St. John's Lutheran Church

A congregation of The Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod

First Sunday in Advent
November 29, 2026
8:00 a.m. & 10:45 a.m. Worship



TO VIEW THE SERVICE WHILE IT IS GOING ON LIVE … go to our Facebook Page https://www.facebook.com/sjlmidland/ Since this is a PUBLIC PAGE, you do not need to have a personal Facebook account in order to view the livestream.

The video of the service will be available for viewing on Facebook following the service so others can view it later.

Stay Awake: The King Is Coming

On this First Sunday of Advent, the Church begins a new year by turning our hearts toward the coming of Jesus Christ. His arrival in Bethlehem fulfills God's promises, His presence among us brings forgiveness and salvation, and His return in glory is the hope of His people. As we begin this season of Advent, may the Holy Spirit keep us watchful and faithful, trusting God's promises and preparing our hearts to welcome our coming King with hope and joy.

Call to Worship

P The King is coming! Let us lift our hearts and prepare the way of the Lord.

C We wait with hope for our Savior, Jesus Christ.

P The night is far gone; the day is drawing near.

C Let us walk in the light of the Lord.

P Be watchful, for you do not know when the Lord will come.

C We will trust His promises and remain faithful.

P Our Savior has come into the world to bring forgiveness and peace.

C We rejoice in the grace of God and the hope we have in Christ.

P Come, Lord Jesus!

C We are ready to receive our King!

All Come, Lord Jesus, and prepare our hearts for Your coming. Keep us faithful, hopeful, and watchful until the day You return in glory. Amen.

Hymn

"Lift Up your Heads, Ye Mighty Gates" *LSB 341*

Great is Thy faithfulness, O God my Father;
There is no shadow of turning with Thee.
Thou changest not: Thy compassions, they fail not;
As Thou hast been, Thou forever wilt be. Refrain

ref Great is Thy faithfulness! Great is Thy faithfulness!
Morning by morning new mercies I see;
All I have needed Thy hand hath provided;
Great is Thy faithfulness, Lord, unto me!

Summer and winter and springtime and harvest,
Sun, moon, and stars in their courses above
Join with all nature in manifold witness
To Thy great faithfulness, mercy, and love. Refrain

Pardon for sin and a peace that endureth,
Thine own dear presence to cheer and to guide;
Strength for today and bright hope for tomorrow,
Blessings all mine, with ten thousand beside! Refrain

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Lighting of the Advent Candle

P As we begin the season of Advent, we light the first candle as a sign of hope. The darkness does not have the final word, for our Savior is coming.

C "The people walking in darkness have seen a great light" (Isaiah 9:2)

P Jesus Christ, the Light of the world, has come, and He will come again.

C We wait with hope. We watch with faith. We welcome our coming King. Amen.

Invocation

P In the name of the Father and of the T Son and of the Holy Spirit.

C **Amen.**

Confession and Absolution

P Let us confess our sins to God, our Father.

C Merciful Father, we confess that we have sinned against You in thought, word, and deed. We have often become distracted by the cares and concerns of this world and have failed to keep our hearts focused on You. We have trusted in ourselves rather than Your promises, neglected opportunities to love and serve others, and failed to live as people who eagerly await the coming of Your Son. Forgive us for the sake of Jesus Christ, who came into the world to save us from our sins. Renew our hearts by Your Holy Spirit, strengthen our faith, and keep us watchful and faithful as we await the coming of our Savior.

P Almighty God, our heavenly Father, has had mercy upon you and has given His Son, Jesus Christ, to die and rise again for the forgiveness of your sins. Upon this your confession, I, as a called and ordained servant of Christ, forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the T Son and of the Holy Spirit.

C Amen.

Introit *Psalm 25:1–3; antiphon: Zechariah 9:9b, alt.*

Behold, your king is coming to you;
righteous and having salvation.
To you, O LORD,
I lift up my soul.
O my God, in you I trust; let me not be put to shame;
let not my enemies exult over me.
Indeed, none who wait for you shall be put to shame;
they shall be ashamed who are wantonly treacherous.
Glory be to the Father and to the Son
and to the Holy Spirit;
as it was in the beginning,
is now, and will be forever. Amen.
Behold, your king is coming to you;
righteous and having salvation.

