

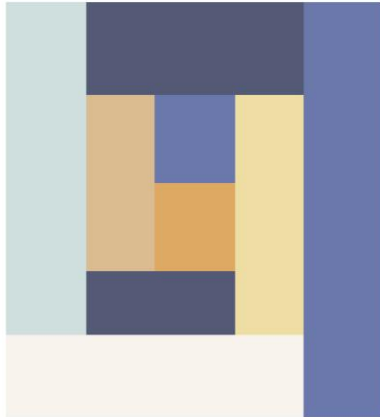
St. John Lutheran Church

Senior Pastor, Robin E. Caldwell
Associate Pastor, Evan Mayhew



FOR THE BEGINNING

— RETURN WITH ALL YOUR HEART —



DECEMBER 7TH, 2024 @ 5:30 PM

2650 Plainfield Road, Joliet, IL 60435
815-439-2320 | contact@stjohnjoliet.org | stjohnjoliet.org

SUNDAY SCHOOL CHRISTMAS PROGRAM

LIGHT UP THE NIGHT: COCOA & CAROLS TREE LIGHTING

DECEMBER 8TH, 2024

4:00 pm Sunday School Christmas Program, Sanctuary

4:30 pm Light Up the Night: Cocoa & Carols, Outside

5:00 pm Light Up the Night: Tree Lighting, Outside

CRYSTAL LAWNS ELEMENTARY SCHOOL HOLIDAY ANGEL GIVING TREE



1

CHECK OUT STUDENTS' GIFT REQUESTS HERE:
LINK ALSO FOUND AT STJOHNJOLIET.ORG

2

CHOOSE YOUR GIFT(S)
REVIEW AVAILABLE SLOTS AND CLICK ON THE
BUTTON TO SIGN UP

3

LABEL YOUR GIFT(S)
ONCE PURCHASED, PLEASE LABEL IT WITH
THE TAG NUMBER

4

DROP OFF YOUR GIFT(S)
BRING YOUR UNWRAPPED & LABELLED GIFT(S) TO ST. JOHN BY
SUNDAY, DECEMBER 8TH OR CRYSTAL LAWNS BY TUESDAY DEC. 10TH

**THANK YOU FOR HELPING PROVIDE HOLIDAY GIFTS TO THE CRYSTAL LAWNS
STUDENT AND FAMILIES FACING FINANCIAL HARDSHIP THIS YEAR!**



GIVING TREE

BEGINS 12/8/24 IN THE NARTHEX

**These giftcards help provide assistance to many
of our community members throughout the year.**



We are looking for \$10-\$20
increments for Target, Thortons,
Walmart, Speedway, McDonald's,
Shell & Aldi work best.

We welcome you to St. John Lutheran Church as we gather for this time of worship and reflection on God's love for the world.

The flowers on the altar today are given by Cathy Hawkins in celebration of her daughter, Trish's birthday!

To sponsor altar flowers or coffee hour, sign up at stjohnjoliet.org or call the church office.



Worship Leaders – Saturday, December 7, 2024 (5:30 pm)

Deacon	Steve Volkening
Ushers	Norm Roland
Piano	Janet Blomquist
Music Director	Tori Hicks
Counters	Wendy Eklund, Pat Block-Hay
Altar Guild	Joan Fry, Marge Wet

Contact Information

Pastor Robin Caldwell	robin Caldwell@stjohnjoliet.org	630-408-1402
Pastor Evan Mayhew	evanmayhew@stjohnjoliet.org	262-366-3132
Tori Hicks	torihicks@stjohnjoliet.org	815-355-3205
Judy Wierman	operations@stjohnjoliet.org	815-439-2320
Pam Kornaus	pamkornaus@stjohnjoliet.org	815-439-2320
Jenelle Lambert	communications@stjohnjoliet.org	815-439-2320
Jonathan Adams, President	council@stjohnjoliet.org	815-295-4092

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815-439-2320 contact@stjohnjoliet.org stjohnjoliet.org

 **St. John by the Mall – Joliet, IL**
 **St. John Lutheran Church, Joliet**

**Indicates Congregation, Please Stand*

Prelude

Welcome and Announcements

*Invocation

- P We are gathered today in the name of the Father, Son,
and † Holy Spirit.
- C Amen.

