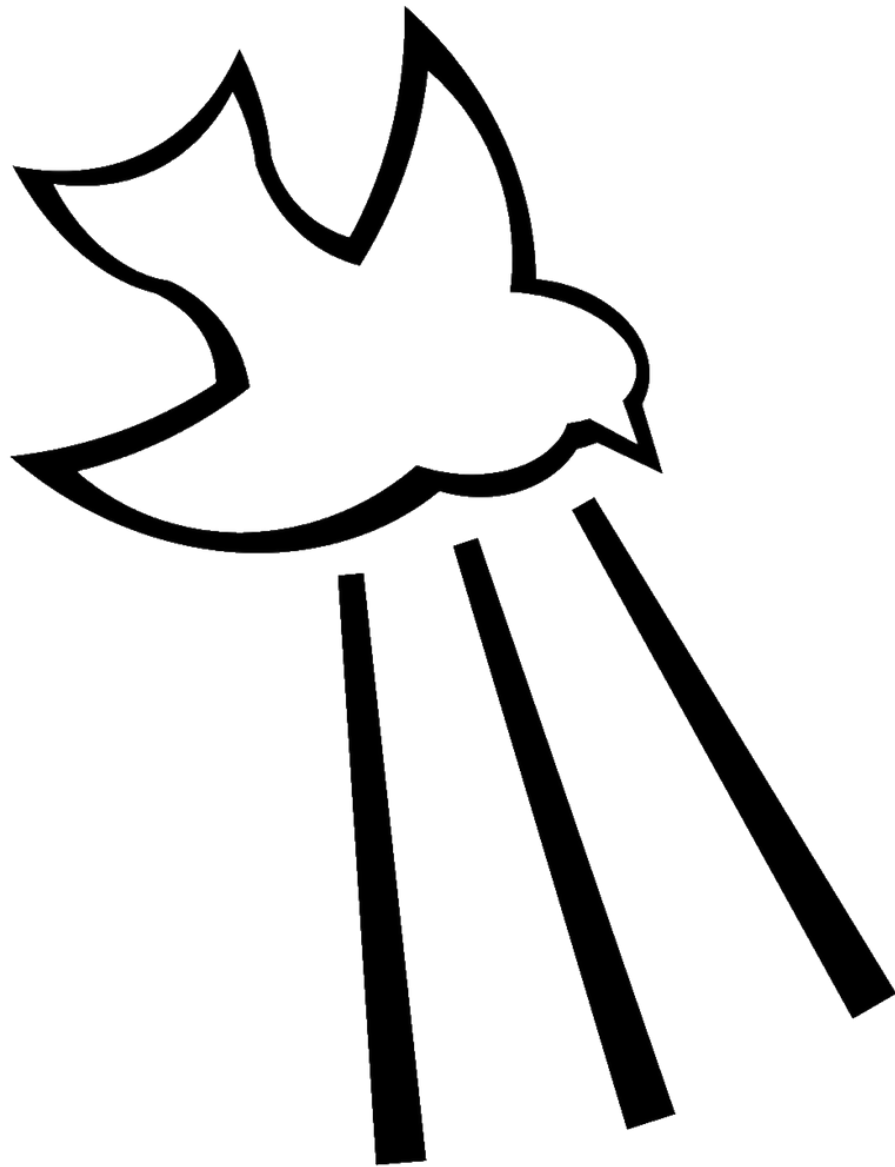


**St. John Evangelical Lutheran Church
Meyersville, Texas
December 31, 2023**



**He sent redemption to his people.
Psalm 111:9**

ST. JOHN EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH

A North American Lutheran Church

1764 Meyersville Road

Meyersville, TX 77974-4143

CHURCH OFFICE: 361-277-8653

stjohnevlutheran@juno.com

(Pr. John's Cell: 361-243-0373)

