

St. Johns Lutheran Church

To the one who conquers



I will grant to eat of the tree of life,

St. Johns Lutheran Church
Christmas Day

St. Louis, Missouri
December 25th, 2022

A Tale of Trees from Death to Life
Tree of Life (Tree of Everlasting Life)

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AS WE GATHER

The long wait is over—the Savior is born! For many people, the days, weeks, and even months have been filled with anticipation for Christmas. For children, it may be an anticipation of gifts; for others, it may be long-awaited family time enjoyed and all the season brings. For all, we pray the Good News of a Savior born this day in the city of David is the overarching reason to celebrate. Others in history had to wait a much longer time for their Christmas joy. Approximately seven centuries before “the Word became flesh” (John 1:14), Isaiah would be inspired by the Spirit to proclaim to the people, “The LORD has bared His holy arm before the eyes of all the nations, and all the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of our God” (Isaiah 52:10). Though the people of Isaiah’s day would not experience Christmas as we do, they would hold on by faith to the anticipated promise of salvation through our Savior who was to come. For us, we give thanks that salvation has come. In the Son of God wrapped in swaddling cloths and lying in a manger, and with the mission for humanity set before Him, “The LORD has bared His holy arm” (Isaiah 52:10). May this promise fulfilled increase our Christmas joy as God still comes to us today in His Means of Grace, that we not only see but often celebrate the salvation of our God.

RINGING OF THE BELLS / WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS

WELCOME GUESTS

We’re glad you are here! Make it a point to introduce yourself to the pastor. Please take time to fill out an attendance card and drop it in the basket during the offering. Please consider liking us on Facebook (St. Johns Lutheran Church – St. Louis City) and checking out our website (<https://stjohnslutheranstlouis.org/>). **Our service today includes the celebration of God’s presence, as He comes in the true body and blood of Christ in the Sacrament of Holy Communion. Any who are not yet instructed or who hold a confession differing from that of this congregation and The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod, are asked to refrain from receiving the sacrament until they have spoken with the pastor.**

PREPARATION

HYMN

O Come, All Ye Faithful

LSB 379

**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;**

Refrain:

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

**Highest, most holy,
Light of Light eternal,
Born of a virgin, a mortal He comes;
Son of the Father
Now in flesh appearing! *[Refrain]***

**Sing, choirs of angels,
Sing in exultation,
Sing, all ye citizens of heaven above!
Glory to God
In the highest: *[Refrain]***

**Yea, Lord, we greet Thee,
Born this happy morning;
Jesus, to Thee be glory giv'n!
Word of the Father
Now in flesh appearing! *[Refrain]***

INVOCATION

In the name of the Father and of the ✠ Son and of the Holy Spirit.
Amen.

LIGHTING OF THE WREATH *John 1:1, 4–5, 9; Isaiah 9:6; 52:10*

In the beginning was the Word,
and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.
In Him was life,
and the life was the light of men.

The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.
**The true light, which enlightens everyone,
was coming into the world.**

For to us a child is born, to us a son is given;
and the government shall be upon His shoulder,
and His name shall be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God,
Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

The LORD has bared His holy arm before the eyes of all the nations,
and all the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of our God.

ADVENT LITANY

O God, our Father, You made a perfect and beautiful world. But when Adam and Eve disobeyed you by eating the fruit of the forbidden tree, sin and its curse corrupted the earth. Like them, we turn away from doing your will and so incur the curse of death. Turn us back to you to repent of our disobedience.

Lord, have mercy, and come to us.

Heavenly Father, in your mercy and love you promised us a savior from sin's curse. Thank you for establishing the family of Abraham, of Jesse and David, of Joseph and Mary to bring forth that savior, and thank you for grafting us into your family tree.

Lord, have mercy, and come to us.

Almighty Lord, you were welcomed with palm branches and Hosannas when you entered Jerusalem. Fill us with your Holy Spirit so that we not only praise you with our lips, but also honor you with our lives.

Lord, have mercy, and come to us.