*Lighting of the Advent Candle

- D In a weary and worn world, how do we begin again?
Where do we start?
- C **Let us return to God.**
Let us return in self-reflection.
Let us return in humility instead of self-righteousness.
Let us begin with merciful words of peace.
- D Yes, let us begin with peace. Today we light the candles of
hope and peace.
- C **May these lights remind us of the dawn from on high that will
break upon us.**
May the spirit of peace pour out on all flesh.
May these lights mark a new beginning.
- D With dreams and visions of a new day to come, may we begin
again.
- C Amen!

“O Come, O Come, Emmanuel”

257, Vs. 2

Text: *Psalterium Canticum Catholicarum*, Köln, 1710; tr. composite; Music: French processional, 15th Cent.;

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Verse 2

O come, O Wisdom from on high,
Embracing all things far and nigh:
In strength and beauty come and stay;
Teach us your will and guide our way.

*Confession and Forgiveness

P There are times when the weight of the world can feel so heavy. But, when we come before God in confession, God lifts that weight. God sees our sin and offers us grace. So, join me in the prayer of confession.

Gracious God,

There are days when the world can feel like it's too much. There are times when we doubt we can make a difference. Yet, at every turn, you remind us that we are a blessing, made in your image, held in your love. Forgive us for forgetting this truth. Forgive us for measuring our worth by society's measuring stick instead of yours. Open up our hearts to risk hope, to dream dreams, and to not be afraid. Amen.

P Friends, no matter how many times we lose momentum, doubt our own ability or tell ourselves that the problems of the world are too big, God calls us by name, surrounds us in grace, and invites us to begin again. Trusting in this good news, join me in proclaiming these words of forgiveness:

**C We are loved. We are forgiven.
Thanks be to God for this new beginning. Amen.**

*Opening Hymn

"Rejoice, Rejoice, Believers"

244, Vs. 1, 2, 4

*Greeting and Prayer for Illumination

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.

P Let us pray. Holy God, the words of this world whip around us like a mighty wind. But here on this day we remember - you too are speaking. Still the voices around us. Calm our minds and center our hearts so that we can hear your words above the wind. In the name of Emmanuel, we pray.

C Amen.

Responsive Reading **Joel 2:12-13, 28-29** (*Inclusive Version*)

D A responsive reading from the book of Joel, the second chapter.
Listen for the Word of the Lord.

C Our hearts are open.

“But know this,” says YHWH:
“Return to me with all your heart,
with fasting, weeping, and mourning.
Tear open your heart, not your clothes!”

Return to YHWH your God,
who is gracious and deeply loving as a mother,
**quick to forgive, abundantly tender-hearted—
and relents from inflicting disaster.**

After that,
I will pour out my Spirit on all humankind.
**Your daughters and sons will prophesy,
your elders will have prophetic dreams,
and your young people will see visions.**

In those days, I will pour out my Spirit
even on those in servitude, women and men alike.

D Word of God, Word of Life!

C Thanks be to God!

Reading **Luke 1:67, 72-79**

D A reading from the book of Luke, the first chapter.
Listen for the Word of the Lord.

C Our hearts are open.

Then John’s father Zechariah was filled with the Holy Spirit and prophesied:

“Thus, the Lord God of Israel has shown the mercy promised to our ancestors and has remembered his holy covenant, the oath that he swore to our ancestor Abraham, to grant us that we, being rescued from the hands of our enemies, might serve him without fear, in holiness and righteousness in his presence all our days. And you, child, will be called the prophet of the Most High, for you will go before the Lord to prepare his ways, to give his people knowledge of salvation by the forgiveness of their sins. Because of the tender mercy of our God, the dawn from on high will break upon us, to shine upon those who sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of peace.”

D Word of God, Word of Life!

C Thanks be to God!

*Gospel Acclamation

Congregation:

Al - le - lu - ia, Al - le - lu - ia. Lord, to whom shall we
go? You have the words of e - ter - nal
life. Al - le - lu - ia!

