



# St. John's

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## Ev. Lutheran Church

VOL. 124 NO. 12 MONTHLY

DECEMBER 2018

### GOD'S PROMISES IN CHRIST...FULFILLED!

God's faithfulness means He will always do what He has said, fulfilling everything He has ever promised.

Consider the ways in which God spoke of the details concerning the birth of Jesus. These prophecies are so specific that they not only eliminate anybody else's claim to be the Messiah, but at the same time they confirm without a doubt that Jesus Christ is Lord.

The first announcement about the Messiah is in Genesis 3:15. From it, we learn two things. First, the Messiah will be "the Seed of a woman." He would take on human nature consisting of body and soul. Second, His mission would be to crush the Serpent's head. To see Genesis 3:15 fulfilled, look to Galatians 4:4, "*But when the fullness of time had come, God sent forth his Son, born of woman...*" (the Seed of woman).

Genesis 3:15 tells us that the Messiah was not going to come into the world riding on a chariot of fire with a thunder bolt in His hand. Rather, He was to become a permanent member of the human race via the body of a woman, without the assistance of a man. And even here in Genesis 3:15 the Scriptures give us a hint that there is going to be something entirely out of the ordinary about the birth of the Messiah. It is male seed that normally gives human life. But in Genesis 3:15 it's woman's seed. He will be conceived of the Holy Spirit in the womb of a Virgin—prophesied long before it happened, and clearly fulfilled in the New Testament.

The second part of Genesis 3:15 to consider is who will deliver this crushing fatal blow to Satan. 1 John 3:8 says, "*Whoever makes a practice of sinning is of the devil, for the devil has been sinning from the beginning. The reason the Son of God appeared was to destroy the works of the devil.*"

So as far as prophecy is concerned, it begins very wide. The Messiah is to be born of a woman and crush Satan. Things begin to narrow down. In Genesis 9:26 Noah pronounced the following blessing over just one of his sons, "*Blessed be the LORD, the God of Shem.*" Shem receives this blessing because Shem's line is the one the Messiah would come through.

Pressing further, in Genesis 12:3, God reveals that the Messiah would be sent through one of Shem's descendants, Abraham. This prophecy is fulfilled in Matthew 1:1, "*The book of the genealogy of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham*" (or, of the seed of Abraham). In Galatians 3:16 we read, "*Now the promises were made to Abraham and to his offspring. It does not say, 'And to offsprings,' referring to many, but referring to one, 'And to your offspring,' who is Christ.*"

So, within just twelve chapters of the Bible, we have prophecies stating the Messiah would:

1. be born of a woman,
2. crush the works of Satan,
3. come through Shem, and
4. more specifically, through the line of Abraham, meaning He would be Jewish

The specificity sharpens. Of the twelve tribes of Israel, prophecy recorded that the Messiah would come forth from the tribe of Judah (Genesis 49:10). This prophecy eliminates the other eleven tribes. Hebrews 7:14 confirms this by saying, *“For it is evident that our Lord was descended from Judah, and in connection with that tribe Moses said nothing about priests.”*

Is there more? Absolutely! The Messiah is to come from a particular family of Judah, namely Jesse. In Isaiah 11:1, we have, *“There shall come forth a shoot from the stump of Jesse (that’s the family name), and a branch from his roots shall bear fruit.”* Romans 15:12 tells of this fulfillment in Christ. But Jesse had eight sons. Of those eight, the one no one expected could be the ancestor of the Messiah, i.e., David, in fact was. Psalm 89:35-36 says, *“Once for all I have sworn by My holiness; I will not lie to David. His descendants shall endure forever, his throne as the sun before Me.”* John 7:42 demonstrates how this was fulfilled. *“Has not the Scripture said that the Christ comes from the offspring of David, and comes from Bethlehem, the village where David was?”* So was the Old Testament right? Of course. The Messiah not only came from the tribe of Judah, He was also from the family of Jesse, a descendent of David.

