



# **St. James Evangelical Lutheran Church December 7, 2025 2nd Sunday of Advent Communion**

**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  
you please sign our guest book.***

**Pulpit Supply: Rev. Scott Custead  
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: Veni, Emmanuel arr. William Ward  
(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 Spirit.

**Amen.**

***We Gather***

\*GATHERING SONG:

Hark, the Glad Sound!

ELW 239

NEXT PAGE

# Hark, the Glad Sound!

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

prom - ised long; let ev - 'ry heart pre -  
 bond - age held. The gates 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, 1702-1751

Music: CHESTERFIELD, Thomas Haweis, 1734-1820

**\*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.

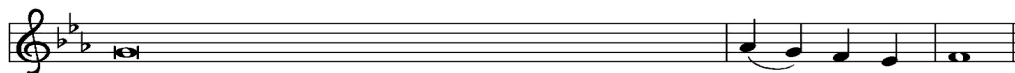
# KYRIE



In peace, let us pray to the Lord.



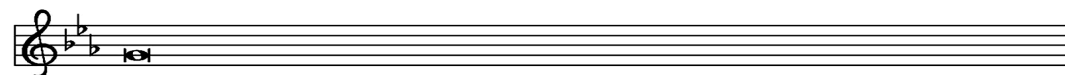
Lord, have mer - cy.



For the peace from above, and for our salvation, let us pray to the Lord.



Lord, have mer - cy.



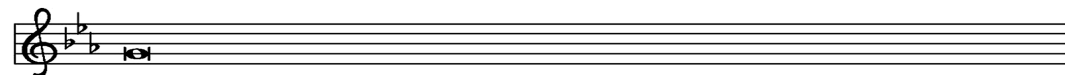
For the peace of the whole world, for the well-being of the church of God,



and for the unity of all, let us pray to the Lord.



Lord, have mer - cy.



For this holy house, and for all who offer here their worship and praise,



let us pray to the Lord.



Lord, have mer - cy.



Help, save, comfort, and defend us, gra - cious Lord.



A - men, a - men.

## \*CANTICLE OF PRAISE

*Refrain*



This is the feast of vic-to-ry for our God. Al-le - lu - ia,

al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia. 1 Wor - thy is Christ, the Lamb

who was slain, whose blood set us free to be peo - ple of God.

*Refrain*

This is the feast of vic-to-ry for our God. Al-le - lu - ia,

al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia. 2 Pow - er, rich - es, wis - dom, and

strength, and hon - or, bless - ing, and glo - ry are his.

*Refrain*



This is the feast of vic-to-ry for our God. Al-le - lu - ia,

al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia. 3 Sing with all the peo - ple of



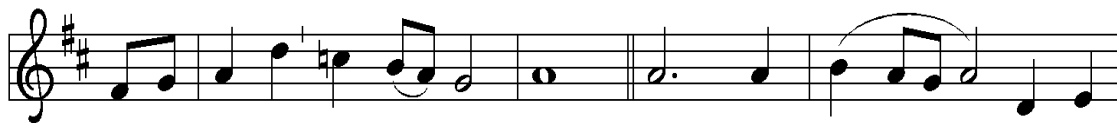
God, and join in the hymn of all cre - a - tion: Bless - ing, hon - or,



glo - ry, and might be to God and the Lamb for - ev - er. A - men.



This is the feast of vic-to-ry for our God. Al-le - lu - ia,



al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia. 4 For the Lamb who was



slain has be - gun his reign. Al - le - lu - ia.



This is the feast of vic-to-ry for our God.



Al-le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia.

## \*PRAYER OF THE DAY:

P: Let us pray.

**Stir up our hearts, Lord God, to prepare the way of your only Son.  
By his coming nurture our growth as people of repentance and peace;  
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 2ND ADVENT CANDLE

\*Candle Lighting Hymn Rejoice, Rejoice, Believers

ELW 244

### Rejoice, Rejoice, Believers

2 The watch-ers on the moun-tain pro-claim the bride-groom near;  
go forth as he ap-proach-es with al-le-lu-ias clear.  
The mar-riage feast is wait-ing; the gates wide o-pen stand.  
A-rise, O heirs of glo-ry; the bride-groom is at hand.

