

December 14, 2025
Third Sunday in Advent
IMMINENT ARRIVAL: IMMINENT ARRIVAL OF THE MESSIAH



EMMANUEL and ST JOHN'S LUTHERAN CHURCHES
Wisconsin Synod
Mecan and Montello, WI
Sunday Worship: 8:00 AM in Mekan 10:00 AM in Montello

We pray that you are blessed by God's Word in worship today. **The order of worship** is printed here, is projected on the screen, and live-streamed at www.stjohnsmontello.org. **Restrooms** are located in the link way, out the church entryway, to the left and down the stairs. At Emmanuel, they are located in the Parish Hall. A **nursery changing station** is located in the lower level of St. John's.

IMMINENT ARRIVAL

Do you remember the feeling when someone important is about to arrive at your place? It's a mixture of anticipation and excitement and nervousness. Did you make all the correct preparations? Will the person be happy to see you? When and how will the person arrive? Will there be any surprises? During these weeks before Christmas, we anticipate the imminent arrival of Jesus. He's an important person! We are about to celebrate his birth. He could return on judgment day at any time. But in worship we realize that he impacts our lives when the Bible is read and when the sacraments are administered. Suddenly we feel the excitement of an imminent arrival.

IMMINENT ARRIVAL OF THE MESSIAH

The Messiah is an important person. "Messiah" is the same word as "Christ" or "Anointed One." He is someone who has been anticipated for a long time. Now we look at a time when his arrival is imminent! The historic Christian Church gave Latin titles to each Sunday. They titled the Third Sunday in Advent "Gaudete," which means "Rejoice!" As we reach the midway point of Advent, we ask Christ to empower us to do just that. We rejoice because God fulfills all his promises in Jesus.

Today's Worship Leader: Vacancy Pastor Bruce Hanneman
Today's Accompanist: Mrs. Donna Kuenn

Today's Order of Worship

Before opening hymn, the choir sings: "Prepare Ye"

OPENING HYMN: 315 Let The Earth Now Praise The Lord

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

Amen.

CONFESSION

If we claim to be without sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us.

If we confess our sins, God is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.

Let us confess our sins to the Lord.

Holy God, gracious Father, I am sinful by nature and have sinned against you in my thoughts, words, and actions. I have not loved you with my whole heart; I have not loved others as I should. I deserve your punishment both now and forever. But Jesus, my Savior, paid for my sins with his innocent suffering and death. Trusting in him, I pray: God, have mercy on me, a sinner.

Silence for meditation and reflection

DECLARATION OF FORGIVENESS

Our gracious Father in heaven has been merciful to us. He sent his only Son, Jesus Christ, who gave his life as the atoning sacrifice for the sins of the whole world. Therefore, as a called 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.

KYRIE

In peace let us pray to the Lord.

♪ **Lord, have mercy.**

For the peace from above and for our salvation, let us pray to the Lord.

♪ **Lord, have mercy.**

For the peace of the whole world, for the well-being of the Church of God, and for the unity of all, let us pray to the Lord.

♪ **Lord, have mercy.**

For this holy house and for all who offer here their worship and praise, let us pray to the Lord.

♪ **Lord, have mercy.**

Help, save, comfort, and defend us, gracious Lord.

♪ **Amen.**

GLORIA

♪ **Glory be to God on high, and on earth peace, good will toward men. We praise you, we bless you, we worship you, we glorify you, we give thanks to you, for your great glory, O Lord God, heav'nly King, God the Father Almighty. O Lord, the only-begotten Son, Jesus Christ; O Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the Father, you take away the sin of the world; have mercy on us. You take away the sin of the world; receive our prayer. You sit at the right hand of God the Father; have mercy on us. For you only are holy; you only are the Lord. You only, O Christ, with the Holy Spirit, are most high in the glory of God the Father. Amen.**

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Let us pray. Hear our prayers, Lord Jesus Christ, and come with the good news of your mighty deliverance. Drive the darkness from our hearts, and fill us with your light; for you live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Amen.

