

"The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to bring good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives, and recovery of sight to the blind, to let the oppressed go free, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor."

~Luke 4:18-19

St. John Evangelical Lutheran Church 4th Sunday after Epiphany – February 2, 2025

420 Beaver St., PO Box 411 Mars, PA 16046-0411 www.stjohnchurchmars.org

Phone: 724-625-1830 email: office@stjohnchurchmars.org

Rev. Katie McNeal, Presiding Minister Maizy Fisher, Director of Music Ministries We are delighted to have you worship with us this morning! Know that you are welcome here just as you are.

If you are looking for a church to call home, why not consider making this one your own? If this is your first time worshiping at St. John, please fill out the visitor information card stapled to your bulletin.

Everything you need to follow worship can be found in this bulletin. As you are comfortable, please rise when there is an * and join in the congregational responses, noted in **bold**. All songs are marked with numbers. The red book in the pew has all the songs. Look for the large number in the upper corner of the page to find the correct song.

During the time of **Peace**, you are invited to turn to those around you and offer a word of peace. We suggest a handshake and saying, "Peace be with you." You are also welcomed to offer another gesture of peace (wave, fist-bump, smile, etc.). Hand sanitizer is available in each pew.

At the time of **Offering**, you are invited to share a gift. Envelopes are available in the pews if you prefer. Online gifts may be made using the QR code below:



You may also offer updates to our ongoing prayer list using the yellow cards in the pews and placing them in the offering plates. **Visitor information cards** and member attendance cards (attached to the front of the bulletin) may also be placed in the offering plates.

As Lutherans, we believe Christ is truly present in the elements of the Lord's Supper. At the time of **Holy Communion**, all baptized individuals are welcome to come forward via the center aisle, receive the elements, and return via the side aisles. We begin at the front of the right side, commune all on the right side, then we will invite the left side forward. When you come forward, you may receive the bread from the pastor (gluten free wafers are available), then prefilled cups with wine or grape juice from the assisting minister. You may consume the elements after receiving them then place the empty cup in the tray held by the acolyte. Those who do not receive Holy Communion are welcome to come forward for a blessing.

If you need a **restroom**, restrooms are located on the bottom floor at the far side of the building from the elevator. Restrooms may be accessed either via the stairs in the rear of the sanctuary, the stairs by the Greeting Area, or the elevator.

A playroom is available downstairs for children who need a break from the worship service.

This room is by the elevator on the lower level. An adult must remain with the child.

Children are also welcome to utilize the books and puzzles available in the Greeting Area on the top level by the elevator.

As you prepare for worship, you are invited to fill out the blue prayer request forms located in each pew. The cards will be collected during our hymn of the day, and prayers will be offered during the prayers of intercession.

PRELUDE

ANNOUNCEMENTS

GATHERING

The Holy Spirit calls us together as the people of God.

*GATHERING SONG Praise the One Who Breaks the Darkness (ELW 843)



- 1 Praise the One who breaks the dark-ness with a lib er at ing light;
- 2 Praise the One who blessed the chil-dren with a strong yet gen-tle word;
- 3 Praise the one true love in car nate: Christ, who suf fered in our place;



praise the One who frees the pris-'ners, turn-ing blind-ness in - to sight. praise the One who drove out de-mons with a pierc-ing, two-edged sword. Je - sus died and rose for man - y that we may know God by grace.



Praise the One who preached the gos - pel, heal-ing ev - 'ry dread dis - ease, Praise the One who brings cool wa - ter to the des - ert's burn-ing sand; Let us sing for joy and glad-ness, see-ing what our God has done.



calm-ing storms and feed - ing thou-sands with the ver - y bread of peace. from this well comes liv - ing wa - ter quench-ing thirst in ev - 'ry land. Praise the one re - deem - ing glo - ry; praise the One who makes us one.

*THANKSGIVING FOR BAPTISM

Blessed be the holy Trinity, \pm one God, by whose hand we are given new birth, by whose speaking we are given new life. **Amen.**

Look, here is water!

Here is our water of life! Alleluia!

Baptized into Christ's death and resurrection, and called to live the baptized life, let us give thanks for the gifts of baptism.

We give you thanks, O God, for in the beginning your voice thundered over the deep and water became the essence of life.

