



St. John Lutheran Church

Powellsville
5600 Junior Furnace-Powellsville Road
Franklin Furnace, Ohio 45629-8937
574-8028 or email: stjoh1875@g mail.com

December 21, 2025
FOURTH SUNDAY IN ADVENT

Service of the Word

Leader: People of St. John, what is our purpose?

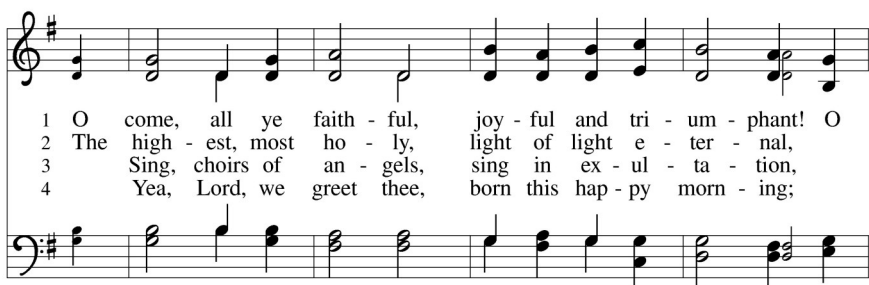
All: To live for the Lord who made us, to love as Jesus taught us, and to serve where the Spirit leads us.

Prelude

+ Gathering Song

O, Come, All Ye Faithful

#45



1 O come, all ye faith - ful, joy - ful and tri - um - phant! O
2 The high - est, most ho - ly, light of light e - ter - nal,
3 Sing, choirs of an - gels, sing in ex - ul - ta - tion,
4 Yea, Lord, we greet thee, born this hap - py morn - ing;



come ye, O come ye to Beth - le - hem;
born of a vir - gin, a mor - tal he comes;
sing, all ye cit - i - zens of heav - en a - bove!
Je - sus, to thee be . . . glo - ry giv'n!

come and be - hold him, born the king of an - gels:
 Son of the Fa - ther now in flesh ap - pear - ing!
 Glo - ry to God . . . in . . . the . . . high - est:
 Word of the Fa - ther, now in flesh ap - pear - ing:

Refrain

Ve - ni - te a - do - re - mus, ve - ni - te a - do - re - mus,
 O come, let us a - dore him, O come, let us a - dore him,

ve - ni - te a - do - re - mus Do - mi - num.
 O come, let us a - dore him, Christ the Lord!

Text: attr. John Francis Wade, 1711–1786; tr. Frederick Oakeley, 1802–1880, sts. 1, 3–4; tr. unknown, st. 2
 Music: ADESTE FIDELES, attr. John Francis Wade

“WE HAVE SEEN JESUS” An Opening Litany

P: When the time was fully come, God sent forth his Son.

C: **Jesus was born to be our Redeemer.**

P: The Word was made flesh and dwelt among us.

C: **We have seen his glory, full of grace and truth.**

P: No one has ever seen God.

C: **But we have seen Jesus, full of grace and truth.**

P: He is the very image of God.

C: **All the fullness of Deity dwells in him bodily.**

P: You will find a baby wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger.

C: **Let us go and see this thing which has come to pass, which the Lord has revealed to us.**

Light the fourth candle

Hymn

Light One Candle to Watch for Messiah

#630

All verses sung during the lighting of the candle.



- 1 Light one can-dle to watch for Mes-si - ah: let the light ban-ish dark - ness.
- 2 Light two can-dles to watch for Mes-si - ah: let the light ban-ish dark - ness.
- 3 Light three can-dles to watch for Mes-si - ah: let the light ban-ish dark - ness.
- 4 Light four can-dles to watch for Mes-si - ah: let the light ban-ish dark - ness.



He shall bring sal - va - tion to Is - ra - el, God ful - fills the prom - ise.
He shall feed the flock like a shep - herd, gent - ly lead them home - ward.
Lift your heads and lift high the gate - way for the King of glo - ry.
He is com - ing, tell the glad tid - ings. Let your lights be shin - ing!

