November 15, 2026

THE BEGINNING OF THE END

IT'S TIME TO PUT YOUR AFFAIRS IN ORDER

PRESENT YOUR
BODIES AS A
LIVING
SACRIFICE,



HOLY
—AND—
ACCEPTABLE
TO GOD.

ROMANS 12:1, ESV

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 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 linkway, 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.

THE BEGINNING OF THE END

The cartoon character holds a sign saying, "The End Is Near." For Christians, this is not a message of fear. Instead, it is a message of watchful hope. Scripture teaches that the End Times began with Christ's first coming, especially his death and resurrection. Christ will come again on judgment day. Now we live in that in-between time, when salvation has been won, but full glory is still to come. It's the beginning of the end. Jesus himself makes clear that no one knows the day or hour of his return. This uncertainty is not meant to trouble us, but to keep us spiritually awake. Each day becomes an opportunity to live in repentance and faith, turning from sin and trusting fully in Christ's finished work for us. Our preparation for the end is not about trying to predict signs or earn God's favor. Instead, it is about remaining rooted in Jesus: hearing the Word, receiving the sacraments, and trusting the promises of forgiveness. These are God's ways of keeping us ready. "The Beginning of the End" reminds us that history is moving toward our own death and toward Christ's return. For believers, that end is truly a beginning.

IT'S TIME TO PUT YOUR AFFAIRS IN ORDER

When you know that your death is approaching, you try to put your affairs in order for the sake of others. When you know that the second coming of Christ is approaching, what is the appropriate response? We are not to be sedentary. Jesus has not yet returned because there is still work to be done. And Jesus carries out his good work through us. So until he comes again and says, "Stop!" we will be busy with faithful service. It's the beginning of the end, and we use our gifts and talents in an orderly way for God's glory.

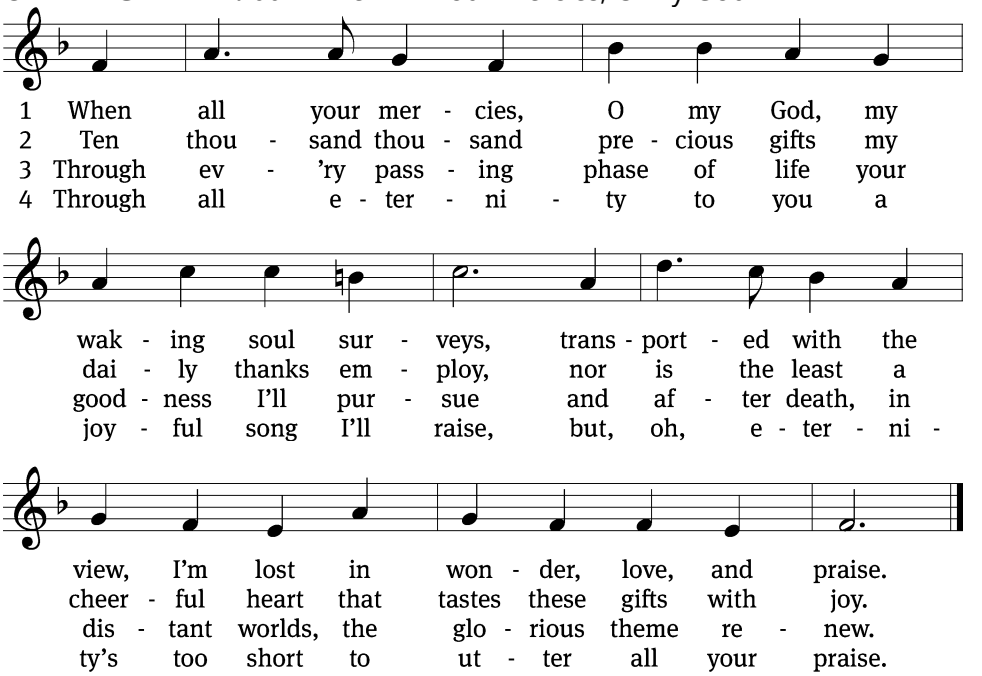
Pastor Chuck Westra
Organist: Bob Mateske

Preparing for Worship with Prayer

Heavenly Father, I have come to worship you. Draw near to me in your gracious Word, and assure me of your loving-kindness. Curb my wandering thoughts so that with undivided attention, I may hear your voice and sing your praise. Amen.

