

**St. John Evangelical Lutheran Church**  
*A Family Connecting in Christ*



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# WELCOME TO ST. JOHN EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH

**At this time our services are for people wearing masks and social distancing!**

Please know that even as we experience this awkwardness, your Good Shepherd holds you close to his heart and goes with you to share his love!

## To Our Guests

- We pray that you receive a warm welcome and are blessed by the message of God's Word in our lessons and hymns. If you have questions, please ask!
- Our service is designed to focus us on Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior. The Holy Spirit does that by exposing our need for Christ and by showing us the wonders of God's grace in Christ – forgiveness and peace, help and hope for life in this world, and life forever with God in heaven.

## Our Communion Practice

We practice close communion, the Biblical and ancient practice of the church.

We invite our congregation members and visitors from sister WELS or ELS congregations to join us, but ask Christians from other denominations to kindly respect our practice. Further explanation is in the pew racks or from our pastor.

## We Care about Your Children

We love to have children with us in worship.

- If your children are crying loudly, our nursery, Gathering Area (back of church), and downstairs Fellowship Hall are audio-equipped for you and your young children. When your children are ready, come back so we can worship together.

## We Care about Your Special Needs

- **Hearing Assistance** for those with hearing aids is provided through our Hearing Loop or personal hearing devices available at the "sound table."
- A **wheelchair lift** is available for your assistance; please ask an usher.



## Our Facilities

Restrooms are in our Fellowship Hall, downstairs and to the right of the kitchen.

## Our Ministry

St. John offers an excellent preschool-8th grade school program. We are members of the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod (WELS) - [www.wels.net](http://www.wels.net).

May 23, 2021

**NEW MORNING PRAISE**

**IN OUR WORLD TODAY...** it's graduation season with the high-sounding wisdom and wishes of graduation cards, mottos, songs most of which have little if any connection with our eternal reality.

**IN OUR WORSHIP TODAY...** we hear a wisdom and promise for our graduates (and all of us) that survives time into eternity!

**OPENING HYMN**

*"Speak, O Savior; I Am Listening"*  
**Hymn 283**

Speak, O Savior; I am list'ning, As a servant to his lord.  
Let me show respect and honor To your holy, precious Word,  
That each day, my whole life through, I may serve and follow you.  
Let your Word e'er be my pleasure And my heart's most precious treasure.

Oh, what blessing to be near you And to listen to your voice!  
Let me ever love and fear you; Let your Word still be my choice.  
Many hardened sinners, Lord, Flee in terror at your Word,  
But to all who feel sin's burden You give peace and words of pardon.

Lord, your words are waters living Where I quench my thirsty needs.  
Lord, your words are bread life-giving; On your words my spirit feeds.  
Lord, your words will be my light Through death's cold and dreary night;  
Yes, they are my sword prevailing And my cup of joy unfailing.

As I pray, dear Jesus, hear me; Let your words in me take root.  
May your Spirit e'er be near me That I bear abundant fruit.  
May I daily sing your praise, From my heart glad anthems raise,  
Till my highest praise is given In the endless joy of heaven.

L O Lord, o-pen my lips.

C And my mouth shall de-clare your praise.

L Hasten to save me, O God.

C O Lord, come quickly to help me.

### CONFESSION & ABSOLUTION OF SINS

M: We have come into the presence of God, who created us to love and serve him as his dear children. But we have disobeyed him and deserve only his wrath and punishment. Therefore, let us confess our sins to him and plead for his mercy.

C: **Merciful Father in heaven, I am altogether sinful from birth. In countless ways I have sinned against you and do not deserve to be called your child. But trusting in Jesus, my Savior, I pray: Have mercy on me according to your unfailing love. Cleanse me from my sin, and take away my guilt.**

M: God, our heavenly Father, has forgiven all your sins. By the perfect life and innocent death of our Lord Jesus Christ, he has removed your guilt forever. You are his own dear child. May God give you strength to live according to his will.

C: **Amen.**

L Give glory to God, our light and our life.

C Come, oh, come, let us wor - ship.

# COME, OH, COME, LET US SING TO THE LORD

①

Come, oh, come, let us sing to the Lord,

②

let us shout with joy to our sav - ing Rock;

③

come, en - ter in with our songs of praise,

*Repeat for use with canon*

come, en - ter in with thanks - giv - ing.

*Verses*

1. You are a great and a won - drous God,  
 2. Come, let us wor - ship and, bow - ing low,

cup - ping in your hands all the depths of earth.  
 kneel be - fore the One who has made us all.