In Micah 5, Micah ministers during a time of deep national trouble and spiritual decline. His prophecy is roughly 700 years before the birth of Christ. Micah 5 begins with, *“Now muster your troops, O daughter of troops; siege is laid against us; with a rod they strike the judge of Israel on the cheek. But you, O Bethlehem Ephrathah... (Ephrathah distinguishes this Bethlehem, just 5 miles south of Jerusalem, from the other in Israel) too little to be among the clans of Judah, from you shall come forth for me one who is to be ruler in Israel, whose coming forth is from of old, from ancient days.”*

Micah prophesied that the Messiah would be born where David was born. In the New Testament, Matthew 2:1 says, *“Now after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod the king, behold, wise men from the east came to Jerusalem,”* and Luke 2:4-5 says, *“And Joseph also went up from Galilee, from the town of Nazareth, to Judea, to the city of David, which is called Bethlehem, because he was of the house and lineage of David, to be registered with Mary, his betrothed, who was with child.”*

Most know that Jesus Christ was born in Bethlehem. But do they know that the Old Testament foretold that Jesus Christ would be born of a woman (a Virgin, nonetheless), of the seed of Shem, Abraham, Isaac, Judah, Jesse’s family, in David’s line to Solomon, and born in Bethlehem?

In light of the Lord’s steadfastness to His Word, at Christmas time we don’t just tip our hats. Instead, with the shepherds we come on bended knee before the Lord of heaven and earth laid in manger, and we sing with Luther, *“Ah, dearest Jesus, holy Child, make Thee a bed, soft, undefiled, within my heart that it may be a quiet chamber kept for Thee.”*



**Senior Pastor - Rev. J. S. Bruss, ext. 104**  
**Associate Pastor – Rev. D. M. Kerns, ext. 101**  
**Kantor - Bethany M. Johnson**  
**TLS Teachers - Andrea Kosmicki, Edith Kerns, Rachel Kathman**

## **NO MONTHLY BREAKFAST IN DECEMBER**

(Rumor is we will have eaten enough between Thanksgiving & Christmas to warrant skipping this breakfast)

### WEDNESDAY ADVENT SERVICES

**Homilies on the Advent Canticles.** In short succession in the Gospel according to St. Luke we get three important New Testament psalms: the Magnificat, the Benedictus, and the Nunc Dimittis. So profoundly do these hymns sung respectively by Mary, Zechariah, and Simeon proclaim the Gospel that they were taken up into the liturgy of the church almost immediately and continue to be sung to this day: the Magnificat at Vespers and Evening Prayer, the Benedictus at Matins, and the Nunc Dimittis in Compline and the Divine Service. Our Midweek Advent series this year focuses on these first, important Advent hymns. Wednesdays 5 and 12 December at 12:15 and 7:00 p.m. and Wednesday 19 December at 12:15 only. On 19 December we'll have our Children's Christmas Program. Please note, too, that the turning of the church year will be observed by celebrating St. Andrew's Day with Matins and Vespers at 7:30 a.m. and 12:15 p.m., respectively, on Friday, 30 November. We hope you can take in all these opportunities to "read, mark, learn and inwardly digest" God's Holy Word!

### HOLIDAY SCHEDULE FOR DECEMBER

<b>2 December</b>	8:15 AM	Divine Service
	9:45 AM	Bible Classes and Sunday School
	11:00 AM	Divine Service
<b>5 December</b>	12:15 PM	Advent Service
	5:00 PM	Sound Words Academy
	7:00 PM	Advent Service
<b>7 December</b>	10:30 AM	LWML Bazaar
	11:00 AM	LWML Luncheon
<b>8 December</b>	2:00 PM	Caroling
	4:00 PM	Chili Supper
<b>9 December</b>	8:15 AM	Divine Service
	9:45 AM	Congregational Forum and Sunday School <u>NO</u> Monthly Breakfast
	11:00 AM	Divine Service
<b>10 December</b>	6:30 PM	Sarah Circle will meet at McFarland's Restaurant Note: All women are welcome to attend.
<b>12 December</b>	12:15 PM	Advent Service
	5:00 PM	Sound Words Academy
	7:00 PM	Advent Service
<b>15 December</b>	9:30 AM	Final Children's Christmas Program Rehearsal
<b>16 December</b>	8:15 AM	Divine Service
	9:45 AM	Bible Classes
	11:00 AM	Divine Service
<b>19 December</b>	12:15 PM	Advent Service
	5:00 PM	<u>NO</u> Sound Words Academy (YCat II meets at 5:30)
	6:30 PM	Children's Christmas Program
<b>23 December</b>	10:00 AM	Divine Service – One Service Only No Sunday School
<b>24 December</b>	7:00 PM	Christmas Candlelight Lesson & Carols
	10:00 PM	Christmas Candlelight Divine Service
<b>25 December</b>	10:00 AM	Christmas Day Divine Service
<b>30 December</b>	10:00 AM	Divine Service – One Service Only No Sunday School
	1:30 PM	Homebound Divine Service

## SOUND WORDS ACADEMY DECEMBER 2018

### Children

**Rhythm of Faith Choir (Wednesdays – 8 May, 5:00-5:40 p.m.; Johnson)** Rhythm of Faith uses God’s gift of music to confess the truth of His Word in song. Develop life-long skills in singing, ringing, and reading music. Participate as a choir in Wednesday Evening Offices and Sunday services. Learn the rich heritage of Lutheran hymnody and liturgy. Enroll after Sunday services now through 9 September or contact Bethany Johnson.

