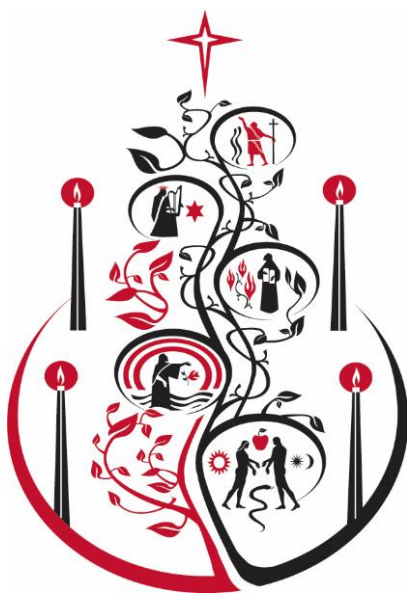




# St. John's Lutheran Church

Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

God's work. Our hands.



## *4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Advent*

*December 20, 2020*

*10:30 Service of the Word*

This week the Sunday school children present their Christmas program. We'll meet a donkey and a camel, and both of them claim to be the most important part of the Christmas story! As the story unfolds, however, they discover a much greater truth. Enjoy this year's program and let the Spirit nurture you through it.

### *Welcome to worship today!*

This order of worship is designed to accompany what is happening live on Zoom. In order to make things work smoothly please keep your computer's microphone off unless you have a speaking part. It may be helpful to use a headset or earbuds to minimize feedback. You are welcome to use the chat feature to ask questions or provide feedback. Following worship we will have a time for those who would like to chat.

## † OPENING †

### Welcome and Announcements

#### Lighting of the Advent Wreath

Blessed are you, O Lord our God, ruler of the universe. In your Son, Emmanuel, you have shown us your light and saved us from the power of sin. Bless us as we light the candles on this wreath. Increase our longing for your presence, that at the celebration of your Son's birth his Spirit might dwell anew in our midst, for he is our light and our salvation. Blessed be God forever.

**C: Amen**

#### Confession and Forgiveness

P: Blessed be God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, whose forgiveness is sure and whose steadfast love endures forever.

**C: Amen.**

P: Together let us honestly and humbly confess that we have not lived as God desires.

#### *Silence for reflection and self-examination*

P: Loving and forgiving God,

**C: we confess that we are held captive by sin.**

**In spite of our best efforts, we have gone astray.**

**We have not welcomed the stranger;**

**we have not loved our neighbor;**

**we have not been Christ to one another.**

**Restore us, O God.**

**Wake us up and turn us from our sin.**

**Renew us each day in the light of Christ. Amen.**

P: People of God, hear this glad news:

by God's endless grace

your sins are forgiven, and you are free-

free from all that holds you back

and free to live in the peaceable realm of God.

May you be strengthened in God's love,

comforted by Christ's peace,

and accompanied with the power of the Holy Spirit.

**C: Amen.**

## Prayer of the Day

**A:** 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.

**C: Amen**

## ✠ CHILDREN'S CHRISTMAS PROGRAM ✠

Join the St. John's Lutheran Sunday School children as we listen in on a conversation between the Donkey and the Camel from our favorite Christmas story.

Cast: -Donkey's voice: Morgan

-Camel's voice: Rudy

-Puppeteers: Jaden/Tierney

-Narrators: Creed, Owen, and Brody

-Nativity Scene Set-up: Rosealie, Charlotte, Elijah, and Alyssa

Script written by Brendan Leahy at Gloria Dei Lutheran Church in Arnold, MD

### Scene 1: Meet Donkey and Camel

Hymn: The First Noel

(For music see Hymn 300 in the Red Hymnal)

**1. The first noel the angel did say  
was to certain poor shepherds in fields as they lay;  
in fields where they,  
lay, keeping their sheep,  
on a cold winter's night that was so deep.**

