

**Come and Worship, Come and Worship.
Worship Christ the Newborn King!**

Dear Friends, as we move into our last days of Advent amidst the rising new Covid19 cases and hospitalizations, St. John's will now be requiring Pre-registration for our in-person worship services— an email with the link has been mailed, and the link will also be on our website. If you are unable to register through these sites, please call the church office. Also, we will broadcast all of our services on our St. John's Facebook page.

4th Sunday in Advent, December 20th

Worship at 9am—Fellowship Hall
(Outside Courtyard seating also available)
Worship in the Sanctuary at 11 am

Christmas Eve (December 24th)

**5:30 pm ~ Family Service with Communion and
Candlelight in the Courtyard**

This brief service will be geared toward families and those who want to worship outside. In the event of inclement weather, service will be moved to fellowship hall. Pre-registration required.

**7:30 and 10:30 pm ~ Candlelight Service with
Communion in the Sanctuary**

These traditional Christmas Eve services will be about 45 minutes and will require pre-registration. Each service will be limited to 50 worshippers. Pre-registration will begin on Monday, December 14.

**MASKS, SOCIAL DISTANCING, AND HAND SANITIZING
IS EXPECTED AT ALL SERVICES.**

*Note: This year in an effort toward safety, LED,
battery-operated candles will be used.*

St. John's Lutheran Church, ELCA

Walhalla, South Carolina
11 am Worship Service

The Third Sunday of Advent ~ December 13, 2020



Welcome to Worship at St. John's!

We are glad that you are with us today as we worship our Lord Jesus Christ. Life continues to "look different" than normal as we are taking precautions to keep everyone safe. Below are details about how we will share in our worship together.

1. Our worship will be an abbreviated form of Service of Word with Holy Communion.
2. Masks must be worn at all times while in the church.
3. Seating will be on every other pew — and we ask that you sit with your family members or with those you rode to church. Seating in the pews will be limited to 60 persons.
4. Hands should be sanitized upon entrance to the building.
5. Please follow the direction of ushers and staff as you enter through the Church Street door.
6. Communion will be celebrated in the pews using prefilled Communion/Fellowship cups.
7. Offering can be given in the baskets provided at the front of the church before and after worship. The offering plates will not be passed during worship.
8. The fellowship hall will be closed.
9. As worship concludes, we ask that you move directly outside and avoid lingering to visit.
10. If you have any questions, please speak to an usher, staff member, or Pastor Rachel.

+++ Please be courteous and respectful. Please turn off all electronic devices during worship .+++

Poinsettia Order Form

Your Name: _____ Your Phone Number: _____

Circle One, Honor or Memory of: _____

Circle One, Honor or Memory of: _____

Circle One, Honor or Memory of: _____

Cost per plant is \$10.00. Amount per order form: _____

Please return this form and a check to the Church Office **by December 13.**



December 13, 2020 ~ Third Sunday of Advent

“Rejoice always,” begins the reading from First Thessalonians. Isaiah and the psalmist make clear that God is turning our mourning into laughter and shouts of joy. “All God’s children got a robe,” go the words of the spiritual. It is not so much a stately, formal, pressed outfit as it is a set of party clothes, clothes that make us feel happy just to put on. We receive that robe in baptism, and in worship we gather for a foretaste of God’s party.

WE GATHER

PRELUDE

WELCOME AND MINISTRY ANNOUNCEMENTS

GATHERING HYMN *“O Come, O Come Emmanuel” - 3 verses ELW 257*
(Hum along or Sing in your Heart)

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

P Blessed be God, Father, † Son, and Holy Spirit, whose forgiveness is sure and whose steadfast love endures forever. **C Amen.**
Together let us honestly and humbly confess that we have not lived as God desires.