jboor1@juno.com

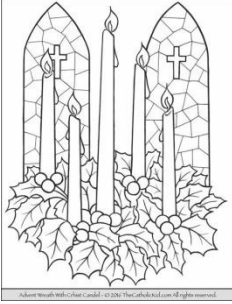
Ministers - The People of St. John

Pastor - The Rev. John Boor

Organist - Mr. Bruce A. Weise

First Sunday After Christmas

December 31, 2023



Greeter This Week: Youth Group

Greeters Next Week: M'Liss Moore

Reader This Week: Cathie Bettge

Reader Next Week: Dwight Jander

Acolyte This Week: Shelby Newman

Acolyte Next Week: Kaleigh Newman

Altar Guild This Month: M'Liss Moore & Virginia Abrameit

Altar Guild Next Month: Dee Moeller & Beverly Bodden

Communion Assistant This Month: Obert Sagebiel

Communion Assistant Next Month: Brian Wendel

Busy Bags are available in the Narthex for all children to enjoy.

MISSION STATEMENT

We the members of St. John Evangelical Lutheran Church of Meyersville, strive to be witnesses for Christ, a Christian family striving to be models and examples to others, loving one another and trying to be friendly to all; acknowledging that we are sinful, but being patient, faithful, giving, caring, forgiving, and forgiven believers.

Worship Notes regarding Today's Service:

For those of you who would prefer to remain in your cars, we will continue to broadcast the service on FM 101.5. You can follow the service in the bulletin as the liturgy, the organ music, hymns with the lyrics by our song leaders, and Pastor John's message will be on the broadcast. Thank you!

*The Service begins with the first notes of the prelude.
Please show your respect with silent meditation at this time.*

PRELUDE

RINGING OF THE CHURCH BELL

ANNOUNCEMENTS PRAISES AND CONCERNS

BRIEF ORDER FOR CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

L In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of ✠ the Holy Spirit.

C Amen

L Almighty God, to whom all hearts are open, all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hid: Cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love you and worthily magnify your holy name, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

C Amen

L If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. But if we confess our sins, God who is faithful and just will forgive our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

Silence for Reflection and Meditation

L Most merciful God,

We confess that we are in bondage to sin and cannot free ourselves. 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. 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

L In the mercy of almighty God, Jesus Christ was given to die for you, and for his sake God forgives you all your 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.

C Amen

OPENING HYMN:

Congregation's Choice

GREETING

L The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

C And also with you.

KYRIE

L In peace, let us pray to the Lord.

C Lord, have mercy.

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

C Lord have mercy.

L 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.

C Lord have mercy.

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

C Lord have mercy.

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

C Amen

L Glory to God in the highest, and peace to his people on earth.

HYMN OF PRAISE

**Lord God, heavenly king, almighty God and Father:
We worship you, we give you thanks, We praise you for your glory.
Lord Jesus Christ, only Son of the Father, Lord God, Lamb of God:
You take away the sin of the world; have mercy on us.
You are seated at the right hand of the Father; receive our prayer.
For you alone are the Holy One, you alone are the Lord,
you alone are the Most High, Jesus Christ, with the Holy Spirit,
in the glory of God the Father. Amen**

PRAYER OF THE DAY

P The Lord be with you.

C **And also with you.**

P Let us pray;

Almighty God, you have given us your only-begotten Son to take our nature and be born of the Virgin Mary. Grant that we, having been redeemed and made your children by grace, may daily be renewed by your Holy Spirit; through our Lord Jesus Christ, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

Please be seated

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

St. Paul reminds us that Jesus was born under the law of Moses and his parents did their religious duty to fulfill the covenant law when they took him to the Temple after his birth. This law, however, is not what saves humanity from sin and death; instead it is the lifesaving sacrifice that is prefigured here in the Temple ritual. Salvation came to the house of Israel, and it was witnessed by two elderly saints.

First Reading: Isaiah 61:10-62:3

¹⁰I will greatly rejoice in the LORD; my soul shall exult in my God, for he has clothed me with the garments of salvation; he has covered me with the robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decks himself like a priest with a beautiful headdress, and as a bride adorns herself with her jewels. ¹¹For as the earth brings forth its sprouts, and as a garden causes what is sown in it to sprout up, so the LORD God will cause righteousness and praise to sprout up before all the nations.

