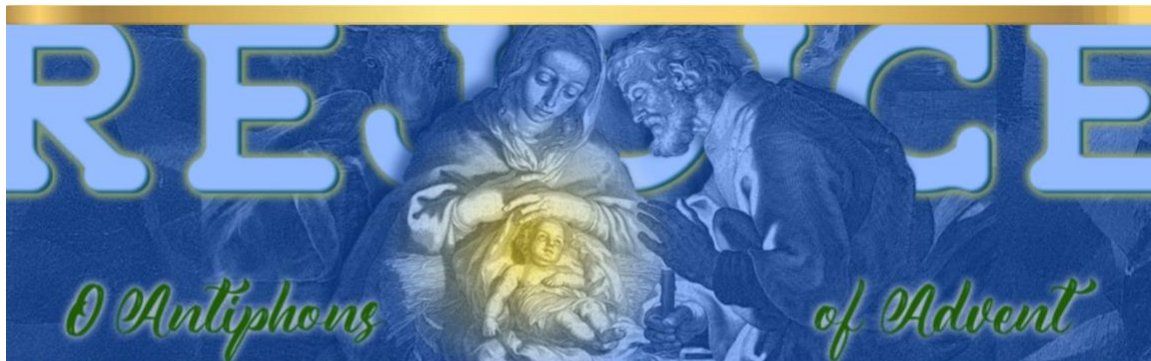


THE WEEKLY CONNECTION

ONE IN JESUS... REACHING MANY!

Week of December 7, 2025

WORSHIP CELEBRATION



REJOICE | Advent 2025 Worship Series

For at least 1300 years, the O Antiphons have been chanted, sung, and prayed by Christians during the last seven days of Advent (December 17-23). They serve as a helpful guide as we move closer and closer to the manger, though most Christians today are more familiar with the hymn which is based upon them: "O Come, O Come, Emmanuel." Each of the Antiphons addresses the Messiah by a different name and all are saturated in rich Old Testament stories and imagery. Together, the O Antiphons preach the Old Testament Gospel of the Messiah who will come for us, live the life we could never live, and ultimately die for us.



If you miss any of the Rejoice Advent Series messages, they will be uploaded weekly to our Online Resources webpage. Scan the QR code or visit our website below to watch any of the previously aired sermons. stjohnrochester.org/worship/church-online/

**Join us this Advent season on weekends (regular schedule) and
Wednesday evenings at 4:15 PM (also online) and 7:00 PM
as we dive into the prophecies of old and celebrate the reality
that the Messiah is here for us!**



TRADITIONAL PRAISE WORSHIP OUTLINE

Advent 2 | December 7, 2025

Service Elements taken from the Divine Service, Setting Four, Pew Hymnal (LSB) p. 203.

For your convenience, all hymn lyrics will also be displayed on the screens at the front of the Sanctuary.

PRELUDE

OPENING HYMN: *Lo! He Comes with Clouds Descending* LSB# 336

SERVICE OF THE WORD LSB p.203

Invocation/Confession

Hymn of Praise: O Come, O Come, Emmanuel

LSB #357 stz. 1 & 4

Prayer of the Day

Special Music (11:00)