**Jr. Lutherans (Wednesdays – 8 May, 5:55-6:50 p.m.; Sweet)** This fast-paced Bible, Catechism, and Lutheran history quiz game places Lutherans aged 4 – 12 yrs. in competition with one another and teams from other congregations—with “trivia” that is hardly *trivial*. Enroll after Sunday services now through 9 September or contact Daniel Sweet.

### Adults

**The Resurrection of the Flesh (7 November – 12 December, 5:55-6:50 p.m.; Bruss):** Yup. That’s how the creed actually puts it. Flesh. Raised incorruptible to immortality. The Resurrection of the Flesh picks up where Dying the Lutheran Way left off last year and examines what the Bible says about the body’s rest in the grave, the return of the Lord Jesus Christ to “raise up me and all the dead,” and the everlasting life He has promised all His believers.

### College Students and Young Adults

**Martin Luther, *The Antinomian Theses* (Wednesdays – 12 December, 7:45-8:40 p.m.; Bruss)** Luther fought it, too—the impulse to think that all of God’s Word could be summed up just in the Gospel and that the only thing worth proclaiming was just that (aka Gospel-reductionism). After all, if Christ has abolished the Law, of what use is it to believers in Christ? Should a Christian regard the Law as friend or foe? Does the Law do anything else than condemn? Answers to these questions and many more.

### Adult Catechesis

**Adult Catechesis (Wednesdays – 8 May 7:45-8:40 p.m.; Kerns through December; Bruss January through May)** The central teachings of the Christian faith. What does God say *about* me in His Law? What does God say *to* me in His Gospel? How am I to relate to God? And where can I find Christ and what He wants to give to me? This September through May course, with breaks scattered throughout those 8 months, weaves together the teachings of Scripture and *The Small Catechism* and shows how God encounters you in the Divine Service. For those interested in becoming members of St. John’s or those seeking a refresher in the guts of Lutheran theology.

### Youth Catechesis

**YCat I (Wednesdays – 8 May, 5:55-6:50 p.m.; Kinnett)** Typically for 6<sup>th</sup> graders. 1 year long.

**YCat II (Wednesdays – 8 May, 5:55-6:50 p.m.; Bruss & Kerns)** Typically for 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> graders. 2 years long.

## ENGAGING YOUR CHILDREN IN THE DIVINE SERVICE

Keep your eyes out for some helpful teaching tools at church. Last month we introduced a new bulletin format. This new format includes a cover picture that captures the Gospel lesson, an excellent way for you to help children to understand what’s going on. The bulletin also includes an explanation of all the readings for that Sunday. You can use this when you talk to your children about what they heard in church—and even use it to help them anticipate what they’ll hear about. At the ends of the pews there’s also now a laminated card that has two sides. On one side are some suggestions for parents to help their young children participate in the Divine Service. On the other side is a guide for young and old alike for getting the most out of the sermon. Coupled with our new Sunday School curriculum whose lessons are on the Gospel for each Sunday, we hope that these things will help you and your family grow in grace and in the knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ.

## HYMN OF THE MONTH FOR DECEMBER

“Savior of the Nations, Come” (*LSB* 332)

### Background & Text

“Savior of the Nations, Come” is the hymn of the day for the first Sunday of Advent. With Advent, we enter into a new season of the Church Year. While most people are eager to dive straight into Christmas following Thanksgiving, we as Christians spend four weeks in Advent prior to Christmas to focus on the coming of Jesus who became flesh to save sinners.

The text of this hymn was written by Ambrose (A.D. 337-397), Bishop of Milan. Ambrose is most well-known as the “father of Latin hymnody.” He also introduced the Eastern Church’s tradition of hymn-singing to the Western church and desired that music and theology work together to proclaim Christian truths in the simplest manner. You may be thinking of someone who also encouraged hymn-singing in the church, and if you guessed Martin Luther, you are correct! He translated this hymn, “Savior of the Nations, Come,” into German, and it was found in two of the earliest hymnals in 1524.

