

**The Fourth Sunday of Advent  
December 21, 2025, 8:30 A.M.  
St. John's Lutheran Church**

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

**Announcements**

**Prelude:** Gentle Mary Laid Her Child Arr. James Biery

**Ringling of the Church Bell**

**The Lighting of the Advent Candle** *The Candle of Love*

**Confession and Forgiveness** page 116-117

L: Blessed be the holy Trinity, one God, who forgives all our sin, whose mercy endures forever.

**C: Amen.**

L: 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.**

L: 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.**

L: 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** *O Come, O Come, Emmanuel* ELW # 257 VS 1-3

**Greeting and Kyrie** *"In peace, let us pray..."* pp. 147-148

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 (This Is the Feast)**

pp. 149-150

L: This is the feast of victory for our God. Alleluia.

**C: Worthy is Christ, the Lamb who was slain, whose blood set us free to be people of God. Power and riches and wisdom and strength, and honor and blessing and glory are his. This is the feast of victory for our God. Alleluia. Sing with all the people of God and join in the hymn of all creation: Blessing and honor and glory and might be to God and the Lamb forever Amen. This is the feast of victory for our God, for the Lamb who was slain has begun his reign. Alleluia. Alleluia.**

**Prayer of the Day:** L: 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.

**C: Amen.**

### **First Reading: Isaiah 7: 10-16**

<sup>10</sup> The Lord spoke to Ahaz, saying, <sup>11</sup> "Ask a sign of the Lord your God; let it be deep as Sheol or high as heaven." <sup>12</sup> But Ahaz said, "I will not ask, and I will not put the Lord to the test." <sup>13</sup> Then Isaiah said, "Hear then, O house of David! Is it too little for you to weary mortals that you weary my God also? <sup>14</sup> Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign. Look, the young woman is with child and shall bear a son and shall name him Immanuel. <sup>15</sup> He shall eat curds and honey by the time he knows how to refuse the evil and choose the good. <sup>16</sup> For before the child knows how to refuse the evil and choose the good, the land before whose two kings you are in dread will be deserted."

### **Psalm: Psalm 80: 1-7, 17-19 (Read Responsively)**

P: <sup>1</sup> Hear, O Shepherd of Israel, leading Joseph like a flock; shine forth, you that are enthroned upon the cherubim.

**C: <sup>2</sup> In the presence of Ephraim, Benjamin, and Manasseh, stir up your strength and come to help us.**

**P: <sup>3</sup> Restore us, O God; let your face shine upon us, and we shall be saved.**

**C: <sup>4</sup> O Lord God of hosts, how long will your anger fume when your people pray?**

P: <sup>5</sup> You have fed them with the bread of tears; you have given them bowls of tears to drink.

**C: <sup>6</sup> You have made us the derision of our neighbors, and our enemies laugh us to scorn.**

P: <sup>7</sup> Restore us, O God of hosts; let your face shine upon us, and we shall be saved.

**C: <sup>17</sup> Let your hand be upon the one at your right hand, the one you have made so strong for**

**yourself.**

**P:** <sup>18</sup> And so will we never turn away from you; give us life, that we may call upon your name.

**C:** <sup>19</sup> **Restore us, O Lord God of hosts; let your face shine upon us, and we shall be saved.**

### **Second Reading: Romans 1: 1-7**

<sup>1</sup> Paul, a servant of Christ Jesus, called to be an apostle, set apart for the gospel of God, <sup>2</sup> which he promised beforehand through his prophets in the holy scriptures, <sup>3</sup> the gospel concerning his Son, who was descended from David according to the flesh <sup>4</sup> and was declared to be Son of God with power according to the spirit of holiness by resurrection from the dead, Jesus Christ our Lord, <sup>5</sup> through whom we have received grace and apostleship to bring about the obedience of faith among all the gentiles for the sake of his name, <sup>6</sup> including you who are called to belong to Jesus Christ, <sup>7</sup> To all God's beloved in Rome, who are called to be saints: Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

