

St. James Evangelical Lutheran Church
November 15, 2026
26th Sunday after Pentecost

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: Jay Buchanan
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: Fugue In D Minor Anton Brucckner Wilson

(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.
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.

God, who is rich in mercy, loved us even when we were dead in sin, and made us alive together with Christ. By grace you have been saved. In the name of Jesus Christ your sins are forgiven. Almighty God strengthen you with power through the Holy Spirit, and Christ may live in your hearts through faith.
Amen.

We Gather

*GATHERING SONG: As Saints of Old ELW 695

NEXT PAGE

As Saints of Old



Text: Frank von Christierson, 1900–1996, alt.
Music: FOREST GREEN, English folk tune; arr. Ralph Vaughan Williams, 1872–1958
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*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 de - fend us, gra - cious Lord.
A - men, a - men.

Glory to God


Assisting minister
Glo-ry to God in the high-est, and peace to God's peo-ple on earth.
All
Lord God, heav-en-ly King, al-might-y God and Fa-ther, we
wor-ship you, we give you thanks, we praise you for your glo-ry.
Lord Je-sus Christ, on-ly Son of the Fa-ther, Lord God, Lamb of God,
you take a-way the sin of the world: have mer-cy on us;
you are seat-ed at the right hand of the Fa-ther: re-ceive our prayer.
For you a-lone are the Ho-ly One, you a-lone are the Lord,
you a-lone are the Most High, Je-sus Christ, with the Ho-ly Spir-it,
in the glo-ry of God the Fa-ther. A-men.

*PRAYER OF THE DAY:

P: Let us pray.

Righteous God, our merciful master, you own the earth and all its peoples, and you give us all that we have. Inspire us to serve you with justice and wisdom, and prepare us for the joy of the day of your coming, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.

We Listen to the Word

First Reading: Zephaniah 1:7, 12-18

A reading from Zephaniah.

7 Be silent before the Lord GOD, for the day of the LORD is at hand! The LORD
has prepared a sacrifice; he has consecrated his guests.
12 At that time I will search Jerusalem with lamps, and I will punish the people
who settle like dregs in wine, those who say in their hearts, "The LORD will not
do good, nor will he do harm."
13 Their wealth shall be plundered and their houses laid waste. Though they
build houses, they shall not inhabit them; though they plant vineyards, they
shall not drink wine from them.
14 The great day of the LORD is near, near and hastening fast; the sound of the
day of the LORD is bitter; the warrior cries aloud there.
15 That day will be a day of wrath, a day of distress and anguish, a day of ruin
and devastation, a day of darkness and gloom, a day of clouds and thick
darkness, 16 a day of trumpet blast and battle cry against the fortified cities and
against the lofty battlements.
17 I will bring such distress upon people that they shall walk like the blind;
because they have sinned against the LORD, their blood shall be poured out
like dust and their flesh like dung.
18 Neither their silver nor their gold will be able to save them on the day of the
LORD's wrath; in the fire of his passion the whole earth shall be consumed, for
a full, a terrible end he will make of all the inhabitants of the earth.

The Word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

Psalm: **Psalm 90:1-8 [9-11] 12**

[1] Lord, you have been our refuge from one generation to another.

[2] **Before the mountains were brought forth, or the land and the earth were born, from age to age you are God.**

[3] You turn us back to the dust and say, “Turn back, O children of earth.”

[4] **For a thousand years in your sight are like yesterday when it is past and like a watch in the night;**

[5] you sweep them away like a dream, they fade away suddenly like the grass:

[6] **in the morning it is green and flourishes; in the evening it is dried up and withered.**

[7] For we are consumed by your anger; we are afraid because of your wrath.

[8] **Our iniquities you have set before you, and our secret sins in the light of your countenance.**

[[9] When you are angry, all our days are gone; we bring our years to an end like a sigh.

[10] **The span of our life is seventy years, perhaps in strength even eighty; yet the sum of them is but labor and sorrow, for they pass away quickly and we are gone.**

[11] Who regards the power of your wrath? Who rightly fears your indignation?]

