



St. John's Evangelical Lutheran Church  
January 29, 2023

# ST. JOHN'S EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH

106 Scheid Road, Sandusky, OH 44870

(419) 625-2192 [www.stjohnlcsandusky.com](http://www.stjohnlcsandusky.com)

Sanctuary Worship 10:30 a.m.

Stacy Lauer-Scovanner, Pastor

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January 29, 2023

Fourth Sunday after Epiphany

Welcome to Worship! Who are the blessed ones of God? For Micah, they are those who do justice, love kindness, and walk humbly with God. For Paul, they are the ones who find wisdom in the weakness of the cross. For Jesus, they are the poor, the meek, the merciful, the pure in heart, the peacemakers, those who mourn, and those who hunger for righteousness. In baptism we find our blessed identity and calling in this countercultural way of living and serving.

As Lutheran Christians, we believe and teach that Christ is truly present in the celebration of Holy Communion as he is God with us. Christians of all denominations are encouraged to come to the Lord's table. We commune children of any age who have received communion instruction at St. John or another Christian church. Children who have not yet received communion instruction will receive a blessing. Both red wine and white grape juice are offered to accommodate various traditions. Gluten free wafers are provided for those with dietary restrictions. Please make the pastor aware of your need.

If you are visiting today, please sign the guest register after worship. Plan to worship with us again next Sunday.

Prelude

“Amazing Grace! (How Sweet the Sound) by Matthew McConnell

New Britain from Virginia Harmony, 1831 incorporating

Ombra mai fu (Largo) from Serse by George Frideric Handel

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Welcome and Announcements

*Please stand*

**Gathering**

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

**Gathering Hymn**

“O God of Mercy, God of Light”

Text: Godfrey Thring, 1823-1903, alt. Music: Joseph Barnby, 1838-1896

# O God of Mercy, God of Light



1 O God of mer - cy, God of light, in love and  
2 You sent your Son to die for all, that our lost  
3 Teach us the les - son Je - sus taught: to feel for  
4 For all are kin - dred, far and wide, since Je - sus



mer - cy in - fi - nite, teach us, as ev - er  
world might hear your call; oh, hear us lest we  
those his blood has bought, that ev - 'ry deed and  
Christ for all has died; grant us the will, and



in your sight, to live our lives in you.  
stray and fall! We rest our hope in you.  
word and thought may work a work for you.  
grace pro - vide to love them all in you.

5 In sickness, sorrow, want, or care,  
each other's burdens help us share;  
may we, where help is needed, there  
give help as though to you.

6 And may your Holy Spirit move  
all those who live to live in love,  
till you receive in heav'n above  
those who have lived to you.

Text: Godfrey Thring, 1823–1903, alt.  
Music: JUST AS I AM, Joseph Barnby, 1838–1896

## Greeting

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

**And also with you.**

## Canticle of Praise

P: This is the feast of victory for our God. Alleluia!

All



1 Wor - thy is Christ, the Lamb who was slain, whose blood set us



free to be peo - ple of God. Pow - er and rich - es and wis - dom and



strength, and hon - or and bless - ing and glo - ry are his.

*Refrain*



This is the feast of vic - to - ry for our God. Al - le - lu - ia.



2 Sing with all the peo - ple of God and join in the



hymn of all cre - a - tion: Bless - ing and hon - or and glo - ry and



might be to God and the Lamb for - ev - er. A - men.

*Final refrain*



This is the feast of vic - to - ry for our God, for the Lamb who was slain



has be - gun his reign. Al - le - lu - ia. Al - le - lu - ia.

## Prayer of the Day

Let us pray.

**Holy God, you confound the world's wisdom in giving your kingdom to the lowly and the pure in heart. Give us such a hunger and thirst for justice, and perseverance in striving for peace, that in our words and deeds the world may see the life of your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.**

*Please be seated*

## First Reading: Micah 6:1-8

A reading from Micah.

*With the mountains and the foundations of the earth as the jury, God brings a lawsuit against Israel. God has "wearied" Israel with a long history of saving acts. God does not want or expect lavish sacrifices to attempt to earn divine favor. Rather God empowers the people to do justice, to love loyalty to God, and to walk shrewdly in God's service.*

<sup>1</sup>Hear what the LORD says:

Rise, plead your case before the mountains,  
and let the hills hear your voice.

<sup>2</sup>Hear, you mountains, the controversy of the LORD,  
and you enduring foundations of the earth;  
for the LORD has a controversy with his people,  
and he will contend with Israel.

<sup>3</sup>"O my people, what have I done to you?  
In what have I wearied you? Answer me!

<sup>4</sup>For I brought you up from the land of Egypt,  
and redeemed you from the house of slavery;  
and I sent before you Moses,  
Aaron, and Miriam.

