

The Bell Tower— Ministry News



Come and Worship, Come and Worship.

Worship Christ the Newborn King!

Dear Friends, as we move through the Sundays of Christmas amidst the rising new Covid19 cases and hospitalizations, St. John's has suspended in-person worship services— for the next two Sundays.

We will broadcast all of our services on our Facebook page—StJohn's Lutheran Church, Walhalla

Sunday's after Christmas

Sunday, December 27

Worship of Lessons and Carols

Online Only—Posted at 10:00 am on FB

Sunday, January 3

2nd Sunday after Christmas

Online Only Worship, Live at 10:00 am on FB



~~ Welcome ~~

St. John's Lutheran Church, ELCA

Walhalla, South Carolina



The Nativity of Our Lord
Christmas Eve

December 24, 2020

7:30 pm and 10:30 pm Worship Services

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. Masks must be worn at all times while in the church.
2. Seating will be on every other pew — and we ask that you sit with your family members or with those you came with. Seating in the pews will be limited to 50 persons.
3. Hands should be sanitized upon entrance to the building.
4. Communion will be celebrated in the pews using prefilled Communion/Fellowship cups.
5. Offerings can be given in the baskets provided at the front of the church before and after worship.
6. The fellowship hall will be closed.
7. As worship concludes, we ask that you move directly outside and avoid lingering to visit.

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

St. John's Lutheran Church Christmas Eve Worship

7:30pm and 10:30pm

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On a long winter evening we gather to proclaim the coming of the light. Isaiah announces that the people who walked in darkness have seen a great light. Paul reminds us that the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all. In the familiar account of Christ's birth, the evening sky is bright with the heavenly host singing, "Glory to God in the highest." Amid our broken world we proclaim that the Prince of peace is born among us. God comes to us in human flesh—in Christ's body and blood—so that we may be bearers of divine light to all the world.

WELCOME

PRELUDE

Grace Lichtenwald

GATHERING HYMN

"O Come, All Ye Faithful"

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1 O come, all ye faithful,
joyful and triumphant!
O come ye, O come ye to Bethlehem;
come and behold him,
born the king of angels: | 2 The highest, most holy,
light of light eternal,
born of a virgin, a mortal he comes;
Son of the Father
now in flesh appearing! <i>Refrain</i> |
|--|---|

Refrain

*O come, let us adore him,
O come, let us adore him,
O come, let us adore him,
Christ the Lord!*

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

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

Leader: We gather on this Holy Night in the name of the Father, and the Son, and the holy Trinity, one God, whose mercy endures forever.

People: Amen.

Leader: Amidst the darkness of this world, let us confess our sin and welcome the light of God's forgiveness.

Silence is kept for reflection.

People: God of grace and truth, in Christ Jesus you come among us as light shining in the darkness. We confess that we have not welcomed the light, nor trusted in the good news of great joy. Forgive us and renew our hope, so that we may live in the fullness of your love, trusting in the grace of Christ our Lord. Amen.

Leader: The angel said, you shall call his name Jesus for he will save his people from their sins. With great joy, I announce to you the entire forgiveness of your sins, in the name of the Father, and of the + Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

People: Amen.

SPECIAL MUSIC

"What Child is This"

Flute Duet

Poinsettias in our worship space are given to the glory of God this season by:

Richard and Connie Addis

In memory of Mr. and Mrs. Ernest Addis and Mr. and Mrs. Greever Derrick

Ron and Debra Blackmore

In memory of Mr. and Mrs. William L. Monts and Mr. and Mrs. Nathan Blackmore
In honor of their children: William and Judy Blackmore; April and Kelly Edwards, Owen and Lucas; Stephen and Amanda Blackmore

Pastor Rachel Connelly and Mike Goyne and family

In honor of our St. John's family

Pastor Rachel Connelly and Mike Goyne and family

In memory of members of St. John's who have died this year: Paul Cantrell, Rudy Nothdurft, Duane Cooley, George Brandt, Eddie Lichtenwald, Hannelore McChesney, Lib Seigler, Dwight Baldus, Bob Johnson, Jean Pittman, Gloria Shealy, Sally Flodin, and Ann Sloan

Dean and Anne Fogel

In memory of Bob Johnson, Lib Seigler and Jean Pittman

Fredi Hallman

In memory of Harvey Hallman

Millie Hawbecker

In memory of John A. Hawbecker, the John Hawbecker family, the Sutton family

Grace Lichtenwald

To the Glory of God and in memory of my beloved husband Eddie Lichtenwald and parents, Lewis and Gladys Combs and Edward and Martha Lichtenwald

Shonda Mahler

In memory of her husband, Patrick

Mark and Libby McLean

In memory of their parents

Sheila Niemeyer

In honor of Gloria Shealy Circle

Albert Pittman

In memory of Jean Pittman

Chuck and Diane Rawlins

In honor of their children and grandchildren, and in memory of their parents

Paul and Barbara Wilson

In memory of J.B. and Marie Dilworth and June Edwards



SENDING HYMN

“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.

DISMISSAL

A Go in Peace. Share the gift of Jesus.

C **Thanks be to God.**

POSTLUDE

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THANK YOU FOR WORSHIPING WITH US!

WE WISH YOU THE GIFT OF FAITH, THE BLESSING OF HOPE
AND THE PEACE OF HIS LOVE AT THIS CHRISTMAS SEASON
AND INTO THE NEW YEAR!



Thanks to the following for sharing their talents and gifts during this festive season!