[12] **So teach us to number our days that we may apply our hearts to wisdom.**

Second Reading: **1 Thessalonians 5:1-11**

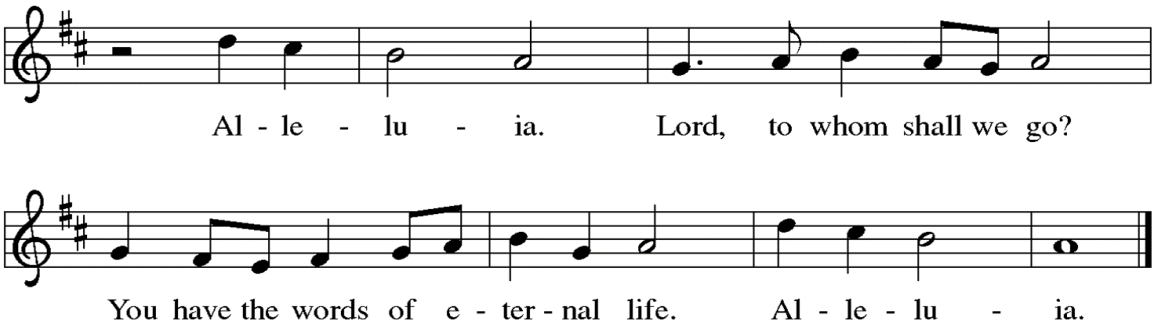
A reading from 1 Thessalonians.

[1] Now concerning the times and the seasons, brothers and sisters, you
do not need to have anything written to you. [2] For you yourselves know
very well that the day of the Lord will come like a thief in the night.
[3] When they say, “There is peace and security,” then sudden destruction
will come upon them, as labor pains come upon a pregnant woman, and
there will be no escape! [4] But you, brothers and sisters, are not in
darkness, for that day to surprise you like a thief; [5] for you are all children
of light and children of the day; we are not of the night or of darkness.
[6] So, then, let us not fall asleep as others do, but let us keep awake and
be sober, [7] for those who sleep sleep at night, and those who are drunk
get drunk at night. [8] But since we belong to the day, let us be sober and
put on the breastplate of faith and love and for a helmet the hope of
salvation. [9] For God has destined us not for wrath but for obtaining
salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ, [10] who died for us, so that
whether we are awake or asleep we may live with him. [11] Therefore
encourage one another and build up each other, as indeed you are
doing.