Ambrose battled the Arian heresy, the claim that Jesus is not fully God and is not equal with the Father. Therefore, in this hymn, Ambrose teaches that Jesus was conceived by the Holy Spirit and “not by human flesh and blood” (stanza 2). Jesus’ life began in the womb of His mother; here He is named “Virgin’s Son” (stanza 1) and “Woman’s Offspring” (stanza 2). Ambrose uses language from the Nicene Creed in stanza 4 that also contradicts Arian heresy: “God of God” and “fully man.”

The imagery in this hymn describes Jesus as a king whose throne is in Mary’s womb, His “pure and kingly hall” (stanza 4). The hymn continues to describe Jesus’ course of salvation as He was victorious over death. Jesus’ light shines in the darkness (stanza 7), and His salvation is for all people, including those living in darkness and in the shadow of death (Matthew 4:16). We have comfort in knowing that our faith abides in Christ whose light shines from the manger and through the cross.

### Catechism: The Second Article of the Apostles Creed

And 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 sits at the right hand of God, the Father Almighty. From thence He will come to judge the living and the dead.

*What does this mean?* I believe that Jesus Christ, *true God, begotten of the Father from eternity, and also true man, born of the Virgin Mary*, is my Lord, who has redeemed me, a lost and condemned person, purchased and won me from all sins, from death, and from the power of the devil; not with gold or silver, but with His holy, precious blood and with His innocent suffering and death, that I may be His own and live under Him in His kingdom and serve Him in everlasting righteousness, innocence, and blessedness, just as He is risen from the dead, lives and reigns to all eternity. This is most certainly true.

*Bethany M Johnson*

## REHEARSAL DATES FOR SUNDAY SCHOOL CHRISTMAS PROGRAM

### (3 years old - 8th grade)

Rehearsals (meet in Room 204):

Wednesday, November 28, 5:15 – 5:40 p.m.

Wednesday, December 5, 5:15 – 5:40 p.m.

Wednesday, December 12, 5:15 – 5:40 p.m.

Dress Rehearsal (meet in the Nave):

Saturday, December 15, 9:30 – 11:00 a.m.

### Christmas Program:

**Wednesday, December 19, 6:30 p.m.**

## FROM THE BOARD OF CHRISTIAN STEWARDSHIP

It hardly seems possible, but only a month remains in the “Year of Our Lord” 2018. At this time, the Church Council and the Board of Stewardship wish to remind and encourage everyone to bring your year 2018 contributions up to date. The congregation’s financial books for 2018 will be closed for the year on December 31, 2018. As per Federal regulations, contributions intended for 2018 must be received (or postmarked) on or by 12/31/18 in order to be credited in 2018. 4<sup>th</sup> Quarter/Year-end contribution statements will be mailed near the middle of January 2019. Thank you for your regular and continued support of your congregation’s work!

## 2019 CONTRIBUTION ENVELOPES

Contribution envelopes will be available to be picked up in the breezeway mid-December. Your envelope number may have changed for 2019. Please use the instructions on the clipboard located on the tables with the contribution boxes to locate your box of envelopes. If you did not receive a contribution box or if you have any questions regarding contribution boxes/envelopes, please speak with Yvonne Berry in the church office. **A Reminder!** *Please do not use your 2019 contribution envelopes before January 2019.* This will ensure that your contribution statements will be credited accurately. Thank you!

## BOARD OF STEWARDSHIP: BUDGET AND RECEIPTS REPORT

In an effort to keep our congregation informed about our financial situation, the Board of Stewardship has agreed to publish monthly budget reports. These reports are designed to give you a snapshot of our congregational support of the budget adopted by the voter’s assembly for 2018. We hope that you will find this information useful.

Budget through October 31	\$628,386.70
<u>Budget Receipts through October 31</u>	<u>\$574,917.77</u>
Over (Under) Budget Year to Date	(\$53,468.93)

## QUALIFIED CHARITABLE DISTRIBUTIONS

We have mentioned this before, but since it is getting close to tax time, we are providing it again. This only applies to members who are at least 70 ½ and are required to withdraw funds from their retirement accounts. As those who must do this know, these withdrawals are taxed as income. A way to defer part or all of those taxes is through a Qualified Charitable Distribution (Contribution). If you have been giving to St. John’s with your charitable gifts each year, or are seeking a way to contribute, we would advise you to look into this option with your financial advisor if you meet the above-mentioned criteria. We believe you will be glad you did.

