

Worship and Music

Advent Soup and Song Our Advent Soup & Song begins this Wednesday, December 6, with Ken Bradbury entertaining us with Songs and Storytelling. On December 13 we will host Springfield High School Jazz Band, directed by Kelly Goldberg; and on December 20, Glenwood High School Concert Choir and Vocal Jazz Group Fusion, directed by Jeff Gemar. Lunch will be served at 12 noon with musical entertainment from 12:15 to 12:45 p.m. This week's lunch is your choice of sweet corn chowder or stuffed green pepper soup, served with a hot ham and cheese sandwich. All are invited. Please bring your friends, neighbors, and co-workers. Don't miss this opportunity to hear great music and enjoy delicious soup and fellowship!

Christmas Cantata Our Christmas cantata this year is Mark Hayes' **Candles and Carols**, a beautiful work presented by the Chancel Choir and Orchestra. This candlelight Advent journey celebrates the traditional themes of hope, peace, joy, and love, culminating with the birth of Christ. Musical selections include **O Come, O Come, Emmanuel; Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus; Hark! The Herald Angels Sing; How Great Our Joy; Love Came Down at Christmas;** and **Silent Night**. The narration relates to the wisdom of ancient scripture as well as to our 21st-century lives. Each carol has a new, contemporary verse which adds relevance to their meaning in today's world. The cantata will be presented in the sanctuary on Saturday, December 9 at the 5 p.m. worship and again on Sunday, December 10 at both the 8 a.m. and 10:30 a.m. services. All are invited to come and worship together. Childcare will be provided.

Advent Service of Healing and Peace On Sunday, December 17 at 3:00 p.m. at Peace Lutheran Church (2800 W Jefferson St), the four congregations of the ELCA Springfield Cluster will host an Advent Service of Healing and Peace. In the midst of the violence, hate, and anxiety that fills our world, this service seeks God's peace and healing to intervene in our world and in our lives. Come and join your hearts in prayer, song, and silence with your sisters and brothers in Christ for this meaningful time of worship together.

Advent 4 Worship Because Christmas Eve falls on a Sunday this year, our Advent 4 worship schedule will be slightly different than usual. We will celebrate the 4th Weekend of Advent at our 5:00 Saturday worship on Saturday, December 23 and again at our 8:00 traditional worship on Sunday, December 24. However, in order to prepare for our four Christmas Eve worship services later that day, we will not be having either our 10:30 traditional or our 10:30 contemporary worship services that morning. Come to either 5:00 or 8:00 as we light the fourth candles on the Advent wreath and then rejoin us later that day as we rejoice in the birth of the Christ-child!

Christmas Eve Worship All are invited to come and worship with us on Christmas Eve at any of our four Christmas Eve Worship Services. This year's Christmas Eve Worship schedule is as follows:

3:00 p.m. - Playful Praise Worship in the Parish Life Center (PLC)
This interactive worship experience is designed especially for pre-school-aged children and their families. Holy Communion included.

4:30 p.m. - Christmas Eve for All Generations Worship (Sanctuary)
This traditional Christmas Eve worship service features the children of St. John's sharing their musical gifts and the reading of the Christmas story from the gospel of Luke. Includes Holy Communion and the Service of Candle Lighting.

7:30 p.m. - Contemporary Christmas Eve Worship (PLC)
This contemporary Christmas Eve worship service features our St. John's Praise Team musicians. Includes Holy Communion and the Service of Candle Lighting.

11:00 p.m. - Traditional Christmas Eve Worship (Sanctuary)
This traditional Christmas Eve worship service features the music of our St. John's Chancel Choir and Bells of Glory. Includes Holy Communion and the Service of Candle Lighting.

Bring your family, friends, and neighbors as we celebrate the birth of Christ, the light that breaks through darkness of our lives and of our world!