The Word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

* Please stand if you are able

*GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

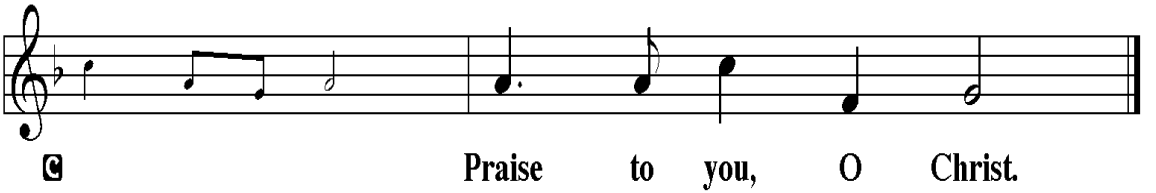


***GOSPEL:** **Matthew 25:14-30**
The Holy Gospel according to Matthew.



[Jesus said to the disciples:] [14] “For it is as if a man, going on a journey,
summoned his slaves and entrusted his property to them; [15] to one he
gave five talents, to another two, to another one, to each according to his
ability. Then he went away. At once [16] the one who had received the five
talents went off and traded with them and made five more talents. [17] In the
same way, the one who had the two talents made two more talents. [18] But
the one who had received the one talent went off and dug a hole in the
ground and hid his master’s money. [19] After a long time the master of
those slaves came and settled accounts with them. [20] Then the one who
had received the five talents came forward, bringing five more talents,
saying, ‘Master, you handed over to me five talents; see, I have made five
more talents.’ [21] His master said to him, ‘Well done, good and trustworthy
slave; you have been trustworthy in a few things; I will put you in charge of
many things; enter into the joy of your master.’ [22] And the one with the two
talents also came forward, saying, ‘Master, you handed over to me two
talents; see, I have made two more talents.’ [23] His master said to him,
‘Well done, good and trustworthy slave; you have been trustworthy in a
few things; I will put you in charge of many things; enter into the joy of
your master.’ [24] Then the one who had received the one talent also came
forward, saying, ‘Master, I knew that you were a harsh man, reaping
where you did not sow and gathering where you did not scatter, [25] so I
was afraid, and I went and hid your talent in the ground. Here you have
what is yours.’ [26] But his master replied, ‘You wicked and lazy slave! You
knew, did you, that I reap where I did not sow and gather where I did not
scatter? [27] Then you ought to have invested my money with the bankers,
and on my return I would have received what was my own with interest.
[28] So take the talent from him, and give it to the one with the ten talents.
[29] For to all those who have, more will be given, and they will have an
abundance, but from those who have nothing, even what they have will be
taken away. [30] As for this worthless slave, throw him into the outer
darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.’ ”

The Gospel of the Lord.



Sermon



We Respond to the Word

*Hymn of the Day: ELW 510

Word of God, Come Down on Earth



Text: James Quinn, SJ, b. 1919
Music: LIEBSTER JESU, WIR SIND HIER, Johann R. Ahle, 1625–1673
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*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

United with the great cloud of witnesses, we offer our prayers for the church, the world, and all of creation.

A brief silence.

You build up the church as a community of faithful witnesses throughout the generations. Enliven the worship, outreach, and service work of our congregations and ministries with the hope of your good news. God, in your mercy,
hear our prayer.
As the nights grow longer in the northern hemisphere, make us mindful of the earth's need for rest. Provide for fallow fields and hibernating animals; show us how to curb human impact on vulnerable lands and species. God, in your mercy,
hear our prayer.
Rescue all nations and peoples from violence, displacement, or famine (*especially*). Disrupt complacency among national and local leaders. Recommit our communities to transforming the systems that divide and oppress into those that empower and unite. God, in your mercy,
hear our prayer.
In your embrace, we find refuge from all trials and troubles. Care for families who are separated or estranged, accompany all undergoing medical procedures or mental health treatment, and reassure any who are ill or despairing (*especially*). God, in your mercy,
hear our prayer.
Bless all who serve in congregational leadership: council members, finance committees, volunteer coordinators, and property teams (*other specific leaders or groups may be named*). Encourage healthy stewardship of time, talents, and resources for the mission of the gospel. God, in your mercy,
hear our prayer.
Here other intercessions may be offered.

The faithful of every age trust in the hope of your saving grace. In thanksgiving for the ways our ancestors have journeyed before us, we remember all who have entered eternal life in you. God, in your mercy,
hear our prayer.
Into your steadfast love, faithful God, we entrust all for whom we pray, in the name of Jesus, your beloved.
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.**

