

December 28, 2025
First Sunday After Christmas
CHRIST THE SAVIOR IS BORN: SON OF GOD



EMMANUEL & St. JOHN'S LUTHERAN CHURCHES
Wisconsin Synod
Mecan, WI & Montello, WI
Sunday Worship: 8:00 AM & 10:00AM

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.

CHRIST THE SAVIOR IS BORN

"Silent Night" was written originally in German by Joseph Mohr, with music composed by Franz Gruber. The carol was first performed on Christmas Eve in 1818 at St. Nicholas Church in Oberndorf, Austria. Legend says the church organ was broken, prompting Gruber to compose a simple guitar accompaniment. Subsequently accompanied by many instruments and translated into many languages, the text paints the picture of the incarnation. The last phrase is repeated, so in the second stanza we hear it twice: "Christ the Savior is born!" Every word of that phrase is significant, and every line of the Christmas carol describes a Bible truth. We use the beloved hymn to ponder the profound message of the Twelve Days of Christmas.

SON OF GOD

Christmas holidays mean family time, often with extended family travel and visits. Meals are prepared, gifts are given, memories are made. But the memories might not all be good. Sometimes there are Christmas hurts or even tragedies. We live in a world still affected by sin. The sinfulness of the world cannot rob us of the peace God intends to bring through his Son. Christ the Savior is born, and through his life, God brings us into the family. He gives us the rights of redeemed sons and daughters, the privileges of inheritance.

Today's Worship Leader: Vacancy Pastor Bruce Hanneman
Today's Accompanist: Mrs. Andrea Schmeling Dolan

Today's Order of Worship

(Adapted from *Corporate Confession and Absolution* CW pages 278-281)

OPENING HYMN: 332 Let Us All with Gladsome Voice

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

Amen.

PRAYER

Let us pray. Almighty God, to whom all hearts are open, all desires are known, and from whom no secrets are hidden: cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by your Holy Spirit, that we may love you and praise your holy name; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

CONFESSiON AND ABSOLUTION

Our help is in the name of the Lord,

the maker of heaven and earth.

Let us confess our sins to God and ask for his forgiveness.

Almighty God, merciful Father, I confess to you that I have not loved you with all my heart. In what I have done and left undone, I have pursued my ways instead of your ways. I have not loved others as you command. For this I deserve your punishment now and forever. I am sorry for my sins. I repent of them. I beg for your mercy.

Silence for reflection

Forgive us for the sake of Jesus Christ, who suffered and died for us.

Cleanse me from my sins. Release me from my guilt. Grant me your Holy Spirit to amend my sinful life.

Jesus says to his people, "If you forgive anyone's sins, their sins are forgiven." Do you believe this?

Yes, I believe.

In the name and by the command of our Lord Jesus Christ, I forgive you all your sins.

Amen.

EXHORTATION

Our Lord Jesus Christ has forgiven us, has reconciled us to God, and has promised us the power to forgive and love one another. Relying on his promise, therefore, be reconciled with one another.

Brothers and sisters, may the peace of Christ rule in our hearts, in our words, and in our actions.

Prayer

Let us pray. God, our Father, by the sacrifice of your Son you reconciled the world to yourself. We thank you for the precious gift of forgiveness. Refresh us with the joy of our salvation, that we may walk in the way of peace with our brothers and sisters in Christ. Renew our minds and wills, that daily we may speak your word of peace; through Jesus Christ our Savior, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Amen.

SCRIPTURE READINGS

FIRST READING: Isaiah 63:7–9

*The kindness of the Lord is seen in sending a Savior
to redeem those who turn away from him.*

⁷I will tell of the kindnesses of the Lord, the deeds for which he is to be praised, according to all the Lord has done for us—yes, the many good things he has done for Israel, according to his compassion and many kindnesses. ⁸He said, “Surely they are my people, children who will be true to me”; and so he became their Savior. ⁹In all their distress he too was distressed, and the angel of his presence saved them. In his love and mercy he redeemed them; he lifted them up and carried them all the days of old.

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

SECOND READING: Galatians 4:4–7

Redeemed by God's true Son, we can call God our "Father."

⁴But when the set time had fully come, God sent his Son, born of a woman, born under the law, ⁵to redeem those under the law, that we might receive adoption to sonship. ⁶Because you are his sons, God sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, the Spirit who calls out, "Abba, Father." ⁷So you are no longer a slave, but God's child; and since you are his child, God has made you also an heir.