The musical score is written for two staves, Treble and Bass clef, in a key of three flats (B-flat major or D-flat minor). The melody is simple and hymn-like, with lyrics written below the notes. The piece consists of four lines of music, each with a corresponding line of lyrics. The final line ends with a double bar line.

## ***We Listen to the Word***

### **First Reading:**

**Isaiah 11:1-10**

A reading from Isaiah.

<sup>1</sup> A shoot shall come out from the stump of Jesse, and a branch shall grow out of his roots.

<sup>2</sup> The spirit of the LORD shall rest on him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and the fear of the LORD.

<sup>3</sup> His delight shall be in the fear of the LORD. He shall not judge by what his eyes see or decide by what his ears hear,

<sup>4</sup> but with righteousness he shall judge for the poor and decide with equity for the oppressed of the earth; he shall strike the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips he shall kill the wicked.

<sup>5</sup> Righteousness shall be the belt around his waist and faithfulness the belt around his loins.

<sup>6</sup> The wolf shall live with the lamb; the leopard shall lie down with the kid; the calf and the lion will feed together, and a little child shall lead them.

<sup>7</sup> The cow and the bear shall graze; their young shall lie down together; and the lion shall eat straw like the ox.

<sup>8</sup> The nursing child shall play over the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall put its hand on the adder's den.

<sup>9</sup> They will not hurt or destroy on all my holy mountain, for the earth will be full of the knowledge of the LORD as the waters cover the sea.

<sup>10</sup> On that day the root of Jesse shall stand as a signal to the peoples; the nations shall inquire of him, and his dwelling shall be glorious.

The Word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**



## PSALM

## Psalm 72:1-7, 18-19

<sup>1</sup> Give the king your justice, O God, and your righteousness to the king's son;

<sup>2</sup> **that he may rule your people righteously and the poor with justice;**

<sup>3</sup> that the mountains may bring prosperity to the people, and the hills, in righteousness.

<sup>4</sup> **Let him defend the needy among the people, rescue the poor, and crush the oppressor.**

<sup>5</sup> May he live as long as the sun and moon endure, from one generation to another.

<sup>6</sup> **Let him come down like rain upon the mown field, like showers that water the earth.**

<sup>7</sup> In his time may the righteous flourish; and let there be an abundance of peace till the moon shall be no more.

<sup>18</sup> **Blessed are you, LORD God, the God of Israel; you alone do wondrous deeds!**

<sup>19</sup> And blessed be your glorious name forever, and may all the earth be filled with your glory. Amen. Amen.

## Second Reading:

## Romans 15:4-13

A reading from Romans:

<sup>4</sup> Whatever was written in former days was written for our instruction, so that by steadfastness and by the encouragement of the scriptures we might have hope. <sup>5</sup> May the God of steadfastness and encouragement grant you to live in harmony with one another, in accordance with Christ Jesus, <sup>6</sup> so that together you may with one voice glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

<sup>7</sup> Welcome one another, therefore, just as Christ has welcomed you, for the glory of God. <sup>8</sup> For I tell you that Christ has become a servant of the circumcised on behalf of the truth of God in order that he might confirm the promises given to the ancestors <sup>9</sup> and that the gentiles might glorify God for his mercy. As it is written,

“Therefore I will confess you among the gentiles and sing praises to your name”;

<sup>10</sup> and again he says,

“Rejoice, O gentiles, with his people”;

<sup>11</sup> and again,

“Praise the Lord, all you gentiles, and let all the peoples praise him”;

<sup>12</sup> and again Isaiah says,

“The root of Jesse shall come, the one who rises to rule the gentiles; in him the gentiles shall hope.”

<sup>13</sup> May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that you may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.

The Word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

\* Please rise if you are able

**\*GOSPEL ACCLAMATION**



## \*GOSPEL:

## Matthew 3:1-12

The Holy Gospel according to Matthew.



