

Sunday School



Program

Pre-Worship Meditation: Today Isaiah prophesies that a young woman will bear a son and name him Emmanuel. The gospel is Matthew's account of the annunciation and birth of the one named Emmanuel, God-with-us. During these final days of Advent we pray, "O come, O come, Emmanuel," a beloved hymn based on the O Antiphons, ancient prayers appointed for the seven days preceding Christmas. On this Sunday of Advent we prepare to celebrate the birth of the one born to save us from the power of sin and death.

12/14/2025

**Third Sunday of Advent
St. John United Church of Christ
Christmas Program**

Prelude

Ringling of the Bell

Welcome and Brief Announcements

*** Hymn: #154, O Come, O Come, Emmanuel**

*** *Prayer of Invocation (Praying Together)***

Stir up your power, Lord Christ, and come. With your abundant grace and might, free us from the sin that hinders our faith, that eagerly we may receive your promises, for you live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

We Light the Advent Wreath

God's Word

First Reading: Isaiah 7:10-16

The Lord spoke to Ahaz, saying, ¹¹ “Ask a sign of the Lord your God; let it be deep as Sheol or high as heaven.” ¹² But Ahaz said, “I will not ask, and I will not put the Lord to the test.” ¹³ Then Isaiah said, “Hear then, O house of David! Is it too little for you to weary mortals that you weary my God also? ¹⁴ Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign. Look, the young woman is with child and shall bear a son and shall name him Immanuel. ¹⁵ He shall eat curds and honey by the time he knows how to refuse the evil and choose the good. ¹⁶ For before the child knows how to refuse the evil and choose the good, the land before whose two kings you are in dread will be deserted.”

Joyful Musical Interlude

Gospel Reading: Matthew 1:18-25

Now the birth of Jesus the Messiah took place in this way. When his mother Mary had been engaged to Joseph, but before they lived together, she was found to be pregnant from the Holy Spirit. ¹⁹ Her husband Joseph, being a righteous man and unwilling to expose her to public disgrace, planned to divorce her quietly. ²⁰ But just when he had resolved to do this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, “Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife, for the child conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. ²¹ She will bear a son, and you are to name him Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins.” ²² All this took place to fulfill what had been spoken by the Lord through the prophet:

²³ “Look, the virgin shall become pregnant and give birth to a son,
and they shall name him Emmanuel,”
which means, “God is with us.” ²⁴ When Joseph awoke from sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded him; he took her as his wife ²⁵ but had no marital relations with her until she had given birth to a son, and he named him Jesus.

Our Sunday School Presentation

Hymn: #199, Carol at the Manger

Pastoral Reflection

**SHARING OF JOYS AND CONCERNS
PRAYERS OF THE CHURCH**

Lord's Prayer

OFFERING / Offertory,

Leader: We stand, singing the Doxology, as our Offerings are presented.

Praise God from whom all blessings flow

Praise Him, all creatures here below

Praise Him above the Heavenly host

Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.

OFFERING PRAYER

All: Nourishing God, you are water in the wilderness and streams in the desert. Through your goodness, satisfy our parched places, that we may rejoice and be for the world signs of your kingdom come. Amen.

Leader: As we prepare to end our worship today, we offer one more prayer – a prayer for our new settled pastor. Please pray with me. **O Great Divine, we trust and believe that you have already identified who this kind and caring person will be. Our new shepherd, who will journey with this congregation for the years ahead. As we wait for you to reveal that person to us, provide us patience, understanding, and a willingness to become extravagantly welcoming. In your great name we pray. Amen.**

Closing Hymn: #210, Love Came Down at Christmas

****Benediction***

Leader: May God who comes among us, Creator, Redeemer, and Sustainer, grant you patience in waiting, peace in the darkness, and good news to share today and always.

All: Our worship has ended. Now let our service begin. Thanks be to Jehovah. Amen!

Please remain seated for the Special Meeting

Today's Worship Leaders

Presiding Minister

Pastor David Kohls

Musician Ebenezer

St. John – Gary Bieck

Reader Ebenezer – Ann

St. John – Brian

Usher Ebenezer – Ralph

St. John – Derek

Announcements

A Loving Welcome: A loving welcome to all who are here today. If you are a guest or visitor, please feel free to sign our guest book located in the back of the church and help yourself to our information. And please remember that no matter who you are or where you are on life's journey, you are welcome here.

Evening Bible Study: Sunday, December 14 at 5:30 p.m. at Ebenezer.

Bible Study: Wednesday, December 17 at 10:00 a.m.

Annual Reports are due Tuesday, December 16.

Blue Christmas: Two services will be held locally to support those who are grieving, hurt, or sad during the Christmas season: Bethlehem UCC (11608 Lax Chapel Rd) will host their Blue Christmas service on Thursday, December 18 at 6:30 p.m. and St. John UCC in New Holstein will host theirs on Monday, December 22 at 6:30 p.m.

Christmas Season Scheduling: As we move into the busy liturgical season of Christmas, meetings with Pastor will be by appointment only. Regular schedule resumes January 5.

Christmas Services: Christmas Eve Candlelight Service – 4:00 p.m. at Ebenezer
7:00 p.m. at St. John
Christmas Day Service – 9:00 a.m. at Ebenezer

At St. John:

Today's Bulletin is Sponsored by Grace Mueller

Thank You to Jim Sommers for lighting the Advent Wreath!

Christmas Program: The St. John Sunday School presents their Christmas Program today. Please join us for a coffee hour after service!

Pastor Kohls' Food Drive concludes today. Thank you for your generosity!

Poinsettias: If you would like to donate a poinsettia plant in memory of a loved one or in honor of someone you'd like acknowledged, please fill out a slip located on the table in the Narthex and place it in the Office Administrator's Inbox located on the wall by the bulletin board. Please bring the plant(s) during regular business or service hours. You may also order your poinsettias from Lilybee's in New Holstein and they will deliver the plants for you to the church.

Council Member Sign-Up: We are looking to fill several council positions for 2026-2027. If you have questions, please feel free to contact your nomination committee members, Jim Sommers & Kelly Sippel. If you would like to nominate a church member, please contact Jim or Kelly. A sign-up sheet has been provided in the church foyer. Thank you for considering joining this important team.

At Ebenezer:

Handbell Practice: Handbell practice will be on Wednesdays at 6 p.m. in the Fellowship Hall until Christmas Eve.

Local Events:

Christmas Choir: Four UCC churches – St. Peter's, Bethlehem, Salem & First Congregational – will host “Sing Joy” a united Christmas Choir program today, December 14 at 1:00 p.m. at St. Peter's UCC, 424 Fremont St. Kiel. Free will offering will be received.

Prayers of Joys and Concerns*

David ~ Elizabeth ~ Jan ~ Maci ~ Penny ~ Ruth ~ Susan

**Contact the office to add or remove from this prayer list*

St. John Council Members

President: Jim Sommers (920) 894-2350

(2-year term starting 2025)

Secretary: Lynn Kind (920) 378-2173

(2nd 2-year term starting 2025)

Treasurer & Congregational President:

Derek Beyer (920) 979-2017

(2nd 2-year term starting 2024)

Vice-President: Garry Preder (920) 838-0714

(2-year term starting 2025)

Trustee: Penny Geiger (920) 266-6324

(2nd 2-year term starting 2024)

**If anyone would like something put on the St. John website,
please contact Phil Vergowe at pjvergowe@outlook.com*

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