Text: Wayne L. Wold, b. 1954

Music: TIF IN VELDELE, Yiddish folk tune

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+ Prayer of the Day

P The Lord be with you.

C And also with you.

P Let us pray. . **Stir up your power, Lord Christ, and come. With your abundant grace and might, free us from the sin that hinders our faith, that eagerly we may receive your promises, for you live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.**

Children's Sermon

Choir

Mary Did You Know

First Reading: Isaiah 7:10-16

¹⁰ The **Lord** spoke to Ahaz, saying, ¹¹ "Ask a sign of the **Lord** your God; let it be deep as Sheol or high as heaven." ¹² But Ahaz said, "I will not ask, and I will not put the **Lord** to the test." ¹³ Then Isaiah said, "Hear then, O house of David! Is it too little for you to weary mortals that you weary my God also? ¹⁴ 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. ¹⁵ He shall eat curds and honey by the time he knows how to refuse the evil and choose the good. ¹⁶ 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."

Second Reading: Romans 1:1-7

¹ Paul, a servant of Christ Jesus, called to be an apostle, set apart for the gospel of God, ² which he promised beforehand through his prophets in the holy scriptures, ³ the gospel concerning his Son, who was descended from David according to the flesh ⁴ 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, ⁵ 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, ⁶ including you who are called to belong to Jesus Christ,

⁷ 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.

+ Gospel Acclamation



+ The Gospel: Matthew 1:18-25

P The Holy Gospel according to St. Matthew the 1st chapter.

C **Glory to you, O Lord.**

¹⁸ 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. ¹⁹ Her husband Joseph, being a righteous man and unwilling to expose her to public disgrace, planned to divorce her quietly. ²⁰ 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. ²¹ She will bear a son, and you are to name him Jesus, for he will save his people

from their sins.”²² All this took place to fulfill what had been spoken by the Lord through the prophet:

²³ “Look, the virgin shall become pregnant and give birth to a son, and they shall name him Emmanuel,”

which means, “God is with us.”²⁴ When Joseph awoke from sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded him; he took her as his wife²⁵ but had no marital relations with her until she had given birth to a son, and he named him Jesus.

P The Gospel of the Lord.

C Praise to you, O Christ

Children’s Christmas Program

God With Us

“O’ Little Town of Bethlehem

Congregation

1 O lit - tle town of Beth - le - hem, how still we see thee lie!
2 For Christ is born of Mar - y, and, gath - ered all a - bove
3 How si - lent - ly, how si - lent - ly the won - drous gift is giv'n!
4 O ho - ly child of Beth - le - hem, de - scend to us, we pray;

A - bove thy deep and dream-less sleep the si - lent stars go by;
while mor - tals sleep, the an - gels keep their watch of won - d'ring love.
So God im - parts to hu - man hearts the bless - ings of his heav'n.
cast out our sin, and en - ter in, be born in us to - day.

yet in thy dark streets shin - eth the ev - er - last - ing light.
 O morn - ing stars, to - geth - er pro - claim the ho - ly birth,
 No ear may hear his com - ing; but, in this world of sin,
 We hear the Christ - mas an - gels the great glad tid - ings tell;

The hopes and fears of all the years are met in thee to - night.
 and prais - es sing to God the king, and peace to all the earth!
 where meek souls will re - ceive him, still the dear Christ en - ters in.
 oh, come to us, a - bide with us, our Lord Im - man - u - el!

Text: Phillips Brooks, 1835–1893
 Music: ST. LOUIS, Lewis H. Redner, 1831–1908

NARRATOR: In those days Caesar Augustus issued a decree that a census should be taken of the entire Roman world. And everyone went to his own town to register.

So Joseph also went up from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Bethlehem the town of David, because he belonged to the house and line of David. He went there to register with Mary, who was pledged to be married to him and was expecting a child.

