

When we pray for each other, we demonstrate Christ's love for each of us

For **Heather Moore**, daughter-in-law of Mike & Willie Moore, dealing with a health issue

For **Amy Lytle**, who had successful foot surgery, and is recovering at home

For **Patty Ross**, friend of Sally Acton, recovering from the flu

For **Darin Pigg**, friend of Alan Butterbaugh, diagnosed with a serious illness

For **Alan Ott**, grandson of Michele (Mike) Moore, diagnosed with a tumor at the base of the brain

For **Karma Wisecarver**, daughter of Lee & Peggy Smith, having a difficult time as she continues through her cancer journey

For **Brian Fowler**, as he slowly recovers from West Nile Virus

Continued prayers for **Jim Fogle, Jon & Linda Leist, Bill Meyer, Freda Rutter, Linda Miller, and Shirley & Larry West**

Welcome to St. John Lutheran Church! **Today is the Third Sunday after Epiphany.** We are delighted to have you worship with us. If you'd like to connect with us, share a prayer request, or learn more about St. John, please complete a yellow communication card located on the back of the pews and place it in the offering plate.

PRAYER REQUESTS
THE WEEKLY UPDATE
JANUARY 25, 2025

ST JOHN LUTHERAN CHURCH

Judy Kellett January 26

Mike Drodofsky January 30

Tina Anderson February 8

UPCOMING BIRTHDAYS

Scripture for today, Jan 25:

Isaiah 9:1-4, Psalm 27:1, 4-9

1 Corinthians 1:10-18, Matthew 4:12-23

If you have a prayer request, please reach out to Sue Mason, who will email our church members. She can be reached at: 614-260-1107 or at susiemase3@hotmail.com.

The **Altar Flower** chart is in the Narthex where you may sign up to place flowers on the altar. Flowers are \$35. You may leave the money in the envelope under the chart for Linda Leist. Please be sure to indicate if the flowers are for a special occasion and let Don Hornbeck know if you would like it posted in the Bulletin.

Please place your food donation for the **Food Pantry** in the shopping cart. For the **Embassy of Winchester nursing home**, please place your donated items in the collection box located in the Narthex. Thank you—everything is appreciated.

Today's Closing Hymn, "I Want to Walk as a Child of the Light", was written by Kathleen A. Thomerson in 1966, inspired by a visit to the Church of the Redeemer in Houston, Texas, where she heard the words and melody forming as she recalled friends and her faith journey, ultimately becoming a beloved hymn about living a Christ-centered life of spiritual clarity, rooted in scripture like Revelation and Ephesians. The hymn is a personal prayer and a guide for Christian living, reflecting a journey from spiritual awakening to a desire for Christ's presence.

THE INSIDE STORY BY SALLY ACTON

JANUARY 25

, 2025

ST JOHN LUTHERAN CHURCH

Page 2

2026

The Weekly Update will NOT be published the next 2 Sundays; February 1st and 8th. The next publication will be February 15th.

Our website has been down for nearly a week and will be for several more weeks. Visitors currently see the message "This site can't be reached" attempting to access the site stjlithopolis.com. Pastor Joe, who has the administrative rights to the site, will assist in resolving the issue once he returns from his overseas trip at the end of January. Thank you for your patience and understanding as we work through this issue.

Due to the weather forecast, **church services at St John is cancelled today**

Sunday, January 25, 2026
Third Sunday after Epiphany
ELW Service of the Word

GATHERING & ANNOUNCEMENTS

PRELUDE

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

Blessed be the holy Trinity, ✝ one God,
who creates us and forms us,
who redeems us and calls us,
who unites us and sends us.

Amen.

Gathered in God's presence, let us confess our sin.

Mighty and loving God,

**we confess that we are captive to sin
and cannot free ourselves.**

We seek our own way. We divide the body of Christ.

In your mercy, cleanse us and heal us.