Grades K-1

Old Testament Reading: Isaiah 11:1-10

New Testament Reading: Acts 13:16-23

Responsory

Screen

Holy Gospel Reading: Matthew 22:41-46

THE NICENE CREED

Screen

HYMN OF THE DAY: *Lo, How a Rose E'er Blooming*

LSB #359

MESSAGE

Pastor Steve Grafe

PRAYERS OF THE CHURCH/LORD'S PRAYER

SERVICE OF THE SACRAMENT

p.208

Distribution

Hymn: *Hail to the Lord's Anointed*

LSB #398

Nunc Dimittis

LSB p.211

POST COMMUNION PRAYER/BENEDICTION

CLOSING HYMN: *What Hope! An Eden Prophesied*

LSB #342

IMPORTANT NOTES ABOUT THE LORD'S SUPPER

The Bible teaches that along with the bread and wine of Holy Communion we also receive the true body and blood of our Savior. Jesus' own words, "this is my body" and "this is my blood for the forgiveness of sins" reveal His Real Presence in the sacrament (Luke 22, 1 Cor. 10:15-16). The Bible also teaches (1 Cor. 11:23-32) the Lord's Supper, properly received brings great blessings, but improperly received without understanding can actually incur God's judgment. If you are a baptized Christian who has been instructed in the Biblical teaching of communion, please feel free to commune today. If you have any questions, please first speak to a pastor.

As you come forward, gluten free wafers are available by request, as well as individual cup choice of wine or lighter colored non-alcoholic grape juice (located in the center of the trays). Common cup is also offered during Traditional Praise services at the altar only. **During regular worship weekends, the Lord's Supper is celebrated in Traditional Praise on the first and third weekends of the month; and in Modern Praise on the second and fourth weekends of the month. On months with a fifth Sunday, Communion will be served at both Traditional and Modern Praise services.**

BIBLICAL DISCOVERY



GET INTO THE WORD | Fall Bible Studies and LIFEgroups

Make the most of growing in your faith walk with Jesus through His Word! Whether you are looking for a small class or large group, there is a Bible Study, LIFEgroup, or event for you! Check out the full listing of classes and events by scanning the QR Code or visiting our website. A printed copy of the *Get Into The Word* guide can also be found in the narthex and atrium.

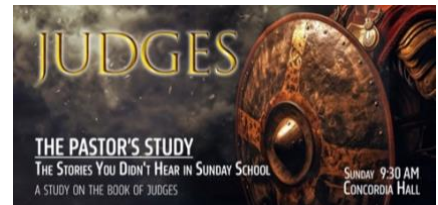


STORIES YOU DIDN'T HEAR IN SUNDAY SCHOOL:

A study on the Book of Judges

Sundays at 9:30 AM | Concordia Hall

Join our pastors on Sunday mornings at 9:30 AM in Concordia Hall, as we study one of the most interesting, exciting, and perhaps even grisly books of the Bible. Judges often gets overlooked on Sunday mornings. Not only is it difficult to discover Christ in it, there are also some stories that you may have been “protected” from as a kid. For more information, contact Pastor Tyler at pastortyler@stjohnrochester.org.



SUFFERING SERVANT PODCAST

Don't forget to check out Pastor Tyler's podcast! His show attempts to bring meaning to suffering through shorter episodes highlighting basic Biblical truths in the face of suffering, as well as longer episodes conversing with others whom God has used in the midst of their own personal suffering. The podcast is available wherever you listen to podcasts, just search “Suffering Servants” or visit <https://www.stjohnrochester.org/sufferingservants>

THE TRUTH PROJECT | Wednesdays at 5:45 PM | Concordia Hall

The Wednesday night Adult Bible Study is hosting a 12-week series called “The Truth Project.” The series features video presentations by Dr. Del Tackett, as he takes you through lessons on the relevance and importance of living the Biblical worldview in daily life. Topics include: ethics, science, history, sociology, law, the American experiment, labor & more.



DADS' BIBLE STUDY | Begins January 7, 6:00 AM – 7:00 AM | Luther Hall

This study is intended for dads of all ages and walks of faith as we grow in God's Word together, learn what it means to lead our families well, and receive encouragement in the highest calling God has for men. Beginning on January 7, join us on Wednesday mornings (even if you have to leave early) as we pick a book of the Bible and read through it with discussion. Coffee and bagels/donuts will be provided, so that we don't miss out on breakfast before work! For more information, reach out to Pastor Tyler at pastortyler@stjohnrochester.org. See you in January!



Gifts For All God's Children was a wonderful success. Thank you to the volunteers and all who gave! For the full update please see the Compassionate Service section on page 10.