You made the hills and the moun - tains high,  
 You are the God whom we call our own,

*to Refrain*

you made the seas and the dry land.  
 we are the flock that you shep - herd.

**HOLY BAPTISM II**  
**William David Villiard**  
**Son of Jack and Stacey Villiard**

Our Lord Jesus Christ gave his Church the command to baptize when he said: "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you."

Scripture makes plain the universal need for Baptism. As children of Adam, we belong to a fallen race. From our parents we inherit a sinful nature and would be lost forever unless delivered by our Lord Jesus Christ. He willingly took on himself the curse of sin and by his death on the cross redeemed us and all people.

Christ's almighty Word gives Baptism its power to save. The apostle Peter declares, "Baptism now saves you." Scripture also clearly teaches that the power and promise of Baptism is intended for young and old alike. On the day of Pentecost the apostle testified, "The promise is for you and your children and for all who are far off - for all whom the Lord our God will call." By water and the Spirit, we are born again and united with Christ and his people as members of the Church.

M: In bringing *this child* to Baptism, you are doing what is God-pleasing. Jesus himself invited little children to become a part of his kingdom when he said: "Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these. I tell you the truth, anyone who will not receive the kingdom of God like a little child will never enter it." And he took the children in his arms, put his hands on them, and blessed them.

M: Receive the sign of the cross on the head and heart to mark you as a redeemed child of Christ.

M: \_\_\_\_\_, I baptize you in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

M: The Almighty God - Father, Son, and Holy Spirit - has forgiven all your sins. By your baptism, you are born again and made a dear child of your Father in heaven.

May God strengthen you to live in your baptismal grace all the days of your life. Peace be with you.

#### EXHORTATION TO PARENTS

M: Dear parent(s), our Lord Jesus Christ, in instituting Baptism, not only commanded that children should be baptized, but that they should be taught to obey everything he has commanded us. I therefore ask you: Do you sincerely intend to bring up \_\_\_\_\_ in the way of the Lord and to instruct *him* in the truths of God's saving Word so that *he* may grow in faith, serve God with a Christian life, and remain in *his* baptismal grace unto the end? If so, answer: Yes, and *we* ask God to help *us*.

**R: Yes, and we/I ask God to help us/me.**

#### EXHORTATION TO SPONSORS

M: Dear sponsor(s), \_\_\_\_\_ has been baptized in the name of the triune God. It is your privilege and responsibility to remember *him* in your prayers, to remind *him* of *his* baptism, and, as far as possible, to give your counsel and aid that *he* may be brought up in the true knowledge of God according to the teachings of the Scriptures as confessed by our Lutheran Church. If you intend gladly and willingly to do this, then answer: Yes, and we ask God to help us.

**R: Yes, and we/I ask God to help us/me.**

#### EXHORTATION TO CONGREGATION

M: Brothers and sisters in Christ, our Lord commands that we teach his precious truths to all who are baptized. Christian love, therefore, urges all of us to assist in whatever manner possible so that \_\_\_\_\_ may remain a child of God until death. If you are willing to carry out this responsibility, then answer: Yes, and we ask God to help us.

**C: Yes, and we ask God to help us.**

M: Let us pray.

M: Merciful Father in heaven, we thank you for the gift of Baptism by which you wash away sin and give us a new and eternal life. Help us each day to remember that through Baptism you clothe us with Christ that we may stand holy and righteous before you. Look with favor on \_\_\_\_\_ that *he* may be kept safe by the gift of your Spirit, grow daily in your grace, and live forever by the power of the risen Christ. Make us willing to carry out our responsibilities to all the baptized, so that all may finally come to the blessed joys of heaven, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

C: **Amen.**

HYMN

*"I Am Jesus' Little Lamb"*

Hymn 432

I am Jesus' little lamb; Ever glad at heart I am,  
For my shepherd gently guides me,  
Knows my needs and well provides me,  
Loves me ev'ry day the same, Even calls me by my name.

Day by day, at home, away, Jesus is my staff and stay.  
When I hunger, Jesus feeds me, Into pleasant pastures leads me;  
When I thirst, he bids me go Where the quiet waters flow.

Who so happy as I am, Even now the shepherd's lamb?  
And when my short life is ended, By his angel hosts attended,  
He shall fold me to his breast, There within his arms to rest.

FIRST LESSON

Acts 2:1-21

When the day of Pentecost came, they were all together in one place. Suddenly a sound like the blowing of a violent wind came from heaven and filled the whole house where they were sitting. They saw what seemed to be tongues of fire that separated and came to rest on each of them. All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit enabled them.



