



# Saint James Lutheran Church



A Parish of the North Carolina Synod of the  
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

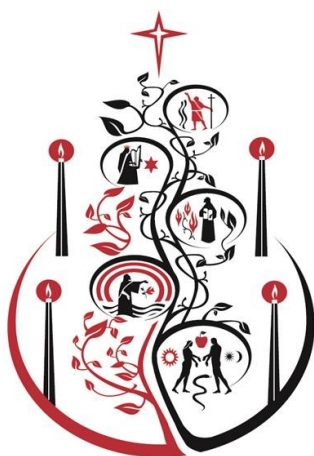


"Growing in Christ Through Worship, Learning, Fellowship, and Service"

104 Union Street South  
Concord, North Carolina 28025

Office Phone: 704.786.0166  
Website: [www.sjnc.net](http://www.sjnc.net)

## FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT NOVEMBER 29, 2020



**S**tir up your power, and come! The psalmist's plea in Psalm 80:2 has become familiar to us in the Advent prayers. Isaiah wants God to rip the heavens open. Both cry out for an apparently distant, angry God to show up, to save, to restore. When we hear Jesus describing the coming of the Son of Man with stars falling from heaven, it can sound dire and horrible, not like anything we would ever hope for. But when we really look at the suffering of people God loves, we can share the hope that God would tear open the heavens and come.

### WELCOME

**PRELUDE**      *O Come, O Come Emmanuel*

**LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT WREATH**      *~Jay Family*

We praise you, O God, for this evergreen crown that marks our days of preparation for Christ's advent. As we light the first candle on this wreath, rouse us from sleep, that we may be ready to greet our Lord when he comes with all the saints and angels.

Enlighten us with your grace, and prepare our hearts to welcome him with joy. Grant this through Christ our Lord, whose coming is certain and whose day draws near.

**Amen.**

### CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

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.**

If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. But if we confess our sins, God who is faithful and just will forgive our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

*Silence is held for reflection and self-examination*

Most merciful God,

**We confess that we are in bondage 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.**

Almighty God, in his mercy, has given his Son to die for us and, for his sake, forgives us all our sins. As a called and 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 of the ✠ Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

**Amen.**

## 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

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.**

## WORD

### FIRST READING: *Isaiah 64:1-9*

*This lament comes from a people who have had their hopes shattered. The visions of a rebuilt Jerusalem and a renewed people of God, spoken of in Isaiah 40–55, have not been realized. Instead, the people experience ruin, conflict, and famine. This lament calls God to account—to be the God who has brought deliverance in the past.*

A reading from Isaiah, the sixty-fourth chapter.

**O** that you would tear open the heavens and come down, so that the mountains would quake at your presence—<sup>2</sup>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! <sup>3</sup>When you did awesome deeds that we did not expect, you came down, the mountains quaked at your presence. <sup>4</sup>From 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. <sup>5</sup>You 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. <sup>6</sup>We 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. <sup>7</sup>There 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. <sup>8</sup>Yet, O LORD, you are our Father; we are the clay, and you are our potter; we are all the work of your hand. <sup>9</sup>Do 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: *Psalms 80:1-7, 17-19*

Let your face shine upon us, and we shall be saved. (*Ps. 80:7*)

A reading from Psalm eighty.

- <sup>1</sup>Hear, O Shepherd of Israel, leading Joseph like a flock;  
shine forth, you that are enthroned upon the cherubim.
- <sup>2</sup>In the presence of Ephraim, Benjamin, and Manasseh, stir up your strength and come to help us.
- <sup>3</sup>Restore us, O God; let your face shine upon us, and we shall be saved.
- <sup>4</sup>O LORD God of hosts, how long will your anger fume when your people pray?
- <sup>5</sup>You have fed them with the bread of tears; you have given them bowls of tears to drink.
- <sup>6</sup>You have made us the derision of our neighbors, and our enemies laugh us to scorn.
- <sup>7</sup>Restore us, O God of hosts; let your face shine upon us, and we shall be saved.
- <sup>17</sup>Let your hand be upon the one at your right hand, the one you have made so strong for yourself.
- <sup>18</sup>And so will we never turn away from you; give us life, that we may call upon your name.
- <sup>19</sup>Restore us, O LORD God of hosts; let your face shine upon us, and we shall be saved.

The Word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

## SECOND READING: *1 Corinthians 1:3-9*

*As the Christians in Corinth await the advent of Jesus, Paul reminds them how the Lord has already enriched them through spiritual gifts and will continue to strengthen them until the coming day of the Lord.*

A reading from 1 Corinthians, the first chapter.