While they were there, the time came for the baby to be born and she gave birth to her firstborn, a son. She wrapped him in cloths and placed him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn.

“Away in a Manger”

Children

*Away in a manger, no crib for a bed,
The little Lord Jesus laid down his sweet head;
The stars in the sky looked down where He lay,
The little Lord Jesus asleep on the hay.*

*The cattle are lowing; the poor baby wakes,
but little Lord Jesus no crying he makes.
I love you, Lord Jesus; look down from the sky
and stay by my cradle till morning is nigh.*

*Be near me, Lord Jesus; I ask you to stay
close by me forever and love me, I pray.
Bless all the dear children in your tender care
and fit us for heaven, to live with you there.*

NARRATOR: And there were shepherds living out in the fields nearby, keeping watch over their flocks at night. An angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. But the angel said to them, “Do not be afraid. I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all people. Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is Christ the Lord.”

“It Came Upon a Midnight Clear”

Congregation

*It came upon a midnight clear that glorious song of old.
From angels bending near the earth to touch their harps of gold.
Peace on the earth, good will to men from heaven’s all gracious king.
The world in solemn stillness lay to hear the angels sing.*

NARRATOR: Suddenly a great company of heavenly hosts appeared with the angel, praising God and saying, “Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to men on whom his favor rests.”

“Hark the Herald Angels Sing”

Congregation

*Hark! The herald angels sing,
"Glory to the newborn king;
peace on earth, and mercy mild,
God and sinners reconciled."
Joyful, all you nations, rise;
join the triumph of the skies;
with angelic hosts proclaim,
"Christ is born in Bethlehem!"
Refrain: Hark! The herald angels sing,
"Glory to the newborn king!"*

*Christ, by highest heav'n adored,
Christ, the everlasting Lord,
late in time behold him come,
offspring of a virgin's womb.
Veiled in flesh the Godhead see!
Hail, incarnate deity!
Pleased as man with us to dwell,
Jesus, our Emmanuel! Refrain*

3 *Hail the heav'n-born Prince of peace!
Hail the Sun of righteousness!
Light and life to all he brings,
ris'n with healing in his wings.
Mild he lays his glory by,
born that we no more may die,
born to raise each child of earth,
born to give us second birth. Refrain*
Text: Charles Wesley, 1707-1788, alt.

NARRATOR: So they hurried off and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby, who was lying in the manger. When they had seen him, they spread the word concerning what had been told them about this child, and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds said to them.

“The Friendly Beasts” -

Children

NARRATOR: After Jesus was born in Bethlehem in Judea, Wise Men from the east came to Jerusalem and asked, “Where is the one who has been born the king of the Jews? We saw his star in the east and have come to worship him.” Jesus was a king for all people and one day every knee will bow before him.

“We Three Kings”

Congregation

*We three kings of Orient are bearing gifts we traverse afar;
Field and fountain, moor and mountain, following yonder star ...
O-o, Star of wonder, Star of night, Star of royal beauty bright;
Westward leading, still proceeding, guide us to Thy perfect light.*

NARRATOR: After they had heard the king, they went on their way, and the star they had seen in the east went ahead of them until it stopped over the place where the child was.

On coming to the house, they saw the child with his mother Mary, and they bowed down and worshipped him. Then they opened their treasures and presented him with gifts of gold and of incense and of myrrh.

All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had said through the prophet: “The virgin will be with child and will give birth to a son, and they will call him Immanuel” which means,...
“God with us.”

