



*kneel at the side  
of a manger*

Nativity of Our Lord  
December 24, 2025 | 8:00 pm | St. John's Evangelical Lutheran Church



## *Welcome*

Your visit is a blessing to us, and we're glad you're here this evening!

As children of God and disciples of Christ seeking peace and justice in the world, we welcome, affirm, and include all people into the fullness of God's love. We celebrate and lift up people of all races, cultures, ages, sexual orientations, gender identities, physical or mental abilities, economic statuses, political affiliation, appearances, family status, and citizenship as equally loved and valued in the eyes of God and in this place. All are invited to join this community as we worship God, grow in faith, and strive to love and serve one another.

All, without exception, are welcome in this place.

## *New Here?*

As a visitor, please do not feel obligated to contribute an offering - you are our guest! Rather, please ask an usher for a Let's Get Acquainted card and drop it in the offering plate.

Restrooms are located on the same level as the sanctuary. Exit the back of the sanctuary, turn left into the Parish House, turn left again at ramp and continue midway down the hallway. Restrooms are on the right.

## *Prayer Requests*

The importance of prayer is affirmed throughout the Bible. As a church we are committed to prayer - your needs are important to us. Prayer request cards can be obtained from an usher and may be filled out and dropped in the offering plate.

## *Gathering Times*

**Sunday | 9:30 am | Sanctuary & livestreamed on YouTube  
Worship Celebration with Holy Communion**

Connect with us on Facebook, Instagram and YouTube.



*In winter's deepest night, we welcome the light of the Christ child. Isaiah declares that the light of the long-promised king will illumine the world and bring endless peace and justice. Paul reminds us that the grace of God through Jesus Christ brings salvation to all people. The angels declare that Jesus' birth is good and joyful news for everyone, including lowly shepherds. Filled with the light that shines in our lives, we go forth to share the light of Christ with the whole world.*



# Nativity of Our Lord

## PRELUDE

## WELCOME

*The congregation may stand.*

## GATHERING HYMN

### O Come, All Ye Faithful

ELW 283



1 O come, all ye faithful, joy - ful and tri - um - phant! O  
2 The high - est, most ho - ly, light of light e - ter - nal,  
3 Sing, choirs of an - gels, sing in ex - ul - ta - tion,  
4 Yea, Lord, we greet thee, born this hap - py morn - ing;



come ye, O come ye to Beth - le - hem;  
born of a vir - gin, a mor - tal he comes;  
sing, all ye cit - i - zens of heav - en a - bove!  
Je - sus, to thee be . . . glo - ry giv'n!



come and be - hold him, born the king of an - gels:  
Son of the Fa - ther now in flesh ap - pear - ing!  
Glo - ry to God . . . in . . . the . . . high - est:  
Word of the Fa - ther, now in flesh ap - pear - ing:

*Refrain*



Ve - ni - te a - do - re - mus, ve - ni - te a - do - re - mus,  
O come, let us a - dore him, O come, let us a - dore him,



ve - ni - te a - do - re - mus Do - mi - num.  
O come, let us a - dore him, Christ the Lord!

Text: attr. John Francis Wade, 1711–1786; tr. Frederick Oakeley, 1802–1880, sts. 1, 3–4; tr. unknown, st. 2  
Music: ADESTE FIDELES, attr. John Francis Wade

## CONFSSION AND FORGIVENESS

Blessed be the holy Trinity, one God, Wonderful Counselor, Mighty Savior, Prince of Peace. **Amen.**

Trusting in God's steadfast love and faithfulness, let us confess our sin.

*The congregation may kneel.*

Reconciling God, **we yearn for your presence to transform our grief, pain, and despair. We confess that we have not always prepared room in our hearts for your love; we have not always recognized your presence among us; we have not always embraced your message of peace.**

**We cry out, weary with the burden of violence, oppression, and fear. We confess our failure to make room for those seeking refuge; our participation in violent systems that harm your innocent ones; our reluctance to embody your good news.**

**Be born in us today and teach us to sing the joyful song of your salvation. Amen.**

*The congregation may stand.*

God's grace upon grace flows over you. Christ's presence redeems the whole creation. Your sins are forgiven. Let the earth rejoice and be glad! **Amen.**

