



## St. John Lutheran Church

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**December 31, 2023**

# Welcome

to St. John Lutheran Church and our New Year's Eve Worship Service. We are so glad you have chosen to join us tonight and we pray your time with us will fill you with the love our Lord has for you.

Tonight's service includes the Lord's Supper. If you are a first-time visitor and wish to receive Holy Communion, please speak with one of our Elders or myself prior to service and be sure to fill out the communion card located in your pew.

May God bless your worship with us today,  
*Paul Kruse, Pastor*

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*Compelled by the Love of Christ to Live,  
Learn, Share, and Serve*

# New Year's Eve



## As We Gather

### ***God's Enduring Love***

The movement from one year to the next provides an opportunity for us to reflect on the year past and look forward to the coming year. As we reflect on the past, many of us will remember particular joys or sorrows. Most of us will have had many ordinary days as well. There have been times we have forgiven others and times we have been forgiven ourselves. In the midst of it all was God's enduring love for us in Jesus. As we look forward to the coming year, we face unknowns. As one familiar prayer expresses, we face this new year "not knowing where we go but only that Your hand is leading us and Your love supporting us." In the coming year too, God's enduring love will be present with us no matter what. For nothing "in all creation will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord." With God's enduring love behind us and ahead of us, we enter the new year as people called to love one another and our neighbors in ways that reflect the enduring love of God for us in Jesus.

### **Preparation and Prelude**

### ***"Glory" (Let There be Peace)***

One star burns in the darkness, shines with the promise, Emmanuel.

One child born in the stillness, living within us, Emmanuel.

We're singing: Glory, Glory.

Let there be peace. Let there be peace.

Singing: Glory, Glory. Let there be peace. Let it start in me.

One voice speaks for the voiceless, hope for the hopeless, Emmanuel.

One love brings us together, now and forever, Emmanuel.

We're singing: Glory, Glory.

Let there be peace. Let there be peace.

Singing: Glory, Glory. Let there be peace. Let it start in me.

Do not be afraid. His love is strong enough to save us.

Nothing stands in the way. His love is strong enough to lead us.

Do not be afraid. His love is strong enough to save us.

Nothing stands in the way. His love is strong enough to lead us.

Glory, Glory. Let there be peace. Let there be peace.  
Singing: Glory, Glory. Let there be peace. Let it start with me.  
Singing: Glory, Glory. Let there be peace. Let there be peace.  
Singing: Glory, Glory. Let there be peace. Let it start in me.  
Let there be peace. Let it start in me.

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## **Welcome and Sharing of the Peace**

### **Opening Song**

### **“Holy Forever”**

A thousand generations falling down in worship  
To sing the song of ages to the Lamb  
And all who've gone before us  
And all who will believe  
Will sing the song of ages to the Lamb  
Your name is the highest Your name is the greatest  
Your name stands above them all  
All thrones and dominions All powers and positions  
Your name stands above them all  
And the angels cry Holy All creation cries Holy  
You are lifted high Holy Holy forever  
If you've been forgiven and if you've been redeemed  
Sing the song forever to the Lamb  
If you walk in freedom and if you bear His name  
Sing the song forever to the Lamb  
We'll sing the song forever and amen  
And the angels cry Holy All creation cries Holy  
You are lifted high Holy Holy forever  
Hear Your people sing Holy To the King of Kings Holy  
You will always be Holy Holy forever  
Your name is the highest Your name is the greatest  
Your name stands above them all

All thrones and dominions All powers and positions  
Your name stands above them all

And the angels cry Holy All creation cries Holy  
You are lifted high Holy Holy forever  
You will always be Holy Holy forever

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## Invocation

- P** In the name of the Father and of the ✠ Son and of the Holy Spirit.
- C** **Amen.**

*The sign of the cross may be made by all in remembrance of their Baptism.*

- P** Jesus Christ is the Light of the world,
- C** **the light no darkness can overcome.**
- P** Stay with us, Lord, for it is evening,
- C** **and the day is almost over.**
- P** Let Your light scatter the darkness
- C** **and illumine Your Church.**

## Confession and Forgiveness

- P** If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.
- C** **But if we confess our sins, God, who is faithful and just, will forgive our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness.**
- P** Let us then confess our sins to God our Father.