SCRIPTURE READINGS

FIRST READING: Isaiah 35:1-10

(Isaiah tells us that the coming of the Messiah would change everything.)

¹The desert and the parched land will be glad; the wilderness will rejoice and blossom. Like the crocus, ²it will burst into bloom; it will rejoice greatly and shout for joy. The glory of Lebanon will be given to it, the splendor of Carmel and Sharon; they will see the glory of the Lord, the splendor of our God. ³Strengthen the feeble hands, steady the knees that give way; ⁴say to those with fearful hearts, "Be strong, do not fear; your God will come, he will come with vengeance; with divine retribution he will come to save you." ⁵Then will the eyes of the blind be opened and the ears of the deaf unstopped. ⁶Then will the lame leap like a deer, and the mute tongue shout for joy. Water will gush forth in the wilderness and streams in the desert. ⁷The burning sand will become a pool, the thirsty ground bubbling springs. In the haunts where jackals once lay, grass and reeds and papyrus will grow. ⁸And a highway will be there; it will be called the Way of Holiness; it will be for those who walk on that Way. The unclean will not journey on it; wicked fools will not go about on it. ⁹No lion will be there, nor any ravenous beast; they will not be found there. But only the redeemed will walk there, ¹⁰and those the Lord has rescued will return. They will enter Zion with singing; everlasting joy will crown their heads. Gladness and joy will overtake them, and sorrow and sighing will flee away.

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

PSALM: 146D Praise the Almighty, My Soul, Adore Him

1 Praise the Almighty; my soul, adore him!

Yes, I will laud him until death.

**With songs and anthems I'll come before him
as long as he allows me breath.**

**From him my life and all things came;
bless, O my soul, his holy name.**

Alleluia, alleluia!

**2 Penitent sinners, for mercy crying,
pardon and peace from him obtain;
ever the wants of the poor supplying,
their faithful God he will remain.**

**He helps his children in distress,
the widows and the fatherless.**

Alleluia, alleluia!

**3 Trust not in princes, they are but mortal;
earthborn they are and soon decay.
Vain are their counsels at life's last portal
when the dark grave will claim its prey.
Since, then, no one can help afford,
trust only Christ, our God and Lord.
Alleluia, alleluia!**

**4 Praise, all you people, the name so holy
of him who does such wondrous things!
All that has being, to praise him solely,
with happy heart its amen sings!
Children of God, with angel host
praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost!
Alleluia, alleluia!**

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SECOND READING: James 5:7-11

(James points to Job as an example of perseverance in the face of suffering.)

⁷Be patient, then, brothers and sisters, until the Lord's coming. See how the farmer waits for the land to yield its valuable crop, patiently waiting for the autumn and spring rains.

⁸You too, be patient and stand firm, because the Lord's coming is near. ⁹Don't grumble against one another, brothers and sisters, or you will be judged. The Judge is standing at the door! ¹⁰Brothers and sisters, as an example of patience in the face of suffering, take the prophets who spoke in the name of the Lord. ¹¹As you know, we count as blessed those who have persevered. You have heard of Job's perseverance and have seen what the Lord finally brought about. The Lord is full of compassion and mercy.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

♪ Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.

**I will send my messenger ahead of you,
who will prepare your way before you.
Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.**

GOSPEL READING: Matthew 11:2-11

(John's disciples wanted to verify that Jesus was the Messiah.)

²When John, who was in prison, heard about the deeds of the Messiah, he sent his disciples ³to ask him, "Are you the one who is to come, or should we expect someone else?" ⁴Jesus replied, "Go back and report to John what you hear and see: ⁵The blind receive sight, the lame walk, those who have leprosy are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the good news is proclaimed to the poor. ⁶Blessed is anyone who does not stumble on account of me." ⁷As John's disciples were leaving, Jesus began to speak to the crowd about John: "What did you go out into the wilderness to see? A reed swayed by the wind? ⁸If not, what did you go out to see? A man dressed in fine clothes? No, those who wear fine clothes are in kings' palaces. ⁹Then what did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, I tell you, and more than a prophet. ¹⁰This is the one about whom it is written: " 'I will send my messenger ahead of you, who will prepare your way before you.' ¹¹Truly I tell you, among those born of women there has not risen anyone greater than John the Baptist; yet whoever is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he.