**HYMN**

**It Came Upon the Midnight Clear**

**ELW 282**

**verses 1 & 4**



1 It came up - on the mid - night clear, that glo - rious song of old,  
2 Still through the clo - ven skies they come with peace - ful wings un - furled,  
3 And you, be -neath life's crush-ing load, whose forms are bend - ing low,  
4 For lo! The days are has -t'ning on, by proph - ets seen of old,



from an - gels bend - ing near the earth to touch their harps of gold:  
and still their heav'n-ly mu - sic floats o'er all the wea - ry world.  
who toil a - long the climb-ing way with pain - ful steps and slow:  
when with the ev - er - cir - cling years shall come the time fore - told,



"Peace on the earth, good will to all, from heav'n's all - gra - cious king."  
A - bove its sad and low - ly plains they bend on hov -'ring wing,  
look now, for glad and gold-en hours come swift - ly on the wing;  
when peace shall o - ver all the earth its an - cient splen-dors fling,



The world in sol - emn still-ness lay to hear the an - gels sing.  
and ev - er o'er its ba - bel sounds the bless - ed an - gels sing.  
oh, rest be - side the wea - ry road and hear the an - gels sing!  
and all the world give back the song which now the an - gels sing.

Text: Edmund H. Sears, 1810–1876  
Music: CAROL, Richard S. Willis, 1819–1900

## PRAYER OF THE DAY

Let us pray.

**Almighty God, you made this holy night shine with the brightness of the true Light. Grant that here on earth we may walk in the light of Jesus' presence and in the last day wake to the brightness of his glory; through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.**

## GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Alleluia. I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord. **Alleluia.**

*The congregation may be seated.*

## FIRST READING

**Isaiah 9:2-7**

*This poem promises deliverance from Assyrian oppression, a hope based on the birth of a royal child with a name full of promise. While Judah's king will practice justice and righteousness, the real basis for faith lies in God's passion for the people: The zeal of the LORD of hosts will do this!*

<sup>2</sup>The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who lived in a land of deep darkness—on them light has shined. <sup>3</sup>You have multiplied the nation, you have increased its joy; they rejoice before you as with joy at the harvest, as people exult when dividing plunder. <sup>4</sup>For the yoke of their burden, and the bar across their shoulders, the rod of their oppressor, you have broken as on the day of Midian. <sup>5</sup>For all the boots of the tramping warriors and all the garments rolled in blood shall be burned as fuel for the fire. <sup>6</sup>For a child has been born for us, a son given to us; authority rests upon his shoulders; and he is named Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. <sup>7</sup>His authority shall grow continually, and there shall be endless peace for the throne of David and his kingdom. He will establish and uphold it with justice and with righteousness from this time onward and forevermore. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will do this.

The word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

## SECOND READING

**Titus 2:11-14**

*The appearance of God's grace in Jesus Christ brings salvation for all humanity. Consequently, in the present we live wisely and justly while also anticipating the hope of our Savior's final appearance.*

<sup>11</sup>The grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all, <sup>12</sup>training us to renounce impiety and worldly passions, and in the present age to live lives that are self-controlled, upright, and godly, <sup>13</sup>while we wait for the blessed hope and the manifestation of the glory of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ. <sup>14</sup>He it is who gave himself for us that he might redeem us from all iniquity and purify for himself a people of his own who are zealous for good deeds.

The word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

*The congregation may stand.*

**HYMN**

**Hark! The Herald Angels Sing**

**ELW 270**



1 Hark! The her - ald an - gels sing, "Glo - ry to the new - born king;  
2 Christ, by high - est heav'n a - dored, Christ, the ev - er - last - ing Lord,  
3 Hail the heav'n - born Prince of peace! Hail the Sun of righ - teous - ness!



peace on earth, and mer - cy mild, God and sin - ners rec - on - ciled."  
late in time be - hold him come, off - spring of a vir - gin's womb.  
Light and life to all he brings, ris'n with heal - ing in his wings.



Joy - ful, all you na - tions, rise; join the tri - umph of the skies;  
Veiled in flesh the God-head see! Hail, in - car - nate de - i - ty!  
Mild he lays his glo - ry by, born that we no more may die,



with an - gel - ic hosts pro - claim, "Christ is born in Beth - le - hem!"  
Pleased as man with us to dwell, Je - sus, our Em - man - u - el!  
born to raise each child of earth, born to give us sec - ond birth.