You may remain seated or kneel for the Confession

P Loving and forgiving God, **we confess that we are held captive by sin. In spite of our best efforts, we have gone astray. We have not welcomed the stranger; we have not loved our neighbor; we have not been Christ to one another. Restore us, O God. Wake us up and turn us from our sin. Renew us each day in the light of Christ. Amen.**

People of God, hear this glad news: by God’s endless grace your sins are forgiven, and you are free—free from all that holds you back and free to live in the peaceable realm of God. May you be strengthened in God’s love, † comforted by Christ’s peace, and accompanied with the power of the Holy Spirit. **C Amen.**

THE GREETING

P The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all. **C And also with you.**

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Serving Today

Pastor: The Rev. Dr. Rachel Connelly
Assisting Minister: Andrea Carlson
Musician: Deb Blackmore
Door Greeter: Duane Carlson
Sacristy Ushers: Joan Lewis, Shonda Mahler
Technology: Mike Goyne and Ray Burroughs
Altar Guild: Beverly Hardin

St. John’s Staff

The Reverend Dr. Rachel Connelly, Pastor
Tom Ward, Congregational President
Andrea Carlson, Administrative Assistant
Joan Lewis, Spiritual Gifts Coordinator
Ray Burroughs, Biggerstaff Resident Director
Judi Matalik, SJ Preschool Director
Patty Shepard, Youth Director
Tiffany Chapman, Children’s Ministry Coordinator

Appointed by Congregation Council

Chuck Rawlins, Treasurer
Mark McLean, Financial Secretary

St. John’s Lutheran Church

301 W. Main Street Walhalla, SC (864)638-6363

Email: stjohnsluther@gmail.com Website: stjohnswalhalla.org
Facebook — St. John’s Lutheran, Walhalla

Pastor Rachel’s contact information: stjohnspastorrachel@gmail.com
cell phone (910) 515-0897

THE MEAL

Upon entering worship today you were given a communion/fellowship cup. As the pastor shares in the Words of Institution and consecrates the elements, you will be invited to peel back the seal on the cup and partake of the bread and wine.

MUSICAL INTERLUDE

THE WORDS OF INSTITUTION

THE PARTAKING OF COMMUNION

THE PASTORAL BLESSING

THE LORD'S PRAYER

THE POST COMMUNION PRAYER

A Let us pray: Gracious and abundant God, you have done great things for us, and we rejoice. In this bread and cup you give us life forever. In your boundless mercy, strengthen us and open our hearts to the world's needs, for the sake of Jesus Christ, our Lord. **C Amen**

SENDING

THE BLESSING

P The Creator of the stars bless your Advent waiting, the long-expected Savior fill you with love, the unexpected Spirit guide your journey, ☩ now and forever. **C Amen.**

SENDING HYMN / POSTLUDE *"People, Look East"* *Deb Blackmore*
Text: Eleanor Farjeon, 1881-1965
Music: French carol; arr. Barry Rose, b. 1934

DISMISSAL

A Go in peace. Prepare the way of the Lord.
C Thanks be to God.

THE PRAYER OF THE DAY

P Stir up the wills of your faithful people, Lord God, and open our ears to the words of your prophets, that, anointed by your Spirit, we may testify to your light; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C Amen.

LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT CANDLE

"Light One Candle to Watch for Messiah" (Verse 1-3) ELW 240

ADVENT 3 PRAYER

We praise you, O God, for this victory wreath that marks our days of preparation for Christ's advent. As we light the candles on this wreath, strengthen our hearts as we await the Lord's coming in glory. Enlighten us with your grace, that we may serve our neighbors in need. Grant this through Christ our Lord, whose coming is certain and whose day draws near. **C Amen.**

YOUTH AND CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

Dottie Brandt

FIRST READING: Isaiah 61:1-4, 8-11

¹The spirit of the Lord GOD is upon me, because the LORD has anointed me; he has sent me to bring good news to the oppressed, to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and release to the prisoners;

²to proclaim the year of the LORD's favor, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all who mourn;

³to provide for those who mourn in Zion— to give them a garland instead of ashes, the oil of gladness instead of mourning, the mantle of praise instead of a faint spirit. They will be called oaks of righteousness, the planting of the LORD, to display his glory.

⁴They shall build up the ancient ruins, they shall raise up the former devastations; they shall repair the ruined cities, the devastations of many generations.

⁸For I the LORD love justice, I hate robbery and wrongdoing; I will faithfully give them their recompense, and I will make an everlasting covenant with them.

⁹Their descendants shall be known among the nations, and their offspring among the peoples; all who see them shall acknowledge that they are a people whom the LORD has blessed.

¹⁰I will greatly rejoice in the LORD, my whole being shall exult in my God; for he has clothed me with the garments of salvation, he has covered me with the robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decks himself with a garland, and as a bride adorns herself with her jewels.

