



SERVICE OF THE WORD
**THE SECOND SUNDAY
OF CHRISTMAS**

SUNDAY, JANUARY 4, 2026
10:15 AM

WELCOME TO ST. JOHN'S LUTHERAN CHURCH!

The **Bold Print** indicates responses spoken by all.

The ELW hymns are also found in the red hymnal located in the pew.

The WOV hymns are also found in the blue hymnal located in the pew.

THE GATHERING

The Prelude

The Shepherd's Song

arr. Hustad

The Welcome and Announcements

THE LITANY FOR A NEW YEAR

P God of wisdom and truth, at the beginning of this new year we look back and we look forward.

In the year that has passed we experienced joy and we experienced sorrow; we felt blessed and we felt challenged. Some things went by much too fast, and some things lingered for far too long. Here in this place, we are reminded that you are present through it all. We are reminded that we are never alone. We are reminded that nothing can separate us from your love.

So, at the beginning of this new year, we pause now in silence to reflect on the year that has passed. We remember the things from this past year that we are most thankful for. We recall the moments we were the happiest. We consider the times we felt most alive. We recognize the times we gave and received the most love.

Brief silence for self-reflection.

C We are grateful, O God, that you were present in those times.

P We also remember the things from this past year that we are least thankful for. We recall the moments we were the least happy. We consider the times we felt life draining from us. We recognize the times we gave and received the least love.

Brief silence for self-reflection.

C We are grateful, O God, that you were present in those times, too.

P Gracious God, at the beginning of this new year, we also look forward to the year to come. We are confident that you will be with us still, when we are thankful and when we are not; when we are happy and when we are sad; when we feel alive and when we feel drained; when we give and receive love and when we do not. God, the world we live in is messy and challenging, it is a world of pain, doubt, and fear; a world of jealousy, violence, and hatred; a world of injustice, oppression, and human failings.

Yet, God, you are with us always. So, give us grace and courage to live faithfully in this imperfect world. Remind us always of the promise of your kingdom, emerging around us and through us. And strengthen us to share the light and love of your Son, Jesus Christ, with a world in need. In your holy name we pray.

C Amen.

Please stand as you are able.

THE CALL TO WORSHIP

P People of God, a new day has dawned, a new year begun.

C O Lord, call us so we may hear your voice.

P The world turns to hopes and dreams of the future.

C O Lord, keep us in your ways and on your path.

P We enter this new year with hope and excitement.

C O Lord, guide us as we look to you.

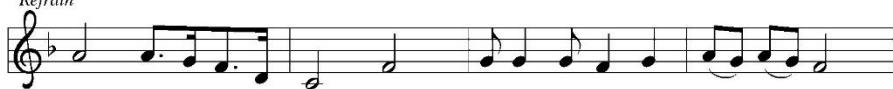
P As you led the way of the magi by the light of a star,

C lead our lives with the light of your Son.

P Let us sing for joy for Christ has come into the world!

C Alleluia! He is the life and light of all people!

Refrain



Go tell it on the moun - tain, o-ver the hills and ev - 'ry - where;



go tell it on the moun - tain that Je - sus Christ is born!



- 1 While shep-herds kept their watch-ing o'er si - lent flocks by night,
- 2 The shep-herds feared and trem-bled when, lo, a - bove the earth
- 3 Down in a lone - ly man - ger the hum-ble Christ was born;

Refrain



be - hold, through-out the heav-ens there shone a ho - ly light.
rang out the an - gel cho - rus that hailed our Sav - ior's birth.
and God sent us sal - va - tion that bless-ed Christ-mas morn.

Text: African American spiritual, refrain; John W. Work Jr., 1872–1925, stanzas, alt.
Music: GO TELL IT, African American spiritual

THE GREETING

P God who sent the Light into our world,
God who shone in the Bethlehem manger,
God whose Spirit enlightens our hearts, be with you all.

C **And also with you.**

THE PRAYER OF THE DAY

P Let us pray.

C **Almighty God, you have filled all the earth with the light of your incarnate Word. By your grace empower us to reflect your light in all that we do, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.**

Please be seated.

THE WORD

THE FIRST LESSON—JEREMIAH 31:7-14

⁷ Thus says the LORD: Sing aloud with gladness for Jacob, and raise shouts for the chief of the nations; proclaim, give praise, and say, "Save, O LORD, your people, the remnant of Israel." ⁸ See, I am going to bring them from the land of the north and gather them from the farthest parts of the earth, among them the blind and the lame, those with child and those in labor together; a great company, they shall return here.

