

The Third Sunday of Advent
December 14, 2025, 8:30 A.M.
St. John's Lutheran Church

*Bulletins are subject to change based on the Pastors' discretion

Announcements

Prelude

Good Christmas All Rejoice

Senior Bell Choir

Ringing of the Church Bell

Lighting of the Advent Candle

The Candle of Joy

Confession and Forgiveness

page 116-117

P: Blessed be the Holy Trinity, † one God, whose home is heaven and earth, whose salvation is sure.

C: Amen.

P: God of all mercy and consolation, come to the help of your people, turning us from our sin to live for you alone. Give us the power of your Holy Spirit that we may confess our sin, receive your forgiveness and grow into the fullness of Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

C: Amen.

P: Let us confess our sin in the presence of God and of one another. Most Merciful God,

C: 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.

P: 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, that Christ may live in your hearts through faith.

C: Amen.

Gathering Hymn

People Look East

ELW # 248 VS 1-3

Greeting and Kyrie

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.**

L: In peace, let us pray to the Lord. **C: Lord, have mercy.**

L: For the peace from above, and for our salvation, let us pray to the Lord. **C: Lord, have mercy.**

L: 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. **C: Lord, have mercy.**

L: For this holy house, and for all who offer here their worship and praise, let us pray to the Lord.

C: Lord, have mercy.

L: Help, save, comfort and defend us gracious Lord. **C: Amen**

The Hymn of Praise (*Glory to God in the Highest...*)

pp. 148-149

L: Glory to God in the highest, and peace to God's people on earth.

C: Lord God, heavenly King, Almighty God and Father, we worship you, we give you thanks, we praise you for your glory. Lord Jesus Christ, only Son of the Father, Lord God, Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world: have mercy on us; you are seated at the right hand of the Father; receive our prayer. For you alone are the Holy One, you alone are the Lord, you alone are the Most High, Jesus Christ, with the Holy Spirit, in the glory of God the Father. Amen.

Prayer of the Day: P: Stir up the wills of all who look to you, Lord God, and strengthen our faith in your coming, that, transformed by grace, we may walk in your way; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **C: Amen.**

First Reading: Isaiah 35: 1-10

Lector: ¹The wilderness and the dry land shall be glad; the desert shall rejoice and blossom; like the crocus ²it shall blossom abundantly and rejoice with joy and shouting. The glory of Lebanon shall be given to it, the majesty of Carmel and Sharon. They shall see the glory of the Lord, the majesty of our God. ³Strengthen the weak hands and make firm the feeble knees. ⁴Say to those who are of a fearful heart, "Be strong, do not fear! Here is your God. He will come with vengeance, with terrible recompense. He will come and save you." ⁵Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be opened; ⁶then the lame shall leap like a deer, and the tongue of the speechless sing for joy. For waters shall break forth in the wilderness and streams in the desert; ⁷the burning sand shall become a pool and the thirsty ground springs of water; the haunt of jackals shall become a swamp; the grass shall become reeds and rushes. ⁸A highway shall be there, and it shall be called the Holy Way; the unclean shall not travel on it, but it shall be for God's people; no traveler, not even fools, shall go astray. ⁹No lion shall be there, nor shall any ravenous beast come up on it; they shall not be found there, but the redeemed shall walk there. ¹⁰And the ransomed of the Lord shall return and come to Zion with singing; everlasting joy shall be upon their heads; they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.

Psalm: 146: 5-10 (read responsively)

P: ⁵Happy are they who have the God of Jacob for their help, whose hope is in the Lord their God;

C: ⁶who made heaven and earth, the seas, and all that is in them; who keeps promises forever;

P: ⁷who gives justice to those who are oppressed, and food to those who hunger. The Lord sets the captive free.

C: ⁸The Lord opens the eyes of the blind; the Lord lifts up those who are bowed down; the Lord loves the righteous.

P: ⁹ The Lord cares for the stranger; the Lord sustains the orphan and widow, but frustrates the way of the wicked.

C: ¹⁰ **The Lord shall reign forever, your God, O Zion, throughout all generations. Hallelujah!**

Second Reading: James 5: 7-11

⁷ Be patient, therefore, brothers and sisters, until the coming of the Lord. The farmer waits for the precious crop from the earth, being patient with it until it receives the early and the late rains. ⁸ You also must be patient. Strengthen your hearts, for the coming of the Lord is near. ⁹ Brothers and sisters, do not grumble against one another, so that you may not be judged. See, the Judge is standing at the doors! ¹⁰ As an example of suffering and patience, brothers and sisters, take the prophets who spoke in the name of the Lord. ¹¹ Behold, we consider those blessed who remained steadfast. You have heard of the steadfastness of Job, and you have seen the purpose of the Lord, how the Lord is compassionate and merciful.