### **Special Music:**

*O Holy Night*

*Adolphe Adam*

*Senior Choir*

*Today's Music chosen by today's Radio Broadcast Sponsor*

### **Children's Message**

### **Gospel Acclamation**

*"Alleluia. Lord to whom shall we go?"*

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

### **Gospel: Matthew 1: 18-25**

**Glory to you, O Lord/Praise to you, O Christ.**

<sup>18</sup> Now the birth of Jesus the Messiah took place in this way. When his mother Mary had been engaged to Joseph, but before they lived together, she was found to be pregnant from the Holy Spirit. <sup>19</sup> Her husband Joseph, being a righteous man and unwilling to expose her to public disgrace, planned to divorce her quietly. <sup>20</sup> But just when he had resolved to do this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, "Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife, for the child conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. <sup>21</sup> She will bear a son, and you are to name him Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins." <sup>22</sup> All this took place to fulfill what had been spoken by the Lord through the prophet: <sup>23</sup> "Look, the virgin shall become pregnant and give birth to a son, and they shall name him Emmanuel," which means, "God is with us." <sup>24</sup> When Joseph awoke from sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded him; he took her as his wife <sup>25</sup> but had no marital relations with her until she had given birth to a son, and he named him Jesus.

### **Message**

**Pastor Waldemar Gies**

### **Confession of Faith**

Apostles' 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.**

**The Offering Hymn**

*Hark! The Herald Angels Sing*

ELW # 270

**The Offering Prayer:** L: Holy God, maker of all things, who nourishes us with water and the WORD, 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 this meal, refresh us with the gift of life, through the one who gave himself for us, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

**C: Amen.**

**Prayers of the Church:** L: God of grace...

**C: Hear our prayer**

**The Words of Institution**

**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.**

**Communion Songs:** *ELW # 286 Your Little Ones, Dear Lord*  
*ELW # 298 The Bells of Christmas*

**Prayer Following Communion** L: We give you thanks, almighty God, that you have fed us with joy and gladness at this table. Send us forth, eager to share your word, welcome the stranger, and bear good fruit in the name of Jesus.

**C: Amen**

**Benediction**

P: May the 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. The Lord bless you and keep you. The Lord's face shine upon 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.

**C: Amen**

**Closing Hymn**

*From Heaven Above*

ELW # 268 VS 1-3

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

**Postlude:**

**Activities this Week at St. John's**

**Dec 21, 2025, to Dec 30, 2025**

Sun, Dec 21	8:30am & 10:30am	Worship Services W/ Communion
	10:30 am	Sunday School Program during Worship Services
	9:30am	Sunday School
Wed, Dec 24	4pm & 7pm	Christmas Eve Worship Services W/ Communion
Sun, Dec 28	8:30am & 10:30am	Worship Services
Tues, Dec 30	10:30am	Nursing Home Visit- Northgate Care Center
	2:00pm	Nursing Home Visit- Good Samaritan Center
	2:45pm	Nursing Home Visit- Evergreen Court

**General Funds** (undesignated)

**Attendance**

**Jan 1 – Dec 16, 2025**

Actual Income	\$195,052
Actual Expenses	\$165,117

Last Sunday	88
2025 Average	97
2024 Average	99

**Jan 1 – Dec 31, 2025**

Budget Expenses	\$203,089
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Greeters	8:30am	Tom & Caroll Schreiber
	10:30am	
Readers	8:30am	Linda Groe
	10:30am	Ann Hagensick
Comm. Asst	8:30am	Linda Groe, Nona Sawyer, Chris Stuckman
	10:30am	Greg/Ann Hagensick Family
Comm. Prep	8:30am	Linda Groe, Kathy Hay
	10:30am	Linda Groe
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 joyfully made possible by Jane Dietrich, sending Christmas blessings to all! Thank you for your generous and 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.