Today's Order of Worship

OPENING HYMN: 604 When All Your Mercies, O My God



Text: Joseph Addison, 1672–1719, abr., alt.
Tune: The Whole Booke of Psalmes, London, 1592; attr. George Kirbye, c. 1560–1634
Text and tune: Public domain

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

CONFESSION

Blessed are they whose transgressions are forgiven, whose sins are covered.
Blessed are they whose sin the Lord does not count against them.

Let us confess our sins to the Lord.
Almighty and merciful Father, we have strayed from your ways like lost sheep. We have followed what we have devised and desired in our hearts. We have offended you and sinned against your holy law. We have done those things that we should not have done, and we have not done those things that we should have

done. Have mercy on us, Lord! Spare us, forgive us, and restore us, according to your promises in Christ Jesus.

Silence for meditation and reflection

DECLARATION OF FORGIVENESS

God, our merciful Father, has forgiven all our sins. He sent his Son, Jesus Christ, to be our Redeemer and Savior. Jesus paid the penalty for our guilt by his death on the cross and freed us from death by his resurrection from the grave. We have peace with God now and forever.

Amen.

KYRIE

In peace let us pray to the Lord.



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



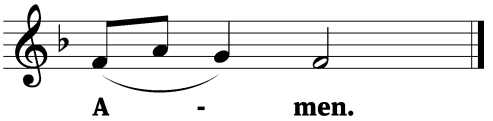
For the peace of the whole world, for the well-being of the Church of God, and for the unity of all, let us pray to the Lord.



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



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



HYMN OF PRAISE: 609 We Praise You O God Our Redeemer v. 1-2



Text: Julia B. Cory, 1882–1963, alt.
Tune: Nederlandtsch Gedenckclanck, Haarlem, 1626
Text and tune: Public domain

The Lord be with you.
And also with you.

PRAYER OF THE DAY:

Let us pray. Lord God Almighty, so rule and govern our hearts and minds by your Holy Spirit that we may always look forward to the end of this present evil age and the day of your righteous judgment. Keep us steadfast in true and living faith, and present us at last holy and blameless before you; through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.
Amen.

SCRIPTURE READINGS

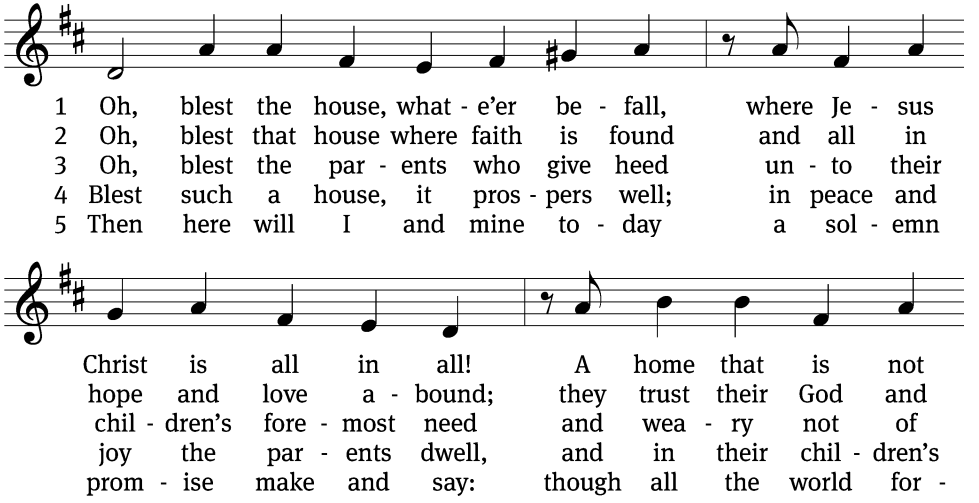
FIRST READING: Isaiah 1:10-18

Although Old Testament Israel responded to God's gifts with grudging service, God remained faithful to his promises.

[10]Hear the word of the Lord, you rulers of Sodom; listen to the instruction of our God,
you people of Gomorrah! [11]"The multitude of your sacrifices—what are they to me?" says
the Lord. "I have more than enough of burnt offerings, of rams and the fat of fattened
animals; I have no pleasure in the blood of bulls and lambs and goats. [12]When you come
to appear before me, who has asked this of you, this trampling of my courts? [13]Stop
bringing meaningless offerings! Your incense is detestable to me. New Moons, Sabbaths
and convocations—I cannot bear your worthless assemblies. [14]Your New Moon feasts
and your appointed festivals I hate with all my being. They have become a burden to me;
I am weary of bearing them. [15]When you spread out your hands in prayer, I hide my eyes
from you; even when you offer many prayers, I am not listening. Your hands are full of
blood! [16]Wash and make yourselves clean. Take your evil deeds out of my sight; stop
doing wrong. [17]Learn to do right; seek justice. Defend the oppressed. Take up the cause
of the fatherless; plead the case of the widow. [18]"Come now, let us settle the matter,"
says the Lord. "Though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though
they are red as crimson, they shall be like wool.