Christmas Day Worship All are invited to join us on Christmas Day morning at 10:00 a.m. in the sanctuary for our Christmas Day Festival Worship. Sing your favorite Christmas hymns! Hear the proclamation of the Christmas Gospel! Receive the gift of God's grace at the table of Holy Communion! Hear the good news: Christ is born for all!

Serving in Worship

5 p.m. Sanctuary Service

Greeters	Wes and Amanda Johnson
Ushers	Doris Hobbs, Jone VanWinkle
Reader	Liz Kelley
Altar Guild	Rose Lambert
Communion Assistants	Pastor John Kelley, Betty Stuemke
Musician	Jan Harms
Preaching/Presiding Minister	Pastor Adam Connolly

8 a.m. Sanctuary Service

Greeter	Chuck Stolte
Ushers	John Gorsek, Kevin Gorsek, Jake Read, Mark Steen, Chuck Stolte
Reader	Lynne Ewan
Communion Assistants	Lynne Ewan, Erika Metz, Rose Moser, Jonathan Sammons
Altar Guild	Diana Skube
Acolytes	Megan Arnold, Lily Garner
Preaching Minister	Pastor Pam Mitcham
Presiding Minister	Pastor Adam Connolly

10:30 a.m. Sanctuary Service

Greeters	Sue Umland, Roger Williams
Ushers	Bob Schenebricker, Jean Sergent, Steve Sergent, Roger Williams
Reader	Dan Simmons
Altar Guild	Marcia Burriss
Communion Assistants	Pat Huff, Dan Simmons, Harry Simmons, Ed Smith
Acolytes	Ashley Wolters, Carly Schmitt
Flower Delivery	Pam Sanders
Preaching/Presiding Minister	Pastor Pam Mitcham

10:30 a.m. Contemporary Service - Parish Life Center

Hospitality	Mike Bowden, Cayleigh Lazarides, Nancy Taylor
Reader	Cindy Sedam
Communion Assistants	Jay Barnard, Jim Gumm, Leslie Gumm, John Lee, Mike Purdy
Praise Team	Becky Eiter, Sundae Johnson, Christie Lazarides, Cynthia Thompson, Greg Weickart, Criag Williams
Keyboardist	Valerie Hunter
Instrumentalists	Gabe Cowan, Andy Lazarides, Dave Lazarides, Matt Mifflin
Technical Team	Thi Bowden, Aaron Duncan, Hannah Duncan, Gabe Eiter, Ron Engstrom
Preaching/Presiding Minister	Pastor Adam Connolly
Weekly Bread Baker	Lynne Ewan

The Messenger

BULLETIN INSERT



ST. JOHN'S
LUTHERAN CHURCH

Weekend of December 2-3, 2017

St. John's Lutheran Church
2477 West Washington • Springfield, IL 62702
(217) 793.3933 • www.stjohns-springfield.org

Pastor's Message - First Sunday of Advent

"We are the clay, and you are our potter; we are all the work of your hand." Isaiah 64:8b

During this season, as the days grow darker, we anticipate and look towards the light of Christ that comes at Christmas. The light that broke through the darkness. The light that shines bright each and every day. The light, that promises to remain with us always.

We, as Americans, seem to get caught up in the Christmas season and it becomes all consuming. Christmas gets earlier and earlier each year. Stores compete with one another to see who can get their Christmas displays up right after, or even before, Halloween. There are presents to buy, homes to decorate, Christmas cards to send, the list goes on and on as we prepare for Christmas; making sure everything is checked off lists to celebrate in the best way.

We seem to forget, however, that in Advent, there is more than just getting our shopping done or preparing our homes. In Advent, we prepare ourselves to welcome Christ into our world. God did something amazing for us, God's creation. In Jesus Christ, the Word became flesh. In this Advent season, through the words of the Prophets, we are reminded that we too have been made flesh. God, the creator of all things, created each of us, perfect in God's image. We have been formed by God's hands, in order to live out God's mission in our world.