Collect of the Day

P Let us pray:
Stir up Your power, O Lord, and come, that by Your protection we may be rescued from the threatening perils of our sins and saved by Your mighty deliverance; for you live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.
C **Amen.**

Old Testament Reading *Isaiah 64:1-9*

Oh that you would rend the heavens and come down, that the mountains might quake at your presence—as when fire kindles brushwood and the fire causes water to boil—to make your name known to your adversaries, and that the nations might tremble at your presence! When you did awesome things that we did not look for, you came down, the mountains quaked at your presence. From of old no one has heard or perceived by the ear, no eye has seen a God besides you, who acts for those who wait for him. You meet him who joyfully works righteousness, those who remember you in your ways. Behold, you were angry, and we sinned; in our sins we have been a long time, and shall we be saved? We have all become like one who is unclean, and all our righteous deeds are like a polluted garment. We all fade like a leaf, and our iniquities, like the wind, take us away. There is no one who calls upon your name, who rouses himself to take hold of you; for you have hidden your face from us, and have made us melt in the hand of our iniquities. But now, O LORD, you are our Father; we are the clay, and you are our potter; we are all the work of your hand. Be not so terribly angry, O

LORD, and remember not iniquity forever. Behold, please look, we are all your people.

P This is the Word of the Lord.

C **Thanks be to God.**

Epistle

1 Corinthians 1:3-9

Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. I give thanks to my God always for you because of the grace of God that was given you in Christ Jesus, that in every way you were enriched in him in all speech and all knowledge—even as the testimony about Christ was confirmed among you—so that you are not lacking in any spiritual gift, as you wait for the revealing of our Lord Jesus Christ, who will sustain you to the end, guiltless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ. God is faithful, by whom you were called into the fellowship of his Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

P This is the Word of the Lord.

C **Thanks be to God.**

Holy Gospel

Mark 13:24-37

P The Holy Gospel according to St. Mark, the thirteenth chapter.

C **Glory to You, O Lord.**

[Jesus said:] "In those days, after that tribulation, the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light, and the stars will be falling from heaven, and the powers in the heavens will be shaken. And then they will see the Son of Man coming in clouds with great power and glory. And then he will send out the angels and gather his elect from the four winds, from the ends of the earth to the ends of heaven. "From the fig tree learn its lesson: as soon as its branch becomes tender and puts out its leaves, you know that summer is near. So also, when you see these things taking place, you know that he is near, at the very gates. Truly, I say to you, this generation will not pass away until all these things take place. Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away. "But concerning that day or that hour, no one knows, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father. Be on guard, keep awake. For you do not know when the time will come. It is like a man going on a journey, when he leaves home and puts his servants in charge, each with his work, and commands the doorkeeper to stay awake. Therefore stay awake—for you do not know when the master of the house will come, in the evening, or at midnight, or when the cock crows, or in the morning—lest he come suddenly and find you asleep. And what I say to you I say to all: Stay awake."

P This is the Gospel of the Lord.

C **Praise to You, O Christ.**

Nicene Creed (see inside back cover of the hymnal)

Children's Message Stephanie Davis

Hymn

"Savior of the Nations, Come" *LSB 332*

Savior of the nations, come,
Virgin's Son, make here Your home!
Marvel now, O heav'n and earth,
That the Lord chose such a birth.

Not by human flesh and blood,
By the Spirit of our God,
Was the Word of God made flesh—
Woman's offspring, pure and fresh.

Here a maid was found with child,
Yet remained a virgin mild.
In her womb this truth was shown:
God was there upon His throne.

Then stepped forth the Lord of all
From His pure and kingly hall;
God of God, yet fully man,
His heroic course began.

God the Father was His source,
Back to God He ran His course.
Into hell His road went down,
Back then to His throne and crown.

For You are the Father's Son
Who in flesh the vict'ry won.
By Your mighty pow'r make whole
All our ills of flesh and soul.

From the manger newborn light
Shines in glory through the night.
Darkness there no more resides;
In this light faith now abides.

Glory to the Father sing,
Glory to the Son, our king,
Glory to the Spirit be
Now and through eternity.

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Sermon

Offering

Prayer of the Church

The Lord's Prayer

C **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.**

Communion Preparation

P Let us pray.

C **Gracious Lord Jesus, as we come to Your table, we give thanks that You have come among us to bring forgiveness, salvation, and peace. Prepare our hearts to receive Your true body and blood with repentant hearts and steadfast faith. Forgive our sins, strengthen our trust in Your promises, and renew us by Your grace. As we receive Your gifts, keep us watchful for Your coming and faithful in the days You have given us. Fill us with the hope and joy of Advent, and send us forth to live as Your people, reflecting Your love until the day You come again in glory. Amen.**

The Words of Institution

Distribution Hymns

"Once He Came in Blessing" *LSB 333*

Once He came in blessing,
All our sins redressing;
Came in likeness lowly,
Son of God most holy;
Bore the cross to save us;
Hope and freedom gave us.

Now He gently leads us;
With Himself He feeds us
Precious food from heaven,
Pledge of peace here given,
Manna that will nourish
Souls that they may flourish.

Soon will come that hour
When with mighty power
Christ will come in splendor
And will judgment render,
With the faithful sharing
Joy beyond comparing.

Come, then, O Lord Jesus,
From our sins release us.
Keep our hearts believing,
That we, grace receiving,
Ever may confess You
Till in heav'n we bless You.