*Refrain*  
Hark! The her - ald an - gels sing, "Glo - ry to the new-born king!"

Text: Charles Wesley, 1707–1788, alt.

Music: MENDELSSOHN, Felix Mendelssohn, 1809–1847; arr. William H. Cummings, 1831–1915

## THE CHRISTMAS GOSPEL

The Holy Gospel according to St. Luke. **Glory to you O Lord.**

**Luke 2:1-14 [15-20]**

<sup>1</sup>In those days a decree went out from Emperor Augustus that all the world should be registered. <sup>2</sup>This was the first registration and was taken while Quirinius was governor of Syria. <sup>3</sup>All went to their own towns to be registered. <sup>4</sup>Joseph also went from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to the city of David called Bethlehem, because he was descended from the house and family of David. <sup>5</sup>He went to be registered with Mary, to whom he was engaged and who was expecting a child. <sup>6</sup>While they were there, the time came for her to deliver her child. <sup>7</sup>And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in bands of cloth, and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn. <sup>8</sup>In that region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. <sup>9</sup>Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. <sup>10</sup>But the angel said to them, “Do not be afraid; for see—I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: <sup>11</sup>to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord. <sup>12</sup>This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger.” <sup>13</sup>And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying, <sup>14</sup>“Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace among those whom he favors!”

[<sup>15</sup>When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, “Let us go now to Bethlehem and see this thing that has taken place, which the Lord has made known to us.” <sup>16</sup>So they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the child lying in the manger. <sup>17</sup>When they saw this, they made known what had been told them about this child; <sup>18</sup>and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds told them. <sup>19</sup>But Mary treasured all these words and pondered them in her heart. <sup>20</sup>The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them.]

The gospel of our Lord. **Praise to you, O Christ.**

*The congregation may be seated.*

**SERMON**

**Pastor Bob Machamer**

**MUSIC SELECTION**

**O Holy Night**

**Adolphe Adam**

*The congregation may stand.*

## THE NICENE CREED

**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 and the Son,\*  
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.**

## PRAYER PETITION

### Lord, Listen to Your Children Praying

*Sung through twice.*

ELW 752



Lord, lis-ten to your chil-dren pray-ing, Lord, send your Spir-it in this place;



Lord, lis-ten to your chil-dren pray-ing, send us love, send us pow'r, send us grace.

Text: Ken Medema, b. 1943

Music: CHILDREN PRAYING, Ken Medema

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*The congregation may kneel.*

## PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

*During this time of prayer, you are encouraged to meditate fully on the prayers offered by the reader.*

*Prayer response:*

Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

*The congregation may be seated.*

## OFFERING MUSIC

*The congregation may stand.*

## OFFERING PRAYER

God of glory, great are your wonders among us and many are the blessings you bestow. Use us and these your gifts for the needs of the world, that all the ends of the earth may rejoice in your saving grace, through Christ our Savior. **Amen.**

## THE GREAT THANKSGIVING

The Lord be with you.

**And also with you.**

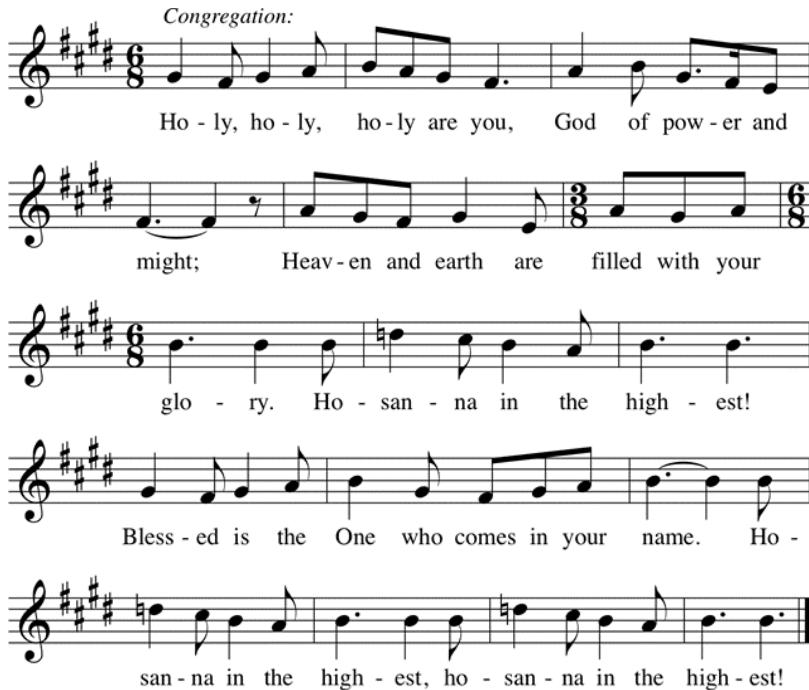
Lift up your hearts.

