



FOURTH WEEKEND OF ADVENT

Welcome to St. John Lutheran Church
Saturday, December 20, 2025 5:00 pm

www.stjohnwilliston.org

419-836-5514

Fourth Saturday of Advent

December 20, 2025

**WELCOME
ANNOUNCEMENTS
SONG**

Wake Up

**Wake up, sleeper arise,
wake up and I will give you life.**

**Wake up, sleeper arise,
rise up from death and find new life.**

When you hear me calling, calling you.
To a life that you are ... sleeping through.
When you hear me calling ... when you hear me calling. **Chorus**

There's a new sun rising ... breaking through.
Lighting up the darkness ... cov'ring you.
There's a new sun rising ... There's a new sun rising. **Chorus**

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

L: Blessed be the holy Trinity, one God, the One whose home stretches from heaven to earth, the One whose saving love never fails.

C: Amen.

L: Let us confess our sin in the presence of God and of one another.

Silence for reflection.

L: Gracious and long-awaited God,

C: we admit that we often trust ourselves for the peace only you can give. We cling to our defenses, holding tight to habits that lead to conflict. We grow impatient in the waiting and tired of staying awake to your presence. Set us free from our self-reliance. Teach us how to live in real peace with our neighbors. Grow our trust in your timing, and open our eyes to your coming among us, so that we may overflow with the hope you promise. Amen.

L: God does not judge us as we deserve but meets us with mercy and righteousness. You are forgiven and set free—saved by grace and ready to welcome the Savior.

ALL: Amen.

ADVENT PRAYER-The Candle of LOVE

L: Loving God, we open ourselves to you in this Christmas season. Light our lives with your imagination.

Prepare our hearts to be transformed by you so we can walk in the light of Christ.



C: Give us faith to carry the deep certainty that you have come and are still coming into the world. Help us look for good not only in a long-ago stable or an ancient manger, but in the people we meet and in the quiet depths of our own hearts. May the blessing of Christmas make us a blessing to others.

FIRST READING

Isaiah 7:10-16

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

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

⁷To 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

Matthew 1:18-25

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." When Joseph awoke from sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded him; he took her as his wife ²⁵ but had no marital relations with her until she had given birth to a son, and he named him Jesus.

SERMON

Pastor Shawn O'Brien

AFFIRMATION OF FAITH

**ALL: We believe in God, the Creator of all that is,
the One who speaks light into darkness and holds the world with
steadfast love. We believe in Jesus Christ, God's beloved Son, our
Lord—conceived by the Holy Spirit, born into our waiting world
through Mary, coming among us with hope when hope felt thin.
He suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried.
He entered the depths of death itself,
and on the third day God raised him in glory.
He ascended to heaven
and now shares in God's reign of justice and mercy.
We trust that he will come again—
not to frighten, but to set things right, to mend what is broken,
and to bring peace to all creation.
We believe in the Holy Spirit, moving still through weary hearts and
watching worlds, gathering us into the one holy church,
uniting us with saints past and present,
and giving us the courage to seek forgiveness and to practice it.
We believe in resurrection—that life is stronger than death—
and in the promise of a world made new by God's coming light.
Amen.**

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

P: God of Grace,

C: hear our prayer.



SHARE THE LORD'S PEACE

P: The peace of the Lord be with you always.

C: And also with you!

P: As God has reconciled us to himself in Christ, and has given us the ministry of reconciliation, let us share a sign of God's Peace with those around us... *(a peace sign, a wave, or a fist bump are good alternatives to a handshake)*

OFFERING SONG

He Brings Peace

What can a baby do in this world? It seems so out of control.
What can this tiny baby of God, bring to a world dark and cold?

Refrain

**He brings peace ... He brings love ... he brings hope to a world in need.
He brings peace ... He brings love ... he brings victory.
And his hope calms our fear, and his love never ends,
He brings peace ... love ... hope and victory.**

What can this child alone in this world, do to correct what is wrong?
God in our flesh became one of us, if we believe, we will know.

Refrain

OFFERING PRAYER

P: Nourishing God,
you are water in the wilderness and streams in the desert. Through this meal,
satisfy our parched places, that we may rejoice and be for the world
signs of your kingdom come.

C: Amen

COMMUNION LITANY

L: We gather for this holy meal because Jesus is the Messiah - the One who has come and the One who is still coming into our world.

All: Jesus shows us exactly what God's love looks like.

L: We come to this table celebrating the gift of forgiveness, trusting that the chains of our guilt can finally be released.

All: Jesus, God's love made flesh, comes to bring us new life.

L: In the night in which he was betrayed, our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks; broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying:
Take and eat; this is my body, given for you.
Do this for the remembrance of me.

Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it for all to drink, saying: This cup is the new covenant in my blood, shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin.
Do this for the remembrance of me.

All: Jesus is God's gift of love—now and always.

THE LORD'S PRAYER

**All: 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**

THE DISTRIBUTION



POST COMMUNION PRAYER

L: God our host, at this table you have fed us with joy and gladness.
Send us forth, eager to share the feast, welcome the stranger,
and bear good fruit in the name of Jesus.

All: Amen.

BLESSING

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. **All: Amen.**

SENDING SONG

Prepare the Way-White Christmas

Prepare the way of the Lord ... tell everybody about Him.

Prepare the way of the Lord ... tell everybody He's coming.

Shout for joy Jerusalem ... Shout for joy you nations of God.

Jesus is coming to save the world ... Prepare Him a place in your heart.

Pre-pare the way of the Lord.

The sun is shining, the grass is green... The orange and palm trees sway.

There's never been such a day...in Beverly Hills, L.A.

But it's December the twenty-fourth...and I am longing to be up north.

I'm dreaming of a white...Christmas. Just like the ones I used to know.

Where the tree-tops glisten...and children listen...to hear...

sleighbells in the snow.

I'm dreaming of a white...Christmas. With every Christmas card I write.

May your days..be..merry...and bright.....

And may all...your...Christmas be white.

DISMISSAL

P: Go in peace. Keep awake.

C: Thanks be to God.



21120 W. Toledo Street
P.O. Box 235
Williston, Ohio 43468
(419) 836-5514

Pastor Shawn O'Brien
(419) 378-1112

Email: pastorobrien@stjohnwilliston.org

***We welcome you to St. John Lutheran Church.
We are... "creating and nurturing life changing relationships
based on the love of God in Jesus Christ,
so that we may grow in faith, serve God,
and serve our neighbor."***

LisaAnne Gregg, Office Administrator

Email: office@stjohnwilliston.org

Church Office Hours: M-T-W 9 am to 3 PM

Thurs. hours may vary Office closed Friday

Worship with us!

Worship: Saturday 5:00 PM

Adult Sunday School and Confirmation: Sunday 8:30 AM

Sunday School-Age 3 to 5th grade 9-9:30 AM

Sunday Worship 9:45 AM

Welcome!

St. John practices "open communion". All who are baptized and instructed are welcome to share the Lord's Supper with us today. Starting with the right side of the church, followed by the left when they are finished, the pastor will distribute the bread and the communion assistant will serve the wine. We will also have pre-sealed elements available for those who would prefer the more hygienic option (or those who wish to receive grape juice instead of wine). Indicate to the pastor that you would like pre-sealed elements and skip the wine server. Those who wish to receive a blessing should indicate their wishes to the pastor by crossing their arms over their chest.