**Let the words of our mouths, the thoughts of our hearts,
and everything that we do be filled with faith, hope, and love.**

Amen.

Hear the voice of Jesus:

"The Spirit of the Lord is upon me
to proclaim release to the captives."

In the name of ✝ Jesus Christ, I proclaim to you
that your sins are forgiven and you are released.

The joy of the Lord is your strength,
and the gifts of the Holy Spirit are yours forever.

Amen.

GATHERING SONG (ELW 533)
Open Now Thy Gates of Beauty

1 Open now thy gates of beauty, Zion, let me enter there,
Where my soul in joyful duty waits for God who answers prayer.
Oh, how blessed is this place, filled with solace, light, and grace!

2 Gracious God, I come before thee; come thou also unto me;
Where we find thee and adore thee,
There a heav'n on earth must be.
To my heart, oh, enter thou, let it be thy temple now!

3 Here thy praise is gladly chanted, here thy seed is duly sown;
Let my soul, where it is planted,
Bring forth precious sheaves alone,
So that all I hear may be fruitful unto life in me.

4 Thou my faith increase and quicken, let me keep thy gift divine;
Howsoe'er temptations thicken, may thy word still o'er me shine
As my guiding star through life, as my comfort in all strife.

5 Speak, O God, and I will hear thee, let thy will be done indeed;
May I undisturbed draw near thee while thou dost thy people feed.
Here of life the fountain flows; here is balm for all our woes.

GREETING

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

And also with you.

CANTICLE OF PRAISE (ELW p. 213)

**Glory to God, glory to God, glory to God in the highest;
Glory to God, glory to God,
And peace to God's people on earth.
Lord God, heavenly King, almighty God and Father,
We worship you, we give you thanks,
We praise you for your glory.**

**Glory to God, glory to God, glory to God in the highest;
Glory to God, glory to God,
And peace to God's people on earth.
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.**

**Glory to God, glory to God, glory to God in the highest;
Glory to God, glory to God,
And peace to God's people on earth.
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.**

**Glory to God, glory to God, glory to God in the highest;
Glory to God, glory to God,
And peace to God's people on earth,
And peace to God's people on earth.**

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Let us pray together the prayer of the day.

**Lord God, your lovingkindness always goes before us and follows after us. Summon us into your light, and direct our steps in the ways of goodness that come through the cross of your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.
Amen.**

FIRST READING: Isaiah 9:1-4

The northern tribes of Zebulun and Naphtali experienced the gloom of defeat by Assyrian military forces, but they are assured that their condition will be reversed when God makes a light-filled appearance. The joy they will experience will resemble celebrations of great harvests, because God will deliver them from everything that diminishes or oppresses them.

A reading from Isaiah.

¹ There will be no gloom for those who were in anguish. In the former time [the LORD] brought into contempt the land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali, but in the latter time he will make glorious the way of the sea, the land beyond the Jordan, Galilee of the nations.

² The people who walked in darkness
have seen a great light;
those who lived in a land of deep darkness—
on them light has shined.

³ You have multiplied exultation;
you have increased its joy;
they rejoice before you
as with joy at the harvest,
as people exult when dividing plunder.

⁴ For 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.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

PSALM: Psalm 27:1, 4-9

- ¹ The LORD is my light and my salvation;
whom then shall I fear?
The LORD is the stronghold of my life;
of whom shall I be afraid?
- ⁴ **One thing I ask of the LORD; one thing I seek;
that I may dwell in the house of the LORD all the days of
my life; to gaze upon the beauty of the LORD and
to seek God in the temple.**
- ⁵ For in the day of trouble God will give me shelter,
hide me in the hidden places of the sanctuary,
and raise me high upon a rock.
- ⁶ **Even now my head is lifted up above my enemies
who surround me. Therefore I will offer sacrifice in
the sanctuary, sacrifices of rejoicing; I will sing and make
music to the LORD.**
- ⁷ Hear my voice, O LORD, when I call;
have mercy on me and answer me.
- ⁸ **My heart speaks your message—"Seek my face."
Your face, O LORD, I will seek.**
- ⁹ Hide not your face from me, turn not away from your
servant in anger.
Cast me not away—you have been my helper;
forsake me not, O God of my salvation.