Adam and Eve beheld Eden's verdant rivers.

The ark carried your creation through the flood into a new day.

Miriam led the dancing as your people passed through the sea into freedom's land. In a desert pool the Ethiopian official entered your boundless baptismal life.

Wash away our sin and all that separates us from you. Empower our witness to your resurrection. Strengthen our resolve in seeking justice for all.

At the river your beloved Son was baptized by John and anointed with the Holy Spirit. By the baptism of Jesus' death and resurrection you opened the floodgates of your reconciling love, freeing us to live as your people.

Joined to Christ in the waters of baptism, we are welcomed, restored, and supported as citizens of the new creation.

Look, here is water!

Here is our water of life! Alleluia!

*CANTICLE OF PRAISE This Is the Feast



PRAYER OF THE DAY

Let us pray.

Blessed Lord God, you have caused the holy scriptures to be written for the nourishment of your people. Grant that we may hear them, read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest them, that, comforted by your promises, we may embrace and forever hold fast to the hope of eternal life, through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

FIRST READING: Jeremiah 1:4-10

A reading from Jeremiah.

I appointed you a prophet to the nations."

"Do not say, 'I am only a boy';

for you shall go to all to whom I send you,

and you shall speak whatever I command you.

⁸ Do not be afraid of them,

for I am with you to deliver you,

says the Lord."

to pluck up and to pull down,

to destroy and to overthrow,

to build and to plant."

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

⁴Now the word of the Lord came to me saying,

⁵ "Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, and before you were born I consecrated you;

⁶ Then I said, "Ah, Lord God! Truly I do not know how to speak, for I am only a boy." ⁷ But the Lord said to me,

⁹ Then the Lord put out his hand and touched my mouth; and the Lord said to me,

[&]quot;Now I have put my words in your mouth.

¹⁰ See, today I appoint you over nations and over kingdoms,

SECOND READING: 1 Corinthians 13:1-13

A reading from 1 Corinthians.

¹ If I speak in the tongues of mortals and of angels, but do not have love, I am a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal. ² And if I have prophetic powers, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but do not have love, I am nothing. ³ If I give away all my possessions, and if I hand over my body so that I may boast, but do not have love, I gain nothing.

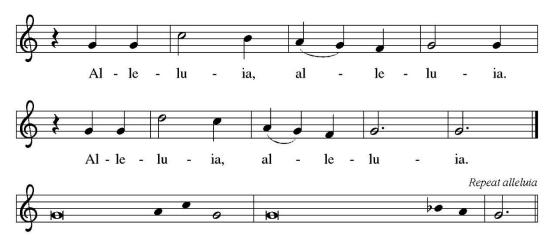
⁴ Love is patient; love is kind; love is not envious or boastful or arrogant ⁵ or rude. It does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful; ⁶ it does not rejoice in wrongdoing, but rejoices in the truth. ⁷ It bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.

⁸ Love never ends. But as for prophecies, they will come to an end; as for tongues, they will cease; as for knowledge, it will come to an end. ⁹ For we know only in part, and we prophesy only in part; ¹⁰ but when the complete comes, the partial will come to an end. ¹¹ When I was a child, I spoke like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child; when I became an adult, I put an end to childish ways. ¹² For now we see in a mirror, dimly, but then we will see face to face. Now I know only in part; then I will know fully, even as I have been fully known. ¹³ And now faith, hope, and love abide, these three; and the greatest of these is love.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

*GOSPEL ACCLAMATION



*GOSPEL READING: Luke 4:14-30

The holy gospel according to Luke.

Glory to you, O Lord.

¹⁶ When he came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up, he went to the synagogue on the sabbath day, as was his custom. He stood up to read, ¹⁷ and the scroll of the prophet Isaiah was given to him. He unrolled the scroll and found the place where it was written:

¹⁸ "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me,

because he has anointed me

to bring good news to the poor.

He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives

and recovery of sight to the blind,

to let the oppressed go free,

¹⁹ to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor."