The Word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

ANTHEM BASED ON PSALM 128: 760 Oh, Blest The House





Text: Christoph C. L. von Pfeil, 1712–1784, abr.; (sts. 1–2, 4–5): tr. Catherine Winkworth, 1827–1878, alt.; (st. 3): tr. Evangelical Lutheran Hymnal, 1880, alt.
Tune: Geistliche Lieder auffs new gebessert, Wittenberg, 1535; ed. Joseph Klug
Text and tune: Public domain

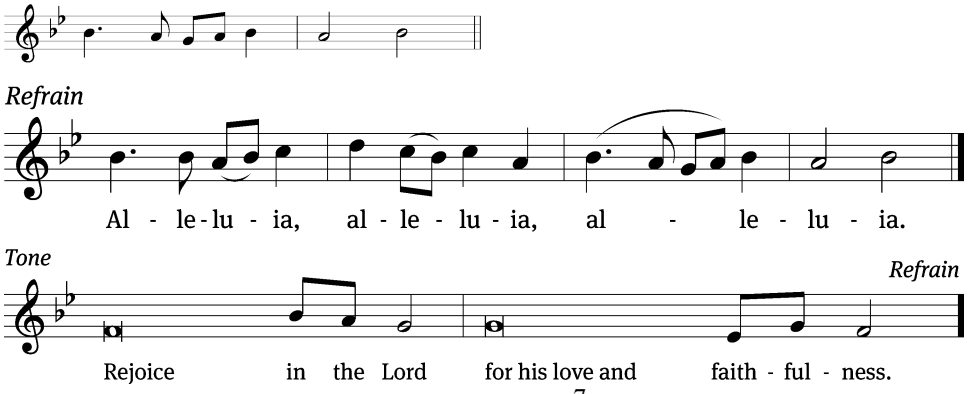
SECOND READING: Romans 12:1-8 (Sermon Text)

With God's mercy in view, we use God's gifts faithfully in joyful response.

[1]Therefore, I urge you, brothers and sisters, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God—this is your true and proper worship. [2]Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will. [3]For by the grace given me I say to every one of you: Do not think of yourself more highly than you ought, but rather think of yourself with sober judgment, in accordance with the faith God has distributed to each of you. [4]For just as each of us has one body with many members, and these members do not all have the same function, [5]so in Christ we, though many, form one body, and each member belongs to all the others. [6]We have different gifts, according to the grace given to each of us. If your gift is prophesying, then prophesy in accordance with your faith; [7]if it is serving, then serve; if it is teaching, then teach; [8]if it is to encourage, then give encouragement; if it is giving, then give generously; if it is to lead, do it diligently; if it is to show mercy, do it cheerfully.

The Word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION:



GOSPEL READING: Matthew 25:14-30

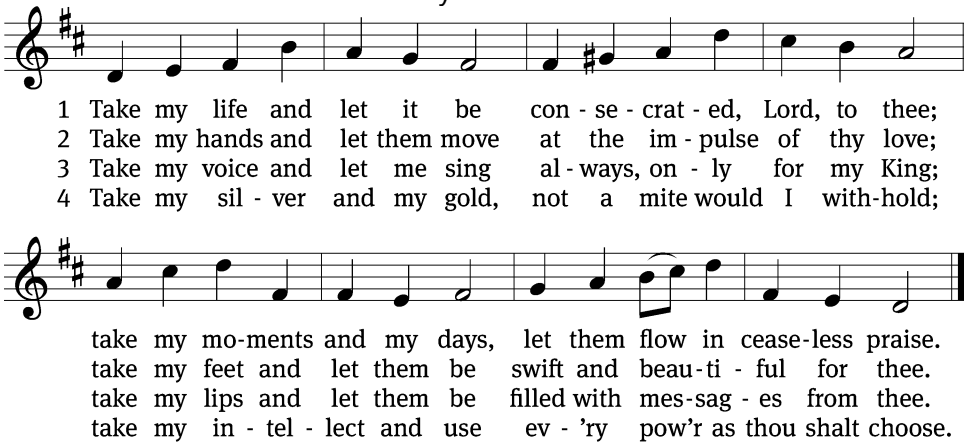
Through a parable, Jesus calls his followers to faithful service.