Throughout this season, there are many ways in which we prepare ourselves for the birth of Christ and discern what God is calling us to become. Through our worship, the words of songs, reading devotions and scripture and sitting in the quiet spaces in our lives, we can hear God calling to us, reminding us of God's love for us, and how we can prepare ourselves to welcome the Messiah into our hearts and homes.

This weekend, as we begin a new church year, we are reminded that God is not done with us yet. Just as the season has changed, we too, look forward to the promises God has made for each of us. As the world prepares to celebrate the birth of Christ, take time to sit in the mystery of God becoming flesh. Take time to reflect on the promises God makes to you. Take time to see what God is calling you to become.

Together in Christ,

Pastor Adam



Christmas Cantata

Join us next weekend for our Christmas Cantata! More details on Page 3!

Welcome

Welcome to St. John's Lutheran Church on this First Weekend of Advent! We are glad you are here! If you do not yet have a church home in Springfield and are interested in becoming part of St. John's, we invite you to visit with one of our pastors. In today's reading from Isaiah, the visions of a rebuilt Jerusalem and a renewed people of God have not been realized. Instead, the people experience ruin, conflict, and famine. As we enter the season of Advent, we join the prophet's lament – calling upon God to be the God who has brought deliverance in the past.

Calendar

Saturday, December 2

LWR Fair Trade Fair
5:00pm Worship/Communion - Sanctuary

Sunday, December 3 1st Sunday of Advent

LWR Fair Trade Fair
8:00am Worship/Communion - Sanctuary
9:00am Christmas Cantata Rehearsal
9:00am Children's Christmas Program Rehearsal
9:15am Fellowship
9:15am Sunday School/Adult Forum
10:30am Worship/Communion - Sanctuary
10:30am Contemporary Worship/Communion - PLC
12:00pm Christmas Cantata Orchestra Rehearsal

Monday, December 4

7:00pm Leadership Board

Tuesday, December 5

9:00am Men's and Women's Bible Studies
9:00am Staff Meeting
4:30pm St. John's After School Center
6:30pm Young Adults Christmas Party
7:00pm Caregiver Conversation

Wednesday, December 6

8:15am Pastries with the Pastors
10:30am Caregivers Conversation
12:00pm Pastries with the Pastors
12:00pm Advent Soup and Song
1:00pm Friends in Christ at Concordia
5:30pm Sprout! Meal
6:15pm Christmas Program Rehearsal
6:30pm Sprout! Classes
6:30pm Worship Band Practice

Thursday, December 7

8:15am Pastries with the Pastors
9:00am Funeral Meal Meeting
12:00pm Pastries with the Pastors
5:30pm Bell Choir
6:40pm Christmas Cantata Rehearsal

Friday, December 8

1:30pm Stitch n' Share

Saturday, December 9

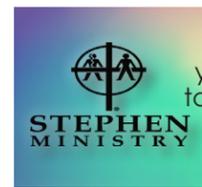
LWR Coffee Sales
9:00am Children's Christmas Program Rehearsal
4:30pm Nativity Display Festival
5:00pm Worship/Christmas Cantata - Sanctuary

Sunday, December 10 2nd Sunday of Advent

LWR Coffee Sales
8:00am Worship/Christmas Cantata - Sanctuary
9:00am Nativity Display Festival
9:15am Fellowship
9:15am Sunday School/Adult Forum
9:15am Mom's Small Group
9:30pm Children's Christmas Program Rehearsal
10:30am Worship/Christmas Cantata - Sanctuary
1:00pm Lutherans at Play
5:30pm Parenting the Early Years Social Event
6:00pm Encounter Christmas Party



December Food Item:
Canned Fruit



People caring about people, if you are interested in talking with a Stephen Minister, please contact one of the pastors.

Altar Flowers

The flowers on the altar are given to the glory of God and in loving memory of Wilma Wieties by the Wieties family.