¹For Zion's sake I will not keep silent, and for Jerusalem's sake I will not be quiet, until her righteousness goes forth as brightness, and her salvation as a burning torch. ²The nations shall see your righteousness, and all the kings your glory, and you shall be called by a new name that the mouth of the LORD will give. ³You shall be a crown of beauty in the hand of the LORD, and a royal diadem in the hand of your God.

Responsive Reading

Psalm 111

¹Hallelujah! I will give thanks to the LORD with my whole heart,
in the assembly of the upright, in the congregation.

²**Great are the deeds of the LORD! they are studied by all who delight in them.**

³His work is full of majesty and splendor, and his righteousness endures forever.

⁴**He makes his marvelous works to be remembered; the LORD is gracious and full of compassion.**

⁵He gives food to those who fear him; he is ever mindful of his covenant.

⁶**He has shown his people the power of his works in giving them the lands of the nations.**

⁷The works of his hands are faithfulness and justice; all his commandments are sure.

⁸**They stand fast forever and ever, because they are done in truth and equity.**

⁹He sent redemption to his people; he commanded his covenant forever;
holy and awesome is his Name.

¹⁰**The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom;
those who act accordingly have a good understanding; his praise endures forever.**

Second Reading: Galatians 4:4-7

⁴When the fullness of time had come, God sent forth his Son, born of woman, born under the law, ⁵to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as sons. ⁶And because you are sons, God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, "Abba! Father!" ⁷So you are no longer a slave, but a son, and if a son, then an heir through God.

Stand as you are able

GOSPEL VERSE

C Alleluia. Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life. Alleluia. Alleluia.

GOSPEL READING: Luke 2:22-40

P The Holy Gospel according to Luke, the 2nd chapter.

C Glory to you, O Lord. (*sung*)

²²When the time came for their purification according to the Law of Moses, {Joseph and Mary} brought {Jesus} up to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord ²³(as it is written in the Law of the Lord, "Every male who first opens the womb shall be called holy to the Lord") ²⁴and to offer a sacrifice according to what is said in the Law of the Lord, "a pair of turtledoves, or two young pigeons." ²⁵Now there was a man in Jerusalem, whose name was Simeon, and this man was righteous and devout, waiting for the consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit was upon him. ²⁶And it had been revealed to

him by the Holy Spirit that he would not see death before he had seen the Lord's Christ. ²⁷And he came in the Spirit into the temple, and when the parents brought in the child Jesus, to do for him according to the custom of the Law, ²⁸he took him up in his arms and blessed God and said, ²⁹"Lord, now you are letting your servant depart in peace, according to your word; ³⁰for my eyes have seen your salvation ³¹that you have prepared in the presence of all peoples, ³²a light for revelation to the Gentiles, and for glory to your people Israel." ³³And his father and his mother marveled at what was said about him. ³⁴And Simeon blessed them and said to Mary his mother, "Behold, this child is appointed for the fall and rising of many in Israel, and for a sign that is opposed ³⁵(and a sword will pierce through your own soul also), so that thoughts from many hearts may be revealed." ³⁶And there was a prophetess, Anna, the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Asher. She was advanced in years, having lived with her husband seven years from when she was a virgin, ³⁷and then as a widow until she was eighty-four. She did not depart from the temple, worshiping with fasting and prayer night and day. ³⁸And coming up at that very hour she began to give thanks to God and to speak of him to all who were waiting for the redemption of Jerusalem. ³⁹And when they had performed everything according to the Law of the Lord, they returned into Galilee, to their own town of Nazareth. ⁴⁰And the child grew and became strong, filled with wisdom. And the favor of God was upon him.

P The Gospel of the Lord.

C Praise to you, O Christ. (*sung*)

Please be seated

MESSAGE

SERMON HYMN:

Congregation's Choice

Stand as you are able

Let us confess our faith through the Apostles' Creed

APOSTLES' CREED

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

I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord.

He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary.

He suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried.

He descended into hell. On the third day he rose again.

He ascended into heaven, and is seated at the right hand of the Father.