⁹ With weeping they shall come, and with consolations I will lead them back; I will let them walk by brooks of water, in a straight path where they shall not stumble, for I have become a father to Israel, and Ephraim is my firstborn. ¹⁰ Hear the word of the LORD, O nations, and declare it in the coastlands far away; say, "He who scattered Israel will gather him and will keep him as a shepherd does a flock." ¹¹ For the LORD has ransomed Jacob and has redeemed him from hands too strong for him.

¹² They shall come and sing aloud on the height of Zion, and they shall be radiant over the goodness of the LORD, over the grain, the wine, and the oil, and over the young of the flock and the herd; their life shall become like a watered garden, and they shall never languish again. ¹³ Then shall the young women rejoice in the dance, and the young men and the old shall be merry. I will turn their mourning into joy; I will comfort them and give them gladness for sorrow. ¹⁴ I will give the priests their fill of fatness, and my people shall be satisfied with my bounty, says the LORD.

L The Word of the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

THE SECOND LESSON—EPHESIANS 1:3-14

³ Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places, ⁴ just as he chose us in Christ before the foundation of the world to be holy and blameless before him in love. ⁵ He destined us for adoption as his children through Jesus Christ, according to the good pleasure of his will, ⁶ to the praise of his glorious grace that he freely bestowed on us in the Beloved. ⁷ In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace ⁸ that he lavished on us. With all wisdom and insight ⁹ he has made known to us the mystery of his will, according

to his good pleasure that he set forth in Christ,¹⁰ as a plan for the fullness of time, to gather up all things in him, things in heaven and things on earth.¹¹ In Christ we have also obtained an inheritance, having been destined according to the purpose of him who accomplishes all things according to his counsel and will,¹² so that we, who were the first to set our hope on Christ, might live for the praise of his glory.¹³ In him you also, when you had heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and had believed in him, were marked with the seal of the promised Holy Spirit;¹⁴ this is the pledge of our inheritance toward redemption as God’s own people, to the praise of his glory.

L The Word of the Lord.

C **Thanks be to God.**

THE GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

ELW, p. 102

Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia,
 al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia.
 Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of e - ter - nal life.

Repeat alleluia

THE HOLY GOSPEL—JOHN 1:1-18

P The Holy Gospel according to Saint John the first chapter.

C **Glorify to you, O Lord.**

[¹In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. ²He was in the beginning with God. ³All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being ⁴in him was life, and the life was the light of all people. ⁵The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overtake it. ⁶There was a man sent from God whose name was John. ⁷He came as a witness to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him. ⁸He himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light. ⁹The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world.]

¹⁰ He was in the world, and the world came into being through him, yet the world did not know him. ¹¹ He came to what was his own, and his own people did not accept him. ¹² But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God, ¹³ who were born, not of blood or of the will of the flesh or of the will of man, but of God. ¹⁴ And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father's only son, full of grace and truth. ¹⁵ (John testified to him and cried out, "This was he of whom I said, 'He who comes after me ranks ahead of me because he was before me.' ") ¹⁶ From his fullness we have all received, grace upon grace. ¹⁷ The law indeed was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. ¹⁸ No one has ever seen God. It is the only Son, himself God, who is close to the Father's heart, who has made him known.

P The Gospel of the Lord.

C Praise to you, O Christ.

THE SERMON

Cheryl Burke

THE HYMN OF THE DAY

We Three Kings

WOV 646



1 We three kings of O - ri - ent are; bear - ing
 2 Born a king on Beth - le - hem's plain, gold I
 3 Frank - in - cense to of - fer have I; in - cense
 4 Myrrh is mine; its bit - ter per - fume breathes a
 5 Glo - rious now be - hold him a - rise, King and



gifts we tra - verse a - far, field and foun - tain,
 bring to crown him a - gain; king for - ev - er,
 owns a de - i - ty nigh; prayer and prais - ing,
 life of gath - er - ing gloom; sor - rowing, sigh - ing,
 God and Sac - ri - fice; heav'n sings al - le -



moor and moun - tain, fol - low - ing yon - der star.
 ceas - ing nev - er, o - ver us all to reign.
 glad - ly rais - ing, wor - ship - ing God Most High.
 bleed - ing, dy - ing, sealed in the stone - cold tomb.
 lu - ia: al - le - lu - ia the earth re - plies.

Refrain

Oh, star of won-der, star of night, star with roy - al beau-ty bright;
west-ward lead-ing, still pro - ceed-ing, guide us to thy per - fect light!

The image shows two staves of musical notation in G major (one sharp). The first staff contains the melody for the first line of the refrain, and the second staff contains the melody for the second line. The lyrics are written below the notes.