“We Wish you a Merry Christmas”

Children

*We wish you a merry Christmas,
We wish you a merry Christmas,*

*We wish you a merry Christmas,
And a Happy New Year.*

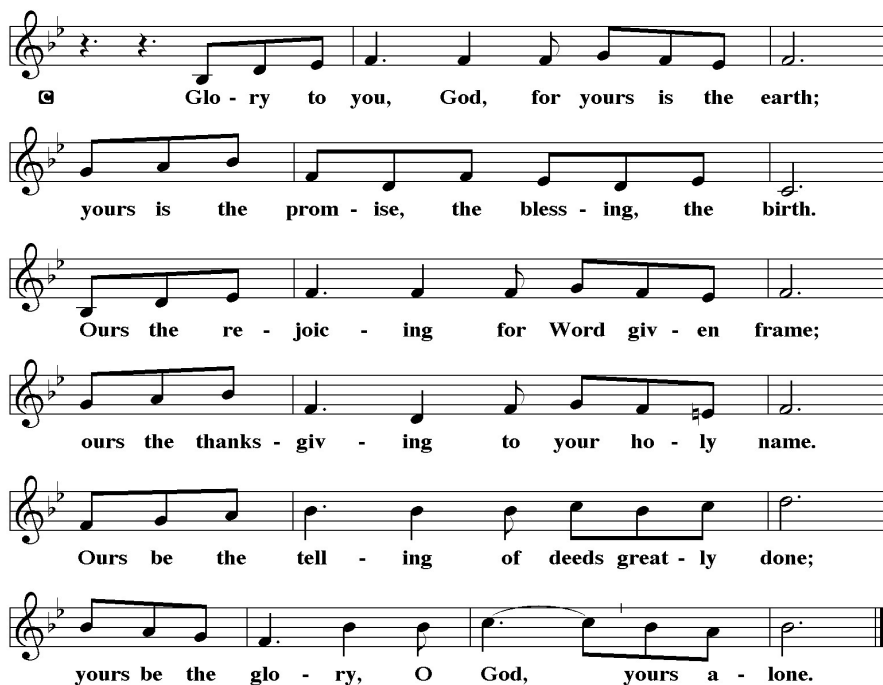
*Good tidings we bring, to you and your kin.
Good tidings for Christmas and a Happy New Year.*

EVERYONE SAYS: Merry Christmas!!

Parish Announcement

Offering

+ Offertory



Glo - ry to you, God, for yours is the earth;
yours is the prom - ise, the bless - ing, the birth.
Ours the re - joic - ing for Word giv - en frame;
ours the thanks - giv - ing to your ho - ly name.
Ours be the tell - ing of deeds great - ly done;
yours be the glo - ry, O God, yours a - lone.

+ Offertory Prayer

P Let us pray.

P God, our Creator,

C you open wide your hand and satisfy the desire of every living creature.
With these gifts we bless you for your tender nurture and care. Help us to
delight in your will and walk in your ways, through Jesus Christ our
Lord. Amen

+ Peace

P The peace of the Lord be with you always.

C **And also with you.**

The ministers and congregation may greet one another with a gesture of peace, using these or similar words:

Peace be with you.

+ The Prayers

P: Among our precious children dear;

C: **Lord, Jesus, come and make your home.**

P: With all who come to worship here,

C: **Lord, Jesus, come and make your home.**

P: Within the homes in which we dwell,

C: **Lord, Jesus, come and make your home.**

P: Where people seek your praise to tell,

C: **Lord, Jesus, come and make your home.**

P: Where working folk their skills employ,

C: **Lord, Jesus, come and make your home.**

P: Where worshippers express their joy,

C: **Lord, Jesus, come and make your home.**

P: Where there is need or want or pain,

C: **Lord, Jesus, come and make your home.**

P: Where mourners seek to hope again,

C: **Lord, Jesus, come and make your home.**

P: Where mourners seek to hope again,

C: **Lord, Jesus, come and make your home.**

P: With all who join to celebrate,

C: **Lord, Jesus, come and make your home.**

P: With those who muse and contemplate,

C: **Lord, Jesus, come and make your home.**

P: With loved ones who are far away,

C: **Lord, Jesus, come and make your home.**

P: With all who watch and wait and pray,

C: **Lord, Jesus, come and make your home.**

P: When faithful saints are laid to rest,

C: **Lord, Jesus, come and make your home.**

P: When people know how they've been blessed,

C: **Lord, Jesus, come and make your home.**

P: Where'er we see your gracious face,

C: **Lord, Jesus, come and make your home.**

P: Until in heav'n we take our place,

C: **Lord, Jesus, come and make your home.**

Quilt Blessing

P: Gracious God, as we place our hands on these Quilts, we join giver and receiver, recognizing the unity of all your people in the body of Christ.