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

HYMN OF THE DAY: 355 Let All Together Praise Our God

SERMON: Matthew 2:13-23: Christians Count on God's Promise

¹³When they had gone, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream. "Get up," he said, "take the child and his mother and escape to Egypt. Stay there until I tell you, for Herod is going to search for the child to kill him." ¹⁴So he got up, took the child and his mother during the night and left for Egypt, ¹⁵where he stayed until the death of Herod. And so was fulfilled what the Lord had said through the prophet: "Out of Egypt I called my son." ¹⁶When Herod realized that he had been outwitted by the Magi, he was furious, and he gave orders to kill all the boys in Bethlehem and its vicinity who were two years old and under, in accordance with the time he had learned from the Magi. ¹⁷Then what was said through the prophet Jeremiah was fulfilled: ¹⁸"A voice is heard in Ramah, weeping and great mourning, Rachel weeping for her children and refusing to be comforted, because they are no more." ¹⁹After Herod died, an angel of the Lord appeared in a dream to Joseph in Egypt ²⁰and said, "Get up, take the child and his mother and go to the land of Israel, for those who were trying to take the child's life are dead." ²¹So he got up, took the child and his mother and went to the land of Israel. ²²But when he heard that Archelaus was reigning in Judea in place of his father Herod, he was afraid to go there. Having been warned in a dream, he withdrew to the district of Galilee, ²³and he went and lived in a town called Nazareth. So was fulfilled what was said through the prophets, that he would be called a Nazarene.

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 & PRAYERS

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, by whose wonderful and mysterious birth you have opened our eyes to the glory of your grace and renewed in our hearts the fervor of your love.

HYMN: 670 I Come, O Savoir, to Your Table v. 1-2

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

The peace of the Lord be with you always.

Amen.

HYMN: 670 I Come, O Savoir, to Your Table v. 9-10

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: 347 Angels from the Realms of Glory

Pastor Johann Caaue Called to Be Our Pastor

Pastor Johann (Hans) Caaue has received our divine call to pastor of Emmanuel/St. John's. 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 Martin Luther College. They have 9 children ranging from 22 - 10. Hannah 22, Andrew 21, Lydia 19, Isaiah 18, Miriam 16, Joanna 14, Ruth 13, Josiah 11 and Esther 10. Pastor Caaue 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: Worship music planning, hospital/shut-in visits, outreach, preaching, and Bible class youth and adult. Contact information is as follows:

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

Email: pastor@stjohnswoodlake.com

Address: PO box 156, Wood Lake MN 56297

Please pray for him and his family, and feel free to 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.



New Years Eve Worship at Emmanuel and St. John's

December 31, 6:30pm

At Emmanuel, Mecan

Holy Communion will be celebrated

This Week of December 28 – January 4 there is NO LITTLE LAMBS or SCHOOL This Week

Next Sunday, January 4th—Worship 8:00am at Emmanuel and 10:00 at St. John's.

Retired pastor and son of the congregation, William Runke, will be our guest preacher and Robert Mateske returns to play the organ.

St. John's Voters' Meeting is Sunday, January 4 following worship.

A New Year' Resolve - *Meditations* Devotions

There are still plenty of *Meditations* booklets available at the back of the church. Begin the new year with a daily devotion plan.

2026 Offering envelopes for St. John's are available in the linkway. For Emmanuel they are available in the Parish Hall.

Worship Attendance Last Week

Emmanuel:50

St. John's: 93

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

Thank you to today's ushers Matthew Kath, Glen Bubolz, Martin Schmanke, Michael Kempley and Grayson Kempley. The ushers for Jan 4th are: James Wachholz, Zeb Zuehls, Chuck Bietcher, Jesse Schable and Aaron Wachholz.

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."



CALA School News

The school made a request to our synod's Assignment Committee for a midyear graduate from Martin Luther College to fill our vacancy in the lower-level grades classroom. However, with only a few candidates available and many schools making a request, we were not assigned a graduate. The board continues to work on alternatives, including education students from Wisconsin Lutheran College...Mr. Mark Hesse of St. Lucas, Kewaskum still holds our principal call beginning with the 2006-2027 school year.



Happy New Year with Habakkuk!

“What in the world, God?” That pretty well sums up how this believer and man of God felt about things when he looked around his world. God understood and answered his (and our) concerns. **On Wednesdays, January 7 and 14th**, the Wednesday Bible study group will listen in on the conversation between Habakkuk and God and see what’s in it for us today. It will be offered twice, at 10:30am and 6:30pm). **You should come!**

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 to remember 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.



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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Mr. Martin Raasch - Grade 6-8 mraasch@christalonelutheranacademy.net

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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