*Silence for reflection on God's Word and for self-examination.*

- P** Most merciful God,
- C** **We confess that we are by nature 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. 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 ways to the glory of Your holy name. Amen.**
- P** In the mercy of almighty God, Jesus Christ was given to die for us, and for

His sake God forgives us all our sins. To those who believe in Jesus Christ He gives the power to become the children of God and bestows on them the Holy Spirit. May the Lord, who has begun this good work in us, bring it to completion in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ.

**G Amen.**

## **Song of Praise**                      **“Amazing Grace” (My Chains are Gone)**

Amazing grace, how sweet the sound that saved a wretch like me.

I once was lost but now am found, was blind but now I see.

’Twas grace that taught my heart to fear, and grace my fears relieved.

How precious did that grace appear the hour I first believed.

My chains are gone, I’ve been set free. My God, my Savior has ransomed me.

And like a flood, His mercy rains unending love, amazing grace.

The Lord has promised good to me, His Word my hope secures.

He will my shield and portion be as long as life endures.

My chains are gone, I’ve been set free. My God, my Savior has ransomed me.

And like a flood, His mercy rains unending love, amazing grace.

My chains are gone, I’ve been set free. My God, my Savior has ransomed me.

And like a flood, His mercy rains unending love, amazing grace.

The earth shall soon dissolve like snow, the sun forbear to shine.

But God, who called me here below will be forever mine, will be forever mine.

You are forever mine.

## **First Reading**

Isaiah 30:8

<sup>8</sup>And now, go, write it before them on a tablet and inscribe it in a book, that it may be for the time to come as a witness forever.

**A** This is the Word of the Lord.

**G Thanks be to God.**

## **Second Reading**

Psalm 90:8-12

<sup>8</sup>You have set our iniquities before you, our secret sins in the light of your presence.<sup>9</sup>For all our days pass away under your wrath; we bring our years to an end like a sigh.<sup>10</sup>The years of our life are seventy, or even by reason of strength eighty; yet their span is but toil and trouble; they are soon gone, and we fly

away.<sup>11</sup> Who considers the power of your anger, and your wrath according to the fear of you? <sup>12</sup> So teach us to number our days that we may get a heart of wisdom.

**A** This is the Word of the Lord.

**G** **Thanks be to God.**

### **Third Reading**

Romans 8:35-39

<sup>35</sup> Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or danger, or sword? <sup>36</sup> As it is written, "For your sake we are being killed all the day long; we are regarded as sheep to be slaughtered."<sup>37</sup> No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. <sup>38</sup> For I am sure that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers, <sup>39</sup> nor height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

**A** This is the Word of the Lord.

**G** **Thanks be to God.**

### **Holy Gospel**

Luke 12:35-40

**P** The Holy Gospel according to Luke, the twelfth chapter.

**G** **Glory to You, O Lord.**

<sup>35</sup> "Stay dressed for action and keep your lamps burning, <sup>36</sup> and be like men who are waiting for their master to come home from the wedding feast, so that they may open the door to him at once when he comes and knocks. <sup>37</sup> Blessed are those servants whom the master finds awake when he comes. Truly, I say to you, he will dress himself for service and have them recline at table, and he will come and serve them. <sup>38</sup> If he comes in the second watch, or in the third, and finds them awake, blessed are those servants! <sup>39</sup> But know this, that if the master of the house had known at what hour the thief was coming, he would not have left his house to be broken into. <sup>40</sup> You also must be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect."

**P** This is the Gospel of the Lord.

**G** **Praise to You, O Christ.**

**Song:**

**"New Creation"**

I thought I knew what I was talking about  
When I testified of your great love  
Well I was a soul on fire there was no doubt  
Bible believing saved and washed in the blood  
But it wasn't 'til I stumbled and made my mistakes  
That I could know in my soul how amazing was grace  
You brought me blessings out of a tragedy  
You turned my old song into a symphony  
And with your spirit living inside of me  
I'm a new creation I'm a new creation  
And now I know what you were talking about  
Went from my head into my heart  
When I was broken at the bottom I found  
You're my healer and redeemer  
Jesus that's who you are  
You brought me blessings out of a tragedy  
You turned my old song into a symphony  
And with your spirit living inside of me  
I'm a new creation I'm a new creation  
Oh oh. Oh oh.

