

# St. John's Ev. Lutheran Church

627 South Washington, New Ulm, Minnesota



## *Third Sunday in Advent*

### December 13/14, 2025

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**Today's service is televised locally**

Channel 14 - Comcast: Monday at 6 pm, Tuesday at 1 pm & Thursday at 10 am

Channel 3 - Nuvera: Monday at 6 pm, Tuesday at 1 pm & Thursday at 10 am

## THIRD SUNDAY IN ADVENT

December 13/14, 2025

*Welcome, Visitors! Please scan the QR code to sign our guest register.*



**PRAYER BEFORE WORSHIP:** God, this life often seems as hostile as a barren desert wasteland. But then we find in you and in your Word an oasis that refreshes our souls by the assurance of the forgiveness of sins and the care you promise to give us. We thank you for it. Help us to live for you as we call others to the oasis we enjoy.

**PRESERVICE MUSIC 9:30am**

**ORDER OF SERVICE**                      *Service Setting 3*                      pg. 188

**OPENING HYMN**    *There's a Voice in the Wilderness Crying*    CW 308

*Stand*

**CONFESSION OF SINS**                      pg. 189

**LORD HAVE MERCY**                      pg. 190

**GLORY TO GOD**                      pg. 191

**PRAYER OF THE DAY**                      pg. 193

*Be seated*

## FIRST LESSON

Isaiah 35:1-10

<sup>1</sup> The desert and the parched land will be glad; the wilderness will rejoice and blossom. Like the crocus, <sup>2</sup> it will burst into bloom; it will rejoice greatly and shout for joy. The glory of Lebanon will be given to it, the splendor of Carmel and Sharon; they will see the glory of the LORD, the splendor of our God.

<sup>3</sup> Strengthen the feeble hands, steady the knees that give way; <sup>4</sup> say to those with fearful hearts, “Be strong, do not fear; your God will come, he will come with vengeance; with divine retribution he will come to save you.”

<sup>5</sup> Then will the eyes of the blind be opened and the ears of the deaf unstopped. <sup>6</sup> Then will the lame leap like a deer, and the mute tongue shout for joy. Water will gush forth in the wilderness and streams in the desert. <sup>7</sup> The burning sand will become a pool, the thirsty ground bubbling springs. In the haunts where jackals once lay, grass and reeds and papyrus will grow.

<sup>8</sup> And a highway will be there; it will be called the Way of Holiness; it will be for those who walk on that Way. The unclean will not journey on it; wicked fools will not go about on it. <sup>9</sup> No lion will be there, nor any ravenous beast; they will not be found there. But only the redeemed will walk there, <sup>10</sup> and those the LORD has rescued will return. They will enter Zion with singing; everlasting joy will crown their heads. Gladness and joy will overtake them, and sorrow and sighing will flee away.

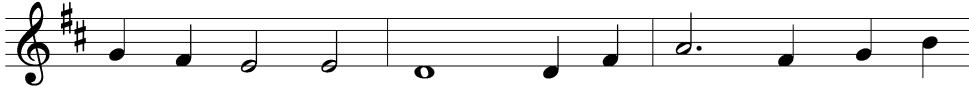
The Word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

**PSALM OF THE DAY** *Praise the LORD, Sing Hallelujah* Psalm 146C



1 Praise the LORD! Sing hal - le - lu - jah! Come, our  
 2 Hap - py are the ones pro - fess - ing Ja - cob's  
 3 Food he dai - ly gives the hun - gry, sets the  
 4 Praise the LORD! Sing hal - le - lu - jah! Come, our



great Re - deem - er praise. I will sing the glo - rious  
 God to be their aid. They are blest whose hope of  
 mourn - ing pris - 'ner free, rais - es those bowed down with  
 great Re - deem - er praise. I will sing the glo - rious



prais - es of my God through all my days.  
 bless - ing on the LORD their God is stayed.  
 an - guish, makes the sight - less eyes to see.  
 prais - es of my God through all my days.



Put no con - fi - dence in princ - es, nor on  
 Heav'n and earth the LORD cre - at - ed, seas and  
 God our Sav - ior loves the right - eous, and the  
 O - ver all God reigns for - ev - er; through all



hu - man help de - pend. They shall die, to dust re -  
 all that they con - tain. He de - liv - ers from op -  
 stran - ger he be - friends, helps the or - phan and the  
 a - ges he is King. Un - to him, your God, O



turn - ing; all their thoughts and plans shall end.  
 pres - sion; right - eous - ness he will main - tain.  
 wid - ow, judg - ment on the wick - ed sends.  
 Zi - on, joy - ful hal - le - lu - jahs sing.