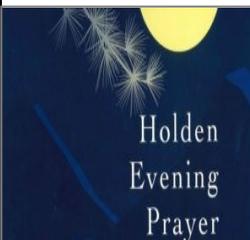
¹¹For as the earth brings forth its shoots, and as a garden causes what is sown in it to spring up, so the Lord God LORD GOD will cause righteousness and praise to spring up before all the nations.

Mid-Week ADVENT SERVICES

**Wednesday, December 16th at 7:00 pm on
FACEBOOK LIVE**

Holden Evening Prayer

Holden Evening Prayer is a liturgical setting written by Marty Haugen. This lovely service of vespers follows the traditional form while using contemporary and inclusive language. It is perfect pause during Advent to focus on the light of Christ coming into the world.



PSALM 126

¹When the LORD restored the fortunes of Zion, then were we like those who dream.

²**Then was our mouth filled with laughter, and our tongue with shouts of joy. Then they said among the nations, “The LORD has done great things for them.”**

³The LORD has done great things for us, and we are glad indeed.

⁴**Restore our fortunes, O LORD, like the watercourses of the Negeb.**

⁵Those who sowed with tears will reap with songs of joy.

⁶**Those who go out weeping, carrying the seed, will come again with joy, shouldering their sheaves.**

1 THESSALONIANS 5:16-24

¹⁶Rejoice always, ¹⁷pray without ceasing, ¹⁸give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you. ¹⁹Do not quench the Spirit. ²⁰Do not despise the words of prophets, ²¹but test everything; hold fast to what is good; ²²abstain from every form of evil.

²³May the God of peace himself sanctify you entirely; and may your spirit and soul and body be kept sound and blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. ²⁴The one who calls you is faithful, and he will do this.

A The Word of the Lord. C Thanks be to God.

Please stand as you are able for the reading of the Gospel.

THE GOSPEL ACCLAMATION *(Spoken)*

“Alleluia, Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life. Alleluia”

THE HOLY GOSPEL ACCORDING TO JOHN 1:6-8, 19-28

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

¹⁹This is the testimony given by John when the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, “Who are you?” ²⁰He confessed and did not deny it, but confessed, “I am not the Messiah.” ²¹And they asked him, “What then?

Are you Elijah?” He said, “I am not.” “Are you the prophet?” He answered, “No.” ²²Then they said to him, “Who are you? Let us have an answer for those who sent us. What do you say about yourself?” ²³He said,

“I am the voice of one crying out in the wilderness,
‘Make straight the way of the Lord,’ ”

as the prophet Isaiah said.

²⁴Now they had been sent from the Pharisees. ²⁵They asked him, “Why then are you baptizing if you are neither the Messiah, nor Elijah, nor the prophet?” ²⁶John answered them, “I baptize with water. Among you stands one whom you do not know, ²⁷the one who is coming after me; I am not worthy to untie the thong of his sandal.” ²⁸This took place in Bethany across the Jordan where John was baptizing.

P The Gospel of the Lord. C Praise to you, O Christ.

SERMON

The Reverend Dr. Rachel Connelly

HYMN OF RESPONSE

*“Joy to the World”
(Hum along or Sing in your heart)*

ELW 267

Joy to the World

1 Joy to the world, the Lord is come!
Let earth receive her king;
let ev'ry heart prepare him room
and heav'n and nature sing,
and heav'n and nature sing,
and heav'n, and heav'n and nature sing.

3 No more let sin and sorrow grow
nor thorns infest the ground;
he comes to make his blessings flow
far as the curse is found,
far as the curse is found,
far as, far as the curse is found.

Text: Isaac Watts, 1674-1748

2 Joy to the earth, the Savior reigns!
Let all their songs employ,
while fields and floods,
rocks, hills, and plains
repeat the sounding joy,
repeat the sounding joy,
repeat, repeat the sounding joy.

THE APOSTLES' CREED

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

I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord. He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary. He suffered under Pontius Pilate and was crucified, died, and was buried. He descended into hell. On the third day he rose again. He ascended into heaven, and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again to judge the living and the dead.

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

THE PRAYERS OF THE CHURCH

After each petition of prayer—Hear us, O God. Your mercy is great.

THE OFFERTORY PRAYER

A Generous God, you have created all that is, and you provide for us in every season. Bless all that we offer, that through these gifts the world will receive your blessing. In the name of Jesus, Emmanuel, we pray. **C Amen.**