<sup>1</sup> In those days John the Baptist appeared in the wilderness of Judea, proclaiming, <sup>2</sup> “Repent, for the kingdom of heaven has come near.” <sup>3</sup> This is the one of whom the prophet Isaiah spoke when he said,

“The voice of one crying out in the wilderness: ‘Prepare the way of the Lord; make his paths straight.’ ”

<sup>4</sup> Now John wore clothing of camel’s hair with a leather belt around his waist, and his food was locusts and wild honey. <sup>5</sup> Then Jerusalem and all Judea and all the region around the Jordan were going out to him, <sup>6</sup> and they were baptized by him in the River Jordan, confessing their sins.

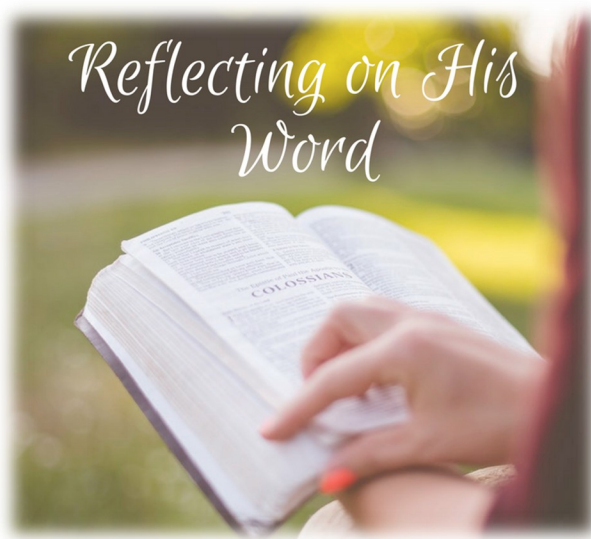
<sup>7</sup> But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees coming for his baptism, he said to them, “You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the coming wrath? <sup>8</sup> Therefore, bear fruit worthy of repentance, <sup>9</sup> and do not presume to say to yourselves, ‘We have Abraham as our ancestor,’ for I tell you, God is able from these stones to raise up children to Abraham. <sup>10</sup> Even now the ax is lying at the root of the trees; therefore every tree that does not bear good fruit will be cut down and thrown into the fire.

<sup>11</sup> “I baptize you with water for repentance, but the one who is coming after me is more powerful than I, and I am not worthy to carry his sandals. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. <sup>12</sup> His winnowing fork is in his hand, and he will clear his threshing floor and will gather his wheat into the granary, but the chaff he will burn with unquenchable fire.”

**The Gospel of the Lord.**



Sermon



## *We Respond to the Word*

\*Hymn of the Day:

ELW 611

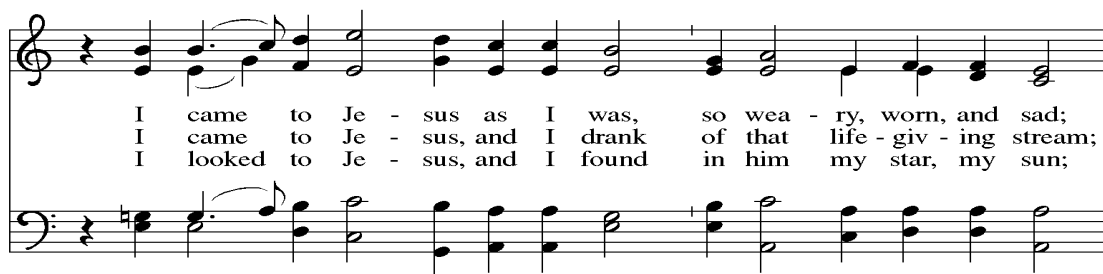
### I Heard the Voice of Jesus Say



1 I heard the voice of Je - sus say, "Come un - to me and rest;  
2 I heard the voice of Je - sus say, "Be - hold, I free - ly give  
3 I heard the voice of Je - sus say, "I am this dark world's light;



lay down, O wea - ry one, lay down your head up - on my breast;  
the liv - ing wa - ter, thirst - y one; stoop down and drink and live."  
look un - to me, your morn shall rise, and all your day be bright."



