



FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT

Welcome to St. John Lutheran Church

Sunday, December 21, 2025 9:45 am

Fourth Sunday of Advent



Fourth Sunday of Advent

December 21, 2025

ANNOUNCEMENTS

PRELUDE

Waiting for Bethlehem's Light

St. John Choir

CONFESSION and FOREGIVENESS

L: Blessed be the holy Trinity, one God, whose home is heaven and earth, whose salvation is sure.

C: Amen.

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

Silence is kept for reflection.

L: Long-expected God,

C: we confess that we look to ourselves for the peace and security only you can provide. We reach for swords and spears, reluctant to release our grip on the ways of war. We become impatient while waiting and weary of keeping awake.

**Free us from self-reliance,
and teach us to live in harmony with our neighbors. Increase our trust in God's timing, and awaken us to your advent among us,
that we may abound in the hope you have promised.
Amen.**

L: God judges us not as we deserve, but according to God's own righteousness. You are freed and forgiven, saved by grace, and ready to welcome the Savior.

C: Amen.

GATHERING HYMN

All the Earth is Hopeful

Hymn #266
4 verses

GREETING and KYRIE

P: The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit is with you all. **C: And also with you.**

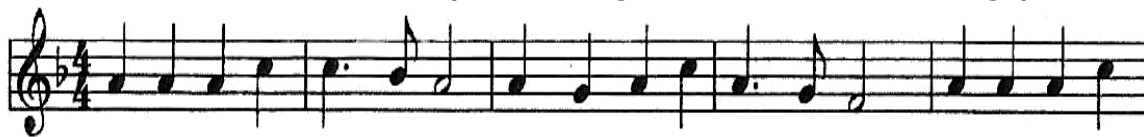
KYRIE

(Tune of Come Thou Long Expected Jesus)

Piano $\text{♩} = 100$

1 Lord, have 2 mer - cy 3 on your 4 peo - ple,
5
6
7
8
9 Christ have 10 mer - cy 11 on 12 us.
13 Shine your 14 light in 15 to our 16 dark ness,
17 Fill us 18 with your 19 ho - ly 20 love.
21 Be our 22 strength in 23 times of 24 trou - ble,
25 Set us 26 free from 27 chains that 28 bind.
29 Breathe 30 new life in 31 to our 32 spir - its.
Pur - i - fy our hearts and minds.

GLORY BE TO GOD *(Tune of Angels We Have Heard on High)*



Glo-ry be to God on high. Peace, good-will to all the earth. Let us sing a
Love has come to dwell with us. Light now shine on ev - 'ry - one. Hope has lift - ed



joy - ful song to the Christ, the Liv - ing Word. Glo - - -
up our hearts. Joy has made, in us, a home.



- - - ri - a in ex - cel - sis De - o; Glor -



- - - - ri - a in ex - cel - sis De - o.

P: The Lord Be With You. **C: And also with you.**

PRAYER OF THE DAY

P: 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**

LIGHTING OF THE 4th ADVENT CANDLE-Hope for God's Love RESPONSIVE LITANY

L: During Advent we see God's love for us embodied in our Savior's birth.

C: Christ is our light and the source of everlasting love.

L: Advent calls us to love others with patience and kindness.

C: Christ is our light and the source of everlasting love.

L: Advent reminds us to be slow to anger and quick to forgive.

C: Christ is our light and the source of everlasting love.

L: Advent reminds us that Christ commanded us to love as he loved.

C: Christ is our light and the source of everlasting love.

CANDLE LIGHTING

L: This morning, we light four candles: the candles of hope, peace, joy, and today's candle – love. This candle reminds us that God so loved the world, he sent his only son, so that whoever believes in him should not perish but have life everlasting. Today we celebrate God's gift of love and remember that we have been commanded to love others as God loves us.



