

Let us depart in peace...



First Sunday After Christmas / New Year's Eve December 31, 2023



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Today's service is televised locally

Channel 14 - Comcast: Monday at 6:00 p.m. & Tuesday at 1:00 p.m. & Thursdays at 10:00 a.m.

Channel 3 - Nuvera: Mondays at 6:00 p.m. & Tuesday at 1:00 p.m. & Thursdays at 10:00 a.m.

Prayer before worship: Sovereign Lord, as you have promised, you now dismiss your servant in peace. For my eyes have seen your salvation, which you have prepared in the sight of all people, a light for revelation to the Gentiles and for glory to your people Israel." As we enter the new year to come, grant us comfort, courage, hope, and the wisdom to hold fast to your unfailing promise that Jesus Christ our Savior has come and delivered us from sin, death, and the devil. Give us joy and lead us on to our eternal victory in heaven. We pray this in Jesus' name. Amen.

Order of Service: *Christian Worship The Service: Setting One* page 154

OPENING HYMN

God Himself Is Present

CW917

CONFESSION

p. 154

FIRST LESSON

1 Kings 8:6–13

⁶The priests then brought the ark of the LORD's covenant to its place in the inner sanctuary of the temple, the Most Holy Place, and put it beneath the wings of the cherubim. ⁷The cherubim spread their wings over the place of the ark and overshadowed the ark and its carrying poles. ⁸These poles were so long that their ends could be seen from the Holy Place in front of the inner sanctuary, but not from outside the Holy Place; and they are still there today. ⁹There was nothing in the ark except the two stone tablets that Moses had placed in it at Horeb, where the LORD made a covenant with the Israelites after they came out of Egypt.

¹⁰When the priests withdrew from the Holy Place, the cloud filled the temple of the LORD. ¹¹And the priests could not perform their service because of the cloud, for the glory of the LORD filled his temple.

¹²Then Solomon said, "The LORD has said that he would dwell in a dark cloud; ¹³I have indeed built a magnificent temple for you, a place for you to dwell forever."

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

PSALM of the DAY *We Sing the Almighty Power of God*

CW504

SECOND LESSON

Colossians 3:12–17

¹²Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience. ¹³Bear with each other and forgive one another if any of you has a grievance against someone. Forgive as the

Lord forgave you. ¹⁴And over all these virtues put on love, which binds them all together in perfect unity.

¹⁵Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, since as members of one body you were called to peace. And be thankful. ¹⁶Let the message of Christ dwell among you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom through psalms, hymns, and songs from the Spirit, singing to God with gratitude in your hearts. ¹⁷And whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia.

For my eyes have seen your sal - va - tion,

Refrain

which you have prepared in the sight of all na - tions.

GOSPEL

Luke 2:22–40

²²When the time came for the purification rites required by the Law of Moses, Joseph and Mary took him to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord ²³(as it is written in the Law of the Lord, “Every firstborn male is to be consecrated to the Lord”), ²⁴and to offer a sacrifice in keeping with what is said in the Law of the Lord: “a pair of doves or two young pigeons.”

²⁵Now there was a man in Jerusalem called Simeon, who was righteous and devout. He was waiting for the consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit was on him. ²⁶It had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not die before he had seen the Lord’s Messiah. ²⁷Moved by the Spirit, he went into the temple courts. When the parents brought in the child Jesus to do for him what the custom of the Law required, ²⁸Simeon took him in his arms and praised God, saying: ²⁹“Sovereign Lord, as you have promised, you may now dismiss your servant in peace. ³⁰For my eyes have seen your salvation, ³¹which you have prepared in the sight of all nations: ³²a light for revelation to the Gentiles, and the glory of your people Israel.”

³⁶There was also a prophet, Anna, the daughter of Penuel, of the tribe of Asher. She was very old; she had lived with her husband seven years after her marriage, ³⁷and then was a widow until she was eighty-four. She never left the temple but worshiped night and day, fasting and praying. ³⁸Coming up to them at that very moment, she gave thanks to God and spoke about the child to all who were looking forward to the redemption of Jerusalem.

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise be to you, O Christ!

O Light of Gentile Nations

CW 497

SERMON

Luke 2:25-35

LET US DEPART IN PEACE TO ENTER IN HOPE

- 1. LET US SEE GOD'S SALVATION**
- 2. LET US EMBRACE THE PROMISE OF HIS COMING**

HYMN

Lord, Now You Let Your Servant

CW951

NICENE CREED

p. 162

OFFERING / COMMUNION

If you are not a member of a WELS/ELS congregation, please see the explanation in the announcements.