Board of Stewardship

## LOVING OUR NEIGHBORS IN THE NEIGHBORHOOD

Please remember that the speed limit in the alley way behind St. John’s is 15 m.p.h. This is especially important to observe since cars must back out of garages (blindly), the households along the alley way include children and grandchildren, and there’s school traffic in and out of Mater Dei.

## THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES SEEKING VOLUNTEER(S)

Anyone interested in a Fall through Winter project of renewing, repairing, and painting the window putty on the Breezeway windows and the lower portions of the stained-glass windows on the Courtyard side of the nave is asked to contact Trustees chair Jeff LaCrone or Dennis Hintz. Jeff can be contacted at 785.969.1387 or Dennis at 785.235.9684. Please leave a message to return your call.

## 2019 FLOWER CALENDAR

Please check the Flower Calendar on the bulletin board outside of the church offices. The *2019 Flower Calendar* should be posted by the time you receive this newsletter. If you would like to provide flowers for a particular service this coming year, please sign your name and phone number by the date of your choice.

## THANKSGIVING/CHRISTMAS BASKETS & POINSETTIA DELIVERY

The Welfare Fund provides monetary assistance to members who have special needs. If you wish to contribute to this cause, please make your check payable to St. John's Ev. Lutheran Church with "Welfare" on the memo line. In addition to monetary gifts, The Crisis Response Team, under the Human Care Team and The Board of Missions, prepares and delivers meals and purchases groceries and gift certificates at Christmas time and for members in need of assistance throughout the year.

If you would be willing to assist in providing meals and/or delivering poinsettias during the Christmas season, please contact Pam Harms [pharms@atjlcms.org](mailto:pharms@atjlcms.org) or call the office at 354-7132. This is an immediate need.

## DOORSTEP NEWS

This year has presented many challenges for Doorstep, and thankfully many blessings. Since they ended 2017 with fewer financial gifts than in the past, they have struggled with agency expenses, and grant funds that work on reimbursement throughout the year. Once again in December, they are working on their annual Christmas Store. Doorstep has requested 260 households from the Christmas Bureau Sign-up this year. There will be 800+ individuals in these households, and Doorstep is committed to helping them with Christmas gifts and food.

To do this, they need your help! They collect clothing, household items, blankets, school supplies, hygiene items, decorations, and more throughout the year. They did not have the funds to do clearance shopping for winter clothing in the first quarter of this year. Therefore, they have less clothing for all ages saved for the Store.

Doorstep is greatly in need of new winter clothing for infants & toddlers, youth, boys & girls, sizes 6-16, women and men. Women like the sweat sets, pajama pants & tops & long nightgowns. The men can use sweat sets, long sleeved shirts & boxer briefs (all sizes). All children receive an outfit and a set of pajamas. The youth section, sizes 6-16, is the largest age range we help, and we always must buy clothing in these sizes to cover the children we have adopted. They also need toys for all children, and gifts for teenagers. Monetary gifts are also greatly appreciated to help cover the food expenses of the Christmas Store, which is their largest expense.

The Christmas Store is the week of December 9 – 13. They need volunteers each day. Flyers have been distributed with the dates and times. Each adopted family goes around the store with an escort. They schedule 19 households per hour during distribution, so they need volunteer escorts!

You can bring donations for the Doorstep Christmas Store, Monday – Friday from 8am – 3pm., or drop them off at the Doorstep display in the church. You can also donate online at: [www.doorsteptopeka.org](http://www.doorsteptopeka.org)



## TLS NEWS

1. You are invited to the TLS Christmas program, K-8 grades, which will be held on Tuesday, December 18 at 7:00 pm, in the TLS Gym. Refreshments will be served following the performance.
2. Students will be performing Christmas music at McCrite Assisted Living on December 12 at 1:30 to 2:00 pm and at Atria Assisted Living on Thursday, December 20 (time TBD). We hope you can stop by!
3. As a quick reminder, for those Thrivent members who are eligible to participate in the CHOICE program, TLS would appreciate your consideration of designating the school as a recipient. This program has generously provided approximately \$8,000 in grant funds to TLS in 2017 which provided additional resources to the school's tuition assistance program. Thank you for your on-going support of TLS.
4. Save the Date-  
The Augustana College Choir, Rock Island, IL. under the direction of Jon Hurty, will be performing at Grace Cathedral on Monday, February 18th, at 7:00 p.m. The Topeka High School choir will be joining them in some selections. Lutheran Fine Arts Council of Topeka will be responsible for housing the 60 students and will be asking for your help at that time.