CLOSING PRAYER

L: Gracious God, as we continue our Advent journey, we are reminded that "Love came down at Christmas – love amazing, love divine." You loved the world enough to send your Son, and now it's up to us to love others as you loved us. Remind us that Christ is our light and the true source of infinite, everlasting, pure love. **ALL: Amen.**



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."

The Word of the Lord... **C: Thanks be to God**

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,

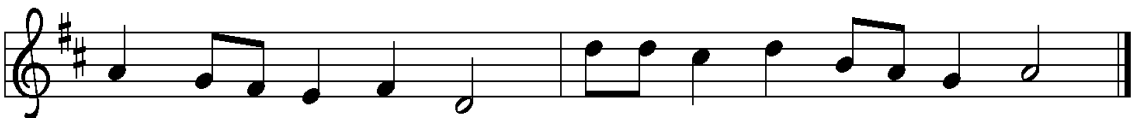
⁷ To all God's beloved in Rome, who are called to be saints:

Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

The Word of the Lord... **C: Thanks be to God**



Al - le - lu - ia. Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the



words of e - ter - nal life. Al - le - lu - ia. Al - le - lu - ia.

P: The Holy Gospel according to St. Matthew

C: Glory to you, O Lord.

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.

The Gospel of the Lord.... **C: Praise to You, O Christ**

SERMON

Pastor Shawn O'Brien

HYMN

Fling Wide the Door

Hymn #259

4 verses

P: With the whole church, let us confess our faith

NICENE CREED

C: We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all that is seen and unseen.

We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, eternally begotten of the Father, God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, of one being with the Father; through him all things were made.

For us and for our salvation he came down from heaven; was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the virgin Mary and became truly human. For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate; he suffered death and was buried.

On the third day he rose again in accordance with the Scriptures; he ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead, and his kingdom will have no end.

We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father, who with the Father and the Son is worshiped and glorified, who has spoken through the prophets.

**We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic church.
We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.
We look for the resurrection of the dead,
and the life of the world to come. 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)

What Child is This

(for Advent)



Praise God, from whom all bless - ings flow. Praise God, all crea - tures



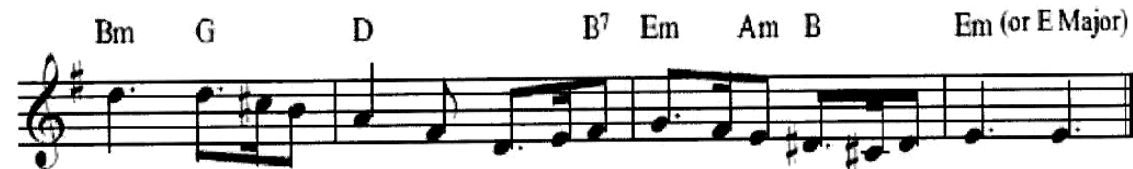
here be - low. Praise God a - bove, ye heaven - ly host. Praise



Fa - ther, Son, and Ho - ly Ghost. This, this is



Christ the King, whom shep - herds guard and an - gels sing;



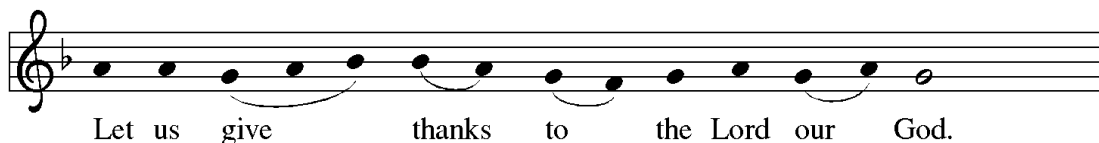
haste, haste to bring him laud, the babe, the son of Ma - ry.