Text: John Henry Hopkins Jr., 1820–1891, alt.
 Music: THREE KINGS OF ORIENT, John Henry Hopkins Jr., 1820–1891

Please stand as you are able.

THE APOSTLE'S CREED

P With the whole church, let us confess our faith.

C **I believe in God, the Father almighty,
 creator of heaven and earth.**

**I believe in Jesus Christ, God's 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 to the dead.
 On the third day he rose again;
 he ascended into heaven,
 he is seated at the right hand of the Father,
 and he will come again to judge the living and the dead.**

**I believe in the Holy Spirit,
 the holy catholic church,
 the communion of saints,
 the forgiveness of sins,
 the resurrection of the body,
 and the life everlasting. Amen.**

THE PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

P Empowered by the news of Christ's birth, let us pray boldly for the church, creation, and all who are in need.

After each petition, please respond:

P ...Hear us, O God.

C Your mercy is great.

P With the joy of Christ's birth in our hearts, we commend our prayers to you, O God, trusting in your boundless mercy and eternal love; through Jesus Christ, our Savior.

C Amen.

THE PEACE

P The peace of Christ be with you.

C And also with you.

The assembly is invited to share a sign of peace with one another.

Please be seated.

THE THANKSGIVING

THE ORGAN OFFERTORY

Tell the Good News

Smith

THE CHOIR ANTHEM

Wise Men Still Seek Him

Kerby

Please stand as you are able.

THE OFFERTORY HYMN

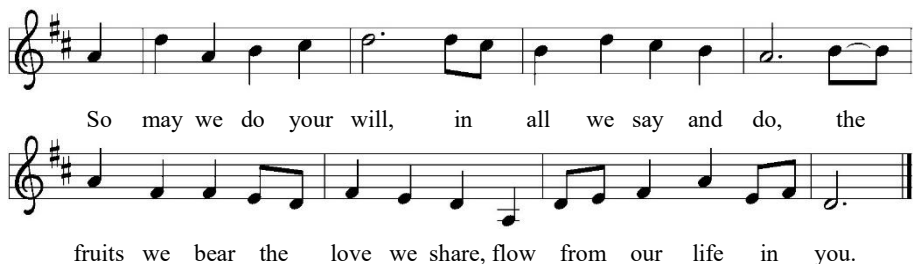
Garnaas-Holmes



We give our gifts, O God, as branches of your vine. The



lives we live, the gifts we give spring from your grace di - vine.



So may we do your will, in all we say and do, the
fruits we bear the love we share, flow from our life in you.

Text: Steve Garnaas-Holmes

Music: TERRA BEATA, Franklin L. Sheppard, 1852-1930

THE OFFERTORY PRAYER

P Let us pray.

God of grace, your love reaches to the heavens, and your abundance to the depths of the seas. Bless what we offer to your service: our selves, our time, and our possessions. Use us, and what we have gathered, in feeding the world with your love, through the one who gave himself for us, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

C Amen.

THE GREAT THANKSGIVING

P The Lord be with you.

C And also with you.

P Lift up your hearts.

C We lift them to the Lord.

P Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

C It is right to give our thanks and praise.

THE THANKSGIVING FOR THE WORD

P Holy God, Light of the universe, Teacher of truth, Giver of goodness, we hear your Word in the scriptures, proclaiming to us your wisdom and inviting us to follow your call. For speaking this Word, we thank you, O God.

C We thank you, O God.

P Your Word came among us in Jesus, our brother, who preached your righteousness, healed the sick, and revived the brokenhearted. For giving us this Word, we worship you, O God.

C We worship you, O God.

P By your Spirit, bless all who receive this Word, that upheld by the mystery of the body of Christ, we may be light for the world, revealing the brilliance of your Son. For sustaining us with your Word, we praise you, O God.

C We praise you, O God.

P Blessed are you, holy God, around us, with us, and in us, now and forever.

C Amen.

THE LORD'S PRAYER

P Gathered together by the Holy Spirit, let us pray as Jesus taught:

**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, the power, and the glory,
forever and ever. Amen.**

THE SENDING

THE BENEDICTION

P Beloved children of God, what came into being in Christ was life, and the life was the light of all people. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it. The light of + Christ shine on you with grace and mercy and fill you with joy and peace.

C Amen.

THE SENDING HYMN

This Little Light of Mine

ELW 677



1 This lit - tle light of mine, I'm goin' - a let it shine;
2 Ev - 'ry - where I go, I'm goin' - a let it shine;
3 Je - sus gave it to me, I'm goin' - a let it shine;



this lit - tle light of mine, I'm goin' - a let it shine;
ev - 'ry - where I go, I'm goin' - a let it shine;
Je - sus gave it to me, I'm goin' - a let it shine;



this lit - tle light of mine, I'm goin' - a let it shine,
ev - 'ry - where I go, I'm goin' - a let it shine,
Je - sus gave it to me, I'm goin' - a let it shine,



let it shine, let it shine, let it shine.
let it shine, let it shine, let it shine.
let it shine, let it shine, let it shine.