We welcomed Hailey Noonan and Gifts For All God's Children to chapel this Wednesday. Hailey shared how unique and important this program is and how our St. John Family plays an invaluable role. GFAGC reaches into underserved communities to deliver Christmas where it would otherwise not arrive. Hailey shared a quote from one of the children they serve, "Every good thing I've ever gotten in my life has come from GFAGC."



RMB MEN'S LIFEGROUP | Tuesday, December 9 at 7:00 PM

The Rochester Mills Men's Group will meet this week on **Tuesday December 9 at 7:00 PM**, NOT on Wednesday due to Advent services. Please check in with the host up front and they will take you to our table. Please reach out to Pastor Tyler with any questions or concerns at pastortyler@stjohnrochester.org. The group will resume their normal Wednesday meeting time in January.



THE LUTHERAN WITNESS MAGAZINE | Orders due Wednesday, December 10

Now is the time to order or renew your subscription of *The Lutheran Witness* for 2026! This publication is the official periodical of The Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod and is published 11 times a year. It provides stories and information that complement congregational life, foster personal growth in faith, and help interpret the contemporary world from a Lutheran Christian perspective. The new subscription year begins March 2026 and **orders need to be turned in to the Pastoral Office by Wednesday, December 10** to take advantage of a discounted rate of \$22.50/year. Checks should be made to "St. John Lutheran Church" with "Lutheran Witness" written on the memo line. Please contact the Pastoral Office at 248-402-8020 or church@stjohnrochester.org for more information.

OWLS CHRISTMAS LUNCHEON | Friday, December 12 at 12:00 PM | Concordia Hall

OWLS (Older Wiser Lutherans in Service) will meet Friday, December 12, beginning at Noon in Concordia Hall. **Christmas music will be provided by several of our St. John School choirs along with an OWLS hymn song(s).** The OWLS Ministry Team will provide spiral ham, potatoes, rolls, and beverages. Attendees, if able, are requested to bring the following potluck items: Last Name A-H (desserts), and Last Name J-Z (side dishes). To assist with planning, please pre-register with Roger Guetzkow at 248-622-1606 or rjguetzkow@comcast.net by Tuesday, December 9.



December's topic is "The Real St. Nick." **All are welcome to attend the luncheon and stay for the discussion.** Folks wishing to only attend the presentation should arrive by 12:45 PM. We will try to arrange a ride for anyone requiring transportation.

LESSONS & CAROLS | Sunday, December 14 at 2:00 PM and 4:30 PM

Please join us on Sunday, December 14 at 2:00 PM or 4:30 PM in the sanctuary for our annual Service of Lessons and Carols featuring many of our St. John music ensembles and instrumentalists. If you enjoy the sacred choral and orchestral sounds of the Advent/Christmas season combined with the fulfilled promises of a Savior they proclaim from God's Word, this is an opportunity not to be missed! Festive instrumental music will begin 10 minutes prior to each service. **As always, near-capacity crowds are expected, so plan to arrive early!**



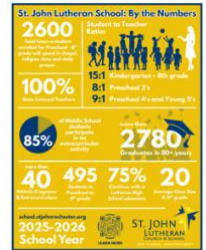
WEATHER RELATED SCHOOL/CAMPUS CLOSING PROCEDURES

If Rochester Community Schools closes due to inclement weather conditions, St. John Lutheran Church & School will also be closed. This means that **all** classes, programs and activities scheduled for the day will be cancelled. This includes Preschool – 8th grade, athletic events, Bible studies, small groups, and all other facility events. Closure information will be shared on our website (stjohnrochester.org) and Facebook page.

CHILDREN, YOUTH & FAMILIES

SCHOOL NEWS | Get ready for the 2026-2027 school year!