Dear Jesus, You are the light of the world that no darkness can put out. As we light candles of prophecy and proclamation this season, let the light of your love shine on us. Make us your lights that we may shine the good news of your forgiveness on all we meet.

Lord, have mercy, and come to us.

Lord Jesus, as we remember your birth in Bethlehem, remind us that you came because of our sin. In your great love for us, you endured humility and shame, dreadful suffering, and death on the tree of the cross. In dying, you paid for our forgiveness, and in rising, you opened the kingdom of heaven to us. Help us to put our trust in your saving grace.

Lord, have mercy, and come to us.

Almighty God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, you created us, redeemed us, and made us Your own people. Keep us faithful to You all the days of

our lives, that we may eat the fruit of the tree of life in heaven and give You all thanks and praise forever.

Lord, have mercy, and come to us.

The Lord has had mercy and has come to us. When we repent of our sins, He covers them with Jesus' righteousness. Thanks be to God!

Amen.

CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION *John 1:4–5; Isaiah 52:10*

Jesus, Word made flesh, You came to dwell among us, but the darkness of our sin separates and we often fail to bask in the light of Your presence.

We are sinful and unclean; we have sinned against You in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done and by what we have left undone. We have not loved You with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. We justly deserve Your present and eternal punishment.

John writes in our Gospel lesson, “In Him was life, and the life was the light of men. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.” Heavenly Father, too frequently we live in the darkness of unbelief.

Forgive us, Lord, for those sins we know, and those sins we do not know.

For the sake of Your Son, Jesus Christ, have mercy on us.

Forgive us, renew us, and lead us, so that we may delight in Your will and walk in Your light to the glory of Your holy name. Amen.

Almighty God in His mercy has given His Son to be born into this world and in our flesh for us, to live a perfect life we can never attain, and to give His life as a perfect sacrifice for you. For His sake, He forgives you all your sins. Christ was born to live for us, to die for us, that we by faith will rise with Him in victory. He was born as our Savior to forgive. As a called and ordained 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.

The LORD has bared His holy arm before the eyes of all the nations, **and all the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of our God.**

WORD

HYMN OF PRAISE Angels We Have Heard on High LSB 368

Angels we have heard on high,
Sweetly singing o'er the plains,
And the mountains in reply,
Echoing their joyous strains.

Refrain:

Gloria in excelsis Deo.

Gloria in excelsis Deo.

Shepherds, why this jubilee?
Why your joyous strains prolong?
What the gladsome tidings be
Which inspire your heav'nly song? *[Refrain]*

Come to Bethlehem and see
Him whose birth the angels sing;
Come, adore on bended knee
Christ the Lord, the newborn King. *[Refrain]*

SALUTATION

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

OLD TESTAMENT READING *Isaiah 61:1-3 & Jeremiah 17:7-8*

The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me, because the Lord has anointed me to bring good news to the poor; he has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to those who are bound; ² to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all who mourn; ³ to grant to those who mourn in Zion— to give them a beautiful headdress instead of ashes, the oil of gladness instead of mourning, the garment of praise instead of a faint spirit; that they may be called oaks of righteousness, the planting of the Lord, that he may be glorified....⁷ “Blessed is the man who trusts in the Lord, whose trust is the Lord. ⁸ He is like a tree planted by water, that sends out its roots by the stream, and does not fear when heat comes, for its leaves remain green, and is not anxious in the year of drought, for it does not cease to bear fruit.”

This is the Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

GRADUAL *Isaiah 9:6; Psalm 98:1a*

To us a child is born, to us a son is * given;

and the government shall be upon His * shoulder.

**And His name shall be called Wonderful Counselor, * Mighty God,
Everlasting Father, * Prince of Peace.**

Sing to the Lord a * new song,

for He has done * marvelous things!

EPISTLE *Revelation 2:7; 22:1-2,14*

⁷He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To the one who conquers I will grant to eat of the tree of life, which is in the paradise of God.'.... Then the angel showed me the river of the water of life, bright as crystal, flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb ²through the middle of the street of the city; also, on either side of the river, the tree of life with its twelve kinds of fruit, yielding its fruit each month. The leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations....