OFFERING PRAYER

L: Nourishing God,

C: 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. Amen.**



P: At the beginning of creation God said, "Let there be light"; and there was light. God saw that the light was good; and God separated the light from the darkness. In ancient times God led the Israelites through the desert with a pillar of cloud by day and a pillar of fire by night. The priests of old also kept a perpetual fire burning in the Temple to remind us that God is a light who cannot be extinguished. Finally Jesus, the Word, who was with God since the beginning of creation, became flesh and lived among us. We have seen his glory shining in our world, full grace and truth. Christ's light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it. This same light has commanded us not to hide our light under a bushel basket, but to put it on a lamp stand so that everyone can see it. With our lights burning brightly, we now join the saints and angels in a hymn of praise to God, the Everlasting Light. **C: Amen**

Holy, Holy, Holy

(tune of Hark the Herald Angels Sing)

Piano $\text{♩} = 90$

Ho - ly, Ho - ly, Ho - ly Lo - rd, God of Pow er, God of Might.

Ho - ly, Ho - ly, Ho - ly One - God of mer - cy, God of light.

Heav'n and earth are full of your glo - ry, Ho - san - na in the high - est.

Bless - ed is the One who comes, Bless - ed in the name of God.

THE WORDS OF INSTITUTION

P: 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.

THE LORD'S PRAYER

P: Gathered into one by the Holy Spirit, let us pray as Jesus taught us.

**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**

Lamb of God

(Tune of O Come, O Come Emmanuel)



O Lamb of God you take a-way our sin; have mer-cy on us, give_ us your



peace. Pre -pare us to re - ceive___ your grace and teach us how to fol - low your ways. Re-



joyce! Re-joyce! E - man - u - el has come to you, O Is - ra-el.

THE DISTRIBUTION



TABLE BLESSING

P: The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen you and keep you in his grace. **C: Amen**

POST COMMUNION SONG

(tune of Away in a Manger)

All

1. Lord, now in your mer - cy, your ser - vants re - lease. As your word has
2. A light to the Gen - tiles, by whom they now see, the glo - ry of

pro - mised, oh, grant us your peace. Our eyes your sal - va - tion and
Is - rael, the Pro - mised One be, who lives now and ev - er, the

mer - cy be - hold, pre - pared for the na - tions as pro - phets fore - told.
hea - ven's bright Son, with Fa - ther and Spir - it, e - ter - nal - ly one.

POST COMMUNION PRAYER

P: 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.

C: 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.

C: Amen.

SENDING SONG

Canticle of the Turning

Hymn #723
4 verses

DISMISSAL

P: Go in peace. Keep awake.

C: Thanks be to God.

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.



Christmas
Eve
at St. John
Williston

WORSHIP *with us* CHRISTMAS EVE

St. John Lutheran Church
Williston, Ohio

St. John Lutheran Church
21140 W. Toledo Street (SR 579)
Williston, Ohio 43468

Rev. Shawn O'Brien

www.stjohnwilliston.org

3 Services!

**4:00 PM—Christmas Eve
Contemporary Worship
Service**

**7:00 PM— Traditional
Christmas Eve Worship
Service filled with Carols
& Candlelight and
Kid's Bells!**

**11:00 PM— Christmas Eve
Christ Mass with
Candlelight**

Watch our
services on **You
Tube**

St. John Lutheran Church
Williston, OH

FAMILY & FRIENDS ALL WELCOME



21120 W. Toledo Street P.O. Box 235
Williston, Ohio 43468
(419) 836-5514
Pastor Shawn O'Brien
www.stjohnwilliston.org
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

Join us this weekend!
Saturday: Worship 5 PM
Sunday: Adult Sunday School and Confirmation 8:30 AM
Sunday School-Kids age 3 thru 5th grade 9-9:30 AM
Sunday: Worship 9:45 AM

Our Seven Faith Practices

I will strive to...

1. **PRAY** daily
2. **WORSHIP** weekly
3. **READ** and study the Bible
4. **SERVE** at and beyond St. John
5. **INVITE** others into a loving relationship with Jesus
6. **GIVE** of my time, talents, and resources
7. **ENCOURAGE** spiritual growth in others