I came to Je - sus as I was, so wea - ry, worn, and sad;  
I came to Je - sus, and I drank of that life - giv - ing stream;  
I looked to Je - sus, and I found in him my star, my sun;



I found in him a rest - ing place, and he has made me glad.  
my thirst was quenched, my soul re - vived, and now I live in him.  
and in that light of life I'll walk till trav - ling days are done.

## **\*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

In our waiting and watching, we come to you in prayer, O God, trusting your promise to renew the church, the nations, and the whole creation.

*A brief silence.*

With wisdom and understanding, inspire the faithful around the world. Unite hearts and minds in work to address poverty, access to housing, and equity among peoples. God of grace,

**hear our prayer.**

With counsel and might, move us to care for creation. As we dream of the day when all creatures will flourish alongside one another, guide us in ways humanity and all creation will mutually thrive. God of grace,

**hear our prayer.**

With righteousness and faithfulness, encourage nations to live in harmony with one another. We pray for international student and teacher exchanges, for our partner churches, and for the shared mission of Lutheran World Relief and Lutheran Disaster Response. God of grace,

**hear our prayer.**

With steadfastness and encouragement, strengthen those who have lost hope in the face of grief, depression, or disease (*especially*).

Renew the spirits of those recovering from surgery and medical procedures. God of grace,

**hear our prayer.**

With welcome and hospitality, embolden us in our shared ministry to overcome all that divides. In acts of repentance, reconciliation, and reparation, may we serve in the way of Christ. God of grace,

**hear our prayer.**

*Here other intercessions may be offered.*

With joy and peace, we remember our ancestors in the faith (*especially Ambrose, Bishop of Milan, whom we commemorate today*). Fill us with the hope of the Holy Spirit now and into the ages of ages. God of grace,

**hear our prayer.**

Draw near to us, O God, as we commend all for whom we pray, trusting in your mercy through Jesus Christ, Emmanuel.

