

The Spirit of the LORD is on me...



to proclaim the Year of the LORD'S favor.

Third Sunday in Advent • December 16 / 17, 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: Almighty God, you sent your Son Jesus Christ to set us free from Satan's bondage and to pay the debt we owed to God because of our sin. Teach us to use our freedom to worship and serve you and one another. Today, as we celebrate the announcement of the Year of Jubilee in Christ our Savior, accept our prayers, praises, offerings, and hymns to the glory of his holy name. Amen.

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

OPENING HYMN ***O Lord, How Shall I Meet You*** **CW324**

CONFESSION p. 154

FIRST LESSON **Isaiah 61:1–4,10-11**

¹The Spirit of the Sovereign LORD is on me, because the LORD has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor. He has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim freedom for the captives and release from darkness for the prisoners, ²to proclaim the year of the LORD's favor and the day of vengeance of our God, to comfort all who mourn, ³and provide for those who grieve in Zion—to bestow on them a crown of beauty instead of ashes, the oil of joy instead of mourning, and a garment of praise instead of a spirit of despair. They will be called oaks of righteousness, a planting of the LORD for the display of his splendor.

¹⁰I delight greatly in the LORD; my soul rejoices in my God. For he has clothed me with garments of salvation and arrayed me in a robe of his righteousness, as a bridegroom adorns his head like a priest, and as a bride adorns herself with her jewels. ¹¹For as the soil makes the sprout come up and a garden causes seeds to grow, so the Sovereign LORD will make righteousness and praise spring up before all nations. ⁴They will rebuild the ancient ruins and restore the places long devastated; they will renew the ruined cities that have been devastated for generations.

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

PSALM of the DAY ***Psalm 71***

SECOND LESSON

1 Thessalonians 5:16–24

¹⁶Rejoice always, ¹⁷pray continually, ¹⁸give thanks in all circumstances; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus.

¹⁹Do not quench the Spirit. ²⁰Do not treat prophecies with contempt ²¹but test them all; hold on to what is good, ²²reject every kind of evil.

²³May God himself, the God of peace, sanctify you through and through. May your whole spirit, soul and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

²⁴The one who calls you is faithful, and he will do it.

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

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

I will send my messenger a - head of you,

who will prepare your way be - fore you. *Refrain*

GOSPEL

John 1:6–8,19–28

⁶There was a man sent from God whose name was John. ⁷He came as a witness to testify concerning that light, so that through him all might believe. ⁸He himself was not the light; he came only as a witness to the light.

¹⁹Now this was John's testimony when the Jewish leaders in Jerusalem sent priests and Levites to ask him who he was. ²⁰He did not fail to confess, but confessed freely, "I am not the Messiah."

²¹They asked him, "Then who are you? Are you Elijah?"

He said, "I am not."

"Are you the Prophet?"

He answered, "No."

²²Finally they said, "Who are you? Give us an answer to take back to those who sent us. What do you say about yourself?"

²³John replied in the words of Isaiah the prophet, "I am the voice of one calling in the wilderness, 'Make straight the way for the Lord.'"

²⁴Now the Pharisees who had been sent ²⁵questioned him, “Why then do you baptize if you are not the Messiah, nor Elijah, nor the Prophet?”

²⁶“I baptize with water,” John replied, “but among you stands one you do not know. ²⁷He is the one who comes after me, the straps of whose sandals I am not worthy to untie.”

²⁸This all happened at Bethany on the other side of the Jordan, where John was baptizing.

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise be to you, O Christ!

HYMN of the DAY *When the King Shall Come Again*

CW 307

SERMON

Isaiah 61:1-4, 10-11

ANOINTED BY GOD TO PROCLAIM THE YEAR OF THE LORD

1. TO PROCLAIM GOD’S VENGEANCE

2. TO PROCLAIM GOD’S GRACE

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 *Draw Near and Take the Body of Your Lord*

CW 661

HYMNS

O Lord, We Praise You

CW 673

PRAYERS (*Contemporary*) **and BLESSING**

p. 170

† † †

PREACHER

Pastor Jeff Bovee

PRESIDING MINISTER

Pastor Rob Guenther

ORGAN

Craig Hirschmann

OBOE

Ella Wurster (Sunday)

VIOLIN

Alan Uher (Sunday)

Welcome, Visitors!

