—Altoona, PA



Our Prayer List:

Tim Surkovich Debbie Thomas Jeff Bickel Bill Wilt
Staff Sgt John Hiles Donna Foster Jean Bickel Donna Wilt
Carolyn Feather Bill Dambeck Judy Dambeck

(Names for inclusion on our parish prayer list can be submitted to the church office. The name will remain on the list for one month. At the end of that period please advise the church office, if you would like the name to be continue for another month.)

Those serving in our military.

Homewood

Sylvia Malsatzki

Allegheny Lutheran Home: In their own homes:

Janet Kauffman Deborah Manbeck







UPCOMING MEETINGS, EVENTS & IMPORTANT DATES:

ADVENT WEEK 1 NOV 26 POINSETTIA ORDER DEADLINE TODAY **NOV 26 12 PM** ADVENT MID-WEEK SERVICE @ BETHANY **NOV 29 630PM DECORATE CHURCH FOR CHRISTMAS DEC 2 10 AM SWEETS AND TREATS/ADVENT WEEK 2 DEC 3 10 AM** FAITH ON TAP @ MARZONIS GREENWOOD **DEC 5 6 PM** ALLEGHENY CHORALE CONCERT **DEC 3 3 PM** ADVENT MID-WEEK SERVICE @ BETHANY **DEC 6 630PM DEC 9 1230PM** WELCA CHRISTMAS PARTY @ JETHRO'S COUNCIL MEETING/ADVENT WEEK 3 **DEC 10 12 PM ADVENT MID-WEEK SERVICE @ BETHANY DEC 13 630PM DEC 17 ADVENT WEEK 4** FAITH ON TAP @ MARZONIS GREENWOOD **DEC 19 6 PM** ADVENT MID-WEEK SERVICE @ BETHANY **DEC 20 630PM** CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICE @ BETHANY **DEC 24 1 PM** CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICE @ BETHANY **DEC 24 6 PM** CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICE @ ST JAMES **DEC 24 8 PM UN-DECORATE CHURCH AFTER CHRISTMAS JAN 6 10 AM** WELCA BABY BOTTLE CAMPAIGN ENDS **JAN 7. 2024**

*Note: No morning services at Bethany or St James December 24th or 25th





SWEETS AND TREATS THE FIRST SUNDAY OF EACH MONTH.

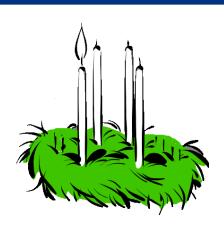
OUR NEXT SWEETS AND TREATS WILL BE DECEMBER 3, 2023 Provided By: Jean Bickel

* We are always looking for volunteers to sponsor Sweets and Treats. If you're interested there is a sign up sheet in the Sunday School Room. Your support is appreciated!

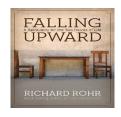


NEXT CHURCH COUNCIL MEETING

DECEMBER 10, 2023







Bible Study Update

Faith on Tap- 1st & 3rd Tuesday of the Month at Marzoni's in Greenwood

Since September, we have been doing a series on Richard Rohr's book *Falling Upward*. These have been great conversations as we have spoken about our spiritual upbringing but how that influences our 2nd half of life. This book study will take us to the remainder of the year as we are doing 2 chapters per session. We hope you join us as we fall upward for a time of fellowship and faithful discussions.

Faith on Tap Dates:

Dec 5th: The Shadowlands & New Problems and New Directions

Dec 19th: Falling Upward & Wrap up



St. James Evangelical Lutheran Church

1407 Eighth Avenue Altoona, PA 16602 814-944-6835

stjamesaltoona@gmail.com www.stjamesaltoona.org





WELCA's Christmas Luncheon

All are invited! Mark your calendar Now!



TIME: 12:30PM



*Must register no later Dec 4th by calling the St James church office at 944-6835, or Margaret Thatcher at 814-943-4749

Sing and Praise God with accordion player Rose Ann Fregone.

* We will briefly hear from Daniellie Haluska Assistant Director of Precious Life, on how your pennies, dimes, and quarters can provide hope and help in our area for all young women dealing with pregnancy.



This opportunity provided by a THRIVENT grant.

thrivent[®]





Free to the public



Everywhere Christmas Tonight

Featuring the Altoona Brass Collective Quintet

Sunday, December 3, 2023 at 3pm St. James Evangelical Lutheran Church, Altoona

> Tuesday, December 5, 2023 at 7pm First Presbyterian Church, Tyrone

> > Deborah Estright, Director

We ask the congregation to please contribute cookies for the social after the concert. There is a sign up sheet in the Narthex.



WELCA NEWS

Precious Life Baby Bottle Campaign



Change for Life Baby Bottle Campaign

Be a "STAR" this Christmas!

Jeremiah 29:11 "For I know the plans I have for you declares the Lord" Plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future

Pick up an empty bottle from our Christmas Tree in the foyer. Campaign starts November 19. Take your bottle home and fill it with spare change. Bring your bottle back by January 7, 2024

> *Take one for friend or relative. Remember: "Every Life Matters!" "Every Coin Counts!"

Fill a Bottle! Save a Life!

*Precious Life provides resources to a young girl who needs to choose life for her young child.



Advent Mid-Week Services at Bethany

(Nov 29th, Dec 6th, Dec 13th, Dec 20th)

We will be hosting a midweek worship service held at church at 6:30pm. We will also be joined by our friends from St Luke's in Roaring Spring, so you will get to enjoy the experience of two Pr. McCaffery's! Our theme for this Advent will be *My Soul Magnifies the Lord*. Traditionally on the 4th Sunday of Advent, we hear the Angel Gabriel's announcement to Mary as she is carrying child. Not just any child but Jesus, the Son of God. Mary while amid her own faithful processing of this news, she responses with what we know as *The Magnificat* ("Here am I, the servant of the Lord; let it be with me according to your word." ~Luke 1:38). It is during this 4-week series, we will faithfully experience and process what Mary's words mean, for us and the world during this Advent Season. See you Wednesday, Nov 30th at 6:30pm for our first service where you can join us in person or watch via FB Live. As always, our series will conclude with our traditional Blue Christmas service, for those who this time of the year is especially difficult, on December 20th.

ADVENT/CHRISTMAS SCHEDULE



Christ the King Sunday November 19, 2023

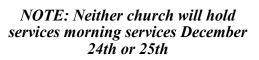
Decorate Church for Christmas Saturday December 2, 2023 10 AM



A Season of Hope & Expectation

November 26, 2023 to December 17, 2023

Bethany 1 PM Bethany 6 PM St. James 8 PM







Un-Decorate Church after Christmas January 6, 2024 10 AM



Christmas Poinsettias

Bless our Sanctuary and your home this Christmas with a beautiful red poinsettia! For each \$8.50 you contribute to the St. James Flower Fund, a flower will be placed in the Sanctuary on Christmas Eve and will be available for you to take with you following our Christmas Eve Service. If you would rather donate the flower for a shut-or or friend of St. James, you may indicate that choice on this order form.

Please complete the form and return it to the church. The deadline for poinsettia orders and payments is Sunday, November 26, 2023. Thank you for your generosity in this endeavor!

Value Nama

Tour Name
(as you wish it to appear in the bulletin)
This donation is made:
In Honor of:
Or In Memory of:
Amount of Contribution:
Number of Christmas Poinsettias:
Envelope Number:
Please check one: Yes, I do want to take the poinsettia (s) home with me.
No. I don't want to take the poinsettia (s). I would like them to be given to a shut in or friend of St. James