C: We celebrate being the children of God.

P: We give thanks for the variety of gifts that compose these Quilts: donations of fabric, thread and sewing machines, the faithful people who cut the squares, design the patterns, sew the tops, iron the fabric, make backs and fillers, and tie and stitch the bindings

C: We celebrate generosity.

P: We give thanks for the fellowship of all who work together to make the Quilts, the laughter, the shared stories, the joy of crafting something with one's hands and heart for another and the time to reflect and wonder about the recipient.

C: We celebrate community.

P: We send these Quilts as a sign of God's love and blessing for each person who receives one, trusting that their Quilt will be a source of comfort and hope in the midst of disaster and fear, a symbol of Christ's love to those who suffer, a reminder that each recipient is a beloved child of God.

We pray that these Quilts will serve a useful purpose in the life of the recipient; that they will bring warmth in the cold, shelter from the sun and heat, a wall for a home, or a carrier for a few precious belongings. May it be a step in recovering one's life and a message of care from someone they may never meet.

C: We celebrate hope in the midst of life's trials.

P: We remember those who have received our Quilts in the past and pray that their lives have returned to stability.

C: We celebrate the gift of life.

Bless all who give and all who receive, as we are sewn together in the unity of your Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C: Amen

+ The Lord's Prayer

(Matthew 6:9-13)

**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 God is faithful and will strengthen you to the end, as you wait for the revealing of our Lord Jesus Christ Almighty God, the Father, the Son, and Holy Spirit, bless you now and forever.

+ Closing Hymn

Joy To The World

#39

1 Joy to the world, the Lord is come! Let earth re -
 2 Joy to the earth, the Sav - ior reigns! Let all their
 3 No more let sin and sor - row grow nor thorns in -
 4 He rules the world with truth and grace and makes the

ceive her king; let ev - 'ry heart pre - pare him
 songs em - ploy, while fields and floods, rocks, hills, and
 fest the ground; he comes to make his bless - ings
 na - tions prove the glo - ries of his righ - teous -

room and heav'n and na - ture sing, and heav'n and na - ture
 plains re - peat the sound-ing joy, re - peat the sound-ing
 flow far as the curse is found, far as the curse is
 ness and won - ders of his love, and won - ders of his

and heav'n and na - ture sing. and

sing, joy, found, love, and re-peat, far as, and heav'n, re-peat, far as, and heav'n, re-peat, far as, and na-ture sing, the sound-ing joy, the curse is found, of his love.

heav'n and na-ture sing.

Text: Isaac Watts, 1674–1748

Music: ANTIOCH, English melody, 18th cent.; arr. Lowell Mason, 1792–1872

+ Dismissal

P: The glory of the Lord shall be revealed,

C: And all the people shall see it together.

P: Go in peace. Prepare the way of the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God.

Postlude

+Stand as you are able

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God With Us

Director - Ryleigh Blagg

Assistants - Dené DeGonzague, Vivian Riffel

Pianist - Drew DeGonzague

Participants

Scarlett Wilson, Sienna Wilson, Alex DeGonzague, Owen Ramey, Evan Ramey, Eli Clevenger, Kasyn Thackston, Eli DeGonzague, Emmett Mercer, Olivia Stafford, Emmett Salyers, Elaina Salyers, Eli Salyers, Kwynn Thackston, Kymber Thackston, Carson Blagg

SERVING TODAY

Organist
Greeter
Altar Committee
Council President

Leigh Ann Henry
Dene DeGonzague
Wendy Queen, Julie Gleim
Rick Williams

WELCOME TO ST. JOHN LUTHERAN CHURCH. We are pleased you are here. If you are visiting with us this morning, please sign our guest book in the entrance area. We hope you will join us again very soon.

