

Bethlehem & St. John Lutheran Churches

~ The Lutheran Church Missouri Synod ~

Dual Parish Office: 715-352-2888

www.stjbeth.org

Bethlehem Lutheran Church
233500 County Rd E
Milan, WI 54411

St. John Ev. Lutheran Church
119415 Huckleberry Rd
Edgar, WI 54426



First Sunday after Christmas

December 28, 2025

Reverend Michael Mathey, Pastor

The Lutheran Church Missouri Synod's Statement on Close Communion:

The Lord's Supper is celebrated at this congregation in the confession and glad confidence that, as He says, Our Lord gives into our mouths not only bread and wine but His very body and blood to eat and drink for the forgiveness of sins and to strengthen our union with Him and with one another. Our Lord invites to His table those who trust in His words, repent of all sin, and set aside any refusal to forgive and love as He forgives and loves us, that they may show forth His death until He comes.

Because those who eat and drink our Lord's body and blood unworthily do so to their great harm and because Holy Communion is a confession of the faith which is confessed at this altar, any who are not yet instructed, in doubt, or who hold a confession differing from that of this congregation and the Lutheran Church Missouri Synod, and yet desire to receive the Sacrament, are asked to first speak with the Pastor.

(CTCR, *Admission to the Lord's Supper*, Nov 1999)

Life Quotes: December 28 - "Look back at how God changed you. Look ahead to what God promises for you. The future looks bright when you're connected to the crucified and risen Lord Jesus. May the Lord continue to strengthen you to live in your baptismal grace all the days of your life." *Rev. Peter Sulzle, St. John Evangelical Lutheran Church, Redwood Falls, Minnesota – A Life Quote from Lutherans For Life • lutheransforlife.org*

Life Thoughts: December 28 – The devil hates little children because he hates the Christ child, who was promised to crush his head (Genesis 3:15). Sadly, his influence can still be seen today in those who, like Herod, see little children as a threat to their authority and aim for their destruction (Matthew 2:16). As we weep with Rachel and her children (Jeremiah 31:15), we also rejoice that by sparing His only-begotten Son from Herod's wrath, God has provided eternal salvation for all the holy innocents—past, present and future—that they too might join in the heavenly song around the throne of God (Revelation 14:3).

Church Cancellation Procedure

PLEASE NOTE: If there is a need to cancel Church Services or Meetings due to bad weather, you can find out by checking waow.com (Channel 9) or wsaw.com (Channel 7). Every effort will also be made to change the message on St. John's answering machine as soon as possible, and please, if you are not comfortable with the weather conditions, be safe and stay home!

Divine Service III

Hymn: “Children of the Heavenly Father”

LSB 725

Confession and Absolution

Invocation and Exhortation (p.184)

Corporate Confession (p.184)

Service of the Word

Psalm 111

Kyrie (p.186)

Gloria in Excelsis (p.187)

Salutation and Collect of the Day

P The Lord be with you.

C And with thy spirit.

P Let us pray.

O God, our Maker and Redeemer, You wonderfully created us and in the incarnation of Your Son yet more wondrously restored our human nature. Grant that we may ever be alive in Him who made Himself to be like us; through Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C Amen.

Old Testament Reading *Isaiah 63:7–14*

⁷I will recount the steadfast love of the Lord,
the praises of the Lord,
according to all that the Lord has granted us,
and the great goodness to the house of Israel
that he has granted them according to his compassion,
according to the abundance of his steadfast love.

⁸For he said, “Surely they are my people,
children who will not deal falsely.”
And he became their Savior.

⁹In all their affliction he was afflicted,
and the angel of his presence saved them;
in his love and in his pity he redeemed them;

he lifted them up and carried them all the days of old.

¹⁰But they rebelled

and grieved his Holy Spirit;

therefore he turned to be their enemy,

and himself fought against them.

¹¹Then he remembered the days of old,

of Moses and his people.

Where is he who brought them up out of the sea

with the shepherds of his flock?

Where is he who put in the midst of them

his Holy Spirit,

¹²who caused his glorious arm

to go at the right hand of Moses,

who divided the waters before them

to make for himself an everlasting name,

¹³who led them through the depths?

Like a horse in the desert,

they did not stumble.

¹⁴Like livestock that go down into the valley,

the Spirit of the Lord gave them rest.

So you led your people,

to make for yourself a glorious name.

P This is the Word of the Lord.

C **Thanks be to God.**

Gradual

To us a child is born, to us a son is given;

and the government shall be upon his shoulder.

And his name shall be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God,

Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

Sing to the Lord a new song,

for he has done marvelous things!

Epistle *Galatians 4:4–7*

⁴When the fullness of time had come, God sent forth his Son, born of woman, born under the law, ⁵to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as sons. ⁶And because you are sons, God has sent the Spirit of his Son

into our hearts, crying, “Abba! Father!” ⁷So you are no longer a slave, but a son, and if a son, then an heir through God.

P This is the Word of the Lord.

C **Thanks be to God**

Alleluia (p.190)

Holy Gospel *Matthew 2:13–23*

P The Holy Gospel according to St. Matthew, the second chapter.

C **Glory be to Thee, O Lord**

¹³When [the wise men] had departed, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream and said, “Rise, take the child and his mother, and flee to Egypt, and remain there until I tell you, for Herod is about to search for the child, to destroy him.” ¹⁴And he rose and took the child and his mother by night and departed to Egypt ¹⁵and remained there until the death of Herod. This was to fulfill what the Lord had spoken by the prophet, “Out of Egypt I called my son.”

