

Welcome! We are happy to share God's peace with everyone. Visitors are invited to sign our guest book in the entryway. If you have any questions, the ushers are ready to help. Feel free to visit after the service.

- Aids to assist with hearing (Williams Sound System) are available from the ushers.
- Printed copies of the sermon are available on the tract desk.
- Large Pring Service binders can be found on the tract desk.
- For a personal preparation for Holy Communion, please see pages 295-296 in your hymnal.

Please note: the Sunday service is being recorded and streamed on

[YouTube. www.youtube.com/@stlukesvassar](https://www.youtube.com/@stlukesvassar)

Our Lord teaches in his Word that in Communion we receive Jesus' true body and blood in, with, and under the bread and wine, and that participation is also a declaration that we believe what our fellow communicants believe. In obedience to God's Word, then, we ask that only those who agree on all points of teaching—those who belong to a WELS or ELS church—and are confirmed partake in the Lord's Supper today. If you are not a member of a WELS or ELS church but

would like to pursue that unity of faith, or if you have questions, please speak with Pastor.

Setting 3, pg. 188

305 Lift Up Your Heads, You Mighty Gates

CW 305

- 1 Lift up your heads, you mighty gates!
Behold, the King of glory waits.
The King of kings is drawing near;
the Savior of the world is here.
Life and salvation he will bring;
therefore rejoice and gladly sing.
To God the Father raise
your joyful songs of praise.
- 2 The King is born in poverty,
his chariot is humility,
his kingly crown is holiness,
his scepter, pity in distress.
The end of all our woe he brings;
therefore the earth is glad and sings.
To Christ the Savior raise
your grateful hymns of praise.
- 3 How blest the land, the city blest,
where Christ the ruler is confessed!
O peaceful hearts and happy homes
to whom this King in triumph comes!

The cloudless sun of joy is he
 who comes to set his people free.
 To God the Spirit raise
 your happy shouts of praise.

4 Fling wide the gates; prepare your heart
 to be a temple set apart
 from earthly use for heav'n's employ,
 adorned with prayer and love and joy.
 So shall your Sov'reign enter in
 and new and nobler life begin.
 To God alone be praise
 for word and deed and grace!

Please rise for the final stanza

5 Redeemer, come! I open wide
 my heart to you; here, Lord, abide!
 O enter with your saving grace;
 show me your kind and friendly face.
 Your Holy Spirit guide us on
 until our glorious goal is won.
 Eternal praise and fame
 we offer to your name.

Text: tr. Catherine Winkworth, 1827–1878, alt.; Georg Weissel, 1590–1635

Text: Public domain

(Stand)

In the name of the Father and of the † Son and of the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

Confession

CW 188

If we claim to be without sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us.

If we confess our sins, God is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.

Let us confess our sins to the Lord.

Holy God, gracious Father,

I am sinful by nature

and have sinned against you in my thoughts, words, and actions.

I have not loved you with my whole heart;

I have not loved others as I should.

I deserve your punishment both now and forever.

But Jesus, my Savior, paid for my sins

with his innocent suffering and death.

Trusting in him, I pray: God, have mercy on me, a sinner.

(Silence for meditation and reflection)

Our gracious Father in heaven has been merciful to us. He sent his only Son, Jesus Christ, who gave his life as the atoning sacrifice for the sins of the whole world. Therefore, as a called servant of Christ and by his authority, I forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the † Son and of the Holy Spirit.
Amen.

Lord, Have Mercy

CW 190

In peace let us pray to the Lord.

Lord, have mercy.

For the peace from above and for our salvation, let us pray to the Lord.

Lord, have mercy.

For the peace of the whole world, for the well-being of the Church of God, and for the unity of all, let us pray to the Lord.

Lord, have mercy.

For this holy house and for all who offer here their worship and praise, let us pray to the Lord.

Lord, have mercy.

Help, save, comfort, and defend us, gracious Lord.

Amen.

Glory to God in the Highest

CW 191

Refrain: Glory to God in the highest, glory to God, and peace to his people on earth, and peace to his people on earth.

Lord God, heavenly King, almighty God and Father, we worship you, we give you thanks, we praise you for your glory.

Lord Jesus Christ, only Son of the Father, Lord God, Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world; have mercy on us. You are seated at the right hand of the Father; receive our prayer.

For you alone are the Holy One, you alone are the Lord, you alone are the Most High, Jesus Christ, with the Holy Spirit in the glory of God the Father. Amen. *Refrain*

THE WORD

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Prayer of the Day

Let us pray.

Hear our prayers, Lord Jesus Christ, and come with the good news of your mighty deliverance. Drive the darkness from our hearts, and fill us with your light; for you live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Amen.