Now there were staying in Jerusalem God-fearing Jews from every nation under heaven. When they heard this sound, a crowd came together in bewilderment, because each one heard them speaking in his own language. Utterly amazed, they asked: "Are not all these men who are speaking Galileans? Then how is it that each of us hears them in his own native language? Parthians, Medes and Elamites; residents of Mesopotamia, Judea and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia, Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the parts of Libya near Cyrene; visitors from Rome (both Jews and converts to Judaism); Cretans and Arabs - we hear them declaring the wonders of God in our own tongues!" Amazed and perplexed, they asked one another, "What does this mean?"

Some, however, made fun of them and said, "They have had too much wine. "

Then Peter stood up with the Eleven, raised his voice and addressed the crowd: "Fellow Jews and all of you who live in Jerusalem, let me explain this to you; listen carefully to what I say. These men are not drunk, as you suppose. It's only nine in the morning! No, this is what was spoken by the prophet Joel:

"In the last days, God says, I will pour out my Spirit on all people. Your sons and daughters will prophesy, your young men will see visions, your old men will dream dreams. Even on my servants, both men and women, I will pour out my Spirit in those days, and they will prophesy. I will show wonders in the heaven above and signs on the earth below, blood and fire and billows of smoke. The sun will be turned to darkness and the moon to blood before the coming of the great and glorious day of the Lord. And everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.'

**HYMN***“Holy Spirit, Light Divine”***Hymn 183**

Holy Spirit, Light divine, Shine upon this heart of mine;  
Chase the gloom of night away; Turn the darkness into day.

Holy Spirit, Love divine, Cleanse this guilty heart of mine;  
In your mercy pity me; From sin's bondage set me free.

Holy Spirit, Joy divine, Cheer this saddened heart of mine;  
Fill me with your heav'nly peace; Let it grow and still increase.

Holy Spirit, Pow'r divine, Dwell within this heart of mine;  
Cast down ev'ry idol throne; Reign supreme and reign alone.

See, to you I give my heart; Cleanse my life in ev'ry part;  
Your own temple I would be Now and for eternity.

**GOSPEL LESSON**

Matthew 6:25-33

“Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or drink; or about your body, what you will wear. Is not life more important than food, and the body more important than clothes? Look at the birds of the air; they do not sow or reap or store away in barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not much more valuable than they? Who of you by worrying can add a single hour to his life?

“And why do you worry about clothes? See how the lilies of the field grow. They do not labor or spin. Yet I tell you that not even Solomon in all his splendor was dressed like one of these. If that is how God clothes the grass of the field, which is here today and tomorrow is thrown into the fire, will he not much more clothe you, O you of little faith? So do not worry, saying, ‘What shall we eat?’ or ‘What shall we drink?’ or ‘What shall we wear?’ For the pagans run after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them. But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.

## 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.

## HYMN

*"Come, Holy Ghost, God and Lord"*

Hymn 176

Come, Holy Ghost, God and Lord! May all your graces be outpoured  
On each believer's mind and heart; Your fervent love to us impart.  
Lord, by the brightness of your light, In holy faith your church unite  
From ev'ry land and ev'ry tongue;  
This to your praise, O Lord our God, be sung: Alleluia! Alleluia!

Come, holy Light, Guide divine, And cause the Word of life to shine.  
Teach us to know our God aright And call him Father with delight.  
From ev'ry error keep us free; Let none but Christ our Master be  
That we in living faith abide,  
In him, our Lord, with all our might confide. Alleluia! Alleluia!

Come, holy Fire, Comfort true; Grant us the will your work to do  
And in your service to abide; Let trials turn us not aside.  
Lord, by your pow'r prepare each heart,  
And to our weakness strength impart  
That bravely here we may contend,  
Through life and death to you, our Lord, ascend. Alleluia! Alleluia!

“You can do whatever you set your mind to. You can be whomever you want to be. Be true to yourself. Grab hold of the world and make it your own.” You’ve heard those sounds and sayings of graduation, haven’t you?

But what do I have for you? Judgment and the end of the world - **“The sun will be turned to darkness and the moon to blood before the coming of the great and glorious day of the Lord.”** Let me add more from Peter, from his letters: **“The present heavens and earth are reserved for fire, being kept for the day of judgment and destruction of ungodly men.” “The day of the Lord will come like a thief. The heavens will disappear with a roar; the elements will be destroyed by fire, and the earth and everything in it will be laid bare.”**

Why would I say such a thing on Graduation Sunday, when I could be saying: “Be true to yourself; you can do ... you can be whatever you want; grab hold of the world and make it your own”? Why? Your most important Graduation, the most important step you take, the most important walk you walk isn’t a school Graduation. Your most important future isn’t found by being true to yourself or doing whatever you want or grabbing the world and making it your own. Your most important graduation, the most important step you take in life is your step from here to eternity, the most important walk you walk is your walk with Jesus. Why? Your most important future, your best future, is found with Jesus, living the Jesus’ life here and forever in heaven.