14 "Again, it will be like a man going on a journey, who called his servants and entrusted
his wealth to them. 15 To one he gave five bags of gold, to another two bags, and to
another one bag, each according to his ability. Then he went on his journey. 16 The man
who had received five bags of gold went at once and put his money to work and gained
five bags more. 17 So also, the one with two bags of gold gained two more. 18 But the man
who had received one bag went off, dug a hole in the ground and hid his master's
money. 19 "After a long time the master of those servants returned and settled accounts
with them. 20 The man who had received five bags of gold brought the other five.
'Master,' he said, 'you entrusted me with five bags of gold. See, I have gained five more.'
21 "His master replied, 'Well done, good and faithful servant! You have been faithful with a
few things; I will put you in charge of many things. Come and share your master's
happiness!' 22 "The man with two bags of gold also came. 'Master,' he said, 'you entrusted
me with two bags of gold; see, I have gained two more.' 23 "His master replied, 'Well
done, good and faithful servant! You have been faithful with a few things; I will put you
in charge of many things. Come and share your master's happiness!' 24 "Then the man
who had received one bag of gold came. 'Master,' he said, 'I knew that you are a hard
man, harvesting where you have not sown and gathering where you have not scattered
seed. 25 So I was afraid and went out and hid your gold in the ground. See, here is what
belongs to you.' 26 "His master replied, 'You wicked, lazy servant! So you knew that I
harvest where I have not sown and gather where I have not scattered seed? 27 Well then,
you should have put my money on deposit with the bankers, so that when I returned I
would have received it back with interest. 28 " 'So take the bag of gold from him and give
it to the one who has ten bags. 29 For whoever has will be given more, and they will have
an abundance. Whoever does not have, even what they have will be taken from them.
30 And throw that worthless servant outside, into the darkness, where there will be
weeping and gnashing of teeth.'

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise be to you, O Christ!

HYMN OF THE DAY: 695 Take My Life And Let It Be



5 Take my will and make it thine,
it shall be no longer mine;
take my heart, it is thine own,
it shall be thy royal throne.

6 Take my love, my Lord, I pour
at thy feet its treasure store;
take myself, and I will be
ever, only, all for thee.

Text: Frances R. Havergal, 1836–1879
Tune: William H. Havergal, 1793–1870
Text and tune: Public domain

SERMON: Romas 12:1-8 "Bow Down in Worship"

APOSTLES' CREED

I believe in God, the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth. I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried. He descended into hell. The third day he rose again from the dead. He ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of God the Father Almighty. From there he will come to judge the living and the dead. I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy Christian Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. 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.

Almighty God, we thank you for teaching us the things you want us to believe and do. Help us by your Holy Spirit to keep your Word in pure hearts that we may be strengthened in faith, guided in holiness, and comforted in life and in death, through

Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.
Amen.