<sup>5</sup>O my people, remember now what King Balak of Moab devised,  
what Balaam son of Beor answered him,  
and what happened from Shittim to Gilgal,  
that you may know the saving acts of the LORD."

<sup>6</sup>"With what shall I come before the LORD,  
and bow myself before God on high?  
Shall I come before him with burnt offerings,  
with calves a year old?

<sup>7</sup>Will the LORD be pleased with thousands of rams,  
with ten thousands of rivers of oil?  
Shall I give my firstborn for my transgression,  
the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul?"

<sup>8</sup>He has told you, O mortal, what is good;  
and what does the LORD require of you  
but to do justice, and to love kindness,  
and to walk humbly with your God?

The word of the Lord.           **Thanks be to God.**

**Psalm: Psalm 15 (Read responsively)**

<sup>1</sup>LORD, who may dwell in your tabernacle?  
Who may abide upon your holy hill?

<sup>2</sup>**Those who lead a blameless life and do what is right,  
who speak the truth from their heart;**

<sup>3</sup>they do not slander with the tongue, they do no evil to their friends;  
they do not cast discredit upon a neighbor.

<sup>4</sup>**In their sight the wicked are rejected, but they honor those who fear the LORD.  
They have sworn upon their health and do not take back their word.**

<sup>5</sup>They do not give their money in hope of gain, nor do they take bribes against the  
innocent.

Those who do these things shall never be overthrown.

**Second Reading: 1 Corinthians 1:18-31**

A reading from 1 Corinthians.

*According to the world's standards of power and might, the message of the cross seems stupid and offensive. Yet this word reveals the paradoxical way God has chosen to work power and salvation through weakness, rejection, and suffering. Hence the message of the cross becomes true wisdom and power for believers.*

<sup>18</sup>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. <sup>19</sup>For it is written,

“I will destroy the wisdom of the wise,  
and the discernment of the discerning I will thwart.”

<sup>20</sup>Where is the one who is wise? Where is the scribe? Where is the debater of this age? Has not God made foolish the wisdom of the world? <sup>21</sup>For since, in the wisdom of God, the world did not know God through wisdom, God decided, through the foolishness of our proclamation, to save those who believe. <sup>22</sup>For Jews demand signs and Greeks desire wisdom, <sup>23</sup>but we proclaim Christ crucified, a stumbling block to Jews and foolishness to Gentiles, <sup>24</sup>but to those who are the called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God. <sup>25</sup>For God's foolishness is wiser than human wisdom, and

God's weakness is stronger than human strength.

<sup>26</sup>Consider your own call, brothers and sisters: not many of you were wise by human standards, not many were powerful, not many were of noble birth. <sup>27</sup>But God chose what is foolish in the world to shame the wise; God chose what is weak in the world to shame the strong; <sup>28</sup>God chose what is low and despised in the world, things that are not, to reduce to nothing things that are, <sup>29</sup>so that no one might boast in the presence of God.

<sup>30</sup>He is the source of your life in Christ Jesus, who became for us wisdom from God, and righteousness and sanctification and redemption, <sup>31</sup>in order that, as it is written, "Let the one who boasts, boast in the Lord."

The word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

*Please stand*

### **Gospel Acclamation**



Al - le - lu - ia. Lord, to whom shall we go?



You have the words of e - ter - nal life. Al - le - lu - ia.

### **Gospel: Matthew 5:1-12**

The Holy Gospel according to St. Matthew, the fifth chapter.

### **Glory to you, O Lord.**

*Jesus opens the Sermon on the Mount by naming those who are blessed in the reign of God.*

<sup>1</sup>When Jesus saw the crowds, he went up the mountain; and after he sat down, his disciples came to him. <sup>2</sup>Then he began to speak, and taught them, saying:

<sup>3</sup>"Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

<sup>4</sup>"Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted.

<sup>5</sup>"Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth.

<sup>6</sup>"Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled.

<sup>7</sup>"Blessed are the merciful, for they will receive mercy.

<sup>8</sup>"Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God.

<sup>9</sup>“Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God.

<sup>10</sup>“Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness’ sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

<sup>11</sup>“Blessed are you when people revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account. <sup>12</sup>Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven, for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you.”

The Gospel of the Lord    **Praise to you, O Christ.**

*Please be seated*

## **Sermon**

*Please stand*

## **Hymn of the Day**

*“Rise Up, O Saints of God!”*

ELW 669

Text © Norman O. Forness, admin. Augsburg Fortress

1 Rise up, O saints of God!  
From vain ambitions turn;  
Christ rose triumphant that your hearts  
with nobler zeal might burn.

2 Speak out, O saints of God!  
Despair engulfs earth's frame;  
as heirs of God's baptismal grace,  
the word of hope proclaim.

3 Rise up, O saints of God!  
The kingdom's task embrace;  
redress sin's cruel consequence;  
give justice larger place.