(Be seated)

First Reading

Zephaniah 3:14–17

¹⁴Sing out, daughter of Zion! Shout aloud, Israel! Be glad and rejoice with all your heart, you daughter of Jerusalem. ¹⁵The LORD has removed the judgment against you. He has turned back your enemy. Israel's king, the LORD, is in your midst! You no longer need to fear disaster. ¹⁶In that day Jerusalem will be told, "Do not be afraid, O Zion. Do not give up. ¹⁷The LORD your God is with you as a hero who will save you. He takes great delight in you. He will quiet you with his love. He will rejoice over you with singing."

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

130 Remember Your Mercy, O LORD*Psalm 130****Refrain*****Remember your mercy, O LORD; remember your mercy and love.**

Out of the depths I cry to / you, LORD;

Lord, / hear my voice.

Let your ears be at- / tentive

to my cry for / mercy.

If you, LORD, kept a record of sins, Lord, / who could stand?

But with you there is forgiveness, so that we can, with reverence, / serve you. *Refrain*I wait for the LORD, my whole / being waits,
and in his word I / put my hope.

I wait for the Lord more than watchmen wait for the / morning,

more than watchmen wait for the / morning.

Israel, put your hope / in the LORD,

for with the LORD is unfailing love and with him is full re- / demption.

He himself will redeem / Israel

from / all their sins.

**Glory be to the Father and / to the Son
and to the Holy / Spirit,**

as it was in the be- / ginning,
is now, and will be forever. / Amen. *Refrain*

Second Reading

Philippians 4:4–7

⁴Rejoice in the Lord always! I will say it again: Rejoice! ⁵Let your gentleness be known to everyone. The Lord is near. ⁶Do not worry about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God. ⁷And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

The Word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.
(Stand)

Gospel Acclamation

Matthew 11:10



Refrain



Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia!



Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia!

Tone

I will send my messenger a - head of you,
 who will prepare your way be - fore you.

Refrain

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Gospel

Luke 3:7–18

⁷So John kept saying to the crowds who came out to be baptized by him, “You offspring of vipers, who warned you to flee from the coming wrath? ⁸Therefore produce fruits in keeping with repentance! Do not even think of saying to yourselves, ‘We have Abraham as our father,’ because I tell you that God is able to raise up children for Abraham from these stones. ⁹Even now the ax is ready to strike the root of the trees. So every tree that does not produce good fruit is going to be cut down and thrown into the fire.”

¹⁰The crowds began to ask him, “What should we do then?”

¹¹He answered them, “Whoever has two shirts should share with the person who has none, and whoever has food should do the same.”

¹²Tax collectors also came to be baptized. They said, “Teacher, what should we do?”

¹³To them he said, “Collect no more than what you were authorized to.”

¹⁴Soldiers were also asking him, “And what should we do?”

He told them, “Do not extort money from anyone by force or false accusation. Be satisfied with your wages.”

¹⁵The people were waiting expectantly and were all wondering in their hearts if John might be the Christ.

¹⁶John answered them all, “I baptize you with water. But someone mightier than I is coming. I am not worthy to untie the strap of his sandals. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. ¹⁷His winnowing shovel is in his hand, and he will thoroughly clean out his threshing floor. He will gather the wheat into his barn, but he will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire.” ¹⁸Then with many other words, he appealed to them and was preaching good news to the people.

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise be to you, O Christ!

(Be seated)

324 O Lord, How Shall I Meet You

- 1 O Lord, how shall I meet you,
how welcome you aright?
Your people long to greet you,
my hope, my heart's delight.
O Jesus, let your Word be
a lamp to light my way,
to show me how to please you,
to guide me ev'ry day.
- 2 Love caused your incarnation;
love brought you down to me.
Your thirst for my salvation
procured my liberty.
Oh, love beyond all telling
that led you to embrace
in love, all love excelling,
our lost and fallen race!
- 3 Rejoice, then, you sad-hearted,
who sit in deepest gloom,
who mourn o'er joys departed
and tremble at your doom.
Despair not; he is near you,
he's standing at the door
who best can help and cheer you
and bids you weep no more.

4 Sin's debt, that fearful burden,
 let not your souls distress;
 your guilt the Lord will pardon
 and cover by his grace.

He comes, for you procuring
 the peace of sin forgiv'n,
 his children thus securing
 eternal life in heav'n.

5 He comes to judge the nations,
 a terror to his foes,
 a light of consolation
 and blessed hope to those
 who love the Lord's appearing.

O glorious Sun, now come,
 send forth your beams most cheering,
 and guide us safely home.

Text: tr. composite; Paul Gerhardt, 1607–1676, D. M. Luther's ... Geistliche Lieder, Berlin, 1653, abr.
 Text: Public domain

Sermon

Luke 3:7-18

Live an Advent Life

I. It's not optional (7-9)

II. Love your neighbor (10-14)

III. Love your Savior (15-18)

(Stand)

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 in unity with the Father and the Son
is worshiped and glorified,
who has spoken through the prophets.**

**We believe in one holy Christian 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.**

(Be seated)

**Prayer of the Church
Offering**

THE SACRAMENT

(Stand)

Preface

The Lord be with you.