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise be to you, O Christ!

HYMN OF THE DAY: 324 O Lord, How Shall I Meet You

SERMON: Matthew 11: 2-11 "What Are We Waiting For?"

NICENE CREED

We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all that is, seen and unseen. We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, eternally begotten of the Father, God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, of one being with the Father. Through him all things were made. For us and for our salvation, he came down from heaven, was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary, and became truly human. For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate. He suffered death and was buried. On the third day he rose again in accordance with the Scriptures. He ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead, and his kingdom will have no end. We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son, who in

unity with the Father and the Son is worshiped and glorified, who has spoken through the prophets. We believe in one holy Christian and apostolic Church. We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins. We look for the resurrection of the dead and the life of the world to come. Amen.

OFFERING

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH

Almighty God and Father, we thank you for all your mercies, especially for the gift of your Son, through whom you have revealed your gracious will. We praise you for the Holy Spirit and his working through the means of grace.

Plant your Word in our hearts, and cause it to produce fruit in our lives.

Strengthen and defend your Church, that by your Word and sacraments faith may grow and love toward all may increase.

Support all who spread the light of your truth throughout the world.

Keep our children in the grace of their baptisms. Enable their parents to train them in lives of faith.

Raise up Christians to serve you in the ministry of the Word and in all godly walks of life.

Preserve our nation in justice and honor. Guide and bless all who make, administer, and judge our laws.

Give them wisdom that they may promote justice and hinder evil.

Let your blessing rest on planting and harvest, commerce and industry, medicine and science, the arts and culture. Protect all who travel, and care for those whose work is difficult or dangerous.

Be with all who devote themselves to any useful task.

Comfort all who are in sorrow or need, sickness or adversity. Remember those who suffer persecution for the faith. Have mercy on those for whom death draws near.

Grant them your love, and take them into your tender care.

Hear us, Lord, as we pray in silence. (*Silent prayer*)

We remember with thanksgiving those who have loved and served you, who now rest from their labors. Console those who are mourning or living with sadness.

Keep us in the true faith, and bring us at last to the joys of heaven.

Grant us these things, Father, for the sake of Jesus, who died and rose again.

Amen.

THE SACRAMENT

The Lord be with you.

♪ **And also with you.**

Lift up your hearts.

♪ **We lift them up 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 and right that we should at all times and in all places give you thanks, O Lord, holy Father, almighty and everlasting God, through Jesus Christ our Lord, who promised that wherever two or three come together in his name, there he is with them to shepherd his flock until he comes again in glory.

Therefore, with all the saints on earth and hosts of heaven, we praise your holy name and join their glorious song:

♪ **Holy, holy, holy Lord God of heavenly hosts: heav'n and earth are full of your glory. Hosanna, hosanna, hosanna in the highest. Blessed is he, blessed is he, blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna, hosanna, hosanna in the highest.**

We give thanks to you, O God, through your dear Son, Jesus Christ, whom you sent to be our Savior, our Redeemer, and the messenger of your grace. Through him you made all things; in him you are well pleased. He is the incarnate Word,

conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary. To fulfill your promises, he stretched out his hands on the cross and released from eternal death all who believe in you. As we remember Jesus' death and resurrection, we thank you that you have gathered us together to receive your Son's body and blood. Send us your Spirit, unite us as one, and strengthen our faith so that we may praise you in your Son, Jesus Christ. Through him, we glorify and honor you, O God our Father, with the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Amen.

THE LORD'S PRAYER

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.

WORDS OF INSTITUTION

Words of Institution

Our Lord Jesus Christ, on the night he was betrayed, took bread; and when he had given thanks, he broke it and gave it to his disciples, saying, "Take and eat; this is my body, which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me."