*Gospel

Luke 3:1-6

P The Holy Gospel according to Luke, the third chapter.

C **Glorify to you, O Lord.**

In the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Caesar, when Pontius Pilate was governor of Judea, and Herod was ruler of Galilee, and his brother Philip ruler of the region of Ituraea and Trachonitis, and Lysanias ruler of Abilene, during the high priesthood of Annas and Caiaphas, the word of God came to John, son of Zechariah in the wilderness. He went into all the region around the Jordan, proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins, as it is written in the book of the words of the prophet Isaiah,

“The voice of one crying out in the wilderness:

‘Prepare the way of the Lord;

make his paths straight.

Every valley shall be filled,

and every mountain and hill shall be made low,

and the crooked shall be made straight,

and the rough ways made smooth,

and all flesh shall see the salvation of God.’ ”

P The gospel of our Lord.

C **Praise to you O Christ.**

Children's Sermon

Sermon

Pastor Robin E. Caldwell

*Hymn of the Day

"Prepare the Royal Highway"

264, Vs. 1, 2, 4

*Apostles' Creed

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

**I believe in Jesus Christ, God's 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,
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.**

Prayers of the Church

Your prayer requests may be spoken when invited during today's prayers, by filling out a green prayer request card in your pew or filling out the Prayer Request form at stjohnjoliet.org.

P As we prepare for Emmanuel, God-with-us, let us pray for all people and places that long for God's presence.

Congregation sings this response:

“Come and Fill Our Hearts”

Text: Psalm 136:1 (Latin); Taize Community. Music by: Jacques Berthier.
Text and Music © 1982, 1991 Les Presses de Taize, admin. GIA Publications.
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**Come and fill our hearts with your peace.
You alone, O Lord are holy.
Come and fill our hearts with your peace.
Alleluia.**

The prayers conclude:

P Savior of the nations, come, and receive these prayers and the
pleas of our hearts, in the name of Jesus Christ.
C Amen.

***Sharing the Peace**

P The peace of the Lord be with you always.
C And also with you.

*You may share the peace of Christ with others.
Those who choose to stay in their pew may wave or give signs of peace.*

Offertory

**Commitment to Community
Giving Out of Gratitude**

*In this season of giving, we remember that all we are and all we have
are gifts from God. When we offer back a portion of our time, possessions,
and money, we trust that God will reach our neighbors in need right here
and throughout the world through what we gratefully give.*

*The Offertory is an invitation to be a part of the mission, ministry,
and outreach of Christ through St. John Lutheran Church.
Together, there is enough for everyone.*

*Please place any financial gifts, attendance sheets, and prayer
concerns in the offering plate when it comes to you
and pass it on to the person next to you or behind you.
Thank you for your generosity!*



Now Accepting



Offertory Response

836, Vs. 3

“Joyful, Joyful We Adore Thee”

Text: Henry van Dyke, 1852-1922; Music: Ludwig van Beethoven, 1770-1827, adapt.; Public Domain
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Verse 3 Thou art giving and forgiving, ever blessing, ever blest,
Well-spring of the joy of living, ocean-depth of happy rest!
Thou our Father, Christ our brother, all who live in love are thine;
Teach us how to love each other, lift us to the joy divine!

*Offertory Prayer

D Let us pray.

C **God of new beginnings, bless the gifts we offer back to you that they may reach the world with the fullness of your love. And now, as we gather at your table, pour out your spirit upon us, that your Word and your presence may reignite our faith. Amen.**

*Great Thanksgiving

The musical score is written on five staves in G major (one sharp) and 4/4 time. The lyrics are distributed across the staves as follows:

Staff 1: *Presider:* The Lord be with you. *Congregation:* And al - so with

Staff 2: you. *Presider:* Lift up your hearts. *Congregation:* We

Staff 3: lift them to the Lord. *Presider:* Let us give

Staff 4: thanks to the Lord our God. *Congregation:* It is

Staff 5: right to give God thanks and praise.