SECOND READING: 1 Corinthians 1:10-18

Paul calls on the Corinthians to end their dissensions and share the unified outlook of the gospel. Discord arises when we forget that we belong not to human leaders or institutions but to Christ. Indeed, the unifying word of the cross of Christ is the center of the gospel and the power of God's salvation.

A reading from 1 Corinthians.

¹⁰ Now I appeal to you, brothers and sisters, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that all of you be in agreement and that there be no divisions among you but that you be knit together in the same mind and the same purpose. ¹¹ For it has been made clear to me by Chloe's people that there are quarrels among you, my brothers and sisters. ¹² What I mean is that each of you says, "I belong to Paul," or "I belong to Apollos," or "I belong to Cephas," or "I belong to Christ." ¹³ Has Christ been divided? Was Paul crucified for you? Or were you baptized in the name of Paul? ¹⁴ I thank God that I baptized none of you except Crispus and Gaius, ¹⁵ so that no one can say that you were baptized in my name. ¹⁶ I did baptize also the household of Stephanas; beyond that, I do not know whether I baptized anyone else. ¹⁷ For Christ did not send me to baptize but to proclaim the gospel—and not with eloquent wisdom, so that the cross of Christ might not be emptied of its power.

¹⁸ For the message about the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God.

The word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION (ELW p. 216)
Alleluia, Lord, to whom shall we go?
Alleluia. You have the words of eternal life.
Alleluia, alleluia.

GOSPEL: Matthew 4:12-23

Jesus begins his public ministry shortly after John the Baptist is imprisoned by Herod. He proclaims the nearness of God's reign and calls four fishermen to be his first disciples.

The holy gospel according to Matthew.

Glory to you, O Lord.

¹² Now when Jesus heard that John had been arrested, he withdrew to Galilee. ¹³ He left Nazareth and made his home in Capernaum by the sea, in the territory of Zebulun and Naphtali, ¹⁴ so that what had been spoken through the prophet Isaiah might be fulfilled:

¹⁵ “Land of Zebulun, land of Naphtali,
on the road by the sea, across the Jordan, Galilee of the gentiles—

¹⁶ the people who sat in darkness
have seen a great light,
and for those who sat in the region and shadow of death
light has dawned.”

¹⁷ From that time Jesus began to proclaim, “Repent, for the kingdom of heaven has come near.”

¹⁸ As he walked by the Sea of Galilee, he saw two brothers, Simon, who is called Peter, and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the sea—for they were fishers. ¹⁹ And he said to them, “Follow me, and I will make you fishers of people.” ²⁰ Immediately they left their nets and followed him. ²¹ As he went from there, he saw two other brothers, James son of Zebedee and his brother John, in the boat with their father Zebedee, mending their nets, and he called them. ²² Immediately they left the boat and their father and followed him.

²³ Jesus went throughout all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues and proclaiming the good news of the kingdom and curing every disease and every sickness among the people.

The gospel of the Lord.
Praise to you, O Christ.

SERMON

HYMN OF THE DAY (ELW 798)

Will You Come and Follow Me: The Summons

1 "Will you come and follow me if I but call your name?
Will you go where you don't know and never be the same?
Will you let my love be shown, will you let my name be known,
Will you let my life be grown in you and you in me?"

2 "Will you leave yourself behind if I but call your name?
Will you care for cruel and kind and never be the same?
Will you risk the hostile stare, should your life attract or scare?
Will you let me answer pray'r in you and you in me?"

3 "Will you let the blinded see if I but call your name?
Will you set the pris'ners free and never be the same?
Will you kiss the leper clean, and do such as this unseen,
And admit to what I mean in you and you in me?"