## SECOND LESSON

James 5:7–11

<sup>7</sup> Be patient, then, brothers and sisters, until the Lord's coming. See how the farmer waits for the land to yield its valuable crop, patiently waiting for the autumn and spring rains. <sup>8</sup> You too, be patient and stand firm, because the Lord's coming is near. <sup>9</sup> Don't grumble against one another, brothers and sisters, or you will be judged. The Judge is standing at the door!

<sup>10</sup> Brothers and sisters, as an example of patience in the face of suffering, take the prophets who spoke in the name of the Lord. <sup>11</sup> As you know, we count as blessed those who have persevered. You have heard of Job's perseverance and have seen what the Lord finally brought about. The Lord is full of compassion and mercy.

The Word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

*Stand*

## GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Matthew 11:10



### Refrain



### Tone



## GOSPEL

Matthew 11:2–11

<sup>2</sup> When John, who was in prison, heard about the deeds of the Messiah, he sent his disciples <sup>3</sup> to ask him, “Are you the one who is to come, or should we expect someone else?”

<sup>4</sup> Jesus replied, “Go back and report to John what you hear and see: <sup>5</sup> The blind receive sight, the lame walk, those who have leprosy are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the good news is proclaimed to the poor.

<sup>6</sup> Blessed is anyone who does not stumble on account of me.”

<sup>7</sup> As John’s disciples were leaving, Jesus began to speak to the crowd about John: “What did you go out into the wilderness to see? A reed swayed by the wind? <sup>8</sup> If not, what did you go out to see? A man dressed in fine clothes? No, those who wear fine clothes are in kings’ palaces. <sup>9</sup> Then what

did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, I tell you, and more than a prophet.

<sup>10</sup> This is the one about whom it is written:

“ ‘I will send my messenger ahead of you, who will prepare your way before you.’

<sup>11</sup> Truly I tell you, among those born of women there has not risen anyone greater than John the Baptist; yet whoever is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he.”

The Gospel of the Lord.

**Praise be to you, O Christ!**

*Be seated*

<b>HYMN OF THE DAY</b>	<i><b>O Lord, How Shall I Meet You</b></i>	CW 324
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<b>SERMON</b>	Footprints in the Sand...	Isaiah 35
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*Stand*

**APOSTLES' CREED**

**I believe in God, the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth.**

**I believe in Jesus Christ, his 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 into hell. The third day he rose again from the dead. He ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of God the Father Almighty. From there he will come to judge the living and the dead.**

**I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy Christian Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.**

*Be seated*

**PRAYER OF THE CHURCH**

pg. 198

**OFFERING**

**HYMN**

*Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus*

CW 322

*Stand*

**PRAYER AND BLESSING**

pg. 171

**CLOSING HYMN**

*Jesus, Still Lead On*

CW 842

**PREACHER**

Pastor Rob Guenther

**PRESIDING MINISTER**

Pastor Jeff Bovee

**ORGANIST**

Jacob Behnken

**SPLS BAND**

Annie Vogel

**Acknowledgments**

Setting Three from Christian Worship

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## **THIS WEEK AT ST. JOHN'S**

Sunday	8, 9:30 & 11 am	Worship
Tuesday	7 pm	Council Meeting
Wednesday	11 am	Advent Midweek Service
	4 & 6:30 pm	Advent Midweek Service
	6:30 pm	Public and Homeschool Catechism
	7:30 pm	Choir
Thursday	10 am	Bible Class
	7 pm	Bible Class
Saturday	10 am	Sunday School Christmas Practice
	6:30 pm	Worship
Sunday, Dec 21	8 & 9:30 am	Worship
	9:30 am	Bible Class and Sunday School <a href="https://bit.ly/SJBibleClassonline">https://bit.ly/SJBibleClassonline</a>
	11 am	Sunday School Christmas Service
Wednesday, Dec 24	4 pm	Children's Christmas Eve Service
	7 pm	Candlelight Service
Thursday, Dec 25	9 am	Christmas Day Service
Friday, Dec 26		Office Closed

## **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Attendance for this past weekend was 559 with 459 receiving the Lord's Supper.