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.

SHARING THE PEACE

L The peace of our Lord, Jesus Christ be with you always.

C And also with you.

L Let us share the peace.

Please be seated

OFFERING *(Please use the yellow envelopes for cash offerings & include your name.)*

Stand as you are able

OFFERTORY

**Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me.
Cast me not away from your presence, and take not your Holy Spirit from me.
Restore to me the joy of your salvation, and uphold me with your free Spirit.**

PRAYERS OF THE CHURCH

Let us pray for the whole people of God in Christ Jesus, and for all people according to their needs.

**Lord, listen to your children praying, Lord, send your Spirit in this place;
Lord, listen to your children praying, Send us love, send us pow'r, send us grace!**

(after each petition "Lord in your mercy," RESPONSE "HEAR OUR PRAYER")

Into your hands, O Lord, we commend all for whom we pray, trusting in your mercy; through Your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen

Please stand

Father remember us always and teach us to pray;

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.**

P The Lord bless you and keep you.

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

The Lord look upon you with favor and ✠ give you peace.

C Amen

HYMN:

Congregation's Choice

Pastor: Go in peace. Serve the Lord.

People: **Thanks be to God.**

THE DOXOLOGY:

LBW# 565

Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;

Praise him, all creatures here below;

Praise him above, ye heav'nly host;

Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.

Amen.

POSTLUDE



Romans 15:13

"May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in faith so that you overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit."



Psalm 65:11

"You crown the year with your goodness; your paths overflow with rich food."

THIS WEEK AT ST. JOHN

Today 12/31 First Sunday After Christmas

9:00 a.m. Sunday School
9:00 a.m. Adult Study
10:15 a.m. Worship



James 1:17

"Every good gift, every perfect gift, comes from above."

Mon. 1/01 Office Closed – *Happy New Year!*

Tues 1/02 9:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m. Office Hours
9:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m. Pastor's Office Hours

Wed 1/03 9:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m. Office Hours

Thurs 1/04 9:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m. Office Hours
1:00 p.m.- 4:00 p.m. Pastor's Office Hours

Fri 1/05 8:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m. Office Hours

Next Sun. Baptism of Our Lord

9:00 a.m. Confirmation
9:00 a.m. Sunday School
9:00 a.m. Adult Study
10:15 a.m. Worship – Holy Communion
3:00 p.m. Take down Christmas decor

Have a Blessed Week!



Welcome Visitors! We would like to extend a special welcome to all visitors. If you are looking for a church home, we pray you would consider St. John's.

Prayer request cards are available in the pews and can be filled out and handed to an usher during the first hymn for your request to be included in the day's prayer. If you have a private prayer request please fill out the appropriate side and give to the pastor.

December 24, 2023 – 10:15 Service General \$1,810.00, MOM – Samaritan's Purse (Dec.) \$120.00, Sunday School \$11.00, Cemetery \$20.00, Old Stone Church \$120.00, Building \$60.00, Youth \$40.00, **Total: \$2,181.00**

Attendance: Worship - 102, Sunday School - 8 Children, 3 Teachers; Adult Study – 8

December 24, 2023 – 10 PM Service General \$6,238.00, MOM – Samaritan's Purse (Dec.) \$100.00, Youth \$100.00, **Total: \$6,438.00.00**

Attendance: Worship - 55

*Sunday School continues throughout the school year.
We'd love to see all the children every Sunday at 9a.m.!*



Portals of Prayers for January-March are available in the narthex.

Mission of the Month for December

Samaritan's Purse

Samaritan's Purse is a nonprofit Christian relief and evangelism organization that specializes in meeting the needs of victims of war, poverty, disease, and natural disaster, while at the same time sharing the Good News of Jesus Christ. They serve where needed whether it be on foreign lands or right here in the USA.

Committee Annual Reports

Just a friendly reminder. All annual reports from committees will be due by Sunday, January 7, 2024. Thank you!

ANNUAL CONGREGATIONAL MEETING

The annual congregational meeting will be held after worship on Sunday, January 21, 2024. Please make sure to mark your calendars and plan to attend this meeting. Thank you!