¹⁴Blessed are those who wash their robes, so that they may have the right to the tree of life and that they may enter the city by the gates.

This is the Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

VERSE *John 1:14*

Alleluia. The Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen His glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth. Alleluia.

GOSPEL PROCESSIONAL *(with choir singing "He Is Born")*

HOLY GOSPEL *John 1:1-18*

The Holy Gospel according to St. John, the first chapter.

Glory to You, O Lord.

¹In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. ²He was in the beginning with God. ³All things were made through him, and without him was not any thing made that was made. ⁴In him was life, and the life was the light of men. ⁵The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it. ⁶There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. ⁷He came as a witness, to bear witness about the light, that all might believe through him. ⁸He was not the light, but came to bear witness about the light. ⁹The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world. ¹⁰He was in the world, and the world was made through him, yet the world did not know him. ¹¹He came to his own, and his own people did not receive him. ¹²But to all who did receive him, who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God, ¹³who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God. ¹⁴And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth. ¹⁵(John bore witness about him, and cried out, "This was he of whom I said, 'He who comes after me ranks before me, because he was before me.'") ¹⁶And from his fullness we have all received, grace upon grace. ¹⁷For the law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. ¹⁸No one has ever seen God; the only God, who is at the Father's side, he has made him known.

This is the Gospel of the Lord.
Praise to You, O Christ.

GOSPEL RECESSIONAL

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE AND TREE DECORATIONS

HYMN OF THE DAY Now Sing We, Now Rejoice LSB 386

**Now sing we, now rejoice,
Now raise to heav'n our voice;
He from whom joy streameth
Poor in a manger lies;
Not so brightly beameth
The sun in yonder skies.
Thou my Savior art!
Thou my Savior art!**

Come from on high to me;
I cannot rise to thee.
Cheer my wearied spirit,
O pure and holy Child;
Through Thy grace and merit,
Blest Jesus, Lord most mild,
Draw me unto Thee!
Draw me unto Thee!

Now through His Son doth shine
The Father's grace divine.
Death was reigning o'er us
Through sin and vanity
Till He opened for us
A bright eternity.
May we praise Him there!
May we praise Him there!

Oh, where shall joy be found?
Where but on heav'nly ground?
Where the angels singing
With all His saints unite,
Sweetest praises bringing
In heav'nly joy and light,
Oh, that we were there!
Oh, that we were there!

SERMON

NICENE CREED

I believe in one God, the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth and of all things visible and invisible.

And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Son of God, begotten of his Father before all worlds, God of God, Light of Light, very God of very God, begotten, not made, being of one substance with the Father, by whom all things were made; who for us men and for our salvation came down from heaven and was incarnate by the Holy Spirit of the virgin Mary and was made man;

and was crucified also for us under Pontius Pilate. He suffered and was buried. And the third day he rose again according to the Scriptures and ascended into heaven and sits at the right hand of the Father. And He will come again with glory to judge both the living and the dead, whose kingdom will have no end.

And I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord and giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son, who with the Father and the Son together is worshiped and glorified, who spoke by the prophets. And I believe in one holy Christian and apostolic Church, I acknowledge one Baptism for the remission of sins, and I look for the resurrection of the dead and the life of the world to come. Amen.

OFFERING

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH

Father, on this day we recall how great is Your love for us, sending Your Son into our world as a shoot from the stump of Jesse, to be our Savior and to forgive our sins.

Thank You, Lord, for this Christmas gift.

Jesus, on this day we recall how great is Your love for us; You came from heaven to live on earth as one of us, and one with us, to forgive our sin, by dying on the tree.

Thank You, Lord, for this Christmas gift.

Holy Spirit, on this day we recall how great is Your love for us, gathering us together through the water of Baptism to bear good fruit and nourishing our faith through the Word and the body and blood of Jesus for the forgiveness of our sin.

Thank You, Lord, for this Christmas gift.

Gracious Lord, You have bared Your holy arm before the eyes of all the nations, that the ends of the earth shall see Your salvation, giving us a right to the tree of life.