### **Fruits of Faith:**

\$17,631 Home Operations ~ Needed: \$872,097 / YTD: \$859,731  
\$1,421 WELS Missions ~ YTD: \$59,057 (2025 Goal: \$87,000)  
\$1,016 MVL ~ YTD: \$94,979 (2025 Goal: \$57,000)  
\$160 Building Fund  
\$135 K-12 Education Assistance  
\$25 St. Paul's School Building Fund  
\$20 Endowment Fund  
\$400 Christian Aid and Relief  
\$133 Altar and Flowers  
\$1,435 Gifts for Called Workers/Staff  
\$103 Food + Fellowship  
\$150 MVL Special  
\$100 Benevolence Fund  
\$21 Lutheran Charities  
\$75 Wish List  
\$100 Technology Equipment

**MVL Wreaths** ~ The wreaths are here! If you ordered a wreath please pick yours up from the shed. An MVL Student will be out there to help you after the service.

**Grand Piano on the Wish List** ~ St. John's Worship Committee would like to replace the piano in the front of the church. The existing piano was not designed for a large space seating 350 people, but for a house or small music studio. The council has approved that a new 5-foot Yamaha grand piano (to be placed in the front of the sanctuary near the lectern) be added to the wish list. This piano would enrich our worship as it fills the church with sound. It's known for its stability of tuning and action and delivers a clear sound that would accompany the congregation and choirs well. The cost is approximately \$21,400 for the piano, delivery and installation, and all needed accessories. If you are interested in contributing to this worship enhancement, please note "Piano" on your offering envelope or electronic gift. To God be the glory!

**Active Threat Training Available** ~ St. John's is hosting active threat training provided by Protect His House. This training is being offered at no cost to all interested St John's and St. Paul's members. Training will cover situational awareness, action planning, and tactics to respond to threatening situations. The class will be held at St. John's LC, Saturday, January 24th from 9am - 12pm. Registration is required. Use promo code SJLCFREE at registration. Use the QR code on the posters found around church, or go to <https://phhtraining.com/event/phh-level-1-active-threat-awareness-seminar-new-ulm-minnesota/> to register.

### **AREA ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**MLC Christmas Concert** ~ Martin Luther College invites you to the annual Christmas concert, For Us and For Our Salvation, presented Sunday, December 14, at 4:00 pm in the MLC Chapel of the Christ. All are welcome as we open the Advent season with this joyous campus tradition!

**New Ulm Food Shelf Volunteers** ~ St. John's supports the New Ulm Emergency Food Shelf by providing volunteers to assist clients on the third Monday of each month from 11:45-3 pm. Duties include accompanying clients as they select their food options based on distribution guidelines, weighing and loading carts, and pushing them to the garage, where clients load their items into their cars. Four volunteers are needed on the third Monday of each month. If you are interested in volunteering for 2026, please indicate your availability on the sign-up sheet in the narthex. For more information, or if you have questions, call Carla Melendy (507-217-9750) or Deb Beatty (507-276-2722). You will receive a volunteer schedule in December, along with guidelines for volunteers.

**MVL Christmas Concert** ~ The MVL Music Department invites you to its annual Sacred Christmas Concert on Friday, December 19, at 7:00 p.m. in the MVL Fine Arts Center. This year's program, themed All Is Well, will celebrate the Advent and Christmas seasons with performances by the A Cappella Choir, Freshmen Choir, MVL Chargaliers, and the Symphonic Band. A freewill offering will be collected.

**Christmas for Families** ~ Saturday, December 20th, all families are invited to travel to Bethlehem to hear about the birth of Jesus from the shepherds, wise men, and others! Come to St. Paul's Church anytime between 9:00-11:00 AM to hear about the first Christmas, decorate cookies, play games, do crafts, and enjoy other activities.

**Christsong Celtic Christmas Concert** ~ The Lutheran Céilí Orchestra performs a night of relaxing Irish Christmas music at Martin Luther College in the Chapel of the Christ! Free and open to the public Saturday, December 20, at 6:30 pm. The Lutheran Céilí Orchestra is a group of Christian musicians specializing in a Celtic perspective on Christian worship. The group pairs bagpipes, tin whistle, fiddle, harp, accordion, and other classic sounds of Celtic music, with the worship format, traditions, legends, and characters of Celtic Christianity.

**About the Cover** ~ An oasis is a fertile section of the desert where the water table is near the surface. Springs and other underground water sources irrigate oases. They vary in size from a small cluster of palm trees surrounding a well to an entire settlement and its irrigated cropland. Oases are vital features of the ecosystem. There is life where you might expect none. That's the picture Isaiah uses to show what we have in Christ: There is calm and peace and even joy in the desert of life, where Jesus with his saving work is found.