P 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. You comforted your people with the promise of the Redeemer, through whom you will also make all things new. And so, with all the choirs of angels, with the church on earth and the hosts of heaven, we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

*Holy

Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly are you, God of pow - er and
might; Heav - en and earth are filled with your
glo - ry, Ho - san - na in the high - est! Bless - ed is the
One who comes in your name. Ho - san - na in the
high - est, ho - san - na in the high - est!

*Words of Institution

*The Lord's Prayer

C 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

P All are welcome at this joyful feast.

C Thanks be to God!

Distribution

*We believe Jesus Christ is the host of this table,
his true presence is in this meal, and you are welcome here!*

St. John provides an introduction to First Communion in the spring to third graders and anyone else who is interested. Younger children typically receive a blessing at the altar rail, but any people with open hands will be offered bread and wine/juice. If you or your child prefer a blessing instead, keep hands folded and head bowed.

Communion Instruction

- You will be invited forward by the usher or pastor.
- Gluten-free wafers are available upon request. Inform the pastor when receiving communion.
- Red wine is on the outer rings of the tray; white grape juice is on the inner rings of the tray.
- After receiving communion, place the communion cup in the basket, and return to your pew via the side aisle.

If you prefer to receive communion in your pew, communion pods are available at the entrances to the sanctuary. The pastor will say the words of distribution after the Invitation to Communion.

Lamb of God



Lamb of God, you take a-way the sin of the world: have
you are the way of jus-tice and peace:
you give us hope as we wait for you:



mer-cy on us, mer-cy on us, mer-cy on us.



Lamb of God, you take a-way the sins of the world:



grant us peace, grant us peace, grant us peace.

Communion Music

“Light One Candle to Watch for Messiah”

240, Vs. 1-4

“Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus”

254, Vs. 1-2

*Prayer after Communion

- D** Let us pray. Nourishing God, we have come to your table to get a glimpse of your kingdom. Thank you for the gift of all who surround it and for the fresh start you offer in ordinary bread and drink, reminders that your kingdom is here and wherever our faith is renewed.
- C** Amen.

*Benediction



*Sending Hymn

239, Vs. 1, 4

“Hark! The Glad Sound”

Text: Philip Doddridge, 1702-1751; Music: Thomas Haweis, 1734-1820; Public Domain. Reprinted & streamed with permission under OneLicense #A-712815. All Rights Reserved.

Verse 1 Hark, the glad sound! The Savior comes,
The Savior promised long;
Let ev'ry heart prepare a throne
And ev'ry voice a song.

Verse 4 Our glad hosannas, Prince of peace,
Your welcome shall proclaim,
And heav'n's eternal arches ring
With your beloved name.

*Sending

- D** Go in peace and prepare your hearts.
- C** **Thanks be to God!**

Postlude

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DECEMBER

ADVENT

WORSHIP & EVENTS 2024

Sat/Sun 30-1 Advent 1: "You are a Blessing"
Wed 4 Advent Evening Prayer 7:00 PM Worship

Sat/Sun 7-8 Advent 2: "Return With All Your Heart"
Wed 11 Advent Evening Prayer 7:00 PM Worship

Sat/Sun 14-15 Advent 3: "Do the Good that is Yours to Do"
Wed 18 Advent Evening Prayer 7:00 PM Worship

Sat/Sun 21-22 Advent 4: "Hope is Worth the Risk"
Sun 22 The Longest Night Service at 7:00 PM Worship

 **CHRISTMAS EVE**
TUESDAY, DEC 24TH

3:00 PM WORSHIP
5:30 PM WORSHIP
11:00 PM WORSHIP



MEN'S MONDAY NIGHT

FOOTBALL FELLOWSHIP EVENT

DECEMBER 16TH , 6:00-10:00PM

 **CATCHER'S TAP, 1723 N. CENTER ST. ,**
CREST HILL, IL 60403

 **FOOD AND DRINK WILL BE**
AVAILABLE FOR PURCHASE.

Order Poinsettias

Christmas is Coming!

Purchase a poinsettia for the St. John celebration of the Christ child.