DISTRIBUTION HYMN

Let All Together Praise Our God

CW355

PRAYERS (*Contemporary*) and BLESSING

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† † †

PREACHER

PRESIDING MINISTER

ORGAN

Pastor Jeff Bovee
Pastor Rob Guenther
Jon Roux

THIS WEEK AT ST. JOHN'S

Sun	8, 9:30 & 11 am	Worship
Mon	6:30 pm	Elders Meeting
Tue	7 pm	Women of St. John's Meeting
Wed	10 am	Catechism
	5:30 pm	Youth Group: Back to School Baking Competition
Thu	10:30 am	Bible Class: The Hard Sayings of Jesus
	7 pm	Bible Class: The I AM Statements of Jesus
Fri	9:30 am	Women's Bible Class: Book of Esther
Sat	6:30 pm	Worship

† Upcoming Services †

Saturday: 6:30 pm
Sunday: 8, 9:30 & 11 am

UPCOMING EVENTS

Jan 7	8, 9:30 & 11 am	Worship
Jan 8	6 pm	Evangelism Meeting
	7 pm	Education Meeting
Jan 9	4 pm	Oak Hills Living Center Service
Jan 10	10 am	Catechism
Jan 11	10:30 am	Bible Class: TBD
	7 pm	Bible Class: The Hard Sayings of Jesus
Jan 12	9:30 am	Women's Bible Class: Book of Esther
Jan 13	9 am	Cards of Caring at 403 N. Minnesota St.
	3 pm	Winter Carnival at St. Paul's School
	6:30 pm	Worship
Jan 14	8, 9:30 & 11 am	Worship
	11 am	New Officer Installation
Jan 15	6:30 pm	Worship Committee Meeting
Jan 16	7 pm	Council Meeting
Jan 17	6 pm	Handbells
	6:30 pm	Catechism
	7 pm	Choir
Jan 18	10:30 am	Bible Class: TBD
	7 pm	Bible Class: The Hard Sayings of Jesus
Jan 19	9:30 am	Women's Bible Class: Book of Esther
Jan 20	6:30 pm	Worship
Jan 21	8, 9:30 & 11 am	Worship
	9:30 am	Sunday School and Bible Class
	11 am	Gr. 1-4 sing

Go to www.stjohnsnewulm.com/calendar for more events

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Attendance for the past weekend was 225.

Fruits of faith given:

\$23,053	Home Operations ~ \$30,392 is our weekly need		
\$985	MVL ~ \$1,278 is our weekly need		
\$360	Missions ~ \$1,818 is our weekly need	\$384	Food & Fellowship
\$535	Building Fund	\$100	St. Paul's School Building Fund
\$515	75th Ann. Sanctuary Renovation	\$50	Choir Fund
\$600	Ministerial Education Endowment Fund	\$25	Lutheran Charities
\$150	Ministerial Student Scholarship Fund		

Youth Group ~ Back-to-School Cookie Baking and Decorating Event!

This Wednesday, January 3, from 5:30 - 7:30 pm in the church basement for Youth and guests. The cookie competition will have 3 categories for prizes (The Van Gogh, The Tasty Treat & The Creative Cookie). Some basic cookie baking supplies will be provided, but it is encouraged to bring your own ingredients and tools to have your cookie stand out from the rest. Check your email for more details! RSVP by scanning the QR code to help prepare for the event.



Offering Baskets ~ We will return to passing offering baskets during our services beginning on Saturday, January 6th. The offering box will be available near the office for offerings that are dropped off during the week outside of service times.

2024 Contribution Envelopes ~ The 2024 offering envelopes can be found either in your bulletin box or in alphabetical order on the tables in the new narthex. To ensure you receive proper credit, please do not use the 2024 envelopes until January 1st. New numbers will change for many people with the 2024 envelopes. Please don't use the 2023 envelopes after December 31st. Thank you for your cooperation.

Cards of Caring ~ will meet this winter to continue to make cards for our homebound and thinking-of-you members, and for our three LWMS Befriend a Mission families. All supplies are furnished. If you are unable to create cards, we have other tasks you may do. We welcome those from 7th grade and older including MLC students. Our next dates are Saturday, January 13 and February 10. We meet from 9 am until noon. Come any time between those hours. We meet at 403 N. Minnesota St. (across from the Glockenspiel). This is an opportunity for fellowship and service to the Lord. Contact Lois Willems at 507-676-1230 with questions.

Senior Choir Rehearsals ~ will begin Wednesday, January 17th at 7 pm in the balcony. All are welcome to join!

Handbell Ringers Needed! ~ Join the Handbell Choir for a fun and unique fellowship opportunity! There are openings in the group! You don't need to be able to read music. The notes are color coded for all levels of experience. Come join the fun! For more information contact Becky Berg at rberg@mvlhs.org.

Financial Update - Operating Fund ~ As of December 15, offerings and other receipts for our Operating Fund in 2023 total \$796,928. Expenditures for the same period were \$962,692. We began 2023 with \$179,684 of reserve funds available to be used for our operating expenses. Since year-to-date operating expenditures are \$165,764 greater than operating receipts, the reserve fund balance is now \$13,920. In light of this, the budget plan that has been approved for 2024 contains significant reductions in spending. We pray that the Lord will continue to bless the gospel ministry here at St. John's and provide for it.