Then he took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, "Drink from it, all of you; this is my blood of the new covenant, which is poured out for you for the forgiveness of sins. Do this, whenever you drink it, in remembrance of me."

The peace of the Lord be with you always.

Amen.

♪ O Christ, Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world; have mercy on us. O Christ, Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world; have mercy on us. O Christ, Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world; grant us your peace. Amen.

DISTRIBUTION

Our Biblical Communion Practice

The Lord's Supper is God's gift in which we receive Christ's body and blood for the forgiveness of sins and strengthening of faith. This gift brings certain responsibilities. The sacrament is intended for those who have been instructed and who understand what the sacrament is all about. Communing together is also a way we express oneness of faith. Therefore, we ask that only confirmed members of our congregations or other churches in fellowship with the Wisconsin Synod come forward to receive the sacrament today. Thank you for respecting this biblical practice. To learn more, you may speak with the pastor after the service.

Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good;

his mercy endures forever.

Whenever we eat this bread and drink this cup,

we proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.

We give thanks, almighty God, that you have refreshed us with this saving gift. We pray that through it you will strengthen our faith in you and increase our love for one another. We ask this in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Amen.

BLESSING

The Lord bless you and keep you.

The Lord make his face shine on you and be gracious to you.

The Lord look on you with favor and give you peace.

Amen.

CLOSING HYMN: 315 Hark The Glad Sound

Acknowledgments

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Intercessory Prayer

We pray for Emmanuel member, Marion Heller and her family, as they mourn the death of her son Edward Heller. His earthly remains were laid to rest in the Emmanuel Cemetery on Friday afternoon. We also pray for Pastor Caauwe and Mr. Mark Hesse, as they deliberate their calls.

Pastor Johann Caauwe Called to Be Our Pastor

At our Pastor Call meeting after church on Sunday the members present voted unanimously to extend a Divine Call to Pastor Johann Caauwe. Following is some information about him and his family. He is 46 years old, has been a Pastor for 20 years and is presently serving at St. John's Wood Lake MN. His wife Sara (nee Kassulke) graduated from MLC. They have 9 children ranging in age from 22 - 10. Hannah 22, Andrew 21, Lydia 19, Isaiah 18, Miriam 16, Joanna 14, Ruth 13, Josiah 11 and Esther 10. Pastor Caauwe is described as a sincere man who is interested in the good of others. He has strong organizational skills that make him a good leader. He has strong preaching and teaching skills as well. He enjoys the following tasks: Worship music planning, hospital/shut-in visits, outreach, preaching, and Bible class youth and adult.

Contact information:

Pastor Johann Caauwe

Phone: 507-485-3362 (work) 507-485-3281 (home) 507-828-5136 (cell)

Email: pastor@stjohnswoodlake.com

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PO box 156

Wood Lake MN 56297

Please pray for him and his family and reach out to him with encouragement through cards, texts, emails, or phone calls as he deliberates where he can best use his gifts to promote the saving Gospel. Please continue to pray for Pastor Dolan and Pastor Hanneman as they work diligently to help us through this vacancy. Pray for all of our called workers as we work together to spread the name of Jesus.

This Week of December 14-20:

15th Mon. Choir practice at St. John's, 6pm
16th Tues St. John's Church Council, 6:30pm
17th Wed. Public School Confirmation Class at St. John's, lower level. 5-6 PM
21st Sun **8 AM Worship at Emmanuel and Sunday School Christmas Program
at St. John's 10am**

Christmas Worship

12/21/25 St. John's Sunday School Christmas Service 10:00am

12/24/25 Christmas Eve Worship at St. John's 6:30pm

12/25/25 Christmas Day Worship at Emmanuel 9:00am

(There will be New Year's Eve Worship with Holy Communion at Emmanuel, 6:30pm)

What Tool Are You Using?