**Refrain: Noel, Noel, Noel, Noel!  
Born is the King of Israel.**

**5. Then entered in those wise men three,  
full rev'rently upon their knee,  
and offered there  
in his presence  
their gold and myrrh and frankincense. Refrain**

Scene 2: Gabriel Visits Mary

Hymn: Angels We Have Heard on High  
For music turn to Hymn 289 in the Red Hymnal

- 1. Angles we have heard on high,  
sweetly singing o'er the plains  
and the mountains in reply,  
echoing their joyous strains.**

*Refrain*

**Glo-ria in excelsis Deo;  
Glo-ria in excelsis Deo.**

- 3. Come to Bethlehem and see  
him whose birth the angels sing;  
come, adore on bended knee  
Christ the Lord, the newborn king. Refrain**

Text: French carol; tr. H.F. Hemy, *The Crown of Jesus Music*, 1864. Music: French Carol; arr. Edward S. Barnes, 1887-1958

Scene 3: Flock of Angels visit Shepherds

Hymn: Go Tell It on the Mountain  
For music turn to Hymn 290 in the Red Hymnal

*Refrain*

**Go tell it on the mountain,  
over the hills and everywhere;  
go tell it on the mountain  
that Jesus Christ is born!**

- 1. While shepherds kept their watching  
o'er silent flocks by night,  
behold, throughout the heavens  
there shone a holy light. Refrain**
- 3. Down in a lonely manger  
the humble Christ was born;  
and God sent us salvation  
that blessed Christmas morn. Refrain**

Text: African American spiritual, refrain: John W. Work Jr., 1872-1925, stanzas, alt. Music: African American spiritual

Scene 4: Donkey, Mary, Joseph and the Inn

Scene 5: Away in a Manger

Hymn: Away in a Manger

(For music see Hymn 277 or 278 in the Red Hymnal)

- 1. Away in a manger, no crib for his bed,  
the little Lord Jesus laid down his sweet head;  
the starts in the bright sky looked down where he lay,  
the little Lord Jesus asleep on the hay.**
- 3. 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.**

Text: North American, 19<sup>th</sup> century. Music: James R. Murray, 1841-1905

Scene 6: The Wise Men

Hymn: We Three Kings of Orient Are

(For music see Hymn 646 in the Blue Hymnal)

- 1. We three kings of Orient are;  
bearing gifts we traverse afar,  
field and fountain  
moor and mountain,  
following yonder star.**
- Refrain:* **Oh, star of wonder, star of night,  
star with royal beauty bright;  
westward leading, still proceeding,  
guide us to thy perfect light!**
- 5. Glorious now behold him arise,  
King and God and Sacrifice;  
heav'n sings  
alleluia:  
alleluia the earth replies. Refrain**

Text and music: John Henry Hopkins Jr., 1820-1921, alt.

*Hymn:* Hark! The Herald Angels Sing  
*For music turn to Hymn 270 in the Red Hymnal*

- 1. 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 new the newborn king!”**

- 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. Music: Felix Mendelssohn, 1809-1847; arr. William H. Cummings, 1831-1915

*Hymn:* Joy to the World  
*For music turn to Hymn 267 in the Red Hymnal*

- 1. Joy to the world, the Lord is come!  
Let earth receive her king;  
let ev’ry heart prepare him room  
and heav’n and nature sing,  
and heav’n and nature sing,  
and heav’n and heav’n and nature sing.**
- 4. He rules the world with truth and grace  
and makes the nations prove  
the glories of his righteousness  
and wonders of his love  
and wonders of his love  
and wonders, wonders of his love.**

Text: Isaac Watts, 1674-1748. Music: English melody, 18<sup>th</sup> century; arr. Lowell Mason, 1792-1872

Response to the Word

P: In Christ you have heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation.

**C: We believe in him and are marked with the seal of the promised Holy Spirit.**

E: Living together in trust and hope, we confess our faith.