4 Give heed, O saints of God!  
Creation cries in pain;  
stretch forth your hand of healing now,  
with love the weak sustain.

5 Commit your hearts to seek  
the paths which Christ has trod;

and, quickened by the Spirit's pow'r,  
rise up, O saints of God!

## **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.

\*Or, "he descended into hell," another translation of this text in widespread use.

**Prayers of the people:** Merciful God. **Receive our prayer.**

## Peace

The peace of Christ be with you always.

**And also with you.**

*Please be seated*

## Offering

*"Once in Royal David's City"* Arranged by Mary McDonald

Tune: IRBY by Henry J. Gauntlet (1805-1876)

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*Please stand*

## Offertory

### Let the Vineyards Be Fruitful *Offering Song*

Let the vine - yards be fruit - ful, Lord, and fill to the brim our cup of  
bless - ing. Gath - er a har - vest from the seeds that were sown, that we may be  
fed with the bread of life. Gath - er the hopes and the dreams of all; u -  
nite them with the prayers we of - fer now. Grace our ta - ble with your  
pres - ence, and give us a fore - taste of the feast to come.

Text: John W. Arthur, 1922-1980

Music: Richard W. Hillert, b. 1923

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## **Offering Prayer**

Let us pray.

Holy God, gracious and merciful, you bring forth food from the earth and nourish your whole creation. Turn our hearts toward those who hunger in any way, that all may know your care; and prepare us now to feast on the bread of life, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **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.**

## **Thanksgiving at the Table**

God of our weary years, God of our silent tears,  
you have brought us this far along the way.

In times of bitterness you did not abandon us,  
but guided us into the path of love and light.

In every age you sent prophets to make known your loving will for all humanity.

The cry of the poor has become your own cry;  
our hunger and thirst for justice is your own desire.

In the fullness of time, you sent your chosen servant to preach good news to the afflicted,  
to break bread with the outcast and despised, and to ransom those in bondage to  
prejudice and sin.

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.**

Remembering, therefore, his death and resurrection, we await the day when Jesus shall return to free all the earth from the bonds of slavery and death.

Come, Lord Jesus! And let the church say, Amen.

**Amen.**

Send your Holy Spirit, our advocate, to fill the hearts of all who share this bread and cup with courage and wisdom to pursue love and justice in all the world.

Come, Spirit of freedom! And let the church say, Amen.

**Amen.**

Join our prayers and praise with your prophets and martyrs of every age, that, rejoicing in the hope of the resurrection, we might live in the freedom and hope of your Son.

Through him, with him, in him, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, all glory and honor is yours, almighty Father, now and forever.

**Amen.**

### **The Lord's Prayer**

Gathered into one by the Holy Spirit, let us pray as Jesus taught us.

**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**

Taste and see that the Lord is good.

*Please be seated*

### **Distribution**



Lamb of God, you take a-way the sin of the world; have mer-cy on  
 us. Lamb of God, you take a-way the sin of the world; have  
 mer-cy on us. Lamb of God, you take a-way the  
 sin of the world; grant us peace, grant us peace.

**Distribution Hymns:**

*“One Bread, One Body”*

ELW 496

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Refrain

One bread, one body, one Lord of all;  
 one cup of blessing which we bless,  
 and we, though many throughout the earth,  
 we are one body in this one Lord.

1 Gentile or Jew, servant or free,  
 woman or man, no more. Refrain

2 Many the gifts, many the works,  
 one in the Lord of all. Refrain

3 Grain for the fields, scattered and grown,  
 gathered to one for all. Refrain

**Distribution Hymn:**

*“Bread of Life from Heaven”*

ELW 474

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Refrain

Bread of life from heaven,  
 your blood and body given,  
 we eat this bread and drink this cup  
 until you come again.

1 Break now the bread of Christ's sacrifice;  
 giving thanks, hungry ones, gather round.  
 Eat, all of you, and be satisfied;  
 in Christ's presence the loaves will abound.  
 Refrain

2 Seek not the food that will pass away;  
set your hearts on the food that endures.  
Come, learn the true and the living way,  
that the fullness of life may be yours. Refrain

4 Dwell in the one who now dwells in you;  
make your home in the lifegiving Word.  
Know only Christ, Holy One of God,  
and believe in the truth you have heard. Refrain

### **Post Communion Blessing**

The body and blood of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ strengthen you and keep you in His grace.

**Amen**

### **Prayer after Communion**

Let us pray.

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.**

### **Sending**

God blesses us and sends us in mission to the world.

### **Blessing**

The Lord bless you and keep you.

The Lord's face shine on you with grace and mercy.