**We lift them to the Lord.**

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.  
**It is right to give God thanks and praise.**

It is indeed right, our duty and delight, that we should everywhere and always offer thanks and praise to you, O God, through Jesus Christ who is your word made flesh among us, and so with the church on earth, all creation and the host of heaven we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

*Congregation:*



Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly are you, God of pow - er and  
might; Heav - en and earth are filled with your  
glo - ry. Ho - san - na in the high - est!  
Bless - ed is the One who comes in your name. Ho -  
san - na in the high - est, ho - san - na in the high - est!

Text and Music: Marty Haugen; © 1990, GIA Publications, Inc.

You are indeed holy, gracious and merciful God; everything is filled with your glory. We give thanks for your promise and presence which have sustained the faithful in this and every generation. Above all, we give you thanks for Jesus, born of Mary, who in word and deed announced your gentle rule of justice, reconciliation and peace.

On the night of his betrayal  
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.

Remembering his command to love one another, his life and death, his resurrection and his ascension, we pray for his coming again, even as we cry:

**Amen. Come Lord Jesus.**

Send now, we pray, your Holy Spirit, that all of your promises may come to us and your creation.  
**Amen. Come Lord Jesus.**

This we pray through Jesus Christ, our Savior and our friend.

**Through Christ, with Christ, in Christ. In the unity of the Holy Spirit, all glory and honor is yours, O God, now and forever. Amen.**

Make us bold, O merciful God, to address you as our Abba as we pray:

**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 sins, as we forgive those who sin 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.**

### **INVITATION TO COMMUNION**

God is now in flesh appearing. Come to the feast of joy!

*The congregation may be seated.*

### **DISTRIBUTION OF THE SACRAMENT**

*All without exception, are welcome at the table of God's grace and love. Please fill out a communion card and hand to an usher or place in the box in the Narthex. Today we receive the sacrament at the altar rail. Please come forward at the direction of the ushers. Gluten-free wafers and grape juice are available at the center aisle. Return to your seats by the side aisle. If you are unable to come forward for communion, please let an usher know and communion will be brought to you.*

*The congregation may stand.*

### **BLESSING**

May the body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen you and keep you in his grace, in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

## POST-COMMUNION PRAYER

Incarnate God, you are among us at this table. May we treasure this gift and ponder in our hearts the mystery of your presence. Move us to discover the wonders of your love in the everyday moments of our lives, through Christ born in us. **Amen.**

## CANDLE LIGHTING

*Please exercise care with the candle. Always hold it upright. Only the unlit candle should be tilted to receive the light. Share the light with your neighbor. Extinguish your candle at the conclusion of the benediction.*

## SENDING HYMN

### Silent Night, Holy Night!

*Last verse sung in German.*

ELW 281

Stil - le Nacht, hei - li - ge Nacht! Al - les schläft,  
1 Si - - lent night, ho - ly night! All is calm,  
2 Si - - lent night, ho - ly night! Shep - herds quake  
3 Si - - lent night, ho - ly night! Son of God,

ein - sam wacht nur das trau - te, hoch - hei - li - ge Paar.  
all is bright round yon vir - gin moth - er and child.  
at the sight; glo - ries stream from heav - en a - far,  
love's pure light ra - diant beams from your ho - ly face,

Hold - er Kna - be im lok - ki - gen Haar, schlaf in himm - li - scher  
Ho - ly In - fant, so ten - der and mild, sleep in heav - en - ly  
heav'n - ly hosts . . . sing, al - le - lu - ia! Christ, the Sav - ior, is  
with the dawn of re - deem - ing grace, Je - sus, Lord, at your

Ruh, schlaf in himm - li - scher Ruh.  
peace, sleep in heav - en - ly peace.  
born! Christ, the Sav - ior, is born!  
birth, Je - sus, Lord, at your birth.