²⁰ And he rolled up the scroll, gave it back to the attendant, and sat down. The eyes of all in the synagogue were fixed on him. ²¹ Then he began to say to them, "Today this scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing." ²² All spoke well of him and were amazed at the gracious words that came from his mouth. They said, "Is not this Joseph's son?" ²³ He said to them, "Doubtless you will quote to me this proverb, 'Doctor, cure yourself!' And you will say, 'Do here also in your hometown the things that we have heard you did at Capernaum.'" ²⁴ And he said, "Truly I tell you, no prophet is accepted in the prophet's hometown. ²⁵ But the truth is, there were many widows in Israel in the time of Elijah, when the heaven was shut up three years and six months, and there was a severe famine over all the land; ²⁶ yet Elijah was sent to none of them except to a widow at Zarephath in Sidon. ²⁷ There were also many lepers in Israel in the time of the prophet Elisha, and none of them was cleansed except Naaman the Syrian." ²⁸ When they heard this, all in the synagogue were filled with rage. ²⁹ They got up, drove him out of the town, and led him to the brow of the hill on which their town was built, so that they might hurl him off the cliff. ³⁰ But he passed through the midst of them and went on his way.

The gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ

CHILDREN'S SERMON

SERMON

¹⁴ Then Jesus, filled with the power of the Spirit, returned to Galilee, and a report about him spread through all the surrounding country. ¹⁵ He began to teach in their synagogues and was praised by everyone.

*HYMN OF THE DAY Hail to the Lord's Anointed (ELW 311)

(Blue prayer cards are collected)



*APOSTLES' CREED

Amen.

I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth. I believe in Jesus Christ, God's 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 to the dead. On the third day he rose again; he ascended into heaven, he is seated at the right hand of the Father, and he will come 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.



*PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

With the Spirit of Christ shining upon us, let us boldly pray for the church, the world, and all of creation. *A brief silence*

God of eternal wisdom, we pray for your church, which is being transformed by your word. Bless the church with your wisdom and guidance. Let us notice and take part in the new thing you are doing. God of grace,

hear our prayer.

As heavens declare your glory and the sky proclaims your work, we lift our voices in awe of quarks and atoms, vast stars and solar systems. Guide us to speak on behalf of your handiwork. God of grace,

hear our prayer.

As Jesus proclaimed life and freedom in his community, energize communities and nations to eliminate poverty, engage in prison ministry and transformative justice, and envision new ways of working together for your promised reign. God of grace,

hear our prayer.

As your word and presence revive the soul, accompany all experiencing depression, anxiety, or eating disorders; be a source of strength for all affected by memory loss and their caregivers; draw near to all undergoing medical treatment or surgery. Provide for those whose hunger runs deep due to isolation, loneliness, or illness, especially Bob, Geneva, Cherry, Winnie, Henry, Harry, Ellen, Sally, Katie, Debi, Anne, Karen, Nan, Beverly, those on our prayer list and all who suffer in any way. God of grace,

hear our prayer.

We pray for the young people in our congregations. May their voices be celebrated. Give youth a place of honor and value among us. Renew and inspire all who use their gifts in this congregation, community, and the world. God of grace,

hear our prayer.

As our faith is strengthened by saints who have gone before us, we remember leaders of the early church and beloved friends and family who have died. God of grace,

hear our prayer.

God our strength, look upon us with your everlasting mercy, and receive the prayers gathered before you now (*blue prayer cards are read*). We entrust our prayers to you, O God, in the sure and certain hope that your promise is revealed among the people. **Amen.**

*PEACE

The peace of Christ be with you always.

And also with you.

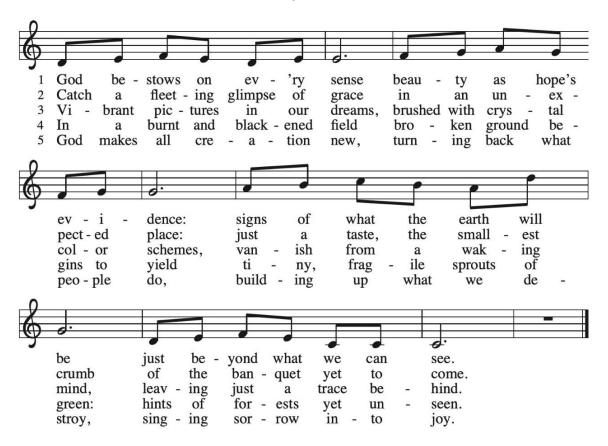
Let us share Christ's peace with one another.