Success in the world might be part of your Jesus’ life, but success in the world won’t get you into heaven. Straight As might be part of your Jesus’ life, but straight As won’t make you right for heaven. Hell is packed with people who sold their soul for a day of success. Hell is packed with people who thought that their smarts and success were all they needed. So I’ll say it again: Your most important graduation, the most important step you take in life is your step from here to eternity, the most important walk you walk is your walk with Jesus.

Why? With Jesus, you have it made. Oh, life might still be hard, hurtful, painful. But with Jesus, you are a child of God, safe with God, with the best of heaven ahead of you forever. That means, when you’ve taken that step from here to eternity, from your first step with Jesus, you don’t have to live in fear and worry. You don’t have to live like your grades or your resume (good or not so good) determine who you are or what you’re worth. You don’t have to live like your successes or your failures determine who you are or what you’re worth. You don’t have to live like your friends or your Facebook Likes (I know, Facebook is so Boomer) ... you don’t have to live like your popularity determines who you are or what you’re worth. You don’t have to live like the cuteness of your online pictures determines who you are or what you’re worth. One more - You don’t

have to live like your feelings today - your happiness today, your sadness today, your love today, your pride today - ... you don't have to live like your feelings today determine who you are or what you're worth. You have something more real than your feelings, something bigger than your failures, something better than your successes, something bigger and better than today.

You have Jesus and all that Jesus brings to the table. In a world of chaos and trouble blowing all around, you have the Jesus who told the wind and the waves: "Quiet; be still" and just like that - quiet and still - he worked his peace and calm. In a world of sickness and death, you have the Jesus who can heal and make alive. He did it in the past; he's doing it today. In a world that can be so cruel and cold-hearted, you have the Jesus who reached out and touched the untouchable (I think of the man with leprosy); you have the Jesus who ate and drank with the rejects; the Jesus who made time for the unlovable. In a world of scammers and bullies - you've met some, haven't you? - you have the Jesus who stood up against Satan, the worst of the scammers and bullies, and he put Satan in his place. Your Jesus can deliver, make safe, and make right; and he does. But none of that would really matter if not for this - in a world of judging judges looking to cut you up and cut you down and push you all around if you don't think like they want you to think, you have the Jesus who heals and holds your heart and sets you right, not just for you, but sets you right for God and for heaven.

That is so key - because this world is facing judgment. No just the judgment of self-appointed judges writing and re-writing, defining and redefining right and wrong, love and hate, but this world is facing the judgment of the All-Powerful Creator who created this world to be a home where God and his people would show and share his love. But in so many ways this world has become home to hate and hurt and love twisted wrong. Instead of turning back to God, the world thinks the answer for that hate and hurt is to redefine right and wrong, to redefine love and hate, to reject God and who he created us to be. And it's not just the world out there, is it? We've fallen for the same lies; we've made the same excuses; we've tried to tell God how things should be. And for that, this world stands under judgment.

But the Jesus who quieted the storms and healed the sick, the Jesus who stood up to sin and Satan and put them in their place; the Jesus who reaches out to hold and to heal your hearts, that Jesus did something more. He stood in for you, for me, for the whole world. He stood in for us before the God to whom we have to give answer. First, he stood in for us living life the way God intends and demands; he stood in for us and earned for you a perfect report card - straight As from God. Then, he stood in for us at the cross. There God put on Jesus all our Fs, all our incompletes, all our wrong, all our sin and guilt. And there with his death Jesus paid the price to erase, wipe out, delete all we've done wrong. Follow the cross with Easter, and what do you get? With Jesus and his

death, you get to stand forgiven before God. With Jesus and his life, you get to stand right before God.

What does that get to mean for you? In this world of hurt and heartache, scammers and bullies, sickness and death, in this world under judgment, you can know this promise - **“Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.”**

Sounds good, doesn't it? But like on that first Pentecost, some people don't want to hear the wonderful works and promises of God. They mock; they ridicule; they reject. Don't let them mess with your graduation. And I don't just mean today. Every day is a graduation day. Every day with Jesus, we get to call the old day “done” and move on to a new day. Every day with his Spirit, we get to face the new day knowing we have God with us. Every day - good, bad, or ugly - we get to face the day and face the world knowing this - **“Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.”** Every day we get to know - we have a better day coming.