Special Music:

Take This Light
Senior Choir, Piano and Handbells

Mark Patterson

Children's Message

Gospel Acclamation

“Alleluia, Lord to whom shall we go?”

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C: Alleluia. Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life. Alleluia.

The Gospel:

Matthew 11: 1-15

C: Glory to You, O Lord/ Praise to You, O Christ.

¹ When Jesus had finished instructing his twelve disciples, he went on from there to teach and preach in their cities. ² When John heard in prison what the Messiah was doing, he sent word by his disciples ³ and said to him, “Are you the one who is to come, or are we to wait for another?” ⁴ Jesus answered them, “Go and tell John what you hear and see: ⁵ the blind receive their sight, the lame walk, those with a skin disease are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the poor have good news brought to them. ⁶ And blessed is anyone who takes no offense at me.” ⁷ As they went away, Jesus began to speak to the crowds about John: “What did you go out into the wilderness to look at? A reed shaken by the wind? ⁸ What, then, did you go out to see? Someone dressed in soft robes? Look, those who wear soft robes are in royal palaces. ⁹ What, then, did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, I tell you, and more than a prophet. ¹⁰ This is the one about whom it is written, ‘See, I am sending my messenger ahead of you, who will prepare your way before you.’ ¹¹ “Truly I tell you, among those born of women no one has arisen greater than John the Baptist, yet the least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he.” ¹² From the days of John the Baptist until now, the kingdom of heaven has suffered violence, and the violent take it by force. ¹³ For all the Prophets and the Law prophesied until John, ¹⁴ and if you are willing to accept it, he is Elijah who is to come. ¹⁵ He who has ears to hear, let him hear.

Message:

The Way of Holiness

Pastor Waldemar Gies

Confession of Faith

Apostle's Creed

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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.

Offering Hymn:

Comfort, Comfort, Now My People

ELW # 256

Offering Prayer: P: God of healing and hope, you bless those who are hungry, promising to fill them with good things. Fulfill that promise through us and these your gifts. Nourish us with the abundance of your feast that we may rejoice and be a sign in the world of your kingdom to come. **C: Amen.**

Prayers of the Church: P: God of grace..... **C: Hear our prayer!**

The Lord's Prayer

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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.

Benediction:

P: May God who comes among us, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, grant you patience in waiting, peace in the darkness, and good news to share today and always. May the Lord bless you and keep you, may the Lord's face shine upon you grace and mercy. May 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. **C: Amen.**

Closing Hymn:

Good Christian Men Rejoice

ELW# 288

Dismissal:

P: Go in peace. Serve the Lord. **C: Thanks be to God.**

Postlude:

Wie Schon Leuchtet Der Morgenstern

Arr. Wayne Wold

Activities this Week at St. John's**Dec 14, 2025, to Dec 21, 2025**

Sun, Dec 14	8:30am & 10:30am	Worship Services
	9:30am	Sr Choir, Sun School
	1pm	Ecumenical Choir Rehearsal
	7pm	Ecumenical Concert
Wed, Dec 10	6pm	Youth Bells
	7pm	Confirmation & Sr Bells
Sun, Dec 21	8:30am & 10:30am	Worship Services W/ Comm
	9:30am	Sr Choir, Sunday School
	10:30 am	Sunday School Program during Worship Services

General Funds (undesignated)Attendance

Jan 1 – Dec 9, 2025		Last Sunday	72
Actual Income	\$190,335	2025 Average	97
Actual Expenses	\$162,407	2024 Average	99
Jan 1 – Dec 31, 2025			
Budget Expenses	\$203,089		

Greeters	8:30am	Cindy Wuebker Family
	10:30am	
Readers	8:30am	Bailey Benson
	10:30am	Mary Jackson
Ushers	8:30am	John Bauercamper, Jens Kallevang, Randy Hesse
	10:30am	
Secretary		Lana Dahlstrom
Custodians		John & Sharon Roe
Organist/Director of Music		James H. Bieber
Pastor		Waldemar Gies

Today we welcome Pastor Waldemar Gies from Rochester, MN, as he leads us in worship. We are grateful for his presence and ministry among us. ~ We extend a special thank-you to the Deacons for securing the supply pastors for St. John's during this time. We have been blessed by the insight of each pastor and the sermons they have shared with us each week. Thank you for your faithful service.