¹⁶Then Herod, when he saw that he had been tricked by the wise men, became furious, and he sent and killed all the male children in Bethlehem and in all that region who were two years old or under, according to the time that he had ascertained from the wise men. ¹⁷Then was fulfilled what was spoken by the prophet Jeremiah:

¹⁸“A voice was heard in Ramah, weeping and loud lamentation, Rachel weeping for her children; she refused to be comforted, because they are no more.”

¹⁹But when Herod died, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared in a dream to Joseph in Egypt, ²⁰saying, “Rise, take the child and his mother and go to the land of Israel, for those who sought the child’s life are dead.” ²¹And he rose and took the child and his mother and went to the land of Israel. ²²But when he heard that Archelaus was reigning over Judea in place of his father Herod, he was afraid to go there, and being warned in a dream he withdrew to the district of Galilee. ²³And he went and lived in a city called Nazareth, that what was spoken by the prophets might be fulfilled: “He shall be called a Nazarene.”

P This is the Gospel of the Lord.

C **Praise be to Thee, O Christ.**

Nicene Creed (p.191)

Office Hymn: “What Child Is This”

LSB 370

Sermon

Offertory (p.192)

Prayer of the Church

Service of the Sacrament

Preface (p.194)

Sanctus (p.195)

The Lord’s Prayer (p.196)

The Words of Our Lord (p.197)

Pax Domini (p. 197)

Agnus Dei (p.198)

Distribution of the Sacrament

Distribution Hymns:

“I Come, O Savior, to Thy Table”

LSB 618

“Go Tell It on the Mountain”

LSB 388

“God Loves Me Dearly”

LSB 392

Nunc Dimittis: (p.199)

Thanksgiving (p.200)

Post Communion Collect (p.201)

Salutation and Benedicamus (p.201)

Benediction (p.202)

Hymn: “Infant Holy, Infant Lowly”

LSB 393

Announcements

Prayers

- ❖ Remember in our prayers our Shut-ins
- ❖ That the Lord would abundantly bless the efforts of the LCMS and its partners in the coming years. That the Gospel is the primary focus of all that is done and proclaimed.



If you are a visitor, please sign the Guest Register (red/maroon book) at the end of the pew. Thank you for worshipping with us today.

This Week at Bethlehem and St. John

STJ: Wed. Dec. 31 New Year's Eve Party 8:30 pm

Next SUNDAY at Bethlehem and St. John

Beth:	Sun.	Jan. 4	Worship Service	8:00 am
Beth:	Sun.	Jan. 4	Adult Bible Study	9:15 am
STJ:	Sun.	Jan. 4	Worship Service	10:30 am
STJ:	Sun.	Jan. 4	Adult Bible Study	11:45 am

Next SUNDAY Acolytes and Greeters

Beth:	Sun.	Jan. 4	Acolyte: Isaac Kosik
			Greeters: Lori and Alan Schmitt
STJ:	Sun.	Jan. 4	Acolyte: Christian Pehlke

Church Office Information

- ✓ Please remember to sign the Guest Register at the end of the pews.
- ✓ Please be sure to check your church mailbox regularly.



Come Ring in the NEW YEAR with us!

December 31st 8:30 pm at St. John Lutheran Church parish hall. Come play some games. Have a favorite game? Bring it. Bring a snack, appetizer or sweet treat to share. We will also have food available.

Sunday School at Bethlehem and St. John

will resume on January 11, 2026

Confirmation and Youth Group classes will resume on January 7, 2026 at Bethlehem Lutheran Church (new year = location change).



Flowers in the chancel at St. John were given by the John & Carol Krampien family in memory of their parents and St. John LWML Ladies Aid.

The Bethlehem Out-Reach would like to thank everyone who came and helped us with the Craft, Soup, & Bake Sale. All your help was greatly appreciated and will not be forgotten. We could not have done it without all your helping hands. The week was very successful and we made \$3,878. Again, thank you to everyone who helped make this event very successful !! God be with you all. Merry Christmas & a Happy Healthy New Year!!

The youth group would like to extend a HUGE thank you to all who worked, donated, made soup and contributed in many and various ways to make the Advent Soup Suppers a blessing.

Thank you to the St. John Sunday School Leaders who used their talents and time to make St. John Children's Advent Program a successful blessing.

Thank you St. John Trustees for gathering and assembling the treat bags for the children.

Portals of Prayer for January – March are available at church. OLD Portals of Prayer are being collected by the Orphan Grain Train. If you have past issues of Portals of Prayers, please place them in the basket located in the carport area at St. John or Bethlehem members can place them in the church secretary's black bin.

Bethlehem/St. John Quilting Group will start meeting again on Monday, January 12, 2025. We will meet 9am to noon in the Fireside Room at St. John. (Day of the week might change - we are flexible with the day of the week.)



Planning ahead: **LifeLight Bible Study** focusing on the book of Mark will be meeting on Thursdays starting January 15th 10: 30 am at Bethlehem and 6: 30 pm at St. John.

Poinsettia Donations at Bethlehem

Loretta Schafer
Darlene Wittlinger
Shirley Buss
Alan and Lori Schmitt
Verlyn and Judy Wittlinger
Galen and Marlene Schreiber
Josh and Jill Penk and family
Dick and Lois Niemi
Hammel Family
Dorean Freimund
Elizabeth Kirchner
Schwartz Family
Ladies Aid
C.W.I.A.

In memory of:

Loved Ones
Loved Ones
Loved Ones
Loved Ones
Loved Ones
Loved Ones
Loved Ones
Loved Ones
Loved Ones
Danny and Diane
Galen and Michelle

I would like to Thank everyone who donated poinsettias this year. The church is beautiful. God's Blessings and a Happy, Healthy New Year in 2026

- Marlene