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"Jerusalem, My Happy Home" *LSB 673*

Jerusalem, my happy home,
When shall I come to thee?
When shall my sorrows have an end?
Thy joys when shall I see?

O happy harbor of the saints,
O sweet and pleasant soil!
In thee no sorrow may be found,
No grief, no care, no toil.

Thy gardens and thy gallant walks
Continually are green;
There grow such sweet and pleasant flow'rs
As nowhere else are seen.

There trees forevermore bear fruit
And evermore do spring;
There evermore the angels dwell
And evermore do sing.

Apostles, martyrs, prophets, there
Around my Savior stand;
And soon my friends in Christ below
Will join the glorious band.

O Christ, do Thou my soul prepare
For that bright home of love
That I may see Thee and adore
With all Thy saints above.

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Benediction

P The Lord bless thee and keep thee.
The Lord make His face shine upon thee and be gracious to thee.
The Lord lift up His countenance upon thee and T give thee peace.

C Amen.

Hymn

"The King Shall Come When Morning Dawns" *LSB 348*

The King shall come when morning dawns
And light triumphant breaks,
When beauty gilds the eastern hills
And life to joy awakes.

Not as of old a little child,
To bear and fight and die,
But crowned with glory like the sun
That lights the morning sky.

Oh, brighter than the rising morn
When Christ, victorious, rose
And left the lonesome place of death
Despite the rage of foes.

Oh, brighter than that glorious morn
Shall dawn upon our race
The day when Christ in splendor comes
And we shall see His face.

The King shall come when morning dawns
And light and beauty brings.

Hail, Christ the Lord! Your people pray:
Come quickly, King of kings!

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Announcements

Blessing and Dismissal

P May the Holy Spirit strengthen your faith, keep you watchful in hope, and fill your hearts with the peace and joy of Christ as you await His coming.

C **Amen.**

P Go in peace, serve the Lord.

C **Thanks be to God.**

Announcements

Sharing Tree Gifts must be returned to SJL by Wednesday, December 2. Gifts should not be wrapped, but rather in gift bags and have the tag securely attached. They can be left near the Sharing Tree in the first alcoves on right side of the sanctuary.

Mid-week advent services begin on Wednesday, December 2 at 12:15 and 7:00 pm. Only the 7pm service will be live streamed on our Facebook page each week. Services will continue for 3 consecutive Wednesdays - December 2, 9, & 16. The service on December 16 will include a musical presentation by the SJL School children during both services, with pre-service music provided by the bands at 6:30 pm.

Advent suppers will also be held each Wednesday in Advent. The first is on December 2 from 5:00 to 6:30 pm in the lounge. It is hosted by the SJL Lydia Guild and will include turkey noodle soup, chili, sandwiches, veggies, salads, and desserts! A freewill offering will be accepted to support various local charities.

Lutheran Witness Subscriptions are available in through the office. The Lutheran Witness is the official publication of The Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod. It is published 11 times a year, and subscribers will receive each copy directly to their home address. In addition, a free copy of *Michigan in Touch* will also be mailed each quarter. If you would like to order, or renew a subscription please let the office know NO LATER then December 5.

Lydia Guild will be hosting their November meeting on Monday, November 30 beginning at 6:30 pm. This month's featured program is a presentation by a local non-profit, the Ten16 Recovery Network. Mr. Sam Price, CEO, will share information about the work of this organization. Refreshments and a short business meeting will follow. NOTE: LG does not have a December meeting.

The 2027 Church Offering Envelopes are available in the lounge by the white curtain. They are arranged alphabetically for your convenience. If you give electronically or do not wish to use envelopes, please pick up a form located by the envelopes and return it to the church office, give it to an usher, or place it in the carton provided. Thank you for your continued faithfulness and generosity!

Reverse Advent Calendars We hope you'll participate once again in a fun St. John's tradition: the Reverse Advent Calendar! Pick up a red bag and Advent devotional, set aside time as a family to read and discuss the daily devotion together, add a nonperishable food item to your bag, then bring your filled bag back on Christmas Eve to be donated to the bonus section at The Bridge Food Center. We pray this is a blessing to your family and our community this Advent season.

Confirmation Prayer Mentor Service Project Calling all confirmation students and prayer mentors! Our next event is happening Sunday, December 6. Meet in the Lounge following the 10:45am worship service for a service project benefiting the Midland Community Christmas Dinner. **Please RSVP to Anna by Wednesday, December 2.**

December Young Adult Meet Up Our monthly event for mid-20s to mid-30s young adults is happening on Friday, December 11 at 6:00pm. We'll meet at Dow Gardens for their annual Christmas Walk followed by hot cocoa. Contact Anna (akruger@sjlmidland.org) for more info or to RSVP.

Acknowledgments

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