Remember in Prayer

Marguerite Allen, Dottie Beach, Marie Bomke, Rick Bremhorst, Clyde Bull, Marlene Carnduff, Bernadine Dickson, Jim Fisher, Fran Fehring, Natalia Foard, Steve Hardy, Susan Hampton, Richard Hatcher, Richard Hawker, Debbie Johnson, Evelyn Lageman, Johannes Leslie (currently deployed in South Korea), Skylar Lewis, Mark Lohnes, Betty Lunik, Lesslie Morgan, Judy Nika, Gene Poehlman, Priscilla Rademaker, Doris Riecks, Liz Saner, Jean Sergeant, Debbie Slater, Pat Srinier, Carol Stubbs, Maude Tatman, Carole Tracy, Stephanie van Ulft, Anita Walbaum

Stewardship

2018 Commitment Cards Thank you to everyone who has already returned their 2018 Financial Commitment Card for 2018! Your generosity fuels Christ's mission and ministry in and through St. John's. If you have not yet returned your card, please consider doing so soon. Every pledge, no matter how large or small, helps us in fulfilling our mission. You may return your completed commitment card by placing in the offering plate, dropping it by the church office, or putting it in the mail. Thanks in advance!

How will you share your skills and schedule in 2018? There is still time to be part of God's work at St. John's and in the community by turning in your Time, Talents, and Touch form. Contact Director of Spiritual Gifts Ministries Kristen Schmid Schurter at 793.3933 x217 or ksschurter@stjohns-springfield.org for more information. Additional forms are available on the church website.

Sign up for St. John's Current Ministry needs at <http://www.stjohns-springfield.org>

Community Care

DECEMBER CAREGIVER CONVERSATIONS Do you offer care to a family member in your home? Is it even more stressful around the holidays? You are not alone. While your particular situation is unique to you, others share many of the experiences and challenges you face. One of the gifts of community is that there is help and support available to you. If you are caring for a family member in your own home, or in a facility, please join Pastor Pam for a Caregivers Conversation. We will offer two meetings in December hoping that one will fit into your schedule:

-Tuesday, December 5, at 7:00 p.m.
-Wednesday, December 6, at 10:30 a.m.

Both meetings will be in the Parlor. You can help us know how to care for the caregiver, for you. Please feel free to speak with Pastor Pam if you have questions, and come join the conversation.

Discipleship

Nativity Festival This year's Advent Nativity Scene Festival is being held in the Adult Meeting Room (AMR) and will be open on Saturday, December 9 before and after the 5 p.m. worship service, and on Sunday, December 10 after all worship services in the AMR. Stop in and view the wonderful nativity scenes from many countries with the many interesting and unique stories they have to tell. If you have a Nativity Scene that you would like to display, stop by the church office and pick up an entry form. Fill it out and return it to the Altar Guild mailbox. Deadline is December 3. This year we are having a raffle for a nativity scene that has been donated to us by the Stotz Family. The scene has over 20 pieces and a crèche. It is of the Avon Nativity Collectibles. All the pieces are in their original box. The drawing will be held at 1:00 p.m. on Sunday. Please stop in, see the display, and register to win. You do not have to be present to win.

Adult Forum: "The Apostles' Creed" Pastor Pam will lead the second session in the three-week series on the Apostles' Creed taking place during the Adult Forum this Sunday, December 3 from 9:15-10:15 in the Adult Meeting Room (AMR). Come and learn together about this most basic statement of our Christian belief. This week's focus will be on the Second Article: "On Redemption." Newcomers are always welcome!

ADULT SPROUT! BIBLE STUDY: "AT THAT TIME" Pastor Pam continues her Advent Bible study this week. Join us on Wednesday evenings as part of our Sprout! activities as we explore the Gospel readings for the Advent season. The class meets at 6:30 p.m. in the Adult Meeting Room (AMR).