CW 199

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them up to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give him thanks and praise.

It is truly good and right that we should at all times and in all places give you thanks, O Lord, holy Father, almighty and everlasting God, through Jesus Christ our Lord, whose way John the Baptist prepared when he called people to repentance and pointed to Jesus as the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world.

Therefore, with all the saints on earth and hosts of heaven, we praise your holy name and join their glorious song:

Holy, Holy, Holy

CW 200

Holy, holy, holy Lord God of hosts,
heaven and earth are full, full of your glory.

Hosanna, hosanna in the highest.

Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.

Hosanna, hosanna in the highest.

Hosanna, hosanna in the highest.

Prayer of Thanksgiving

Blessed are you, Lord God, eternal King and gracious Father. In love you made us the crown of your creation. In mercy you planned our salvation. In grace you sent your Son to redeem us from sin.

We remember and give you thanks that your eternal Son, Jesus Christ, became flesh and made his dwelling among us, that he willingly placed himself under law to redeem those under law, that he humbled himself by becoming obedient to death on a cross, that he has destroyed death and has brought life and immortality to light through the gospel.

Bless us as we receive your Son's body and blood in this Sacrament. Forgive our sins, increase our faith, strengthen our fellowship, and deepen our longing for the day when Christ will welcome us to his eternal feast. Praise and thanks and honor and glory be to you, O God our Father, and to your Son and to the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Amen.

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.**

Words of Institution

Our Lord Jesus Christ, on the night he was betrayed, took bread; and when he had given thanks, he broke it and gave it to his disciples, saying, “Take and eat; this is my † body, which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me.”

Then he took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, “Drink from it, all of you; this is my † blood of the new covenant, which is poured out for you for the forgiveness of sins. Do this, whenever you drink it, in remembrance of me.”

The peace of the Lord be with you always.

Amen.

Lamb of God

CW 202

Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world; have mercy on us.

Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world; have mercy on us.

Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world; grant us, grant us peace.

(Be seated)

Distribution

(As he distributes the elements, the minister says to the communicants:)

Take and eat; this is the true body of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, given into death for your sins.

Take and drink; this is the true blood of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, poured out for the forgiveness of your sins.

(As he dismisses the communicants, the minister says:)

The true body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen and preserve you to life everlasting. Go † in peace.

Amen.

493 Rejoice, Rejoice, Believers

CW 493

- 1 Rejoice, rejoice, believers,
 and let your lights appear;
 the evening is advancing,
 and darker night is near.
 The Bridegroom is arising
 and soon is drawing nigh.
 Up, pray and watch and wrestle;
 at midnight comes the cry.
- 2 The watchers on the mountain
 proclaim the Bridegroom near;
 go forth, as he approaches,
 with alleluias clear.
 The marriage feast is waiting;
 the gates wide open stand.
 Arise, O heirs of glory;
 the Bridegroom is at hand.
- 3 You saints, who here in patience
 your cross and sufferings bore,
 shall live and reign forever
 when sorrow is no more.
 Around the throne of glory
 the Lamb you shall behold,
 in triumph lay before him
 your shining crowns of gold.

4 Our hope and expectation,
 O Jesus, now appear;
 arise, O Sun so longed for,
 above this shadowed sphere.
 With hearts and hands uplifted
 we plead, O Lord, to see
 the day of earth's redemption
 that sets your people free.

Text: tr. Sarah B. Findlater, 1823–1907, alt.; Laurentius Laurenti, 1660–1722, abr.
 Text: Public domain

307 When the King Shall Come Again CW 307

- 1 When the King shall come again,
 all his pow'r revealing,
 splendor shall announce his reign,
 life and joy and healing,
 earth no longer in decay,
 hope no more frustrated.
 This is God's redemption day
 longingly awaited.

- 2 In the desert trees take root,
 fresh from his creation;
 plants and flow'rs and sweetest fruit
 join the celebration.
 Rivers spring up from the earth,

barren lands adorning.

Valleys, this is your new birth;
mountains, greet the morning!

3 Strengthen feeble hands and knees,
fainting hearts be cheerful!

God, who comes for such as these,
seeks and saves the fearful.

Deaf ears, hear the silent tongues
sing away their weeping;
blind eyes, see the lifeless ones
walking, running, leaping.

4 There God's highway shall be seen
where no roaring lion,
nothing evil or unclean
walks the road to Zion.

Ransomed people, homeward bound,
all your praises voicing,
see your Lord with glory crowned;
share in his rejoicing!