Deadline: Sunday, December 15th

\$15 per plant

TO ORDER

Visit stjohnjoli.org

Bulletin Order Form

Call the Church Office

December

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 8 *(Special Offering: Christmas)*

- 8:30am - 9:30am Worship: Sanctuary
- 9:45am - 10:45am Sunday School: Sanctuary/Karin Johnson Hall/West Wing
- 9:45am - 10:45am Beautiful Beginnings: (PDO Room)
- 11:00am - 12:00pm Worship: Sanctuary (Sunday School Sings)
- 4:00pm - 4:30pm Sunday School Christmas Program: Sanctuary
- 4:30pm - 5:00pm Cocoa & Carols: Parking Lot
- 5:00pm - 5:30pm Light Up the Night Tree Lighting: Parking Lot

MONDAY, DECEMBER 9

- 9:30am - 11:30am Parent's Day Out (PDO)
- 12:00pm - 3:00pm Staff Meeting
- 5:00pm - 6:30pm 4:12 The Next Chapter: Narthex
- 5:30pm - 8:00pm A.A. Woman's Group: Karin Johnson Hall
- 6:30pm - 8:30pm Monday Night Small Group: Trinity Room
- 7:00pm - 8:00pm Al-Anon: West Wing 3 & 4
- 7:00pm - 8:00pm Handbell Choir: Sanctuary
- 8:00pm - 8:30pm Handbell Ensemble: Sanctuary

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 10

- 9:30am - 11:30am Parent's Day Out (PDO)
- 11:00am - 12:00pm Funeral: Michael J. Fuller: Sanctuary
- 5:30pm - 7:00pm Boy Scouts Committee Meeting: Narthex
- 6:30pm - 8:00pm Finance/Executive Committee: Pastor Robin's Office
- 6:30pm - 8:00pm Martha Circle: Off-Site
- 7:00pm - 8:30pm Boy Scouts: Karin Johnson Hall

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 11

- 8:30am - 12:00pm Food Pantry Volunteer Shift: Karin Johnson Hall
- 9:30am - 11:30am Parent's Day Out (PDO)
- 7:00pm - 7:30pm Advent Evening Prayer Service: Sanctuary
- 7:30pm - 8:30pm Bible Study: Sanctuary
- 7:00pm - 8:15pm Confirmation: (Recess)
- 8:15pm - 9:15pm High School FIRE: Youth Room

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 12

- 9:00am - 11:30am Coffee with Friends (Women): Youth Room
- 9:00am - 1:00pm Food Pantry Volunteer Shift: Karin Johnson Hall
- 9:30am - 11:30am Parent's Day Out (PDO)
- 2:00pm - 7:00pm Food Pantry Volunteer Shift: Karin Johnson Hall
- 7:00pm - 8:00pm A.A. Men's Group: Zoom
- 7:00pm - 8:00pm St. John Chorale: Choir Room
- 8:00pm - 9:00pm Praise Team: Sanctuary

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 13

- 8:30am - 12:00pm Food Pantry Volunteer Shift: Karin Johnson Hall
- 9:00am - 11:00am Quilters: West Wing 5
- 9:00am - 10:30am Meals on Wheels: Senior Services of Will County, Mark Frost
- 9:30am - 11:30am MOMCO: Narthex/West Wing

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 14

- 7:00am - 11:00am Food Pantry Volunteer Shifts: Narthex & Karin John Hall
- 8:00am - 10:00am Food Pantry Distribution Drive-Thru: Parking Lot
- 5:30pm - 6:30pm Worship: Sanctuary (Baptism-Hoeg)

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 15

- 8:30am - 9:30am Worship: Sanctuary (Cantata)
- 9:45am - 10:45am Sunday School: Sanctuary/Karin Johnson Hall/West Wing
- 11:00am - 12:00pm Worship: Sanctuary (Cantata)
- 12:15pm - 2:30pm Tween GO!: Karin Johnson Hall
- 6:30pm - 9:00pm HS FIRE Christmas Party: Off-Site

*Check "stjohnfood.org" for Food Pantry distribution times and volunteer opportunities.