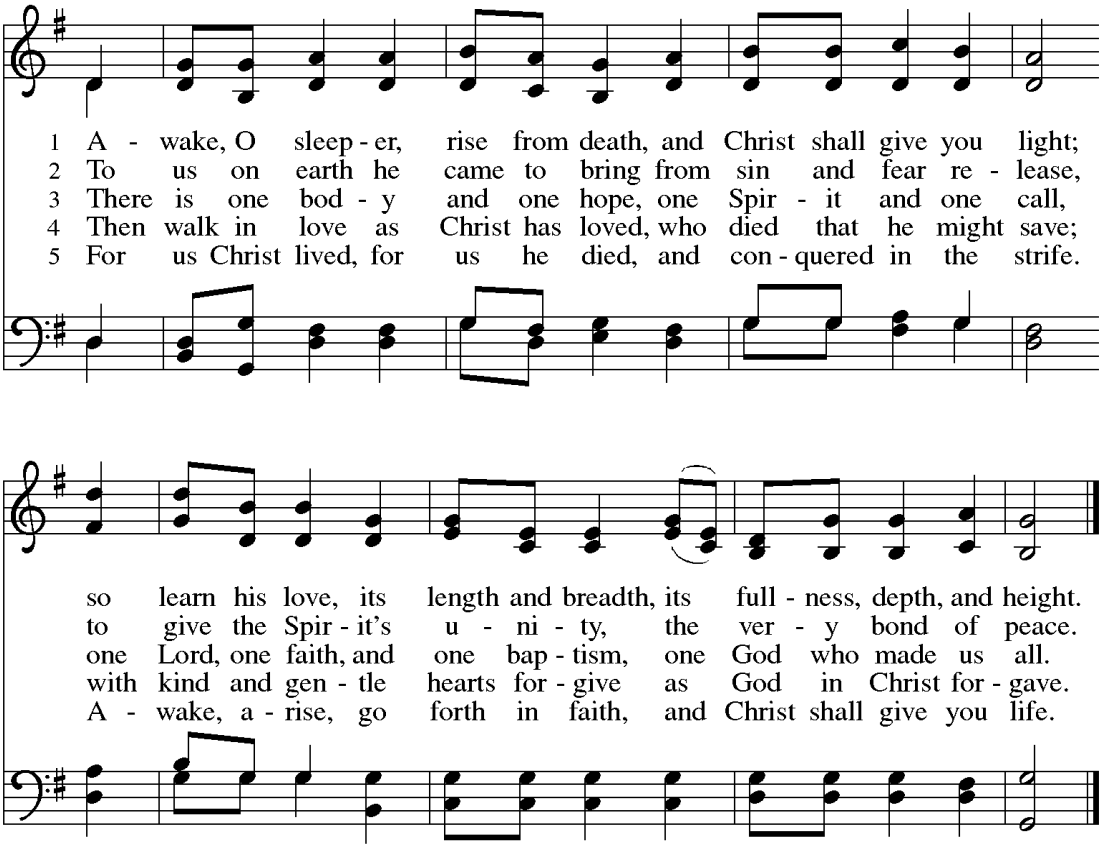
*Sending Song: Awake, O Sleeper, Rise From Death ELW 452
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*Dismissal

P: Go in peace. Serve the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God
Recessional My God And King Rodger Wilson

Awake, O Sleeper, Rise from Death



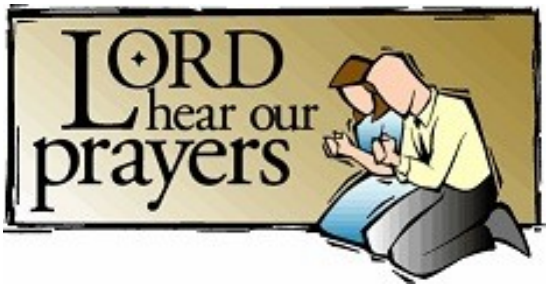
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Music: AZMON, Carl G. Gläser, 1784–1829
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CHURCH ANNOUNCEMENTS

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 The church's website is www.stjamesaltoona.org
On Facebook—St. James Lutheran Church—Altoona, PA



Our Prayer List:

Tim Surkovich	Jeff Bickel	Bill Wilt	Bob Holsinger Sr
Donna Foster	Donna Wilt	Carolyn Feather	
Bill Dambeck	Judy Dambeck		
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		The soul of Carol Weaver	

(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:

Interfaith Thanksgiving Service	***Nov 19 7 PM***
St. John the Evangelist Church	
Pot Luck Dinner	***Nov 22 12 PM***
Advent Study Course	***Dec 1 6 PM***
****St. Luke's***	
Decorate Church for Christmas	***Dec 5 10 AM***
**** Pizza will be provided afterwards***	
Sweets and Treats	***Dec 6 10 AM***
Allegheny Chorale Concert	***Dec 6 3 PM***
**** Refreshments following the performance***	
Advent Study Course	***Dec 8 6 PM***
****Bethany Lutheran***	
Community Lunch	***Dec 9 12 PM***
Church Council Meeting	***Dec 15 4 PM***
Advent Study Course	***Dec 15 6 PM***
****St. Luke's***	
Advent Study Course	***Dec 22 6 PM***
****Bethany Lutheran***	





SWEETS AND TREATS

THE FIRST SUNDAY OF EACH MONTH.