But it wasn't 'til I stumbled and made my mistakes  
That I could know in my soul how amazing was grace  
You brought me blessings out of a tragedy  
You turned my old song into a symphony  
And with your spirit living inside of me  
I'm a new creation  
You brought me blessings out of a tragedy  
You turned my old song into a symphony  
And with your spirit living inside of me  
I'm a new creation I'm a new creation  
Oh oh. Oh oh

And with your spirit living inside of me  
I'm a new creation I'm a new creation

## Reflections and Anticipations

### Song:

### “Evidence”

All throughout my history, Your faithfulness has walked beside me.  
The winter storms made way for spring. In every season, from where I'm standing  
I see the evidence of Your goodness all over my life, all over my life  
I see Your promises in fulfillment all over my life, all over my life.

Help me remember when I'm weak, fear may come but fear will leave.  
You lead my heart to victory. You are my strength and You always will be.

I see the evidence of Your goodness all over my life, all over my life  
I see Your promises in fulfillment all over my life, all over my life.

See the cross the empty grave; the evidence is endless.

All my sin rolled away because of You oh Jesus.

See the cross the empty grave; the evidence is endless.

All my sin rolled away because of You, oh, Jesus, oh.

I see the evidence of Your goodness all over my life, all over my life  
I see Your promises in fulfillment all over my life, all over my life, yeah.

I see the evidence of Your goodness all over my life, all over my life  
I see Your promises in fulfillment all over my life, all over my life.

Why should I fear? The evidence is here.

Why should I fear? Oh, the evidence is here.

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### Prayer

**P** Let us pray. ... Lord God, You have done marvelous things in the sight of all people. Most marvelous of all is Your Son, Jesus Christ, in whom You have made salvation known. As we reflect the year past, help us to forgive others, to learn from our errors, and to not dwell on our past sins. As we look forward to the coming year, keep us in Your steadfast love and faithfulness, so that our lives show forth Your goodness to the ends of the earth, through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

**G** Amen.



## Offering

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## Prayer of the Church

**P** For the Church around the world, that we might collaborate with one another to be faithful witnesses to the love of Christ, that differences be overcome during the coming year, and that all people look not only to their own needs, but also to the needs of others, we pray to the Lord:

### **C Lord in your mercy.**

**P** For all governments that they bless their citizens with justice, freedom, accountability, and care for those who cannot care for themselves, that leaders serve with integrity and compassion so that all people may thrive, that peace overcome warfare, that those in the armed forces find Christ to be their hope and peace, and that our opponents instead become our friends, we pray to the Lord:

### **C Lord in your mercy.**

**P** For those who serve to keep us safe and help us in times of need, that they carry out their tasks for the good of all, and that this new year brings peace and prosperity to all in our community according to God's will, we pray to the Lord:

### **C Lord in your mercy.**

**P** For those with poor health, those who mourn, and those who are lonely, that they experience the presence of Christ in their lives, that our families love, nurture, forgive, and embrace one another, we pray to the Lord:

### **C Lord in your mercy.**

**P** We commend to the Lord the year past, trusting in Jesus to forgive our sins and the Holy Spirit to empower us to change in the year ahead. We look forward to the coming year as a time of grace, to grow in our faith in Christ and our love for God and for our neighbors. Trusting in Christ, the same yesterday, today, and forever, let all God's people say:

### **C Amen.**

## Lord's Prayer

**P** Lord, remember us in Your kingdom and teach us to pray:

**C** **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.**

## SACRAMENT

### The Words of Our Lord

#### Peace of the Lord

**P** The peace of the Lord be with you always.

**C** Amen.

#### Distribution of the Holy Sacrament

*The Lord gave this Holy Sacrament to His Church so that His followers might receive His love and forgiveness in a visible, tangible way. When the Church celebrates this Sacrament, believers are also making a public declaration of their faith in the Lord Jesus Christ (1 Cor. 11:26). Holy Communion is offered every Sunday at St. John Lutheran, but because it is possible to receive the Lord's Supper to one's detriment (1 Cor. 11:27-29), we ask all who wish to partake of it to examine themselves as follows:*

1. *Do I believe that I am a sinner and therefore deserve God's punishment?*
2. *Am I truly sorry that by my sins I have offended God?*
3. *Do I believe that God accepts the death of Jesus as payment for my sins and therefore forgives my sins for Jesus' sake alone and not because of any goodness or effort on my part?*
4. *Do I intend, with the help of the Holy Spirit, to turn from my sins?*
5. *Do I seek to forgive others as God has forgiven me?*
6. *Do I believe Christ's own Word that His body and blood are truly given and received in and with the bread and wine (Matt. 26:26-28)?*

*If you have been baptized into the Christian faith and can answer "yes" to the above questions, you are invited to receive Holy Communion with the assurance of all the blessings Scripture promises.*



***If you prefer to receive a gluten-free wafer for communion, please place your hand over your heart as you kneel***

***Non-alcoholic wine is available in the center of the tray for those members who prefer it due to matters of health or conscience.***



#### Communion Song

#### "Make Room"

A family hiding from the storm found no place at the keeper's door.  
It was for this a child was born: To save a world so cold and hollow.

A sleeping town, they did not know that lying in a manger low  
a Savior king who had no home has come to heal our sorrows.

Is there room in your heart? Is there room in your heart?

Is there room in your heart for God to write His story?

Shepherds counting sheep at night. Do not fear the glory light.

You are precious in His sight. God has come to raise the lowly.

Is there room in your heart? Is there room in your heart?

Is there room in your heart for God to write His story?

You can come as you are. It may set you apart,  
when you make room in your heart and trade your dreams for His glory.

Make room in your heart, make room in your heart.

A mother holds the promise tight. Every wrong will be made right,  
the road is straight, the burden's light, for in His hands He holds tomorrow

Is there room in your heart? Is there room in your heart?

Is there room in your heart for God to write His story?

You can come as you are. It may set you apart,  
when you make room in your heart and trade your dreams for His glory.

Make room in your heart, make room in your heart, make room in your heart.

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## Prayer

**P** Let us pray... Gracious Lord, we give You thanks for the year now past, especially for the good we were permitted to give and to receive. The year is now past, and we commit it to You. We entrust to You the new year and rest in Your peace, for You are our help, and You neither slumber nor sleep. Hear us for the sake of Your name.

**G Amen.**

**P** Guide us waking, O Lord, and guard us sleeping

**G that awake we may watch with Christ and asleep we may rest in peace.**

## Benediction

**P** The almighty and merciful Lord, the Father, the ✠ Son, and the Holy Spirit, bless and preserve you.

**G Amen**

## Sending Song

## “He Shall Reign Forevermore”

In the bleak mid-winter All creation groans  
For a world in darkness Frozen like a stone  
Light is breaking In a stable for a throne  
And He shall reign forevermore forevermore  
And He shall reign forevermore forevermore  
Unto us a Child is born  
The King of kings and Lord of lords  
And He shall reign forevermore forevermore  
If I were a wise man I would travel far  
If I were a shepherd I would do my part  
But poor as I am I will give to Him my heart  
And He shall reign forevermore forevermore  
And He shall reign forevermore forevermore  
Unto us a Child is born  
The King of kings and Lord of lords  
And He shall reign forevermore forevermore  
Here within a manger lies the One Who made the starry skies  
This baby born for sacrifice Christ the Messiah  
Into our hopes into our fears The Savior of the world appears  
The promise of eternal years Christ the Messiah  
He shall reign forevermore forevermore  
And He shall reign forevermore forevermore  
He shall reign forevermore forevermore  
And He shall reign forevermore forevermore  
Unto us a Child is born  
The King of kings and Lord of lords  
And He shall reign forevermore forevermore

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