Thank You, Lord, for this Christmas gift.

Even amid Christmas peace and joy, we experience the hurt and harm of this world. We lift up all those who suffer in mind, body, or spirit, [*especially . . .*]. Reach out to them with Your holy arm and the light of our Savior that they may be comforted in their time of need, seeing the salvation You have prepared for all through faith.

Thank You, Lord, for this Christmas gift given, received, and kept unto life eternal. Amen.

SACRAMENT

PREFACE

LSB 208

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 Him thanks and praise.

It is truly good, right, and salutary that we by faith give thanks for the salvation You have bestowed upon Your people, baring Your holy arm before all the nations; for You came from heaven to earth as one of us, as an infant for the hope of humanity and restoration as Redeemer.

Therefore with angels and archangels and with all the company of heaven we laud and magnify Your glorious name, evermore praising You and singing:

SANCTUS LSB 208

Holy, holy, holy Lord God of Sabaoth adored;

Heaven and earth with full acclaim

shout the glory of Your Name.

Sing Hosanna in the highest,

Sing hosanna to the Lord;

Truly blest is He who comes

In the name of the Lord!

PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

We pray, from the ends of the earth to celebrate with all the faithful the marriage feast of the Lamb in His kingdom, dressed in white robes, eating from the tree of life, going through the gates of paradise, which has no end. Graciously receive our prayers; deliver and preserve us. To You alone, O Father, be all glory, honor, and worship, with the Son and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and 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.

THE WORDS OF OUR LORD

Our Lord Jesus Christ, on the night when He was betrayed, took bread, and when He had given thanks, He broke it and gave it to the disciples and said: “Take, eat; this is My ✠ body, which is given for you. This do in remembrance of Me.”

In the same way also He took the cup after supper, and when He had given thanks, He gave it to them, saying: “Drink of it, all of you; this cup is the new testament in My ✠ blood, which is shed for you for the forgiveness of sins. This do, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me.”

PAX DOMINI (The Peace of the Lord)

The peace of the Lord be with you always.

Amen.

AGNUS DEI (Lamb of God) *LSB 210*

**O Jesus Christ, true Lamb of God,
You take the sin of the world away;
O Jesus Christ, true Lamb of God,
Have mercy on us, Lord, we pray.**

**O Jesus Christ, true Lamb of God,
You take the sin of the world away;
Have mercy on us, Jesus Christ,
And grant us peace, O Lord, we pray.**

DISTRIBUTION HYMNS

Hark! The Herald Angels Sing *LSB 380*

“From Heaven Above to Earth I Come” *LSB 358*

NUNC DIMITTIS (Song of Simeon) *LSB 211*

**O Lord, now let Your servant
Depart in heav’nly peace,
For I have seen the glory
Of Your redeeming grace;**

**A light to lead the Gentiles
Unto Your holy hill,
The glory of Your people,
Your chosen Israel.**

**All glory to the Father,
All glory to the Son,
All glory to the Spirit,
Forever Three in One;
For as in the beginning,
Is now, shall ever be,
God's triune name resounding
Through all eternity.**

BENEDICTION

The Lord bless you and keep you.
The Lord make His face shine on you and be gracious to you.
The Lord look upon you with favor and ✠ give you peace.
Amen.

HYMN Joy to the World *LSB 387*

**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 nature sing.**

**Joy to the earth, the Savior reigns!
Let men their songs employ,
While fields and floods, rocks, hills, and plains
Repeat the sounding joy,
Repeat the sounding joy,
Repeat the sounding joy.
No more let sins and sorrows 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 the curse is found.**

**He rules the world with truth and grace
And makes the nations prove
The glories of His righteousness
And wonders of His love,
And wonders of His love,
And wonders of His love.**

Preacher	Pastor Michael Tanney
Liturgist	Pastor Michael Tanney
Lector	Pastor Michael Tanney
Elders	Al Bohannon & Earl Welch
Organist	Suzanne Manelli
Ushers	Cameron Hampel, John Benwell,

Patrick Benwell, Jayvon Evers, Joan Potvin,
William Gebhart, and Roger Schmidt

Children's Message	Pastor Michael Tanney
Acolytes/Screen	Tra-Mi and Thao-Vy

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PASTOR AWAY Pastor will be on vacation from December 26th-January 1st. In the case of an emergency, please contact Head Elder Earl Welch @ 314-629-9507 or Al Bohannon @ 314-401-0628

THANK YOU from Pastor with so many well wishes sending him and his wife Christmas cards and gifts. May you all find the New Year a moment to reflect on God's Blessings of His presence to hear your prayers.