OUR NEXT SWEETS AND TREATS WILL BE: Dec 6, 2026
Provided By: Diane Shultz

* 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!

IMPORTANT NOTE:

Worship Service

- During November in the Sunday School Room.
- During December through Christmas Eve in the Sanctuary.
- Starting December 27th we will move back to the Sunday School Room until Palm Sunday.



NEXT CHURCH COUNCIL MEETING
December 15, 2026

12 PM



November 22, 2026

12 PM



ST LUKES COMMUNITY LUNCH

December 9th 12 PM

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

INTERFAITH THANKSGIVING SERVICE

A Celebration of Gratitude, Faith, and Community



You are warmly invited to join us for an **Interfaith Thanksgiving Service** on:

Thursday, November 19, 2026
7:00 PM
St. John the Evangelist Church

The planners of this year's service are reaching out to include more members of the Blair County community.

This special gathering will bring people of different faith traditions together in a spirit of thanksgiving, fellowship, and gratitude.



Allegheny Chorale presents

Free to the Public



Sunday, December 6, 2026 at 3pm
St. James Evangelical Lutheran Church, Altoona

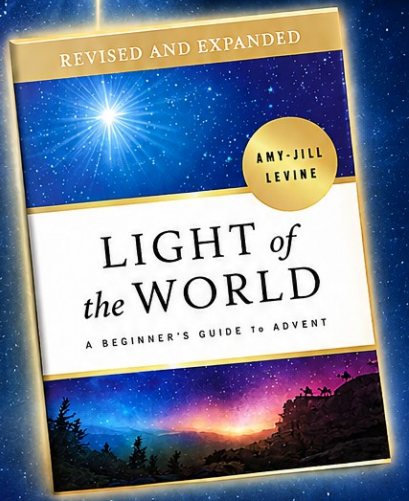
Tuesday, December 8, 2026 at 7pm
First Presbyterian Church, Tyrone

Deborah Estright, Director

Refreshments provided by funds from St James WELCA.

WOMEN of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

ADVENT
STUDY COURSE



Tuesday, December 1
at St. Luke's
6:00 p.m.

Tuesday, December 8
at Bethany Lutheran
6:00 p.m.

Tuesday, December 15
at St. Luke's
6:00 p.m.

Tuesday, December 22
at Bethany Lutheran
6:00 p.m.

In collaboration with our ELCA neighbors, Bethany and St. James, St. Luke's will be studying Amy-Jill Levine's newly revised and expanded classic ***Light of the World: A Beginner's Guide to Advent.***

Authored by this award-winning biblical scholar and New Testament professor, Light of the World traces the Christmas story from its Old Testament roots through the New Testament accounts, exploring the lives of Zechariah and Elizabeth, the Virgin Mary, the journey to Bethlehem, and the visit of the Magi. With the clarity and warmth she is known for, Levine illuminates the cultural, historical, and theological significance of each passage, making complex biblical scholarship accessible to readers of every background and faith tradition.



We invite you to join us for a ***pot luck supper*** at ***6:00 p.m.*** followed by discussion until ***8:00 p.m.***

Please email **Mark Hoover** (mfh4@psu.edu) or call him at **814-931-2154** to register or for more information.

St. James Evangelical Lutheran Church

is a

Blessed Community



May God's love
and blessings
be with you
and remain
with you always.

St. James Evangelical Lutheran Church

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Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

God's work. Our hands.