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

**Amen**

### **Sending Hymn**

*“O Master, Let Me Walk with You”*

**ELW 818**

Text: Washington Gladden, 1836-1918, alt. Music: H. Percy Smith, 1825-1898

1 O Master, let me walk with you  
in lowly paths of service true;  
tell me your secret; help me bear  
the strain of toil, the fret of care.

2 Help me the slow of heart to move  
by some clear, winning word of love;  
teach me the wayward feet to stay,  
and guide them in the homeward way.

3 Teach me your patience; share with me  
a closer, dearer company,  
in work that keeps faith sweet and strong,  
in trust that triumphs over wrong,

4 In hope that sends a shining ray  
far down the future's broad'ning way,  
in peace that only you can give;  
with you, O Master, let me live.

### Dismissal

Go in peace. Remember the poor.

**Thanks be to God.**

### Postlude

*"The Snow Lay on the Ground"*

Arranged by Mary McDonald

Tune: VENITE ADOREMUS Traditional carol

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St. John's Evangelical Lutheran Church is:

***"A Family of Disciples, Faithfully Making Christ Known"***

**And a congregation of the**

**Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA)**

### PEOPLE OF ST. JOHN'S, MINISTERS

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Communion Assistant: Allison Young

Audio/Visual Tech: Jon Baaske

Attendance: Jan. 29 - 48

Website: [www.stjohnlcsandusky.com](http://www.stjohnlcsandusky.com)

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**2023 the Year of Story Memory Verse.** *"But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth". Acts 1:8*

**Mark your calendars:** St. John's 2022 Annual meeting will be held on Sunday, January 29, 2023 immediately after worship.

**Council asks the congregation to pray** for guidance in the upcoming year, that we may be a welcoming space for authentic conversations, and that we continue our prayers for strength and comfort for those who need it most.

Additionally, council wants to thank the entire congregation for its generous and dedicated giving throughout the year.

**Happy Birthday** to Greg Finkenbine and Kylie Ross.

**Family of Larry Schlessman:** Larry, brother in faith, passed from this life on Friday, January 13, 2023. Funeral took place on Friday, January 20, 2023 at 11:00 am at St. John's. Please keep Dawn and the Schlessman families in your prayers.

**New Book Discussion** begins on Tuesday, February 14, 2023 at 10:00 a.m. in the Upper Room. *Help Is Here* by Max Lucado. Bills pile up. Savings accounts go down. Marriages go south. Pandemics rage. Work goes off the rails. Stress goes off the charts. Suddenly, you feel powerless to calm life's chaos. It's all too much to take on by yourself. But pastor and bestselling author Max Lucado has great news for you--*Help Is Here*. Please read chapters 1 & 2 for group discussion.

**Souper Bowl Sunday is COMING!** Please donate your loose change or any monetary amount on Sunday, February 12<sup>th</sup>. The soup kettle will be in the rear of the sanctuary for your donations and also in the handicap entrance. All donations will benefit Victory Kitchen in Sandusky. Thanks for playing in the Souper Bowl.

**The Season of Lent** begins with Ash Wednesday on February 22<sup>nd</sup> with the Imposition of Ashes. Join us for special opportunities for fellowship and worship on Wednesday evenings during Lent beginning March 1<sup>st</sup>, featuring soup suppers at 5:30 pm followed by worship at 6:30 pm. This year's theme is "Perfect Love Casts Our Fear" we will hear from several People of Faith. The soup supper sign-up sheet is on the back window for you to share your delicious soup recipes. May God bless you in your Lenten journey.

## ST. JOHN'S CALENDAR FOR JANUARY 29<sup>th</sup> THRU FEBRUARY 12<sup>th</sup>

Sunday, January 29	10:30 am	Sanctuary Worship live streamed to Zoom Annual meeting follows worship
Wednesday, February 1	1:00 pm 6:00 pm	Scripture and Prayer at Berardi's Huron Choir Practice
Sunday, February 5	9:30 am 10:30 am	Intergenerational Sunday School Sanctuary Worship live streamed
Tuesday, February 7	1:00 pm	Faith Life Team
Wednesday, February 8	6:00 pm	Choir Practice
Thursday, February 9	1:00 pm 6:00 pm	Small Group Bible Study at Thompsons' Art with Allison at Youngs' home
Sunday, February 12	9:30 am 10:30 am	Small Group with Lynn Sanctuary Worship live streamed

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**Annual Spaghetti Benefit:** Project Share of Margaretta Township will hold its annual spaghetti benefit on **Saturday, March 4, 2023 at Grace Lutheran Church, Castalia 4:30 pm until sold out.** Drive thru pick up only at the back of the church. Delivery is available for shut-ins. **Menu: Spaghetti with meat sauce, salad, bread sticks, and dessert. Cost: Free will offering.** Project Share of Margaretta is a 501(c)(3) organization who annually provides gifts, clothing, and food for families of Margaretta School District who share a need.