Please scan the QR code to
sign our Guest Register.



THIS WEEK AT ST. JOHN'S

Sun	8, 9:30 & 11 am	Worship
Mon	10:30 am	Stewardship Meeting
	6:30 pm	Properties Meeting
Tue	6 pm	Council Meeting
	7 pm	Voters' Meeting
Wed	8 am	St. Paul's School Christmas Rehearsal
	4 pm	Wedding Rehearsal
	7 pm	Choir
Thu	8 am	St. Paul's School Christmas Rehearsal
	2 pm	Ladd / Thomson Wedding
	6:45 pm	MVL Concert
Fri	8 am	St. Paul's School Christmas Rehearsal

† Upcoming Services †

Saturday: NO Service

Christmas Eve: 8 & 9:30 Worship

St. Paul's Christmas Service: 4 pm

Candlelight Service: 7 pm

Christmas Day Service: 9 am

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 Sunday, December 31: 8, 9:30 & 11 am
 NO evening Service

UPCOMING EVENTS

Dec 24	8 & 9:30 am	Worship
	4 pm	St. Paul's School Christmas Service
	7 pm	Candlelight Service
Dec 25	9 am	Christmas Day Service
Dec 26		Church office closed
	4 pm	Oak Hills Living Center Service
Dec 30		NO Saturday Service
Dec 31	8, 9:30 & 11 am	Worship
Jan 1		Church office closed
	6:30 pm	Elders Meeting
Jan 2	7 pm	Women of St. John's Meeting
Jan 3	10 am	Catechism
Jan 4	10:30 am	Bible Class: The Hard Sayings of Jesus
	7 pm	Bible Class: The I AM Statements of Jesus
Jan 5	9:30 am	Women's Bible Class: Book of Esther
Jan 6	6:30 pm	Worship
Jan 7	8, 9:30 & 11 am	Worship

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

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Attendance for the past weekend was 570.

Fruits of faith given:

\$17,232	Home Operations ~ \$30,392 is our weekly need		
\$572	MVL ~ \$1,278 is our weekly need	\$275	Lutheran Charities
\$1,947	Missions ~ \$1,818 is our weekly need	\$200	Benevolence Fund
\$417	Building Fund	\$160	St. Paul's School
\$295	75th Ann. Sanctuary Renovation	\$100	Sunday School
\$473	Food & Fellowship	\$60	Martin Luther College
\$300	Ministerial Student Scholarship Fund	\$25	St. Paul's School Building Fund

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.

Has Your Contact Information Changed? ~ Please contact the church office at 354-6744 or office@stjohnsnewulm.com with any changes to your **home address, cell phone number, and email address**. Also, if your children have moved, please update us with their new contact information so we can better serve them, too. Thank you!

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.

Handbell Ringers Needed! ~ If you've seen the handbells played at church and thought, "I wish I could do that." Now's your chance! 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.

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

MVL Christmas Concert ~ "Christ Breaks Through," will be presented on Thursday, December 21st in our school gymnasium. The concert will feature the Symphonic Band, Freshman Choir, A Capella Choir, Chargaliers, and Charger Junior Choir. Doors to the gym will open at 6:15 pm. The band will begin playing at 6:45. with the processional of the choirs at 7:00. We sincerely hope that you can join us as we finish our semester with the celebration of the birth of our Savior Jesus, who pierces our darkness with his marvelous light! Merry Christmas to you all!

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.

2023 Christmas Schedule

Christmas Eve

Saturday, December 23: NO Service

Sunday, December 24: 8 & 9:30 am
4 pm St. Paul's School Christmas Service
7 pm Candlelight Christmas Eve Service



Christmas Day

Monday, December 25 at 9 am

New Year's Eve Weekend

Saturday, December 30: NO Service
Sunday, December 31 at 8, 9:30 & 11 am
(NO New Year's Eve Service)



About the Cover ~ In the days of the Old Testament, every 50th year there would be a Sabbath Year known as the Year of Jubilee. On the very day that year began, all debts were forgiven, property that had been lost was restored to its original owner, and all slaves were set free. Wouldn't that be great?!! It was symbolic. The Year of Jubilee pointed to the saving work of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ who has freed us from the debt of sin and freed us from slavery to Satan. Jesus is the true Sabbath rest for all who believe in him as their Savior.