Current Preschool to 7th grade St. John students have the first opportunity for enrollment for the 2026-2027 school year during the current student re-enrollment, January 12 to 22, 2026. School parents may also apply for any other children (immediate household) during this early timeframe as well. St. John congregation members are also eligible to apply for their Preschool to 8th grade children during this timeframe. Any remaining spots will be opened to the community starting February 2. For more information visit school.stjohnrochester.org/admissions or contact Beth Dameron, Director of Admissions, at 248-402-8012 or bdameron@stjohnrochester.org.



Several of our students and parents participated in the Mighty Gobbler Race in Troy on Thanksgiving Day, competing in the 1-mile and 5-K divisions. Great job getting out and being active - especially on a cold Thanksgiving morning!



Thank you to the team at Henry Ford Hospital for hosting our first graders to sing Christmas Carols! We enjoy this long-standing tradition and appreciate the opportunity to share the Joy of Christmas with the community. The 1st graders wore their holiday angel handprint sweatshirts.



Second Grade filled the sanctuary with their joyful voices in chapel and Advent Midweek Worship this week.

CHILDREN'S SUNDAY SCHOOL | Sundays at 9:30 AM

Children ages 4 years to 6th grade are welcome and encouraged to join us every Sunday in the school wing for Sunday School! There are no attendance requirements! If you have any questions regarding Sunday School, please contact the Pastoral Office at church@stjohnrochester.org.



Sign up for our Sunday School email list to get updates! Sign up at the Sunday School kiosk or on our website at stjohnrochester.org/groups/childrens-sunday-school

MIDDLE SCHOOL YOUTH | Sundays at 12:30 - 2:30 PM

Middle School Youth meets most Sundays at 12:30 PM in the Youth Room. For more information, please contact Melissa Hammett at mhammett@stjohnrochester.org.



HIGH SCHOOL YOUTH | Sundays at 6:00 - 8:00 PM

High School Youth meet most Sundays at 6:00 PM. Check your weekly emails for meeting locations and details. For more information, please contact Melissa Hammett at mhammett@stjohnrochester.org.

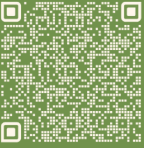
LUTHERAN NORTHWEST NEWS

You are invited to the Lutheran Northwest Christmas Concert on our St. John Campus in the sanctuary Monday, December 8, at 7:00 PM. Don't miss this opportunity to hear the LHNW Choirs & Bands give glory to God through their musical gifts! Many are from our St. John family!

Grab dinner at Panera before the concert and support LHNW!

SCAN QR FOR THE FLYER

LHNW FUNDRAISER - 30% of net sales



December 8, 2025 (before the concert)
4:00 PM to 8:00 PM
177 South Livernois Rd, Rochester Hills, MI



SACRIFICIAL GENEROSITY

YOUR FINANCIAL GIFTS MAKE A HUGE DIFFERENCE

Your continued financial support and partnership in the ministry and mission of St. John Lutheran Church & School is so important and is making a huge difference in changing lives for eternity in Jesus' name! If you are worshiping onsite, offerings can be placed in the designated areas outside the sanctuary. You can also scan the provided QR code to give online or visit our website <https://www.stjohnrochester.org/give/>. If you have any questions, please contact our Director of Operations, Steve Gauss, at sgauss@stjohnrochester.org.



MISSION PARTNER OUTREACH OPPORTUNITY

Our Mission Partner Christian Outreach for Africa (COFA) has been **blessed with an opportunity to match all donations received from now through the end of 2025 up to \$380,000!** Your generosity fuels futures at Amajuba Orphanage and St. Peter Christian School in Mhluzi, South Africa, from interactive classrooms and youth ministry to safe housing and college dreams for orphans. This is your chance to double your impact and invest in the lives God has entrusted to us. Give now. Change tomorrow. Create Opportunity. Find out more at AfricaOutreach.org

CONSTANT PRAYER

LET US PRAY FOR WHATEVER IS ON YOUR HEART

To submit a prayer request, please email prayer@stjohnrochester.org at any time or visit our website and click on the prayer link toward the bottom of the homepage. These requests are received by our pastors and are passed along (or kept confidential when requested) to our prayer warriors and are also included in our weekend worship.