Text: African American spiritual
Music: THIS JOY, African American spiritual

THE DISMISSAL

P Go in peace. Share Christ's light.

C **Thanks be to God.**

The Postlude

The Angel's Trumpet

Eliot

SERVING OUR PARISH THIS MORNING

Presiding	Cheryl Burke
Organist/Choir Director	Fawn Albert
Acolyte/Bell Ringer	Joey Shankweiler
Ushers	Tom Campbell (DIC), Ruthann Mantz, & Sharon Stehly
Lector	April Krempasky
Camera Operator	Bobbi Jo Kline
Altar Guild	Devon Sabene & Sharon Stehly

COMMEMORATIONS TO THE GLORY OF GOD

The chancel flowers and bulletins are given to the glory of God.

KEEP IN YOUR PRAYERS: Burlene Balliet, Scott Barhight, Janice Beck, Dolly Cunfer, Kathleen Deibert, Janice Dormida, Linda Durback, Gloria Hausman, Cheryl Hower, Dawson Kunz, Paul L., Carol MacCrindle, Gloria Martin, Maria Mitchell, Bartine Mummey, Preston Raber, Betsy Rauch, Veronica Redline, Ashley Remaly, Hope Roberts, Christine Sigley, Doris Snyder, Ed Stephen, Colson Tkach, Lydia Weaver, Kathy Williams, and Bill Yelland.

ATTENDANCE LAST SUNDAY: 10:15 AM—21

OFFERING LAST WEEK THROUGH 12/31/25: \$871.97

THIS WEEK'S ACTIVITIES:

Today	10:15 AM—Service of the Word 11:30 AM-1:00 PM—Community Luncheon 8:00 PM—A.A.
Wednesday	10:00 AM—Chair Yoga 7:00 PM—Choir
Thursday	8:00 PM—A.A.
Friday	9:30 AM—Sewing Group

ANNOUNCEMENTS

HAPPY BIRTHDAY THIS WEEK TO: Steven Csanadi, Julie Herman, Timothy Paules Jr., Anne Saylor, and Jennifer Stauffer.

HAPPY BAPTISMAL ANNIVERSARY THIS WEEK TO: Burlene Balliet, Susan Cunfer, Amelia Gauker, Jaxson Jacoby, Carol Miller, Hunter Miller, and Chad Wasilkowski.

THANK YOU to Cheryl Burke for leading worship today. Thank you also to Altar Guild for providing baked goods for the coffee hour.

UNDECORATE CHURCH HELP is needed today after the service. Everyone is invited to stay for a brief period to take down all the Christmas decorations and then enjoy lunch downstairs afterwards.

COMMUNITY LUNCHEON TODAY – Our FREE luncheon is today from 11:30 A.M to 1:00 P.M., as either an eat-in or take-out meal. We will be serving meatloaf, mashed potatoes, gravy, vegetable, salad, rolls, and dessert.

POINSETTIAS may be picked up through *TODAY*. A listing of what poinsettia(s) you ordered is available so you can take the poinsettia(s) you purchased.

CHRISTMAS BAG HELP NEEDED – The children of the Sunday School and Youth Fellowship class prepared Christmas gift bags for the shut-in/special concerns members of our congregation. We are looking for help delivering the bags. The bags can be picked up in the Fellowship Hall. The list of shut-ins/special concerns members and the sign-up sheets are by the bags.

2026 ENVELOPES are in the Fellowship Hall on a cabinet near the front steps for pick-up. The offering envelopes are expensive to mail so please go to the Fellowship Hall after church to pick up your envelopes or those of a friend, neighbor, or relative.

SPONSORS NEEDED – The 2026 sponsor charts are posted on the bulletin board outside the church office. Cost to sponsor flowers is \$35.00 per date. Bulletins are \$25.00 per date. Sign up for any open dates on the sponsor charts or call the church office at 610-767-6361. Sponsors are needed for most dates in January.

ORGAN REPAIRS will start this week! Anyone wishing to donate towards the upgrade/repairs to our Moeller organ can do so. Mark "Organ Repairs" on your envelope.

NEWSLETTER ARTICLES for the February/March newsletter are due in the church office by Thursday, January 15. Pink sheets for submitting the information are in the tract rack outside the church office. Any information received after the January 15 deadline cannot be included in the February/March newsletter.