December 6 - A Message
December 13 - A Servant

Discipleship

Youth and Family

St. John's Breadline This Sunday, seven of our confirmation students, together with two adult leaders, will be helping prepare and serve the noon meal at the St. John's Breadline in downtown Springfield. Those participating include Olivia Baima, Cooper Burk, Griffin Burk, Jack Casey, Jackson Pearce, Luke Read, Ashley Wolters, Jan Cazal, and Andy Read. Thanks to these young disciples at St. John's for living out our mission **to be and make disciples of Christ, in response to God's grace** as they serve those in need in our community!

Help Needed If you want to rediscover your youth by hanging out with the pros of youthfulness, please contact Pastor Adam at pconnolly@stjohns-springfield.org. There are many opportunities to get involved, and you are definitely needed.

Encounter Does Christmas! Next Sunday, December 10, from 6-8 p.m. for all youth 6-12th grade! We'll play fun games, have snacks and cookies, coffee bar, a time for worship and songs. Bring a friend, or 20, as we celebrate Jesus' birth, Youtheran style. Bonus points if you come in holiday apparel.

Discipleship

Children and Family

Follow the Star Christmas Program Preschool - 6th grade

Christmas Program Rehearsal Schedule:
•Wednesdays Dec. 6 and 13, 6:15 p.m. in Room C/D
•Sundays Dec. 3, 9:00 a.m. in PLC
•Saturday Dec. 9, 9:00-11:00 a.m. (speaking parts)
•Saturday Dec. 16, 9:00-11:00 a.m. (all)
•Sunday, Dec. 17, 9:15 a.m. in the PLC
•Performance on Sun., Dec. 17 at 10:30 in the PLC

Contact Alicia Huntley at ahuntley@stjohns-springfield.org with any questions.

Volunteer for the Preschool Christmas Program On December 11 and 12, we need volunteers to greet, pass out programs, and help get children into costumes and lined up for our St. John's Preschool Christmas Program. Plan to arrive at 5:30 p.m. You may leave after the children are in the sanctuary or stay for the program. Sign up outside Sam Neahring's office. If you have any questions, please call Barb Pirmann at 529.7325.

Outreach and Mission

Help Needed at Harvard Park & Dubois Elementary Schools If you enjoy working with children and are available during weekdays, we have a great opportunity for you! Harvard Park and Dubois Elementary Schools are looking for mentors and tutors for their students. Teachers have reached out to us with specific needs and timeframes. Any help for any length of time would be deeply appreciated by our partner schools! To learn more about how you can help, please contact Normajean Sanders (217.726.5230), Pastor Adam (pconnolly@stjohns-springfield.org), or Sam Neahring (sneahring@stjohns-springfield.org) to see how you can get involved.

MITTEN TREES Once again mitten trees will adorn our church narthex and PLC lobby during the Advent and Christmas seasons. Thanks to you, they are decorated with mittens, gloves, scarves, and hats for the many children at Harvard Park and Dubois Elementary schools who come to school on cold days without them. This year we are also asking for socks of all sizes which are always needed during the winter months. If you have any slightly used children's coats, you can always bring these as well. Thank you in advance. We look forward to another joyous Christmas with you as we give to others. - Social Ministry Team

UCP Christmas Gifts Each year our congregation has enthusiastically supported United Cerebral Palsy with Christmas gifts for the participants of this agency. The opportunity is provided for members to select one of the participant's name, purchase a gift(s) for that person according to their Christmas list attached and either return the gift to church by Wednesday, December 13 or give the gift in person on Saturday, December 16 at our Cookies & Cocoa event with the participants of UCP. Thank you for your generous sharing with those in need in our community. Your gift giving will make their Christmas a joyous time. Contact Janet Moulton (971.9535) with any questions.

UCP Cookies and Cocoa Saturday, December 16 from 3:00-4:00 p.m., join the clients from UCP in the PLC as we celebrate Christmas with a festive event. There will be cookies, cocoa and a carol sing-a-long led by members of the St. John's Choir. For those who purchase gifts for the UCP participants, this is a perfect opportunity to give those gifts in person. Contact Janet Moulton (971.9535) or Pastor Adam (pconnolly@stjohns-springfield.org) if you have any questions.