Healing & Peace: Jim Schwark - recently hospitalized with infection in West Virginia - on their way home / Stephanie Hall (daughter of Mark & Margaret) - cancer treatment / Laura Gilbert - recovering from hip surgery / Maryann (friend of Karen Hager) - open heart surgery / Rick Webster (sil of Dale & Susan McGorman) - upcoming cancer surgery / Bob Richards - hospitalized for low platelet blood count

Bereavement (for the families of): Rebecca Attard - sister of Beth Helmer / Jack Bogers – brother of Candi Schwark / Carol Beck / Caroline L. Klausmeier / Willet Kriewall

Gospel Impact: Upcoming Lessons & Carols Service

Strength & Guidance: Principal & Director of Youth & Family – call process

Thanksgiving: For generosity to those in need through both the neighbor-to-neighbor food drive and Gifts for All God's Children

Long-Term Healing & Recovery: Walt Brown - chemo & radiation treatment / Abel Beyer 3y (friend of Cronkright's) - daughter of missionaries in Central Asia now back for Abel's treatment of Leukemia / Ginny Siewert - brain cancer / Fariba Hartfiel - rehab from spinal surgery / Layla Loveres 6y - autoimmune disease / Sue Neumeyer (SIL of Joel & Karen) - multiple health issues and hospitalizations this summer / Diane Ringwelski (friend of Vicki Wright) - glioblastoma and undergoing treatment / Jim Genova (in-law of Pastor Steve & Sarah) - Parkinson's & leukemia / Jolie Knudsen - cancer / Gerald Walters (brother of Pam Peck) - long term care for kidney failure / Lauren Gonser (brother of Terry) - cancer / Gary Kwapis – cancer / Lori Kulczycki / Nancy Egloff – continuing eyesight treatments / Rosemarie Chila - cancer / Lorri Heins – cancer / Brian Thornberry (father of staff member Erin Morgante) – cancer / Brent Zoellner / Crystal Mischley – cancer / Leanne Stevens / Allison - Huntington's disease / Rebecca / Pastor Michael Standfest

Church-Work Students: Ethan Dodson / James Wilson / Nicolas Stevens

Pregnancy: Natalie / Ashley Pavka (Wright) / Shay Spaniola-Henning / Samantha Egloff / Ashley McKinnon

Those in Military Service: Mark Anderson / Aaron Byers / Devin Deck / Troy Glover / Alex Holzke / Earle IV Leighton / Alex Lindsay / Erich Mammen / David Metcalf / Matthew Neumeyer / John Paulson / Michael Pesamoska / Christian Petty / Jon Taykowski / Brad Ziegler / Kayla Pfund / Tim Pfund / Bryan Mullins / Tyler Wetzel / Jack Sinko / Stephen Rusanchin / Courtney Sharbaugh / Paul Batt / Victor Martin / Gabe Couturier / David Lyons / Austin Taylor / Tyler Doebler / Drew McBrien / Zachary Browne / Cameron Dork / Jon Rubin / Brendan Standfest / Luke Standfest

Home Bound or Nursing Home Residents: Ginny & Russ Schmidt / Jerry & Mary Bantin / Kathy Bentley / Karen & Richard Brooks / Lorraine Hayes / Bob & Sally Hobson / Helga Olson / Ruth Parish / Rob Plewa / Ray Rau / Jerry Ruff / Chuck Schroeder / Gloria Trudeau / Connie Ulrich / Lillian Von Rusten / Iris Wawrzyniak / Karen Wright / John Zimmerman / Joan Sebastian / Norma Jule

COMPASSIONATE SERVICE

CHRISTMAS COOKIE DONATIONS

On Christmas Eve St. John will host a Christmas Cookie and Hot Cocoa Bar from 11:00 AM to 8:00 PM for our church family to enjoy a treat and some fellowship. We are seeking people willing to **donate store-bought Christmas cookies**. If you would be willing to purchase a container of cookies for the festivities, **please sign up by scanning the QR code or visiting stjohnrochester.org/cookies**. Please drop off all cookie donations to the designated bin in the Atrium NO LATER THAN **Friday December 19**.