ROCK-A-THON – The Youth Fellowship/Confirmation class will hold a Rock-a-Thon to raise money for *The Northern Lehigh Food Bank* on Sunday, January 18, from 11:30 A.M. to 1:00 P.M. (Snow date is January 25). We will have four rocking chairs we need to keep rocking continuously from 11:30 A.M. to 1:00 P.M. The initial rocking will happen from 9:00 to 10:00 A.M. by the Sunday School children during their annual Birthday Social. We will stop the rocking during the 10:15 A.M. church service, restart at 11:30 A.M., and continue until 1:00 P.M. Everyone is invited! Donation containers, sign-up sheets, and sponsor sheets are at the Rock-a-Thon displays on the rear radiator cover in church, the Fellowship Hall, and the Parent Information Center in the Sunday School hallway. Ways you can help:

1. Sign up to rock in one of the four rocking chairs for a 15-minute shift.
2. Donate baked goods for the bake sale.
3. Place a donation in any donation container at a Rock-a-thon display. Donations of canned vegetables, soup, ramen noodles, crackers, canned tuna & chicken, spaghetti sauce, and cereal for the food bank are also welcome.
4. Sponsor a rocking chair for \$25.
5. Volunteer to work at the bake sale, kitchen, or craft area.
6. Stop by, have lunch, buy some dessert, and cheer on the rockers.

Any questions or for more information, see Ruthann Mantz.

ANNUAL REPORTS for each organization of the church are due to the church office by Friday, January 30. Forms for submitting your annual report are in each organization's mail bin in the church office and in the tract rack outside the church office. Reports are needed by the end of January for the auditors to do the annual audit of the books in February.

JANUARY FOOD SALE – The Catering Committee is sponsoring a soup, sandwich, and PA Dutch corn pie sale for January. The order forms are blue and due back by Sunday, January 18. Pick-up is on Saturday, January 24, from 9:00 to 11:00 A.M. The sandwich choice is a cold Reuben sandwich. Soup choices are: chicken tortellini soup, chili con carne, and old-fashion chicken noodle soup. You can also order PA Dutch corn pies (ready-to-bake, frozen). Return order forms to either the church office or to Harrison Williams. You can call your order into the church office at 610-767-6361, Harrison at 610-216-4284, or e-mail Harrison at williamshj2514@msn.com.

A PORK & SAUERKRAUT SUPPER will be held on Saturday, February 7, from 3:30 to 6:00 P.M. You can eat in or take-out. Menu is: pork & sauerkraut, mashed potatoes, buttered lima beans, bread & butter, and homemade desserts. Tickets are \$14.00 per meal and can be purchased from any member of the Catering Committee, Sundays after the service, or from the church office during the week. You can also reserve tickets by calling the church office at 610-767-6361 or Harrison Williams at 610-216-4284. Donations of baked goods are needed and would be greatly appreciated.

PLEASE CALL the church office (610-767-6361) whenever a family member, neighbor, or friend who is a member of St. John’s is hospitalized or moves from one hospital to another. Please give our church code “290” to the local hospitals when being admitted. Hospitals do NOT notify the church; we will only get information if you call us. As the two hospital networks have grown, we do not get names even when calling with our church code. Please call the church to keep us informed of any hospitalizations so can keep people in our prayers.

LIVESTREAM NOTICE — Our 10:15 AM service is streamed live online each week on Facebook. The front of the sanctuary, which includes the space for holy communion and children’s messages are included in the video. By being in this space, you may be included in the livestream and/or the recorded video posted on our website.



ST. JOHN'S LUTHERAN CHURCH

40 2nd Street, Slatington, Pennsylvania 18080

St. John's Lutheran Church is located in the heart of Slatington, Pennsylvania and has served the Lehigh Valley since 1868.

CHURCH STAFF

Sharon Stehly, *Church Administrator*
Fawn Albert, *Organist and Choir Director*
Harrison Williams, *Sexton*

CONTACT

Phone (610)767-6361
Email stjohnslatington@gmail.com

SUNDAY WORSHIP

10:15 AM

SUNDAY SCHOOL

9:00 AM

BUILDING HOURS

Weekdays	9 AM to 3 PM
Saturday	9 AM to 3 PM
Sunday	7 AM to 12 PM

Visit us online at stjohnslatington.org
and follow us on **Facebook**

ONLINE GIVING

For your convenience, St. John's Lutheran Church accepts online offerings through Vanco, an online payment processing service.

With Vanco, you can choose to give a one-time offering, or you can create an account to schedule weekly or monthly tithes.



To give today, scan the QR Code above by opening your cell phone's camera. This will direct you to the church's online giving website.

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