**G**race to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. <sup>4</sup>I give thanks to my God always for you because of the grace of God that has been given you in Christ Jesus, <sup>5</sup>for in every way you have been enriched in him, in speech and knowledge of every kind—<sup>6</sup>just as the testimony of Christ has been strengthened among you—<sup>7</sup>so that you are not lacking in any spiritual gift as you wait for the revealing of our Lord Jesus Christ. <sup>8</sup>He will also strengthen you to the end, so that you may be blameless on the day of our Lord Jesus Christ. <sup>9</sup>God 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.**

## HOLY GOSPEL *Mark 13:24-37*

*Jesus encourages his followers to look forward to the day when he returns in power and glory to end all suffering.*

The Holy Gospel according to Saint Mark, the thirteenth chapter.

**Glory to you, O Lord.**

**J**esus said: <sup>24</sup>“In those days, after that suffering, the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light, <sup>25</sup>and the stars will be falling from heaven, and the powers in the heavens will be shaken. <sup>26</sup>Then they will see ‘the Son of Man coming in clouds’ with great power and glory. <sup>27</sup>Then 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. <sup>28</sup>“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. <sup>29</sup>So also, when you see these things taking place, you know that he is near, at the very gates. <sup>30</sup>Truly I tell you, this generation will not pass away until all these things have taken place. <sup>31</sup>Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away. <sup>32</sup>“But about that day or hour no one knows, neither the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father. <sup>33</sup>Beware, keep alert; for you do not know when the time will come. <sup>34</sup>It 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. <sup>35</sup>Therefore, 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, <sup>36</sup>or else he may find you asleep when he comes suddenly. <sup>37</sup>And what I say to you I say to all: Keep awake.”

The Gospel of the Lord.