**Amen.**

**\*Sharing of the Peace**

**P** The peace of the Lord be with you always.

**C** **And also with you.**

## ***We Offer Our Gifts***

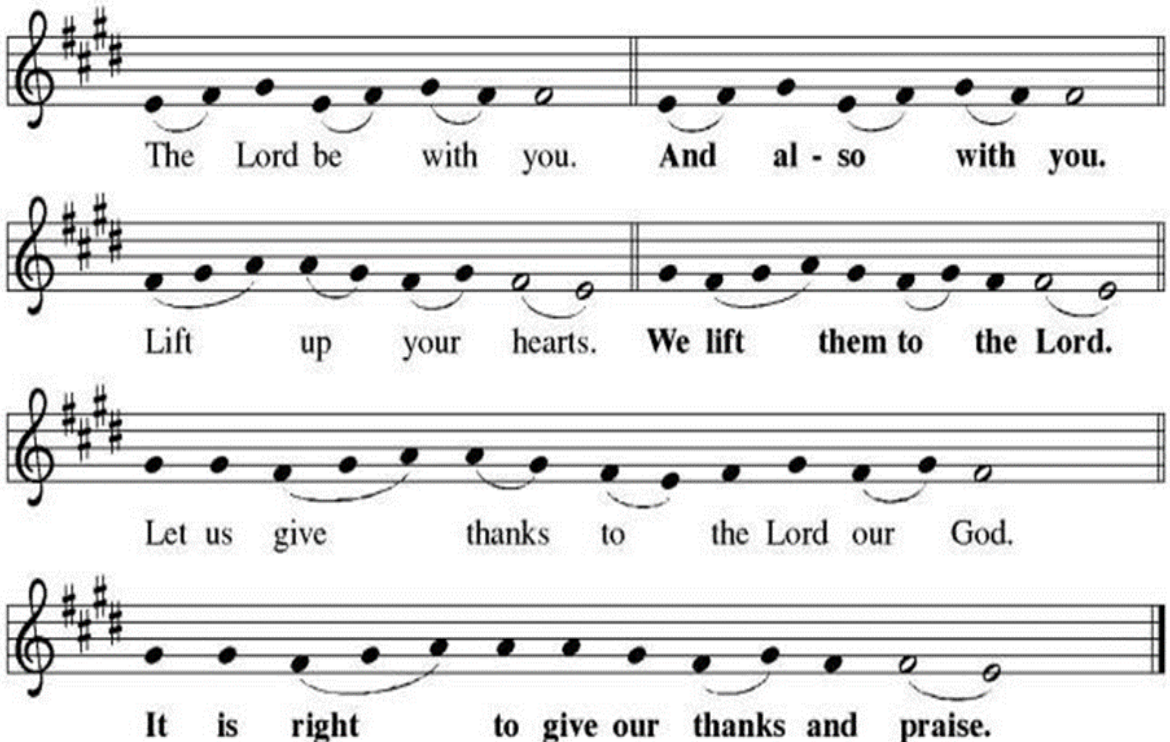
**\*Offering Prayer:**

Blessed are you, O God, maker of all things. Through your goodness you have blessed us with these gifts: our selves, 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.**

## ***We Share the Feast***

**\*Holy Communion**



The Lord be with you. And al - so with you.

Lift up your hearts. We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

The image shows four staves of musical notation in G major (one sharp). Each staff contains a melody line with lyrics underneath. The first staff has a double bar line in the middle. The second staff also has a double bar line in the middle. The third and fourth staves are single lines. The lyrics are: 'The Lord be with you. And al - so with you.', 'Lift up your hearts. We lift them to the Lord.', 'Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.', and 'It is right to give our thanks and praise.'



**P:** It is indeed right, our duty and our joy, that we should at all times and in all places give thanks and praise to you, almighty and merciful God, through our Savior Jesus Christ. You comforted your people with the promise of the Redeemer, through whom you will also make all things new in the day when he comes to judge the world in righteousness. And so, with all the choirs of angels, with the church on earth and the hosts of heaven, we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

# Holy, Holy, Holy

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

[illegible]

in the name of the Lord. Ho - san-na in the high - est.

### \*Thanksgiving at the Table

Blessed are you, Lord of heaven and earth. In mercy for our fallen world, you gave your only Son, that all those who believe in him should not perish but have eternal life. We give thanks to you for the salvation you have prepared for us through Jesus Christ. Send now your Holy Spirit into our hearts , that we might receive our Lord with a living faith as he comes to us in his holy supper.

For it is our Lord Jesus, who in the night in which he was betrayed took bread, and gave thanks; broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying: "Take and eat; this is my body, given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me."

Again, after the supper, he took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it for all to drink, saying: "This cup is the new covenant in my blood, shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin. Do this for the remembrance of me".

### \*The Lord's Prayer

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

**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.**

## \*Invitation to Communion

P: Reveal yourself to us, O Lord, in the breaking of the bread, as you once revealed yourself to your disciples.

### 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.

Communion Distribution — please come to the step before altar as led by the Spirit to receive the Body and Blood of our Lord Jesus Christ.

## \*Post-Communion Blessing

P: The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen you and keep you in his grace.

**C: Amen**

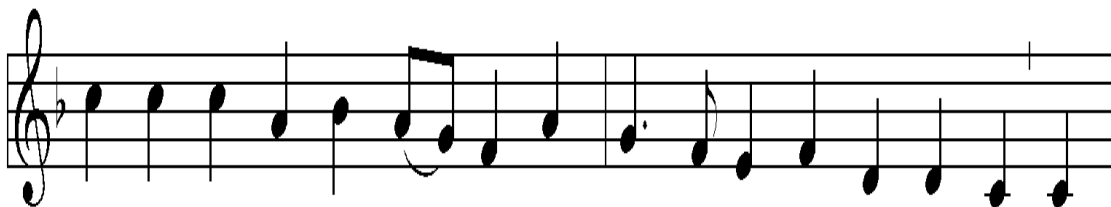
\*Song after Communion:



☐ Thank the Lord and sing his praise; tell ev-'ry-one what he has done.