So don't settle for the empty sounds and sayings of graduation - “Be true to yourself. Do whatever you want. Be whomever you want. Grab hold of the world and make it your own.” Don't settle for that emptiness. You get to graduate with a better set of promises:

#### **A MEDLEY OF SCHOOL THEME VERSES**

M: Those who hope in the LORD will renew their strength.

C: **They will soar on wings like eagles;**

M: they will run and not grow weary,

C: **they will walk and not be faint.** (Isaiah 40:31~ 2012-2013)

M: I am strong for all things

C: **through Christ who strengthens me.** (Philippians 4:13 ~ 2014-2015)

M: Be kind and compassionate to one another,

C: **forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you.**

(Ephesians 4:32 ~ 2015-2016)

M: Do not be anxious about anything,

C: **but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving,**

**present your requests to God.**

(Philippians 4:6 ~ 2016-2017)

M: I have told you these things,  
 C: **so that in me you may have peace.**  
 M: In this world you will have trouble.  
 C: **But take heart! I have overcome the world.** (John 16:33 ~ 2017-2018)

M: So do not fear, for I am with you;  
 C: **do not be dismayed, for I am your God.**  
 M: I will strengthen you and help you;  
 C: **I will uphold you with my righteous right hand.** (Isaiah 41:10 ~ 2018-2019)

M: "Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened,  
 C: **and I will give you rest."** (Matthew 11:28 ~ 2019-2020)

M: "I know the plans I have for you," declares the Lord,  
 C: **"plans to prosper you and not to harm you,  
 plans to give you hope and a future."** (Jeremiah 29:11~ 2020-2021)

CHOIR

*"10,000 Reasons"*

*Refrain*

Bless the Lord, O my soul, worship his holy name.  
 Sing like never before, O my soul;  
 I'll worship your holy name.

The sun comes up, it's a new day dawning,  
 it's time to sing your song again.  
 Whatever may pass and whatever lies before me,  
 let me be singing when the evening comes.

*Refrain*

You're rich in love and you're slow to anger.  
 Your name is great and your heart is kind.  
 For all your goodness, I will keep on singing;  
 ten thousand reasons for my heart to find.

*Refrain*

And on that day when my strength is failing,  
 the end draws near and my time has come;  
 still my soul will sing your praise unending  
 ten thousand years and then forever more!

*Refrain*

## GRADUATION

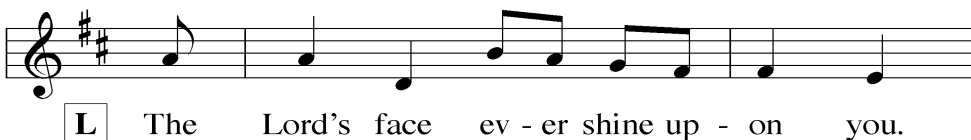
Jacob Gay  
Amelia Haak  
Tymbre Mirza  
Anna Roti

### PRAYER AND LORD'S PRAYER

**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.**

**M:** O Lord, our heavenly Father, almighty and everlasting God, you have brought us safely to this new day. Defend us with your mighty power, and grant that this day we neither fall into sin nor run into any kind of danger; and in all we do, direct us to what is right in your sight, through Jesus Christ, your Son, our Lord. Amen.

### BLESSING







**L** The Lord grant you peace for all your days.



**C** A - men.

## CLOSING HYMN

## *“Go, My Children, with My Blessing”*

Hymn 332

Go, my children with my blessing, Never alone.  
Waking, sleeping, I am with you; You are my own.  
In my love’s baptismal river I have made you mine forever.  
Go, my children, with my blessing— You are my own.

Go, my children, sins forgiven, At peace and pure.  
Here you learned how much I love you, What I can cure.  
Here you heard my dear Son’s story; Here you touched him, Saw his glory,  
Go, my children, sins forgiven, Joyful and free.

Go, my children, fed and nourished, Closer to me.  
Grow in love and love by serving, Joyful and free.  
Here my Spirit’s power filled you; Here his tender comfort stilled you.  
Go my children fed and nourished, Joyful and free.

I the Lord will bless and keep you And give you peace;  
I the Lord will smile upon you And give you peace;  
I the Lord will be your Father, Savior, Comforter, and Brother.  
Go, my children; I will keep you And give you peace.

## OFFERING

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**Morning Praise** *Texts revised from The Lutheran Hymnal, 1941. “Blessing,” “Come, Oh, Come, Let Us Sing to the Lord,”*

*Prayer Response, “You Are God; We Praise You” ...Marty Haugen. Text, Tune, Setting: © 1995, 1996 by GIA Publications, Inc.*

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