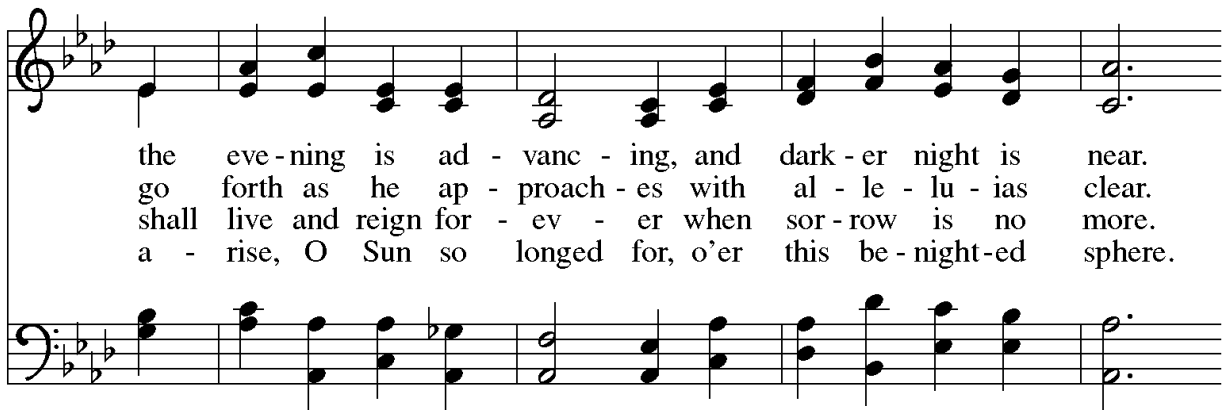
**Praise to you, O Christ.**

## SERMON

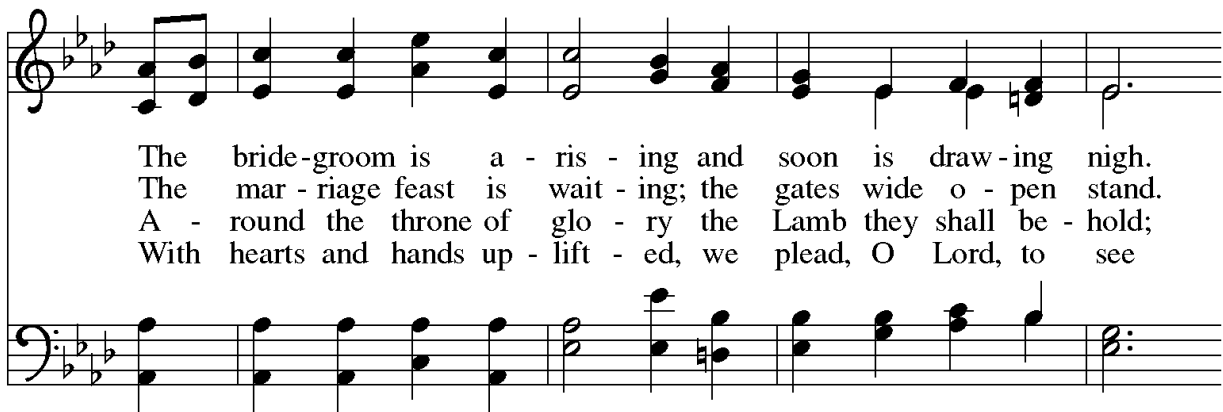
*Rejoice, Rejoice Believers*  
*Audrey Glatz, vocalist*



1 Re - joice, re - joice, be - liev - ers, and let your lights ap - pear;  
 2 The watch - ers on the moun - tain pro - claim the bride - groom near;  
 3 The saints, who here in pa - tience their cross and suf - f'ings bore,  
 4 Our hope and ex - pec - ta - tion, O Je - sus, now ap - pear;



the eve - ning is ad - vanc - ing, and dark - er night is near.  
 go forth as he ap - proach - es with al - le - lu - ias clear.  
 shall live and reign for - ev - er when sor - row is no more.  
 a - rise, O Sun so longed for, o'er this be - night - ed sphere.



The bride - groom is a - ris - ing and soon is draw - ing night.  
 The mar - riage feast is wait - ing; the gates wide o - pen stand.  
 A - round the throne of glo - ry the Lamb they shall be - hold;  
 With hearts and hands up - lift - ed, we plead, O Lord, to see



Up, pray and watch and wres - tle; at mid - night comes the cry.  
 A - rise, O heirs of glo - ry; the bride - groom is at hand.  
 in tri - umph cast be - fore him their di - a - dems of gold.  
 the day of earth's re - demp - tion that sets your peo - ple free!

## APOSTLES' CREED

God has made us his people through our Baptism into Christ. Living together in trust and hope, we profess our faith.

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

**I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord.**

**He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary,**

**He suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried.**

**He descended into hell. On the third day he rose again.**

**He ascended into heaven, and is seated at the right hand of the Father.**

**He will come again 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 THE PEOPLE

God of power and might, tear open the heavens and come quickly to this weary world. Hear our prayers for everyone in need.

*A brief silence.*

We pray for the ministry we share in Christ's name. Open our hearts to your call for justice, peace, and healing. Attune us to the needs of the world as you draw near. Hear us, O God.

**Your mercy is great.**

We pray for this planet in need of restoration: for devastated habitats, polluted waters, thawing ice, blazing fires, swelling floods, and long-lasting droughts. Renew the face of the earth and our relationship to it. Hear us, O God.

**Your mercy is great.**

We pray for all people who care for others in our community and around the world. Fill them with compassion and the power to respond with justice for those who are oppressed, with welcome for those who are excluded, and with relief for those who suffer. Hear us, O God.

**Your mercy is great.**

We pray for people who are in crisis as the seasons change: for those without homes facing severe weather, for those who are unemployed or underemployed, and for those in poverty or facing food insecurity. Relieve their burdens, sustain their bodies, and ease their minds. Hear us, O God.

**Your mercy is great.**

We pray for the people in our families and congregation who live with depression, anxiety, chronic pain, addiction, and other invisible illnesses. Ease their suffering and support them when they struggle. Hear us, O God.

**Your mercy is great.**

We give thanks for the lives and witness of those who died while waiting for justice, peace, or healing, those whose names we know and those whose names are known only to you. Sustain all who still yearn for the completion of your redeeming work. Hear us, O God.

**Your mercy is great.**

Draw near to us, O God, and receive our prayers for the sake of your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

**Amen.**

## **LORD'S PRAYER**

And now as our Savior Christ has taught us, we are bold 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.**

## **BLESSING**

As we await the coming of Christ, Almighty God, Father, ✚ Son, and Holy Spirit, grant you peace and joy, hope and gladness.

**Amen.**

## **DISMISSAL**

Go in peace, remember the poor!