Text: Joseph Mohr, 1792-1849; tr. John F. Young, 1820-1885  
Music: STILLE NACHT, Franz Gruber, 1787-1863

## BENEDICTION

The triune God, glorious Mystery, holy Incarnate One, abiding Comforter, bless you with endless grace, peace, and joy. **Amen.**

## SENDING HYMN

### Angels We Have Heard On High

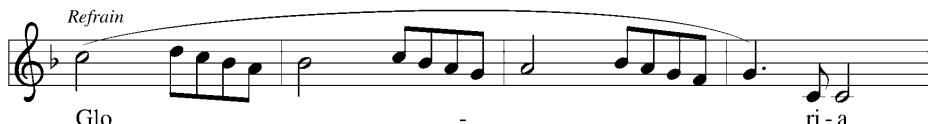
ELW 289



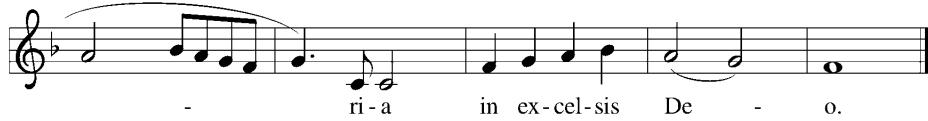
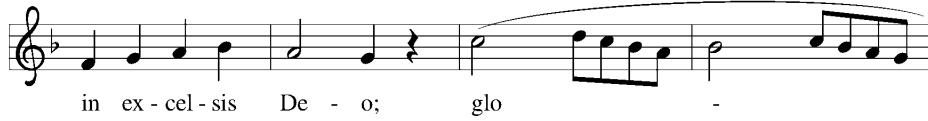
1 An - gels we have heard on high, sweet - ly sing - ing o'er the plains,  
2 Shep - herds, why this ju - bi - lee? Why your joy - ous strains pro - long?  
3 Come to Beth - le - hem and see him whose birth the an - gels sing;



and the moun-tains in re - ply, ech - o - ing their joy - ous strains.  
What the glad - some tid - ings be which in - spire your heav'n - ly song?  
come, a - dore on bend - ed knee Christ the Lord, the new - born king.



Glo - - - - - ri - a



Text: French carol; tr. H. F. Hemy, *The Crown of Jesus Music*, 1864  
Music: GLORIA, French carol

## DISMISSAL

Glory to God in the highest! **And peace to God's people on earth!**  
Go in joy. Embody God's redeeming grace. **Thanks be to God.**

## POSTLUDE

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# *Serving in Worship*

## **Acolyte**

Tatum Friz

## **Altar Assistants**

Shannon Omlor

Becky Scheiry

## **Altar Guild**

Mary Kay Heimbach

Sue Hill

## **Assisting Minister**

Jennifer Schlegel

## **Lector**

Jen Friz

## **Media**

Jason Friz

## **Musicians**

Cindy DePietro, *harp*

Madison Robb, *vocals*

Christine Mervine, *organ/piano*

## **Prayers**

Ros Moatz

## **Sound**

Ashley Gheer

## **Video**

Camryn Friz

## **Ushers**

Mary Kay & Donnie Heimbach

Bonnie & Rick Moatz

Ros & Brian Moatz



# Come to the Table



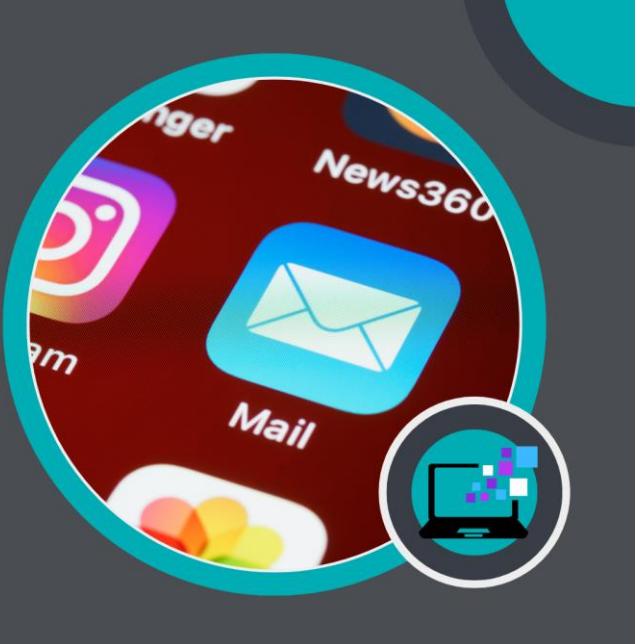
Saturdays 4:30-5:30 @ St. John's  
enter parking lot at N. Reading Ave or Walnut St  
and follow traffic directors