The Poinsettia's gracing the Chancel were placed to the Glory
of God and in the memory of loved ones by:

Sandra Gerber
Diane Schwab

Marsha Jackson

Ruth Trauth
Doris Seevers

Thuy Troung
Tra-Mi Troung

Al & Liz Bohannon

Loved Ones
Henry & Hazel Schwab
Jacob & Noah Flyinn
Denny & Sally Schwab
Joseph Jackson
Loved Ones
Loved Ones
Ken Seevers
David Seevers
Valerie Seevers
Ken Seevers
Loved Ones
Alex Bell
Mrs. K
Tamarris Bohannon
JR and Lucy Bohannon

Announcements

Saved to Share Called to Care

Our Response to God's Love Last Week

Attendance Sunday: 49

Nepalese Attendance: 29

Offering: \$3,391.00

LONG TERM SUB NEEDED One of Word of Life's preschool teachers will be taking maternity leave from the end of March through the end of the school year. They are looking for a long term substitute teacher for that time period. If you are interested or know someone who may be, please contact Principal Melissa Bergholt at mbergholt@wordoflifeschool.net or 314-832-1244.

BIG BAND SWING The Lutheran South bands will host *Big Band Swing* on Friday, January 13 from 6:00 - 10:00 p.m. The night will feature the local professional big band "The Ambassadors of Swing." Tickets are available for \$30 each and include beer, wine, and hors d'oeuvres. Free swing dance lessons will be offered at 6:30 p.m. It is sure to be a fun evening as we raise money for the band to go on tour this spring! Register at LSlancers.org/events

Prayers

Special Prayer Petitions –Joan as she recovers from hip surgery; **Melba Fanger** as she recovers back at home; **Maureen Rehmer** for healing of her hip; **Jabin** who has recovered and is back home; **Jerry** as he recovers from covid; **Carmen Hobson** who is facing pain, stability, and results for upcoming surgery; **Bobbie** who is back in the nursing home, but suffering; **Confirmation Class** for the Lord to mature their faith; **Our Vicars** as they continue to take classes at the Seminary; **Our Field-Workers** Tristan (and family), Alvaro and, Isaac; **St. Johns** as we look for the funding for two new AC units.
Shut Ins – Bobbie Kepford, Jerry Schmaltz, Steve Bain, Eileen Wehrheim, Carmen Hobson

Opportunities to Love and Serve Christ this Week December 25-January 1

Sunday	9:00am Worship w/ Communion (Christmas Day) 10:30am Nepali Worship & Christmas Celebration 12:30pm African Worship
Monday	Office Closed <u>NO</u> Counseling in Nursery / <u>NO</u> Compass
Tuesday	8am-12pm Office Open (Pastor Gone) NO Compass NO Seminary Students
Wednesday	8am-12pm Office Open (Pastor Gone) NO Compass NO Compass Chapel
Thursday	8am-12pm Office Open (Pastor Gone) NO Ridgewood Bible Study <u>NO</u> Compass / <u>NO</u> Adult Confirmation
Friday	8am-12pm Office Open (Pastor Gone) <u>NO</u> Bible Study / <u>NO</u> Counseling in Nursery <u>1pm</u> Nepali Mother's Prayer Service / <u>NO</u> Compass
Saturday	NO Food Pantry <u>NO</u> Confirmation / <u>NO</u> Vicar Meeting
Next Sunday	9:00am Worship 10:30am Bible Study/Nepali Worship 12:30pm African Worship