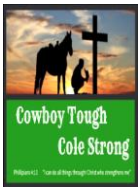


We need you to say YES! The Worship Team is "blowing the dust off" the reenactment of the "Living Last Supper." Please see the article in January's newsletter for more information and contact Johnny Jank and simply say, "How can I help?"



Office hours will be posted in the weekly bulletins. If you would need immediate assistance outside of office hours, text or call Meliss at 361-649-0413. If you'd like to receive your monthly church newsletter via email, call or text the church office at 361-277-8653.

Please note that hours may change during the week.

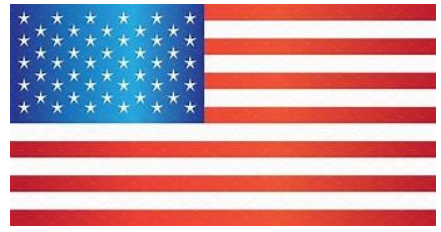


+ UPDATE + Special Prayers for Cole ❤️

Taken from Facebook Cowboy Tough Cole Strong: Hi everyone!! It's been a long time! I hope you are all doing well! We are all doing good. Cole is healthy as a horse and doing well. He continues to amaze me with his drive to continue his therapy diligently. He is still waling on the Lokomat and uses the Armeo robotic arm machine twice weekly as well as working hard at home with me and his nurses. God definitely blessed him with a hardheadedness that he may or may not have gotten from his mother. For those of you who didn't know last weekend was the 6th annual Cowboy Tough Cole Strong Team roping benefit. It was an awesome weekend with a very well run 3day team roping thanks to Justin Shelton as well as two days of silent auction items including some delicious homemade goods and fall décor. We also had a gun raffle board that is still going on until we fill all the squares on the board for a nice rifle and as always shirts for sale with Cole's logo. For those of you who know Cole this is one of his favorite events of the whole year. He so looks forward to it each year. So a special thank you to Justin and all those who helped him as well as all the donors and sponsors. You all make this a wonderful event each year. Also want to send out a special thank you to Amy Burnet for announcing and keeping the books all weekend and to Shelly Marbach and Penny Pence for all their help with the shirts and silent auction. Special thank you to Britney Lesikar and KC Hats for donating her services throughout the weekend also. She does an amazing job. Special thank you to all who donated and or purchased the silent auction items and t-shirts as well. We sincerely appreciate all of you. This year was really special with one of Cole's brothers winning one of the trophy saddles! All in all it was an amazing and blessed weekend. Asking for continued prayers for Cole's health and healing as well as his and our faith. Also asking for prayers that Cole will be granted a meeting with the Governor soon to fight for changes in state funded care for the handicapped. I'll post later with more details. Thank you all and God Bless. And as always thank you all for your continued prayers for Cole - keep praying! **+Please pray at 12:00 PM daily for Cole+ At his request, these are the prayers he has on his list: *Healing-physical, emotional & spiritual To help family stay strong Patience ~ Stay positive ~The drive to keep trying (perseverance)***

Our Military and their families:

Russell Copeland - U.S. Army Reserves
Jonathon Albrecht - U.S. Army, Fort Hood
Chase Schroeder - U.S. Navy, Florida
Lee Magruder - U.S. Army, stationed overseas (location unknown)
Katrina Moritz - U.S. Air Force
Michael Petrash II - 1st LT, United States Army
Andrew Washington, L CPL - USMC, Pensacola, FL
Jacob Redmond - USMC, San Diego, CA
Koltyn Mayhall - USMC, North Carolina
Zach McBrayer - U.S. Air Force, San Antonio



PRAYER REQUESTS: If you have a prayer request or wish to be on the prayer chain, please contact Mary Wagner (361)275-9500 or Pastor John (361)243-0373. We ask that you would update the prayer request regularly. If we do not have an update, in an effort to keep our list current and up to date, we will presume the situation has improved and remove the request after 30 days. We thank you for your cooperation in this matter.