There are different tools you can use for a daily routine of faith building. One of them, a simple but meaningful tool, is the daily devotion booklet, *Meditation*. If you have not picked up a copy, do so. They are available in the back of both churches. This week you get more from Isaiah, today's first reading. "Your God Comes" is the weeklong theme.

December Forward in Christ is Available

It's a great Christmas issue! You will find applicable devotions/Bible studies, encouraging mission news and stories, and other informational and instructional materials. One example is: "How Do Lutherans View Mary."

Worship Attendance Last Week

Emmanuel: 55

St. John's:

2026 St. John's Offering envelopes are now available in the linkway. PLEASE, don't use these envelopes until January 2026.

Thank You to Those Who Serve as Ushers at St. John's!

Thank you to today's ushers Jerre Duerr, Gordon Krause and Kevin Kaul.. The ushers for Dec. 21st are: Ben Jaster, Jacob Jaster, Jeff Reimer and Mark Emond.

St. John's Financials

	Budget	Offerings	All Income	Expenses
November	\$33,436.46	\$21,120.75	\$30,886.75	\$30,045.98
Year to Date	\$167,182.27	\$111,764.57	\$176,067.41	\$150,971.81

Financial Overview Jul-Nov, 2025-26 (Fiscal Year)

Checkbook balance remained stable and ahead of the balance at the start of the fiscal year. Membership and plate offerings continued to run somewhat low. Supplemental income from Emmanuel, CALA, and St. John's Princeton helped bring total income close to the budgeted number. Expenses continued to run somewhat lower than budgeted. Net income remained on the plus side and slightly exceeded the budgeted projection. Book equity (assets minus dedicated accounts) remained in negative territory but was much improved from the start of the fiscal year...It is still very important that we have not been funding a fulltime pastor since July. That, of course, will change when a new pastor arrives, and will obviously have considerable impact on our expenditures.

Bulletin submissions

Please have any submissions for the bulletin into the office by no later than Thursdays at 3pm. Please understand that the bulletin editors reserve the right to edit as needed without losing the main content of the announcement. Thank you!

From Our Little Lambs Ministry

Our Little Lambs Childcare ministry has reached the halfway point of the 2025-26 year. We have been blessed with the opportunity to feed the lambs entrusted to our care. 11 children are enrolled with many of them from non-member families. What a great opportunity to "tell the story of Jesus Christ our Lord." ... In addition, this year we were able to offer financial assistance to some of our families which allowed them to send their children to Little Lambs. At this point, however, the funds available for financial assistance have been used up. Special gifts designated for this purpose, over-and-above regular giving offerings, are always welcome and greatly appreciated. Give that prayerful consideration in 2026. ... The Little Lambs teachers, and staff thank God for the opportunity to serve in this ministry, and we thank the members and friends of our parish for your ongoing support."

Advent Wreath

LuAnn Zieman

*“Arise, shine, for your light has come, and the glory
of the Lord rises upon you.” --Isaiah 60:1*

a circle of green
with no beginning, no end,
like God’s love for us
or the gift of eternal life

three candles of purple
declare royalty and repentance:
one for prophecy, hope,
a promise of old kept;
one for Bethlehem, peace,
Christ is our peace;
one for angels, love--
great love, God’s gift,
compels us to love others;

one candle of pink, joy--
shepherds, lamb-tenders,
met God’s Passover Lamb
and spread the Good News

one candle of white,
the Christ candle,
shining brightly at the center
The Light of the World



Welcome to Our Visitors - Help Us Stay In Touch

Scan the barcode using your smartphone camera and fill out the prompted information...OR... fill out the attendance card located at the end of each pew and place it in the offering plate

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Miss Beth Barenz - Grade 3-5 bbarenz@christalonelutheranacademy.net

Mrs. Elizabeth Wolter - K-2 ewolter@christalonelutheranacademy.net

Miss Rachel Huebner - Little Lambs Teacher -littlelambs@stjohnsmontello.org

Mrs. Sylvia Straschinske - Little Lambs Director -lladmin@stjohnsmontello.org

Mrs. Jorgia Kempley - CALA Secretary -

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