MEAL

God feeds us with the presence of Jesus Christ

OFFERING COLLECTION

OFFERTORY HYMN God Bestows on Every Sense (ACS 1069) Rise on 5th verse



*OFFERING PRAYER

Let us pray.

Generous God, we offer to you what is already yours - all that we have and all that we are. Grant us grateful hearts that can see your goodness toward us, and willing hands that are open to share the blessings we have known from you; in the name of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

Amen.

*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.

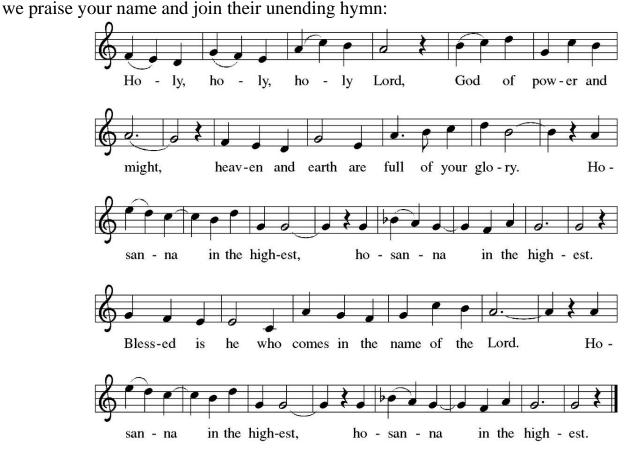
It is right to give our thanks and praise.

It is indeed right, our duty and our joy, that we should at all times and in all places give thanks and praise to you, almighty and merciful God, through our Savior Jesus Christ.

By the leading of a star he was shown forth to all nations; in the waters of the Jordan you proclaimed him your beloved Son; and in the miracle of water turned to wine he revealed your glory.

And so, with all the choirs of angels,

with the church on earth and the hosts of heaven,



Holy One, the beginning and the end, the giver of life:

Blessed are you for the birth of creation.

Blessed are you in the darkness and in the light.

Blessed are you for your promise to your people.

Blessed are you in the prophets' hopes and dreams.

Blessed are you for Mary's openness to your will.

Blessed are you for your Son Jesus,

the Word made flesh.

In the night in which he was betrayed, 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.

For as often as we eat of this bread and drink from this cup, we proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.

Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again.

With this bread and cup

we remember your Word dwelling among us, full of grace and truth.

We remember our new birth in his death and resurrection.

We look with hope for his coming.

Come, Lord Jesus.

Holy God, we long for your Spirit.

Come among us.

Bless this meal.

May your Word take flesh in us.

Awaken your people.

Fill us with your light.

Bring the gift of peace on earth.

Come, Holy Spirit.

All praise and glory are yours,
Holy One of Israel,
Word of God incarnate,
Power of the Most High,
one God, now and forever. Amen.

*THE LORD'S PRAYER

Gathered into one by the Holy Spirit, let us 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 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

*INVITATION TO COMMUNION

Glory to God in the highest! Come to the table of peace.

Through this meal, we know forgiveness, life, and salvation as the blessings of God's sacramental grace. In response to Jesus' invitation, all are welcome to come forward and experience the real presence of Christ in the bread and wine. Those who do not receive the bread and wine are invited to come forward for a blessing.

Grape juice and gluten free wafers are available upon request. Communion may also be brought back to the pews for those who are unable to come forward.

COMMUNION SONG Lamb of God

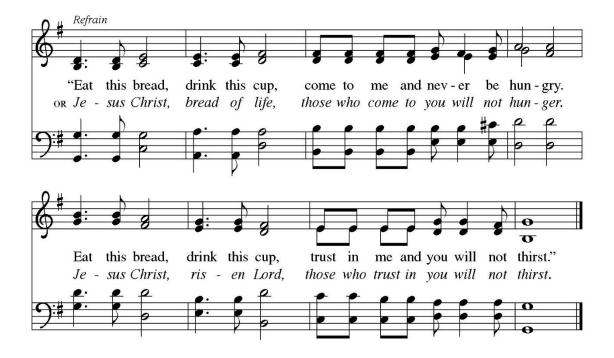


COMMUNION HYMN Thy Strong Word (ELW 511)



- 5 Give us lips to sing thy glory, tongues thy mercy to proclaim, throats that shout the hope that fills us, mouths to speak thy holy name. Alleluia! Alleluia! May the light which thou dost send fill our songs with alleluias, alleluias without end!
- 6 God the Father, light-creator, to thee laud and honor be.
 To thee, Light of Light begotten, praise be sung eternally.
 Holy Spirit, light-revealer, glory, glory be to thee.
 Mortals, angels, now and ever praise the holy Trinity!