Please Pray for: Hunter Jacob, Cole Ohrt, Ryon Preslar, Joy Meadows, Rylan Caskey, Dorothy Fay Diebel, Marlene Fromme, Debbie Webb, Steve Cusack, Laura Whitson, Pat Hays, Robert Moeller



Nursing Home:

Cuero Nursing & Rehab. ~ Marjorie Ideus

SOME WORDS FROM LUTHER

When Mary heard such things spoken first by the angels, then shepherds, and now by Simeon, she wondered greatly. Wonderful indeed, it was that such lowly and despised folk as Joseph and Mary should be the parents of such a Child!

- Martin Luther

Martin Luther's Christmas Book



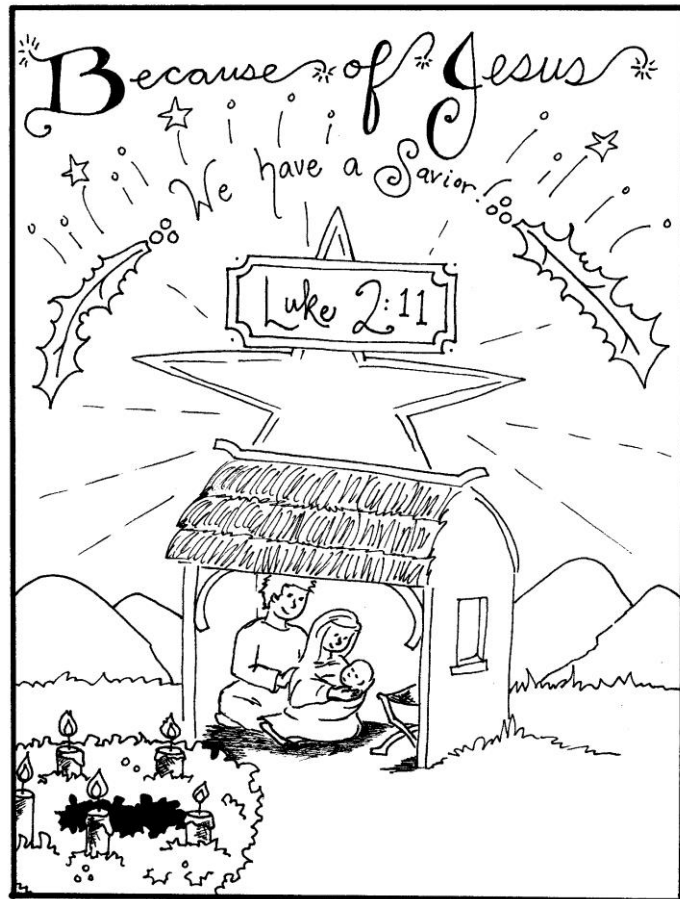
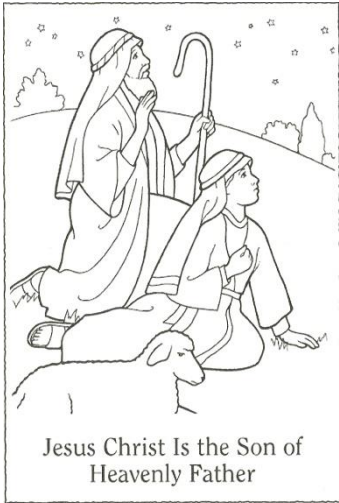
Keep up with St. John online
St. John Meyersville

<https://www.facebook.com/Stjohnmeyersville>

Or visit our website at: stjohnmeyersville.org to view weekly bulletins and monthly newsletters.

For those on church premises wishing to worship in their vehicles, tune in to FM 101.5 at 10:15 a.m. Sunday mornings.

If you'd like to receive your monthly church newsletter via email, call or text the church office at 361-277-8653.



FOR UNTO us a
Child is born
~Isaiah 9:6



A Christmas Message

FROM BISHOP DAN SELBO

Dear Pastors, Congregations, Partners in Ministry, Sisters and Brothers in Christ, Greetings in the Name of our God—Father, Son and Holy Spirit—as we look forward to the celebration of our Lord’s birth at Christmas and His glorious return when the Father will call us all home to be with Him forever!