bellies filled hearts warmed

## DO WE HAVE YOUR EMAIL ADDRESS?

Stay in touch with  
what's new at St. John's!

Subscribe online



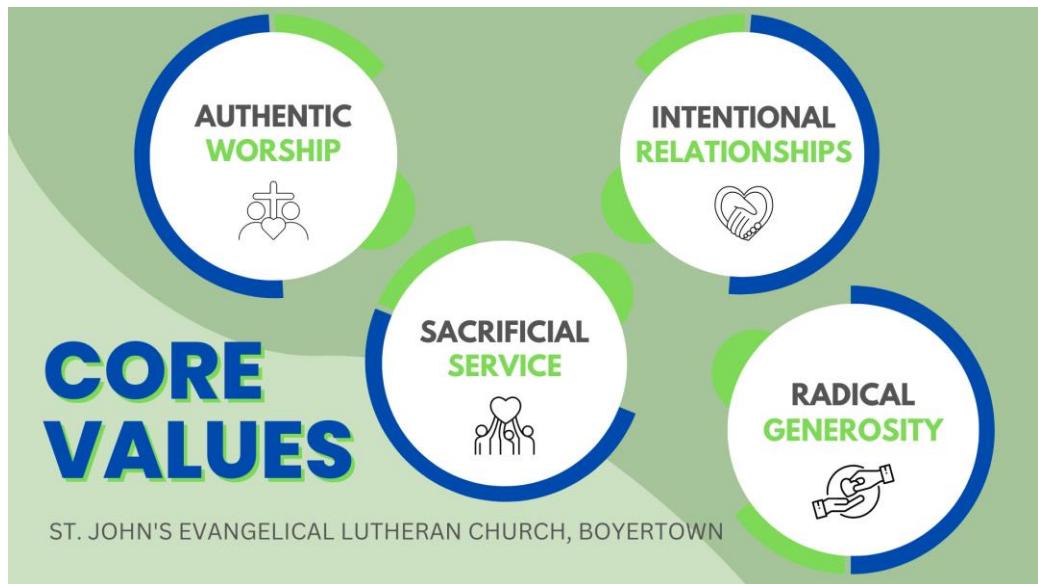
**GUESTS** are always welcome to the Table!

**MEMBERS (two types)**

Voting & Non-voting

**KEEPING MEMBERSHIP SIMPLE**

1. The only way you can ever be removed from the membership roll at St. John's, or any ELCA congregation:
  - You request a transfer
  - You ask to be removed
  - You depart this life
2. Voting members must make a record of having:
  - Filled out a communion card and received the Lord's Supper ONE time per year
  - Contributed ONE time per year, making sure your name is included



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## PURPOSE STATEMENT

We believe God's purpose for the people of St. John's Evangelical Lutheran Church is to develop joy-filled children of God who love the Lord and share God's Word.

*We do this by:*

- Maintaining a trusting and welcoming environment.
- Praying daily.
- Reading scripture regularly.
- Sharing our faith through action-based service.
- Encouraging holy conversations.
- Feeding our faith with music.

*With a focus on:*

- Activities that build relationships.
- Worship that is relevant.
- Meeting the needs of the vulnerable in our community.

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Pastor Bob Machamer

[bmachamer@stjohnsboyertown.org](mailto:bmachamer@stjohnsboyertown.org)

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Linda Rohrbach, Treasurer



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[stjohnsboyertown.org](http://stjohnsboyertown.org)

Office Hours | Monday-Thursday 8:30am - 3:30pm | Friday 8:30am - 12:00pm