**Thanks be to God!**

## **POSTLUDE**

Reprise on "Even So Lord Jesus Quickly Come"

*Paul Manz*

*The Liturgy Has Ended; The Service Begins!*

# WEEKLY ANNOUNCEMENTS

Please e-mail all information to the church office at keith@sjnc.net

SAINT JAMES LUTHERAN CHURCH  
104 UNION STREET SOUTH  
PO BOX 684  
CONCORD, NORTH CAROLINA 28025  
CHURCH OFFICE 704.786.0166  
WEBSITE www.sjnc.net

## PRAYER LIST

Anne Ridenhour,  
granddaughter of Tom and Ann  
Ridenhour

Ray Faggart  
Phil Sloop

All health care professionals and  
first responders including:

Deb Bradshaw  
Lauri Fowler  
DeeDee Gilbert  
Annette Propst  
Meagan Lambert  
Alison Monk  
Jason and Stephanie Matthews  
Dr Bradley Propst, son of  
Kenny and Annette Propst  
Sam Hurley, son of Elizabeth  
Hurley  
Julie Greathouse, friend of  
Lois Marlow  
Betsy Waselovich, sister of  
Golda Jay  
Lauren, daughter of Angie  
Buchanan  
Dr. Stephanie Garrison,  
daughter-in-law of Margaret  
Garrison  
Dr. Kevin Burns, son-in-law of  
Margaret Garrison.

If you have someone you would like  
to add to the prayer list, please  
contact Keith. 704-786-0166 and  
leave a message or email at  
keith@sjnc.net

## BIRTHDAYS THIS WEEK

29-Nov. Garrett Baker  
30-Nov. Patrick Matthews  
02-Dec. Betsy Ballard  
02-Dec. Al Brown, Jr.  
02-Dec. Nathan Larkin  
02-Dec. Jaxon Yow  
04-Dec. Lauren Hoadley  
04-Dec. Margaret Pruette

## ASSISTING IN WORSHIP

Lector/Intercessor:  
Mark Murphy

Vocalist: Audrey Glatz

## OUR STEWARDSHIP

Contributions and Receipts  
for November 22, 2020  
\$4,515.00

(\$8,414.00 needed for weekly)

## CUDDLE UP COAT DRIVE

The Cabarrus Partnership for  
Children kicked off its 14th annual  
Cuddle Up Coat Drive on October  
1st. This winter, more than ever, we  
need your help to ensure all of our  
community's children are warm. In  
an effort to keep our families,  
children, and staff safe, we will not  
be accepting coats, socks,  
underwear, mittens or hats this  
year. Instead we are asking for  
checks (written to St. James  
Lutheran Church, note Coat Drive  
in the memo line), so that the  
Partnership staff can purchase the  
coats and winter items that local  
children need.

## SALVATION ARMY BELL RINGING

St. James will be ringing the bell  
for Salvation Army on Friday,  
December 4 and December 11. The  
location is Sam's Club at the  
Northlite Shopping Center at Exit  
#60. You can signup online at:  
<https://forms.gle/hjE1Ep4TTNHRUhp8A> or call  
the church office. 704-786-0166

Join Saint James Lutheran  
Church Facebook and  
Instagram groups—send Jeremy  
Jay any pictures and/or articles you  
would like to have posted at  
[jeremy@pbncjay.com](mailto:jeremy@pbncjay.com)

St. James YouTube Channel  
Search for St. James Lutheran  
Church Concord NC and subscribe.

## DIRECTORY

Members of Saint James.....Ministers  
The Rev. Elizabeth Eaton...Presiding Bishop  
The Rev. Dr. Timothy M. Smith.....Bishop

## SAINT JAMES STAFF

The Rev. Tony Bradshaw.....Senior Pastor  
[tony@sjnc.net](mailto:tony@sjnc.net)  
Jill Irvin.....Finance Administrator  
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[ccruse98@twc.com](mailto:ccruse98@twc.com)  
Kathryn Radcliffe.....Nursery Coordinator  
[krad3700@gmail.com](mailto:krad3700@gmail.com)

## CONGREGATIONAL COUNCIL

Kenny Propst.....President  
Joseph Beasley.....Vice President  
Golda Jay.....Secretary  
Beth Huss.....Treasurer

Ann Blackwelder  
Samantha Hillegass  
Elizabeth Hurley  
Hunter Huss  
Nick Lovelace  
Mac Mullins  
Mark Murphy  
Al Pieschel  
Jodi Ramirez



@stjamesnc

## OFFICE HOURS

M-Th 8:30-4:00, F 8:30-1:00  
Closed for lunch 12:30 - 1:00