## WOMEN'S LEAGUE NEWS

**LWML Bazaar & Luncheon:** It's right around the corner. Please mark Friday, December 7, 2018 on your calendar for the St. John's LWML Bazaar and Luncheon. It's time to think about what you can bring to this event to ensure we have another successful bazaar. The ticket price for an adult is \$8.00 and \$3.00 for a child. Booths open at 10:30 a.m. and the Luncheon is from 11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. In addition, we also will have one of the largest "Cookie Walks" in Topeka. The price for the cookies is \$6.00 a pound. As in the past few years, we will be selling woodworking items, homemade craft items, gift items, paintings, quilts, etc. We will again be offering a baked goods area and the Sweet Shop. The proceeds will be divided among many different local and national missions. Without the contributions from St. John's members and the participation from the general public, this would not be possible. We thank you in advance for your help. Items may be brought to church on Wednesday, December 5 and Thursday, December 6 from 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. Additional information will be available in the Sunday bulletins.

We would like to ask for 4-6 volunteers for the congregation to help serve the Luncheon. Our ladies work hard and never have time to eat or shop and with more volunteers this would give them a short break. We would also like to emphasize that all the money received, less expenses, from this Christmas Luncheon and bazaar, will be given to Missions, both locally and abroad. Watch the newsletter in January or February and you will see where these funds were sent for this year.

Thank you in advance for your support, by volunteering, contributions, attending and purchasing items and enjoying the wonderful luncheon.

## OUR YOUTH NEED YOUR HELP!

The pastors are in the beginning stages of creating a more cohesive and coherent curriculum for our high school youth Sunday School class. Our vision? A comprehensive curriculum, regularly repeatable (every 2 or 3 years) that works through the critical questions Christians face as they mature from childhood to adulthood. Our goal? To apply the Word of God faithfully to these questions to keep our young people in the Faith and to give parents additional incentive to make sure their kids regularly attend the high school youth Sunday School class.

Here's where you come in. We'd like you to send us your "critical questions"—the questions every Christian needs an answer to. You can communicate them to us orally, via email ([jbruss@stjlcms.org](mailto:jbruss@stjlcms.org) and/or [dkerns@stjlcms.org](mailto:dkerns@stjlcms.org)), via text, on the phone, in writing—whatever. We'll amass those questions that need a solid, biblical answer, and use them, along with many of our own, as the spine of our curriculum.

To get the juices flowing: The answer to what question would have made a difference to you as you matured in the Faith? What have you only recently discovered that would have made a big difference to you as you grew up? What do you know today that you wish you knew years ago? What killer question has plagued you for a long time?

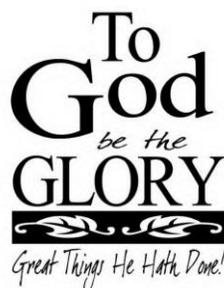
## SUNDAY SCHOOL NEWS FOR DECEMBER 2018

As we near the end of this year, we are concluding our first year of Sunday School using the curriculum based on the one-year lectionary. This has been an exciting year seeing the kids really grow in their understanding of the Gospel reading for the Sunday. It really helps them understand what the sermon is about each Sunday. We continue to incorporate this across the grades.

December 2:	1st Sunday in Advent	Jesus' Entrance into Jerusalem	Luke 20: 23-37
December 9:	2nd Sunday in Advent	The Second Coming of Christ	Luke 21:25-36
December 16:	Gaudete Sunday	The Lord's Messenger	Matthew 11:2-20
December 23 & 30	<b>No Sunday School</b>		

## COAT DRIVE

Please help share the warmth. St. John's is having a "Coat Drive" to give a warm coat/jacket to those in the neighborhood in need of one. The coats will be distributed by Doorstep and Grace Cathedral. If you have a used coat in good condition that you no longer need please consider donating it to our "Coat Drive". New coats will be accepted also. Coats should be left at the "Coat Drive" drop off location, on the coat racks in the narthex, on both sides of the main entry doors. The "Coat Drive" goes thru January 31. After that, used coats may still be donated to "Doorstep" using the Doorstep display at church. Thank you!





## THE MISSION OF THE CHURCH

*“Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you.” (Matthew 28:19–20a)*  
So that we may obtain faith in Christ, God instituted the ministry of teaching the gospel and administering the sacraments. Through the gospel and sacraments, as through means, God gives the Holy Spirit who produces faith, where and when He wills, in those who hear the gospel. (*Augsburg Confession*, Article 5)