Wish List Items ~ The Church Council has approved the addition of two items to the Wish List, both of which originated with the Campus Facilities Task Force:

- **48 Chairs** (with arm rests and hymnal racks below the seats) for nave seating -- These linked chairs will replace seating the first three pews on each side of the nave. The seat cover will match the covering planned for the pews. These movable seats will provide flexible seating arrangement (e.g., to accommodate choirs or handicapped). Purchasing these in anticipation of the planned renovations may offset the possible price increases in the coming months.
- **Painting** the walls of the nave -- \$1,000 is the anticipated cost for paint and materials; volunteers will be solicited to provide the labor. The color to be selected will coordinate with the renovation. This project is to be completed before renovations begin.

Please consider supporting these efforts in addition to your regular church offerings.

Pictorial Directory Update ~ Members, please submit a picture to sm.dretske@stjohnsnewulm.com or have me take your picture before or after services during December if you are not pictured in our PEW Copy of our 2023 St John's Directory. If your picture is included but you would like to update it, you can do the same. You could also change it on your phone or computer by logging into your account and editing the picture yourself. Pew Copies will be updated in January. New Directories will be available upon request once the information and pictures have been updated.

Offering Announcement ~ Visitors, there is no obligation or expectation that you should give to support our ministry at St. John's. This is our members' way of expressing their thanks to God and supporting the work that we do to share the Gospel in New Ulm and around the world. Members, you are invited to give your gifts of gratitude and thanks to God for all he's done for you in Christ by leaving your offerings in the drop box in the narthex. Or you can bring your offerings to the church during regular office hours: Mondays through Fridays, 8 am - 1 pm. You might also consider taking advantage of your bank's online bill pay service and have your offering automatically sent to the church on a one time or recurring basis.

Communion Announcement: At St. John's we practice "close communion." That is, we invite only those who are in fellowship with us as members of the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Church (or of a synod that is in fellowship with us) to commune with us. We are in no way judging your personal faith. But we recognize that in the Lord's Supper we enjoy not only a close communion, or fellowship, with God, but we also enjoy a close communion with one another as we publicly express our agreement in every teaching of God's Word. And we wouldn't presume to ask you to publicly confess your agreement with all that we teach and believe without first being instructed in what it is that we teach and believe. But if you do desire to commune with us, please speak to one of the pastors after the service.

AREA ANNOUNCEMENTS

OWLS Meeting ~ Our local MN Valley Chapter 13 OWLS (Organization of WELS Lutheran Seniors) will meet on Monday, January 8 at St. Paul's Lutheran Church, New Ulm. Fellowship begins at 11:30 am with a pot luck meal at noon. After a devotion, we will have a presentation by Bonnie Schirlinger entitled, "What it is like to be Blind." Hope you can attend.

Winter Carnival at St. Paul's ~ Join John and Paul Ministries for WINTER CARNIVAL on January 13, 2024, at St Paul's Lutheran School from 3:00-5:30 pm! Enjoy a fun afternoon of bounce houses, snacks, prizes, games, indoor snowball fights, and winter Escape Rooms! Can't wait to see you there and bring a friend!

WELS Night at the Timberwolves! ~ Sunday, January 14 at 6 pm! Tickets purchased with the discount offer will have the opportunity to shoot a free throw on the court after the game! Scan the QR code and use promo code: 2324WELS. Contact Cameron Schwarz at 612-673-1647 or cameron.schwarz@timberwolves.com with questions.

St. Paul's Preschool Open House ~ Monday, January 15, 2024, from 4 – 7 pm! New preschoolers, please come and visit! St. Paul's Preschool offers full day & part-time sessions for 3-, 4- and 5-year-old children. Watch for a preschool Information/Registration mailing in early January. St John's (New Ulm & Sleepy Eye) and St. Paul's members and our school families are invited to have first choice of preschool sessions through January 15th. (Community "Open Registration" begins January 16th. Some sessions fill by early February). If you have questions, please contact our preschool director, Mrs. Heidi Meyer at preschool@splnewulm.org.

Housing Needed for International Student ~ MVL would like to host a young man from Germany next year. However, we are in need of a host family willing to open their home to this young man. He will only be with us for one semester, which means he will arrive in late August and then leave just before Christmas. Host families are compensated for serving in this capacity. If you are interested, please contact MVL Principal Tim Plath at tplath@mvlhs.org or 507-354-6851.

About the Cover ~ Although Simeon's Song is really about an elderly man talking about his death, there is much more to it. It is really a song of praise in which the prophet embraces God's gracious promise to send a Savior for the human race. In fulfillment of that same promise, we who continue on our pilgrimage through this life on earth and enter into a new year do so with home and confidence. We depart the year now past in peace, and enter into the year to come holding fast to the promise that we have a Savior who will take us to the end of this journey and grant us a permanent home in heaven. That Savior is Jesus Christ our Lord.

Welcome, Visitors!

Please scan the QR code to
sign our Guest Register.