Text: Christopher M. Idle, b. 1938
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(Stand)

Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good;
his mercy endures forever.

Whenever we eat this bread and drink this cup,
we proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.

O God the Father, source of all goodness, in your loving-kindness you sent your Son to share our humanity. We thank you that through him you have given us pardon and peace in this Sacrament. We also pray that you will not forsake us but will rule our hearts and minds by your Holy Spirit so that we willingly serve you day after day; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.
Amen.

Blessing

The Lord bless you and keep you.

The Lord make his face shine on you and be gracious to you.

The Lord look on you with favor and ✠ give you peace.

Amen.

314 O Savior, Rend the Heavens Wide

CW 314

1 O Savior, rend the heavens wide;
 come down, come down with mighty stride.

Unlock the gates, the doors break down;
unbar the way to heaven's crown.

2 O Morning Star, O radiant Dawn,
when will we sing your morning song?
Come, Son of God! Without your light
we grope in dread and gloom of night.

3 Sin's dreadful doom upon us lies;
grim death looms fierce before our eyes.
Come lead us with your mighty hand
from exile to our promised land.

4 There shall we all our praises bring
and sing to you, our Savior-King;
there shall we laud you and adore
forever and forevermore.

Text: tr. Martin L. Seltz, 1909–1967, alt.; Friedrich von Spee, 1591–1635, abr.

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Acknowledgments

Setting Three from Christian Worship

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MESSAGE BOARD

Symbolism of the Third Advent Candle



The third candle that we light today is called the Shepherds' Candle (sometimes also called the Joy Candle). This rose-colored candle symbolizes the coming of the Savior into the hearts and lives of believers. It

pictures the joy that the shepherds had after seeing their newborn Savior, a joy that we share today.

Children's Christmas Service Practice: Saturday, Dec. 21st, is our Christmas Service practice for the K-8 graders from 10:30 - noon. This is the only scheduled practice before the program! **Narrators also should attend.**

Children's Christmas Service: December 22nd 9:00 AM. 'Out of the mouth of babes'. What a joy to listen to our children profess their knowledge and faith. Join as they preach the joyous Word of our promised Savior!!!

Cookie Crunch: December 22nd following the Children's Service. Yum. Yum!

Candy Bags for the Children: Thank you to our member who donated candy for our Children's service and to the volunteers who assembled the bags.

Operation Joy: The Operation Joy items being collected for our shut-ins will end on Dec. 18th. Thank you to all who are participating!!!

Befriend Our Missionary Friends: December is St. Luke's turn to focus on our assigned missions/missionaries through personal correspondence and prayer. Below the bulletin board near the church office is a list of overseas missionary children attending school in the USA. Please take a copy and send a Christmas greeting and words of encouragement to these young men and woman who are so far from their immediate families. Perhaps you might also consider a

gift card along with your good wishes. **It's the Simple Gestures!**

Saginaw Valley Lutheran Chorale (SVLC) begins 1/5/25:

The *Saginaw Valley Lutheran Chorale* welcomes all confirmed WELS/ELS members to join in preparing a concert of sacred music to be presented on March 22 & 23, 2025. Weekly rehearsals will begin under the direction of Prof. em. Leonard Proeber on Sunday, January 5th, 6:30-8:00 PM in the Michigan Lutheran Seminary band room. New voices are always welcome! [For further information, please contact Prof. Proeber or the Chorale's president, Prof. Allen Ash.

Poinsettia Orders: I wanted to let anyone know who is purchasing their own poinsettias to please drop them off by noon on the 21st. I will work on getting them all placed that afternoon. **Order forms can be found on the radiator by the office.** A big shout-out to Heidi Krause for kindly taking on this task!

HAPPENING SOON

Sunday 12/015	9:00 AM Communion Worship Service
	10:15 AM Sunday School/Bible Class
	11:15 AM Choir Practice
Monday 12/16	7:00 PM Communion Worship Service
Saturday 12/21	10:30 AM Children's Service Practice

Sunday 12/22 9:00 AM Children's Christmas Service

December Servers

December Sunday Ushers: John Solgat, Mike Hecht, Nate Rupprecht, Grant Barnes

December Communion Elder: Dec. 1-Phil Pellar, Dec. 17-Paul Schultz, Christmas Day-David Atkins

December Monday Usher: Barry Mays

December Finance: Jeremy LaPratt, Nick Hubbard

December Altar Guild: Marian Whitney and Pat Mecham

Organist: Olivia Marker

EVENT ATTENDANCE

Sunday Service: 93

Monday Service: 18

Sunday School: 8

Adult Bible Class: 45

STEWARDSHIP AT ST. LUKE'S

For 2024, the planned giving needed is \$7,910.00 per week to meet our ministry goals.

Last Week's Budgetary Offerings: \$5,082.00

Sunday School: \$12.00