Let all who seek the Lord re - joice and proud-ly bear his name.



He re-calls his prom-is - es and leads his peo-ple forth in joy with



shouts of thanks-giv-ing. Al-le - lu - ia. Al-le - lu - ia.

## **\*Prayer after Communion**

**P:** Let us pray.

God our host, at this table you have fed us with joy and gladness.  
Send us forth, eager to share the feast, welcome the stranger, and  
bear good fruit in the name of Jesus.

**C: 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: Come, Long-Awaited Savior David Paxton

# On Jordan's Bank the Baptist's Cry



1 On Jor - dan's bank the Bap - tist's cry an - nounc - es  
 2 Then cleansed be ev - 'ry life from sin; make straight the  
 3 We hail you as our Sav - ior, Lord, our ref - uge  
 4 Stretch forth your hand, our health re - store, and make us  
 5 All praise to you, e - ter - nal Son, whose ad - vent

that the Lord is nigh; a - wake and heark - en,  
 way for God with - in, and let us all our  
 and our great re - ward; with - out your grace we  
 rise to fall no more; oh, let your face up -  
 has our free - dom won, whom with the Fa - ther

for he brings glad tid - ings of the King of kings!  
 hearts pre - pare for Christ to come and en - ter there.  
 waste a - way like flow'rs that with - er and de - cay.  
 on us shine and fill the world with love di - vine.  
 we a - dore, and Ho - ly Spir - it, ev - er - more.

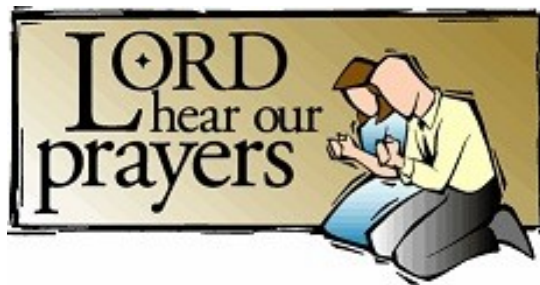
Text: Charles Coffin, 1676-1749; tr. composite

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 Eli Hess  
Work: 814-943-3972

The church office email is [stjamesaltoona@gmail.com](mailto:stjamesaltoona@gmail.com) The church's  
website is [www.stjamesaltoona.org](http://www.stjamesaltoona.org)  
On Facebook—St. James Lutheran Church—Altoona, PA



## Our Prayer List:

Tim Surkovich	Jeff Bickel	Bill Wilt	Bob Holsinger Sr
Staff Sgt John Hiles	Donna Foster	Donna Wilt	Bob Holsinger
Carolyn Feather	Bill Dambeck	Judy Dambeck	Evelyn Holsinger
The soul and family of Debbie Thomas		The soul and family of Debra Morgan	
The soul of Marian "Toots" Holsinger		The soul of Deborah Manbeck	
The soul of Sylvia Malsatzki			

(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.



## **UPCOMING MEETINGS, EVENTS & IMPORTANT DATES:**

<b>Allegheny Chorale Concert TODAY</b>	<b>Dec 7 3 PM</b>
<b>Council Meeting</b>	<b>Dec 9 4 PM</b>
<b>St Luke's Community Lunch</b>	<b>Dec 10 12 PM</b>
<b>Food Drive for St Lukes Last Day</b>	<b>Dec 14</b>
<b>Sweets and Treats</b>	<b>Jan 4 10 AM</b>

- **NOTE: Worship Services will be held in the Sunday School Room until Palm Sunday!**
- **NOTE: The Allegheny Chorale Concert and Christmas Eve Service will still be held in the Sanctuary!**



Saint James is collecting donations of food for the  
Saint Luke Food Pantry  
until December 14th.

Please place your donations in the box by the front  
entry of the church by the stairs.