**C: 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.**

E: Build yourselves up on your most holy faith;

**C: pray in the Holy Spirit.** *(Jude 20)*

E: Keep yourselves in the love of God;

**C: look forward to the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ.** *(Jude 21)*

E: If anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation:

**C: Everything old has passed away;  
behold, everything has become new!** *(2 Corinthians 5:17)*

## † PRAYER †

### Prayers of Intercession

P: With the whole people of God in Christ Jesus, let us pray for the church, those in need, and all of God's creation.

*The pastor will begin the prayer with a petition and then invites the congregation to add additional petitions and thanksgivings. These three petitions will be read by people in the congregation:*

**A:** O God, Emmanuel, we pray: be with us. Bless our national church and our own congregation. Bless also our neighbors of other denominations and faiths, that strengthened by your presence we may support one another in love and together serve those in need. Lord in your mercy...

**C: Hear our prayer.**

**B:** O God, the Wisdom of the world, as tomorrow the earth's north tilts back toward the sun, preserve vegetation and wild animals during winter. Form us into a people who honor your creation. Make of our decorated Christmas trees signs of our thankfulness for the earth. Lord in your mercy...

**C: Hear our prayer.**

**E:** O God, Ruler of might, send your healing power to all in bodily need. Curb the coronavirus, and strengthen medical workers. Guide all world health organizations and governmental officials in the distribution of the vaccines, and calm the fears of those who are reluctant to receive the vaccine. Lord in your mercy...

**C: Hear our prayer.**

*The pastor concludes the prayer:*

P: Into your hands, gracious God, we commend all for whom we pray, trusting in your mercy; through Jesus Christ our Savior.

**C: Amen.**

### Peace

**A:** The peace of the Lord be with you always.

**C: And also with you.**

**A:** We share that peace with one another.

*The congregation may greet one another with messages of Christ's peace.*

### Special Music



Lord's Prayer

P: Lord remember us in your kingdom and teach us to pray:

**C: 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**

†      E N D I N G      †

Blessing

P: The Creator of the stars bless your Advent waiting,  
the long expected Savior fill you with love,  
the unexpected Spirit guide your journey,  
now and forever.

**C: Amen**

Dismissal

P: Go in peace. Serve the Lord.

**C: God's Work. Our Hands.**

## **Office Hours**

Pastor Jon anticipates being in the office:

Monday – morning and afternoon

Wednesday – morning and afternoon

Thursday- morning

He can be available other times by appointment. Please call the church:

(585) 924-5192 or pastor's cell: (585) 281-3595

## **Snow Clearing Volunteers/Helpers**

We are looking for people to help with snow removal at church this winter season. We work in teams; if you're not comfortable driving an easy-to-operate small plow truck, we also need snowblower operators, shovelers, and salters. If you can assist, please contact Tom Urbanic at [turbanic@rochester.rr.com](mailto:turbanic@rochester.rr.com) or 585-489-5965.

## **Mitten Tree**

We will still have a Christmas tree in the gathering area for donations of gloves, mittens, scarves, and hats of all sizes. These items will be donated to the Victim Resource Center. The deadline is December 20<sup>th</sup>.

## **Church Christmas Tree Decorations**

We are still setting up and decorating a church tree this year. Please see your newsletter for a collection of Chrismons— Christian symbols used to decorate a tree. Please select one and print it out (on heavy paper or cardstock if possible). You may cut it out or leave it uncut. Decorate it to your liking and put your name(s) on it. Then return it to church. We'll place them on the tree. During the Christmas Eve service we'll give some camera time to the decorations on the tree. Thank you!

## **Church Playground – Girl Scout Gold Project Can & Bottle Collection**

Kelsey Sackett is working to replace the church playground for her Girl Scout Gold Award project. Please consider donating your deposit bottles and cans to help pay for it. A collection bin is in the old entrance room.



**St. John's Lutheran Church**

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The Rev. Jonathan Deibler, Pastor  
Nathan Cheung, Pianist

*-and-*

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(315) 946-6748

The Rev. Jonathan Deibler, Transitional Pastor  
Lawrence Dapolito, Organist