TODAY IS THE FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT, the fourth Sunday of the new Church year. Advent is the season, (the four Sundays before Christmas) when we prepare ourselves for the coming of the Messiah, Immanuel, God with us as a person like ourselves. The liturgical color of Advent blue.

LET US PRAY FOR: Dale Ramey, Emily Smith, Peggy Butler, Roberta Sommer, Rosemarie Becker, Patricia Cavendish, Jim Skipworth, Galen Gleim, Paul Means, Grace Mootz, Marcella Mootz, Kay Staker, Kimberly Tolliver, Danica Clarkson, Bill Murphy, Frank Dodd, Linda Martin, Rena McIntyre, Bill Culver, Melaine Hawk, Patty Poole, Kent Gifford, Nicholas Young, Jason Pierce, Beth Miller, Jane Staker, Joanne Oakes, Vivian Riffel, Donnie Hixon, Rod Schneider, The Congregation of the Mountain Church in Asmushausen, Germany, the members of our armed forces, and those we hold privately in our hearts.

PLEASE PRAY FOR the Call Committee and Church Council as we search for a new pastor. May God bless and guide them in this journey.

POINTSETTIA ORDERS are due on next *Today*.

CHRISTMAS EVE FESTIVAL OF CANDLELIGHT AND HOLY COMMUNION will be Wednesday, December 24 at 7:00 p.m. This very special time of worship features scriptures and carols that help us celebrate the birth of the One who saves us, Emmanuel.

CONFIRMATION CLASS for 7th and 8th graders is the 2nd and 4th Sunday of each month. The next class is Sunday, January 11 and January 25 at 9:00 a.m. We will meet downstairs in the library Sunday School room.

ALL YEAR END REPORTS are due next Sunday, December 28.

ANNUAL CONGREGATIONAL MEETING will be Sunday, January 11.

This Week at St. John

Today—*Fourth Sunday in Advent*

10:00 a.m. **Worship**—Children's Christmas Program

11:00 a.m. Annual Christmas Dinner
Followed by caroling

Wednesday

7:00 p.m. Christmas Eve Festival Service of
Candlelight and Holy Communion

Next Sunday—*First Sunday after Christmas*

10:00 a.m. **Worship**

Attendance

2025 Average 61

2024 Average: 62

Serving Next Sunday, December 28

Organist

Greeter

Altar Committee

Council President

Leigh Ann Henry

James & Kym Hayman

Wendy Queen, Julie Gleim

Rick Williams

CELEBRATING THIS WEEK

BIRTHDAYS: Galen Gleim, Rusty Gleim

BAPTISMS: Vivian Riffel, Ron Willis, Jessica Miller

ANNIVERSARIES: Everett & Ophelia Hatfield, San & Joyce Bailey, Ed
& Kendra Hughes

IF WE MISSED ANYONE please let Vicki Bradley know so we can add
you to the list.

Coming Events

Sunday, December 21 at 10:00 a.m. Children Christmas Program & Blessing of the Blankets

Sunday, December 21 at 11:00 a.m. Annual Christmas Dinner Caroling

Wednesday, December 24 at 7:00 p.m. Christmas Eve Service

Sunday, January at 9:15 a.m. Lite Breakfast and fellowship

Sunday, January 11 immediately after worship Annual Congregational Meeting

Sunday, December 21

Children's Christmas Program during worship.

Join us Wednesday, December 24

**At 7:00 p.m. for our annual
Christmas Eve Festival Service
of Candlelight and Holy Communion**

Sunday, January 11

**Annual Congregational Meeting
Immediately following worship.**