*Sharing*  
*Christmas*  
**JOY**



***Sunday, December 7, 2025 at 3pm***  
***St. James Evangelical Lutheran Church, Altoona***

***Tuesday, December 9, 2025 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.**

**SWEETS**



**TREATS**

## **SWEETS AND TREATS**

**THE FIRST SUNDAY OF  
EACH MONTH.**

**OUR NEXT SWEETS AND TREATS WILL  
BE: January 4, 2026  
Provided By: Mark Hoover**

\* 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!

**NOTE: No Sweets and Treats in December!**

**COMMUNITY  
LUNCH**



### **ST LUKES COMMUNITY LUNCH**

**Dec 10th 12 PM**

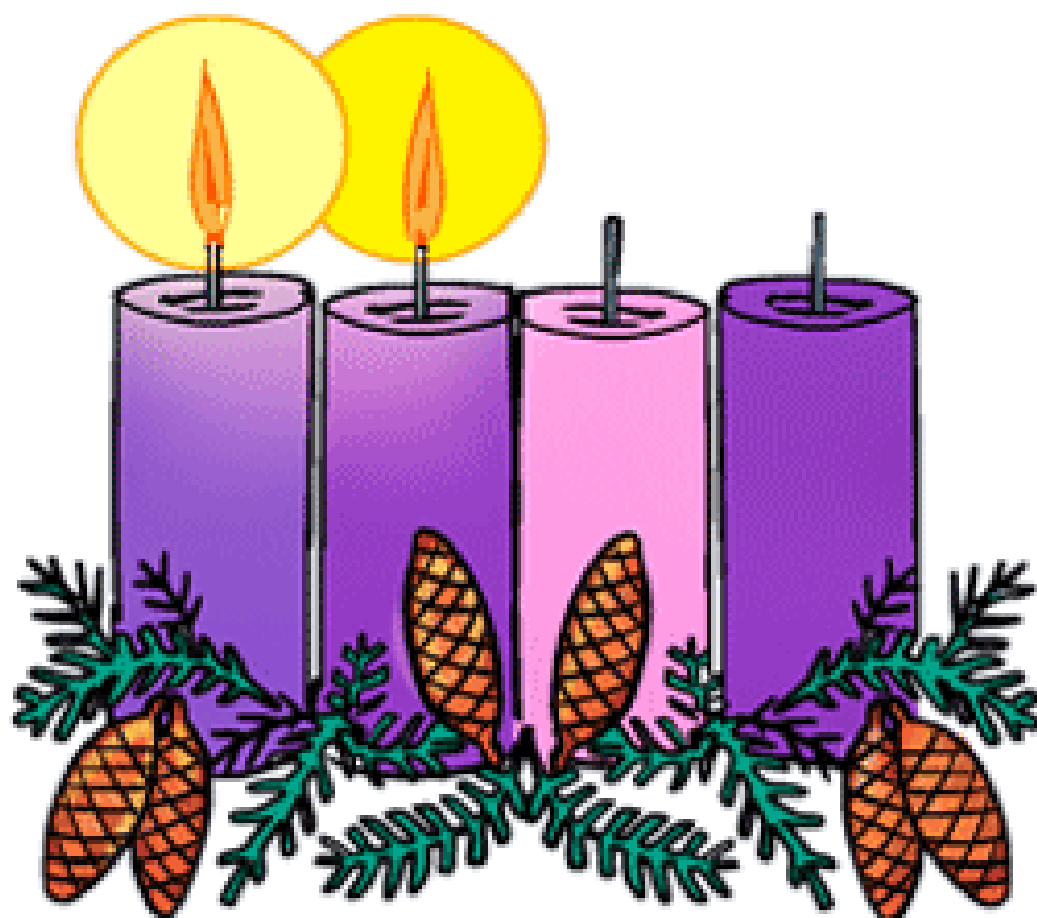
- Hosted by St James Lutheran Held 2nd Wednesday of each month in the St James Social Hall



### **NEXT CHURCH COUNCIL MEETING**

**December 9, 2025**

**4 PM**



**Second Sunday  
of Advent**

# *St. James Evangelical Lutheran Church*

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**Evangelical Lutheran  
Church in America**

God's work. Our hands.