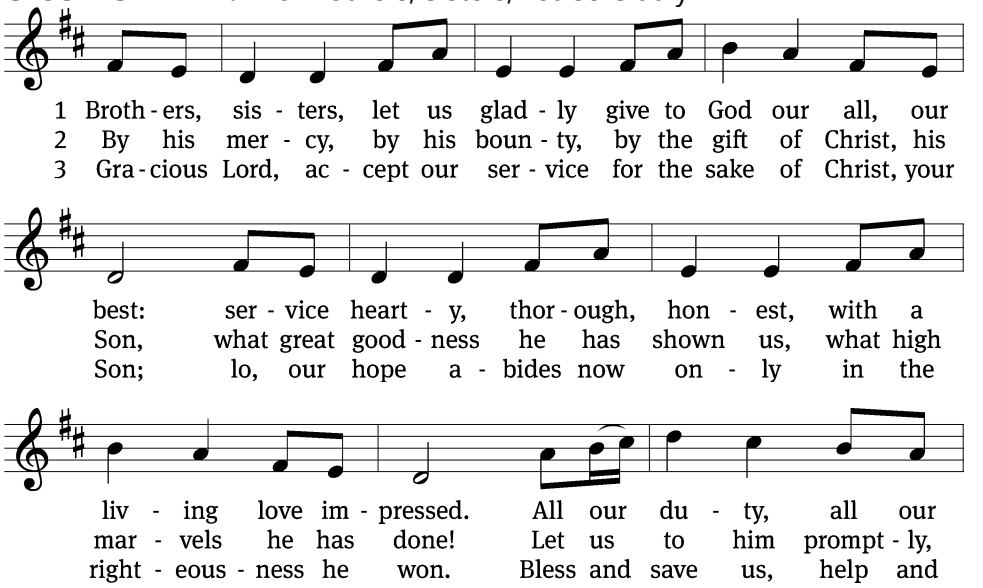
LORD'S PRAYER

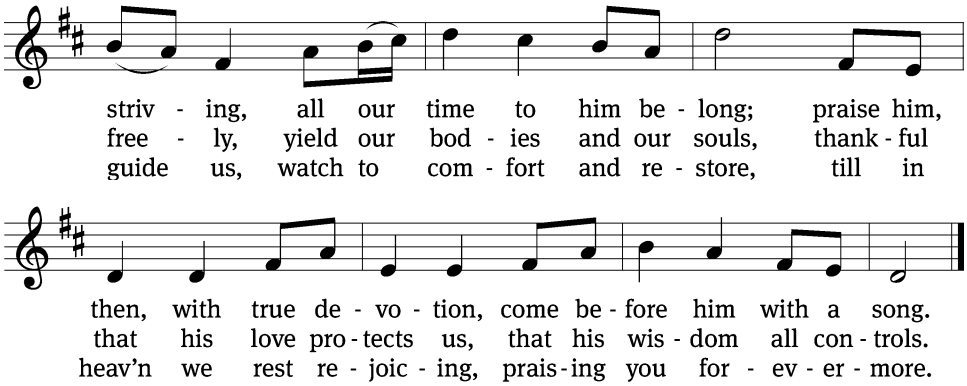
Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever and ever. Amen.

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: 748 Brothers, Sisters, Let Us Gladly





Text: Henry Bateman, 1802–1872
Tune: Repository of Sacred Music, Part Second, Harrisburg, 1813, ed. John Wyeth
Text and tune: Public domain

Acknowledgments – Setting One, adapted, from CW 23. Unless otherwise indicated, Scripture quotations are from The Holy Bible, New International Version®. Copyright © 1973, 1978, 1984, 2011 by Biblica, Inc.™ Used by permission of Zondervan. All rights reserved worldwide. Software distributed in partnership with Northwestern Publishing House. Created by Christian Worship: Service Builder © 2024 CPH.

Next Sunday, November 22: Last Sunday Of The Church Year

We conclude our series "The Beginning Of The End",
our theme will be "It's Time To Hope For The Best".

*****CALENDAR OF EVENTS & ANNOUNCEMENTS*****

November 15-22,2026

Mon 16th: No School. Parent/Teacher Conferences
Choir Practice at St. John's 6:00pom

Tues 17th: Bible Information Class at St. John's, 6:00pm
St. John's Council Meeting 6:30pm

Wed 18th: Bible Class at St. John's 10:30am & 6:30pm
Catechism Class at St. John's 5:00pm

Thurs 19th: GriefShare at St. John's, 5:30pm.
Worship at St. John's, 6:30pm (same service as on Sunday)

Sat 21st: Holiday Trail at St. John's.

Next Sunday 22nd: Sunday School at St. John's 8:30am
Bible Study at St. John's 8:45am

Looking Ahead: 11/25-27 NO SCHOOL
NO Bible Class or Catechism Class 11/25
Wednesday 11/25: Thanksgiving Eve Worship at Emmanuel 6:30pm
11/29 Advent by Candlelight at Emmanuel 4:00pm
11/28 Men's Breakfast & Study Club at St. John's, 8:00am
12/1 CALA Meeting
12/3 Ladies Aid Meeting noon
12/3 Joint Worship Meeting 6:00pm

LL, CALA and Sunday School Singing Schedule:

11/15/26 LL & K-8, Chimes at PRINCETON
11/29/26 Sunday School at Montello

Thank you to all who supported our LWMS Mission pie sale last weekend. We appreciate your extra donations. We made $367 for our local working fund.

Advent by Candlelight: Sign up now for this important event! Emmanuel will be hosting an Advent by Candlelight for all women of the Emmanuel and St. John's congregations, and their female family members, friends, and neighbors, on Sunday, November 29 at 4:00 pm at the Emmanuel Parish Hall. Please join us for this wonderful afternoon/evening of God's Word, music, and fellowship to help you prepare your hearts for the Advent season before the holidays get into full swing! Sign-up sheets are located in Emmanuel's Parish Hall and St. John's Information Area. **Seating is limited, so please sign up by Sunday, November 22**. If you have any questions, please text/call Kathy Ninneman at 920-896-3681.