Radio Broadcast Ministry Today's radio broadcast is made possible through the generous donations of our congregation. Thank you for your continued support of this important outreach ministry! Join us Sunday mornings at 8:30 a.m. on KNEI 103.5 FM to listen to the service.

Note: When sponsoring a broadcast, you have the opportunity to select a hymn of your choice for that service.

Sympathy Notice; St. John's Lutheran Church extends our sincere sympathy to the family of Victor A. Stuckman of Waukon, IA. Victor passed away on November 30, 2025. Funeral services were held on Friday, December 5, at St. John's Lutheran Church in Waukon.

Solar Project: Installation is complete, and we are running on solar power!

Grateful hearts are getting food baskets ready for Christmas. The grocery cart is located in the coat room with a list of items. Please donate generously to this cause and if you would rather donate money, please make a

check out to the St. John's and write Food Baskets in the memo. We will be sending these out before Christmas. Thank You!

Attention Members: Please contact the Church Office at 563-568-3623 or email stjohnswaukon@gmail.com with your current email, address, phone so we can update our records for all 2026 Church correspondence. If you prefer to pick up printed correspondence instead of receiving emails, please let us know. Thank you for helping us stay connected!

Share Your Time and Talents! Please mark the areas where you'd like to serve on the time-and-talent form, pick up a copy in the pews or the church office. Thank you for helping us grow in faith and service!

Please submit your 2025 contributions to the church office by Dec 30, 2025. Thank you for your generosity and continued support of St. John's Lutheran Church. Giving statements for Jan 1–Dec 2, 2025, have been emailed to all members who opted to receive their statements electronically. For those without email, printed statements are available for pick-up in the Narthex. If you have any questions, please contact the Church Office.

Church Committees: Please submit your reports to the church office by **Jan 8, 2026**, so the **Financial Review Committee** can complete their review for 2026.

Call Committee Update A congregational questionnaire has been prepared to help shape our ministry profile. If you have not yet completed one, copies are available in the Narthex. Please return your completed form to the wooden drop box at the back of the church or to the church office.

LAST CALL for Poinsettia orders. Cost is \$12 with checks made out to St John's Altar Guild. You may pick up your poinsettia any time after the Christmas Eve Service. **Christmas Eve Services** with Communion will be at 4 pm and 7 pm. The 7 pm service will be broadcast on KNEI.

The 49th Annual Allamakee Ecumenical Christmas Festival of Lessons and Carols will be held **Sun, Dec 14 at 7:00 PM** at **St. John's Lutheran Church in Waukon**. This candlelight service includes Scripture readings from local clergy, congregational carols accompanied by organ, and musical offerings from the Ecumenical Choir, Ecumenical Men's Choir, the **Ecumenical Children's Choir**, St. John's Youth and Senior Handbell Choirs, and the Waukon High School Brass Quintet. **A reception will follow the service.** All are welcome to join in this community celebration of the Christmas story. The program is directed by **James H. Bieber**, assisted by **Sarah J. Sweeney**. A reception will follow the service, the concert will also be broadcast on **KNEI 103.5 on Christmas Day at 10:00 AM**.

You are invited to the **Luren Singers Christmas Concert** on Sun, Dec 14 - 3:00 p.m. at Decorah Lutheran Church. Free Will Offering will be accepted.

Sunday School Christmas Program will be Sun, Dec 21 at the 10:30 Service. The children will be sharing their gift of music with you. Hope to see you there!

Volunteers for Dec 21 service:

Ushers for December: 8:30 am John Bauercamper, Jens Kallevang, Randy Hesse 10:30 am:

Greeters: 8:30 am Tom & Caroll Schreiber 10:30 am:

Readers: 8:30 am Linda Groe 10:30 am Ann Hagensick

Comm. Asst: 8:30 am Linda Groe, Nona Sawyer, Chris Stuckman 10:30 am Greg/Ann Hagensick Family

Comm. Prep: 8:30 am Mary Jackson, Kathy Hay 10:30 am Linda Groe

We are pleased to host Pastor Waldemar Gies, Rochester MN.