Organist: Grace Lichtenwald

Flute: Grace Lichtenwald and Ellen Bell

Soloist: Catie Devoe Fisher and Accompanist: Jamie Gibson (7:30pm)

Bell Ringers: Deb Blackmore Brenda Safrit, Barbara Wilson, Jeri Klaren (7:30pm)

Guitars and Vocals: Ray Burroughs and Faith Goyne

Technology Support: Mike Goyne, Jesse Goyne, and Ray Burroughs

Pastor—The Rev. Dr. Rachel Connelly

7:30 pm

10:30 pm

Lay Assistant

Jan Long

Craig Schumacher

Acolyte

Duane Carlson

Craig Schumacher

Ushers

Shonda Mahler, Joan Lewis

Tina Barrett, Joan Lewis

THE LIGHTING OF THE CHRIST CANDLE PRAYER

P Good news, you who are weary and heavy burdened! Sing for great joy, you who are tired and shackled with pain! For the Lord, our Redeemer, has come!

Light the Christ Candle

We Light the Christ candle as a sign to the world that today, in the City of David, a Savior is born, who is Christ the Lord. We no longer have to fear the darkness for our Light has come. That light that enlightens all people has broken into our world. And the world will never be the same again.

C **Alleluia! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Amen.**

THE WORD

OLD TESTAMENT READING

Isaiah 9:2-7

²The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who lived in a land of deep darkness— on them light has shined. ³You 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. ⁴For 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. ⁵For all the boots of the tramping warriors and all the garments rolled in blood shall be burned as fuel for the fire. ⁶For 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. ⁷His 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.

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

SPECIAL MUSIC

“I Wonder as I Wander” (7:30pm) *Catie Devoe Fisher, Mezzo Soprano Soloist*
Jamie Gibson, Accompanist

“Mary Did You Know” (10:30pm) *Faith Goyne and Ray Burroughs*

THE GOSPEL ANNOUNCEMENT

P The Holy Gospel according to the St. Luke, the second chapter. C **Glory to you, O Lord**

THE CHRISTMAS GOSPEL:

St. Luke 2:1-20

¹In those days a decree went out from Emperor Augustus that all the world should be registered. ²This was the first registration and was taken while Quirinius was governor of Syria. ³All went to their own towns to be registered. ⁴Joseph 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. ⁵He went to be registered with Mary, to whom he was engaged and who was expecting a child. ⁶While they were there, the time came for her to deliver her child. ⁷And 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.

⁸In that region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. ⁹Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. ¹⁰But the angel said to them, “Do not be afraid; for see—I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: ¹¹to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord. ¹²This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger.” ¹³And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying, ¹⁴“Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace among those whom he favors!”

¹⁵When 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.” ¹⁶So they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the child lying in the manger. ¹⁷When they saw this, they made known what had been told them about this child; ¹⁸and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds told them. ¹⁹But Mary treasured all these words and pondered them in her heart. ²⁰The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them.

HOMILY

The Rev. Dr. Rachel Connelly

HYMN OF RESPONSE

“Hark the Herald Angels Sing”*(Bell Ringers 7:30pm)*

1 Hark! The herald angels sing,
"Glory to the newborn king;
peace on earth, and mercy mild,
God and sinners reconciled."
Joyful, all you nations, rise;
join the triumph of the skies;
with angelic hosts proclaim,
"Christ is born in Bethlehem!"

3 Hail the heav'n-born Prince of peace!
Hail the Sun of righteousness!
Light and life to all he brings,
ris'n with healing in his wings.
Mild he lays his glory by,
born that we no more may die,
born to raise each child of earth,
born to give us second birth. *Refrain*

Refrain

Hark! The herald angels sing,
"Glory to the newborn king!"

Text: Charles Wesley, 1707-1788, alt.

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.

The Prayers of the Church

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

MUSICAL INTERLUDE

“Away in the Manger”

*(7:30pm Bell Ringers)
(10:30pm Flute Duet)*

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.

OFFERTORY PRAYER

A Let us pray. Gracious God, you came to us as one unknown, bringing joy and salvation to the earth. Nourish us at your banquet table, that with all who welcome your birth we may proclaim your peace, revealed in Jesus Christ, our Savior. **Amen.**

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.**

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



THE CANDLE LIGHTING SERVICE

For the candle lighting the congregation will stand in silence as the church is darkened. As the Pastor lights (turns on) the candle, the congregation is invited to light (turn on) their candle. During the candle lighting, the congregation will sing Silent Night, beginning very softly and increasing as the light shines more brightly. As the carol reaches its climax, the congregation is invited to raise their candles.

HYMN

“Silent Night”*Bell Ringers and Flutes (7:30pm)*

1 Silent night, holy night!
All is calm, all is bright
round yon virgin mother and child.
Holy Infant, so tender and mild,
sleep in heavenly peace,
sleep in heavenly peace.

2 Silent night, holy night!
Shepherds quake at the sight;
glories stream from heaven afar,
heav'nly hosts sing, alleluia!
Christ, the Savior, is born!
Christ, the Savior, is born!

3 Silent night, holy night!
Son of God, love's pure light
radiant beams from your holy face,
with the dawn of redeeming grace,
Jesus, Lord, at your birth,
Jesus, Lord, at your birth.

Text: Joseph Mohr, 1792-1849; tr. John F. Young, 1820-1885

LESSON OF LIGHT:

John 1:1-14

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. In him was life, and the life was the light of all people. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it. There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. He came as a witness to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him. He himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light. The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world. He was in the world, and the world came into being through him; yet the world did not know him. He came to what was his own, and his own people did not accept him. But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God, who were born, not of blood or of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God. And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of the Father's only Son, full of grace and truth.

CLOSING PRAYER AND BENEDICTION

P Grace from God’s own heart, peace from the + Child in the manger, and strength from the Spirit of life be blessings for you today and forever. **Amen.**