The congregation of St. John's Lutheran Church extends its sincere sympathy to the family of Susan "Sue" Freese. Sue passed away on Wednesday, December 17, 2025, at Veterans Memorial Hospital in Waukon. Funeral services will be held on Monday, December 22, at 11:00 am at Waterville Lutheran Church, with Pastor Laura Gentry officiating. Burial will follow at Oakland Cemetery in Waukon. Friends may greet the family from 2:00 to 5:00 pm on Sunday at Martin–Grau Funeral Home in Waukon.

**Solar Project Update:** Installation is complete, and we are now running on solar power! The Allamakee Energy District recently stopped by to take a look at the project.

**Attention Members:** Please contact the Church Office at **563-568-3623** or email [stjohnswaukon@gmail.com](mailto: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 members who opted to receive their statements electronically, printed statements were mailed out. 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:** We have completed the Ministry Site Profile and submitted it to Synod staff for review. We are continuing to move forward in the process. If you have not already done so, please take a moment to complete the Congregational Questionnaire. 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.

**Sunday School Christmas Program** will be **Sun, Dec 21** at the **10:30 Service**. The children will be sharing their gift of "Chosen Too—Jesus Chose You" with you. Hope to see you there!

**CHRISTMAS IN THE COUNTRY:** will be held on Christmas Day night at 5:00 pm at the West Paint Creek Synod Church (1351 Elon Dr Waukon, IA 52172). The lessons and carols service will include special music by local musicians and will include a cookies and coffee reception in the newly remodeled church basement. All are encouraged to attend. A free will offering will be taken.

**Volunteers for Dec 24 Christmas Eve service:**

Ushers: 4pm Bill Roe Family 7pm:

Greeters:

Readers: 4pm Linda DeBuhr; 7pm Linda Halvorson

Comm. Asst: 4pm Russ/Mary Jo Meyer Family; 7pm Chris Stuckmon, Vickie Larson, Ron Dahlstrom

Comm. Prep: Altar Guild

We are pleased to host Pastor Mark Oehlert, Peosta, IA.

**Volunteers for Dec 28 service:**

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

Greeters: 8:30 am Cindy Barness 10:30 am:

Readers: 8:30 am Mary Jackson 10:30 am Linda Groe

We are pleased to host Charis Combs-Lay, Oelwein, IA.

Thank You for sharing your poinsettia with us during this Christmas season. You are welcome to take your poinsettia home following the Christmas Eve service.

**Given In Loving Memory of:**

My sister Jan Helgeson by Dennis & Linda DeBuhr

Our Loved Ones gone too soon by Steve & Natasha Wilkes & Family

Our Loved Ones by Cindy & Dave Wuebker

Nathan & Julie Bieber by James Bieber & Family

Sue Bieber by James Bieber & Family

Victor & Jean Stuckman by the Stuckman Family

My father Joe by Vickie Larson

Harold & Margaret Halverson by Russ & Mary Jo Meyer & Families

Eric Halverson by Russ & Mary Jo Meyer & Families

Victor & Nora by Ed & Karen Stamper

Irene & A.V. Palmer & Christopher Mirich by Jill, Richard and Evonne Kistler & Family

Our Loved Ones by Jon & Gloria Payne

My sister Janna Seabrooke by Wayne & Nona Sawyer

Bill & Virginia Roe by Bill & Becky Roe Family

Loved Ones by Greg & Ann Hagensick Family

Sherry Henning by Mike & Brandi Neuzil Family

Dean & Barb Russell by Mike & Brandi Neuzil Family

Ruth Palmer & Eric Palmer by Lee & Chris Ellickson Family

Bob & Agnes Anderson and Grandma Palma by the Randy & Lori Hesse Family

**Given in Honor of:**

Duane, Noah, Jenny, Daren & Dawson by Jane Dietrich

Bev Haas by Anonymous

Thankful for Greg & Marlene Palmer by Lee & Chris Ellickson Family

**Given by:**

Chris Engstrom & Irv Fosaaen