New Wednesday Bible Study series will begin on the 18th. We will begin a study on the Epistle of 1 John. All are welcome! Bring a friend! Wednesdays at 10:30am and again at 6:30pm.

The I:55 Book Fair will be on display in the CALA gym in Montello during The Holiday Trail on Sat. Nov. 21st. It will also be open for an hour after church on the 22nd. The display will move to Princeton for the Princeton Craft Fair on Nov. 28. and for an hour after church in Princeton on the 29th.

Upon the first day of the week, let every one of you lay aside in store as God hath prospered him, "

Stewardship of the Word Last Week:

- Sunday Worship at Emmanuel 65 and at St. John's 163

Hebrews 10:25 Let us not neglect meeting together, as some have the habit of doing. Rather, let us encourage each other, and all the more as you see the Day approaching.

Our Stewardship of Time:

This week the ushers at St. John's are: James Wachholz, Zeb Zuehls, Chuck Boetcher, Jesse Schable, Aaron Wachholz, Wally Wolsdorf. The St. John's ushers for November 15 are: Paul Van Treeck, Matt Borzick, Ken Borzick, James Henke, Haiden Van Treeck, Nolan Van Treeck, Brody Henke, Milo Henke.

Give the gift of a Christ-centered education! ❤️

Your generosity can make a lasting difference in the life of a child and their family. By donating to Christ Alone Lutheran Academy, you can help provide the gift of a Christian education or help offset the cost of tuition for those who need a little extra support. Every gift, big or small, helps make a difference. Together, we can ensure more children have the opportunity to grow in faith, knowledge, and love for Christ.
Please contact Jorgia Kempley with any questions 920-481-9002 OR secretary@christalonelutheranacademy.net

Literacy Volunteers-Marquette County, Inc has a box located near the church/school office at St. John's. It is for the Tots to Teens Holiday Book Drive that is held annually. Books will be distributed during the Marquette County Giving Tree Event held on Saturday, December 12th for families served by the Marquette County Social Services. Please drop off new or gently used books. Picture books, board books, chapter books, and young adult readers are all welcome. Thank you for your contributions! If you have any questions, you can contact LuAnn Zieman

Marquette County Giving Tree. Our churches are once again participating in this year's drive. The Trees with tags on them will be placed in the church entrance at St. John's and in the Parish Hall at Emmanuel. Please wrap the gifts and tape the tag on it, and have them returned to the church you took the tag from by December 8th. Thank you to St. John's and Emmanuel for participating in this exercise of stewardship. Remember to pray for those in our community, that they may have a safe and happy Christmas, and that the Gospel will be shared with them, so they can join us in the joy, love and peace of our Savior.

Men's Breakfast & Study Club. The next breakfast will be Saturday, Nov. 28th at 8:00am in the Lower Level of St. John's. (Yes, I know it's during Rifle Season, but you can still hit the stand after breakfast for the body and soul!) I promise we won't have turkey leftovers! We are going to look at whether or not the Roman Catholic Church still practices the things that Luther protested against, such as indulgences. The answer to "do they still teach that?" might surprise you! We will also look at why Luther protested those teachings. So, gentlemen of all ages, come and get fed a good hearty breakfast, enjoy some camaraderie with fellow men, and some "meat and potatoes" for the soul. Dads are welcome to bring kids! Come wearing blaze orange and get a prize! See you there!

This is the last day for the LMSG Ammo Can! Thank you to all who have donated to the Lutheran Military Support Group Ammo Can. The offerings go to LMSG to help with the physical and spiritual needs of active military staff and Veterans. Please pray for our men and women serving our nation in the military services, and for Veterans that have served.

CALA CUSTODIAN POSITION: CALA is currently looking for a custodian at the ***Montello campus***. Duties include maintaining the Montello campus building and grounds in a clean, safe, and orderly condition. This position is hourly, approximately 600 hours per year, and runs from August through May. If you or someone you know is interested, please contact Lucas Wolter at 920-481-9002 or principal@christalonelutheranacademy.net

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*



Pastor: Chuck Westra
931-446-3968
chuck.westra@gmail.com
CALA Principal – Lucas Wolter
principal@christalonelutheranacademy.net
Mrs. Elizabth Wolter - Grade 6-8
ewolter@christalonelutheranacademy.net
Miss Beth Barenz –Grade 3-5
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Mrs. Bethany Ibeling – Grades 1-2
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