4 "Will you love the you you hide if I but call your name?
Will you quell the fear inside and never be the same?
Will you use the faith you've found to reshape the world around,
Through my sight and touch and sound in you and you in me?"

5 Lord, your summons echoes true when you but call my name.
Let me turn and follow you and never be the same.
In your company I'll go where your love and footsteps show.
Thus I'll move and live and grow in you and you in me.

THE APOSTLES' CREED

Let us confess our Christian faith using the words of the Apostles' Creed.

**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. Amen.**

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

Jon: As God's beloved children united in Christ, let us pray for the church, the whole human community, and the well-being of the earth, our home.

Jon: Holy One, you entrust the message of the cross and the mission of the gospel to the church in every land. Guide the newly baptized and deepen the faith of all who follow Christ.

Merciful God,
receive our prayer.

Reader 1: Holy Creator, you lavish creation with splendor, and we praise you for the gift of life. Teach us to live as wise stewards, sharing the earth's resources with all inhabitants of this garden planet. Merciful God,
receive our prayer.

Reader 2: Holy Judge, your power is love, and you judge the nations by the measure of Christ. Free any who are unjustly accused or wrongly condemned. We pray for those in authority. Merciful God,
receive our prayer.

Reader 3: Holy Lover, you care for vulnerable young children, frail elders, and any who are sick. We pray for all who are affected by natural disasters. Provide for their needs and relieve their suffering. Merciful God,
receive our prayer.

Reader 4: Holy Giver, you gather, forgive, and shape us as disciples of Christ. Nurture in us a spirit of patience and respect, that we may love one another as you love us. Merciful God,
receive our prayer.

Reader 5: Holy Savior, you free us from the power of death. Lead and guide us until we come at last into the communion of all your saints in light. Merciful God,
receive our prayer.

Jon: Confident that the Holy Spirit receives our prayers and answers us, we commend all for whom we pray to God's loving-kindness made known to us in Christ Jesus our Savior.
Amen.

WE SHARE THE PEACE

The peace of Christ be with you always.
And also with you.

Let us share the peace with one another.

THANKSGIVING FOR THE WORD

Let us pray together, giving thanks to our God.

O God of justice and love, we give thanks to you that you illumine our way through life with the words of your Son. Give us the light we need, awaken us to the needs of others, and at the end bring all the world to your feast; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, to whom, with you and the Holy Spirit, be honor and glory forever. Amen.

LORD'S PRAYER

Lord, remember us in your kingdom and teach us to 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.**

BLESSING

May the God of glory dwell in you richly,
name you beloved,
and shine brightly on your path;
and the blessing of almighty God,
the Father, the ✝ Son, and the Holy Spirit,
be upon you and remain with you always.
Amen.

SENDING SONG (ELW 815)

I Want to Walk as a Child of the Light

1 I want to walk as a child of the light.
I want to follow Jesus.
God set the stars to give light to the world.
The star of my life is Jesus.

In him there is no darkness at all.
The night and the day are both alike.
The Lamb is the light of the city of God.
Shine in my heart, Lord Jesus.

2 I want to see the brightness of God.
I want to look at Jesus.
Clear Sun of righteousness, shine on my path,
And show me the way to the Father.

In him there is no darkness at all.
The night and the day are both alike.
The Lamb is the light of the city of God.
Shine in my heart, Lord Jesus.

3 I'm looking for the coming of Christ.
I want to be with Jesus.
When we have run with patience the race,
We shall know the joy of Jesus.
In him there is no darkness at all.
The night and the day are both alike.
The Lamb is the light of the city of God.
Shine in my heart, Lord Jesus.

DISMISSAL

Go in peace. Share the Good News.
Thanks be to God.

LET US SING TOGETHER:

God be with you 'til we meet again,
By his counsel's guide, uphold you,
With his sheep securely fold you,
God be with you 'til we meet again. Amen.

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