COMMUNION HYMN Eat This Bread (ELW 472)



*POST-COMMUNION BLESSING

The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen you and preserve you in grace. **Amen**

*POST-COMMUNION PRAYER

O God, we give you thanks that you have set before us this feast, the body and blood of your Son. By your Spirit strengthen us to serve all in need and to give ourselves away as bread for the hungry, through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

*BLESSING

May Almighty God, the Holy One who created the world, the Son who lived to teach us how to live together, and died that we might live together with him forever, and the Spirit who inspires and nurtures us in faith, + bless you with joy, anoint you with compassion, and send you in love. **Amen.**

*SENDING SONG O Zion, Haste (ELW 668)



*DISMISSAL

Go in peace. Christ is with you.

Thanks be to God.

POSTLUDE

The flowers on the altar were supplied by Jeff and Deb Martin in memory of Deb's father, Alex J Christ.

Assisting in worship today:

Assisting Minister: Missy K

Acolyte: Anna K Ushers: Volunteer

Offering: Cate S & Lydia M Attendance last week: 52 + 6 zoom

Notes for the day's texts:

Playgrounds still resound with "sticks and stones may break my bones, but words will never hurt me." But those words ring hollow. As adults, and as children, we know only too well the power of words to do harm. Human words can hurt or fail, but now we hear this holy word of wisdom, challenge, instruction, and hope that really does form us in God's promise. Rather than words that tear down, we are invited by Jesus into God's living words with and among friends. Jesus, in coming home and attending the synagogue, reads from the scroll of the prophet Isaiah. Jesus announces good news to those struggling economically on the fringes of society, hope to those who are imprisoned, healing to those without sight, a lifting of the burden from those who are weighed down or oppressed, and even the in-breaking of a holy year of favor. Standing in a tradition of prophets and priests who speak, engage, and teach God's word, Jesus now offers one thing more—fulfillment. The words of those who dream and hope, who work for justice and mercy on behalf of God, are now true. Today as we look around and see people spending time speaking, reading, and even playing games with words, this is an opportunity to ground ourselves in the one full Word that bears life. This word counters sticks and stones and all that oppresses; Jesus' address announces God's liberating actions. This Word sounds promise to all who hear; it is an invitation to see God at work among God's people. God uses our lips to declare God's glory, inexperienced and hesitant though they may be. God uses our love to demonstrate that glory and so urges us to exercise it. God uses Jesus of Nazareth, water and the word, bread and wine, to reveal God's glory where and when God chooses. Take heed, lest the glory of God slip through our midst unnoticed.

Today's Music

Praise the One Who Breaks the Darkness Text: Rusty Edwards, b. 1955, Music: J. Wyeth, Repository of Sacred Music, Part III, 1813. Hope Publishing Company (ASCAP) / Public Domain.

Hail to the Lord's Anointed. Text: James Montgomery, 1771–1854, alt., Music: Leonhart Schröter, 1540–1602. Public Domain.

God Bestows on Every Sense. Text: Adam M. L. Tice, b. 1979, Music: Anthony Giamanco, b. 1958. GIA Publications, Inc. / Augsburg Fortress. Thy Strong Word. Text: Martin H. Franzmann, 1907–1976, Music: Thomas J. Williams, 1869–1944; arr. Richard W. Hillert, 1923-2010. CPH Publishing (SESAC) / Public Domain.

Eat This Bread. Text: Taizé Community , Music: Jacques Berthier, 1923-1994. GIA Publications, Inc..

O Zion, Haste. Text: Mary A. Thomson, 1834-1923, Music: James Walch, 1837-1901. Public Domain.

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Next Week's Readings:

Isaiah 6:1-13 Isaiah says, Here am I; send me Psalm 138 I will bow down toward your holy temple 1 Corinthains 15:1-11 I am the least of the apostles Luke 5:1-11 Jesus calls the disciples to fish for people