Thank you for your good and faithful ministry and for your partnership in the work of the Gospel. It is my deepest and most sincere desire and prayer that this Christmas season will be one in which the love shown to us so clearly in the birth of God’s only Son, Jesus Christ, will be at the center of the proclamation we offer and the witness we give to a world.

With every passing year, rather than the story of our Lord’s birth becoming more familiar, I find myself being struck more intensely by its significance. The divine became human. The infinite became finite. The eternal became temporal. Not only that, but our broken relationship with God was repaired. It was restored in the person and work of Jesus, put back together and made right when Jesus became one of us and walked the path of the cross.

I am not yet convinced that we can fully understand all of what that means. I am convinced that we can be assured of what has been done for us in Jesus. That’s the good news. That’s what Christmas is all about. And that’s why we need to speak with clarity and conviction of the love revealed to us in Jesus Christ, so that the world for which He gave His life might come to believe.

One of the most basic and fundamental needs we have in this life is to be loved. From the moment we are born until the day when we leave this world, to love and to be loved is central to how we were created. It’s basic to what our life on this earth is all about. It keeps us going. It tells us that we matter. It says to us that we belong and that our life on this earth really counts.

When God came into this world in the person of Jesus, it was God’s way of declaring that we are loved and will always be loved by Him. It’s the very reason Jesus was born as a baby. It’s the motivation in the heart of God behind the entire Christmas event.

“For God so loved the world that He gave His only Son.” Christmas is God’s declaration that we do matter, that our lives on this earth really do count, and that no matter what else might happen in this life, there is always and forever a reason to live.

One of my seminary professors was Dr. Gerhard Forde. He was a good teacher. He kept the focus of his lectures on Jesus. No matter what direction the theological conversation went, he continually brought it back to Christ.

One of the books he wrote was titled, *Where God Meets Man*. The subtitle was, “A Down To Earth Approach to The Gospel.” It was a study about how the story of Jesus is the story of God coming down to earth to give us what we need. And He did it not by sending someone else on His behalf, but by becoming what we need in Himself.

I would imagine that if you were to think back on all the Christmas gifts you have

received over the years, the ones that would stand out the most would be the ones with the most personal touch. Christmas is the story of God's love for us. It's the story of God's individual and personal love for you and for me. And it's not love wrapped in a package. It's love found in a person. It's not a gift placed under a tree, waiting to be opened when the time is right. It's love placed in a manger, working to make right a relationship that had gone wrong.

"You will call His name Jesus," the angel said, "for He will save His people from their sins." And so, it was. And so, He did. And so, we celebrate that good news again this year.

Where does God meet man? He meets us in our sin. He comes to us where we are. He forgives us and He loves us, and He promises to never leave.

As I consider the turmoil in which our world is currently found, the wars in Ukraine and the Middle East, the tension among nations that seems to be increasing with each passing day, as well as the division that exists within our own nations, to say nothing of the brokenness found in many homes and communities throughout North America and beyond, I cannot help but believe that the answer to this world's turmoil was offered to us in the coming of Jesus.

Our task, as His followers, is to point the world toward Him. Beginning in our families and our churches, from there into the relationships we have with our neighbors and co-workers and in our schools, and from there into the surrounding communities and beyond. There is no better remedy to the troubles we face in this life than to face those troubles with the remedy given to us two thousand years ago in the person and work of Christ.

Will we ever fully comprehend what that saving event was all about? Probably not, at least not this side of the grave. But that doesn't matter, because it does not depend upon how much we understand but solely upon what He has done.

God's love, down to earth. That's what you have been given. Where God meets man. In our sin. At Christmas. In Jesus Christ.

Thank you for your faithful witness. Thank you for the partnership we share in Christ. Thank you for the love you share and the witness you offer, pointing people to the love of God revealed to us in Jesus.

It continues to be a joy and an honor to serve as your bishop. Know that my prayers are with each of you. Have a blessed and a love-filled Christmas!

In Christ,

Bishop Dan

Bishop Dan

North American Lutheran Church