Neighbor-2-Neighbor Food Drive RESULT

Thank you for answering the call to help feed the less fortunate in a BIG way! The 2025 Neighbor-2-Neighbor Food Drive collected **an amazing 7,207 lbs.** This is more than double last year's total and it is the approximate weight of a full grown hippopotamus!

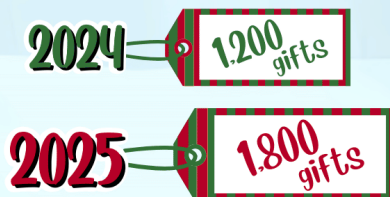
Many thanks to our volunteers (including our American Heritage Girls) who sorted, loaded, and delivered the food!

**THANK
YOU!**



Thank you to all who generously donated to Gifts for All God's Children! This year **300 children will receive gifts thanks to your generosity (that's over 1,800 total gifts!)** We pray that all those receiving the gifts may see and feel Jesus' love.

Many thanks also to the dedicated volunteers who sorted, bagged, and shopped for gifts to ensure all the sponsored children have their Christmas needs met!



WEEK AT A GLANCE: DECEMBER 8-14

Here is a highlight of activities happening on campus this week.

MON

9:00 AM Quilters Guild (Room 128)
7:00 PM Lutheran High Northwest Band Concert (Sanctuary)

TUE

8:45 AM Women of Prayer (Chapel)
1:00 PM ESL (Mary Martha)
7:00 PM RMB Men's Group (Rochester Mills Brewery) ***NOTE DATE CHANGE***



WED

8:30 AM Mom's Morning Prayer (Nursery)
8:45 AM Chapel (Sanctuary)
4:15 PM Mid-Week Advent Service (Sanctuary)
5:00 PM Bell Choir Practice (Choir Loft)
5:45 PM Adult Bible Study (Concordia)
7:00 PM Mid-Week Advent Service (Sanctuary)

THR

9:00 AM MomCo (Luther Hall)
1:00 PM International Bible Study (Mary Martha)
6:30 PM 242 LIFEgroup Meeting (Torgler House)
7:00 PM Choir Practice (Choir Loft)

FRI

9:30 AM ESL (Mary Martha)
12:00 PM OWLS Luncheon (Concordia)
7:00 PM Dummelsmith 242 LIFEgroup (Luther Hall)

SAT

8:00 AM Bibles and Basketball Men's Group (Gymnasium)
10:00 AM GriefShare (Church Library)

SUN

9:30 AM Pastor's Bible Study (Concordia Hall)
9:30 AM Sunday School (School Wing)

Join us at 2:00 or 4:30 for Lessons & Carols





The St. John family invites you to join us for worship this Advent and Christmas season as we give thanks for our Savior who truly is God with us!

CHRISTMAS EVE

Modern Praise | Gymnasium

Wednesday, December 24

12:00 PM, *2:00 PM, & 4:00 PM

*2:00 PM service will be streamed online.

CHRISTMAS EVE

Traditional Praise | Sanctuary

Wednesday, December 24

*6:00 PM, 8:00 PM, & **11:00 PM

*6:00 PM service will be streamed online.

**11:00 PM service will have Holy Communion.

CHRISTMAS DAY

Thursday, December 25

10:00 AM with Holy Communion

10:00 AM service will also be streamed online.



Worship Schedule

Traditional Praise: Sundays at 8:00 AM, 9:30 AM (also online), and 11:00 AM

Modern Praise: Saturdays at 5:00 PM | Sundays at 10:45 AM (also online)

1011 W. University Dr. | Rochester, MI 48307 | 248.402.8000 | stjohnrochester.org