



Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

God's work.
Our hands.

Worship Services:

Sundays 9:00 am

Interim Pastor

Pastor Len Hoffmann

815-975-4740

prlen.hoffmann@yahoo.com

Church office hours:

Mon., Tues., Wed. 6:00-11:00 AM

Parish Administrator

DJ Scott

prshadmin@gmail.com

Church Address:

PO Box 234 229 S First St

Pearl City, IL 61062

Church Phone:

815-443-2215

Building Hours:

The building will only be open
when the office is open

ST. JOHN'S EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH

"Ever Loving, Caring Always"



Christmas Eve—Nativity of Our Lord

Pastor Len Hoffmann presiding

Chancel Choir (9PM service)

December 24, 2025

Large Print Bulletins are available from the ushers.

Serving Us Today

Presiding Minister: Pastor Len Hoffmann **Acolytes:** Carlito Ramos (5PM) Kolton Kampmeier (9PM) **Organist:** Karen Bremmer **Lector:** Kim Williams (5PM) Lynda Palmer (9PM) **Assisting Minister:** Kris Eden (5PM) Shawn Kuhlemeier (9PM) **Greeter:** Jenaro Ramos & Jean Lutz family (5PM) Mike & Lynda Palmer (9PM) **Ushers:** Larry & Kathy Albrecht (5PM) DJ Scott (9PM) **Counters:** Ron Bremmer & Chad Bremmer **Sacristan:** Kathy Williams, Kris Liebenstein, and Nancy Trampel

P Pastor **C** Congregation **L** Lector **A** Assisting Minister

Introduction to the Day

In winter's deepest night, we welcome the light of the Christ child. Isaiah declares that the light of the long-promised king will illumine the world and bring endless peace and justice. Paul reminds us that the grace of God through Jesus Christ brings salvation to all people. The angels declare that Jesus' birth is good and joyful news for everyone, including lowly shepherds. Filled with the light that shines in our lives, we go forth to share the light of Christ with the whole world.

PRESERVICE MUSIC (9PM duet by Kathy Hillmer & Karen Bremmer)

THANKSGIVING FOR BAPTISM

P In the name of the Father, and of the ☩ Son , and of the Holy Spirit.

C Amen.

P Joined to Christ in the waters of baptism, we are clothed with God's mercy and forgiveness. Let us give thanks for the gift of baptism.

C We give you thanks, O God, for in the beginning your Spirit moved over the waters and by your Word you created the world, calling forth life in which you took delight.

P Through the waters of the flood you delivered Noah and his family. Through the sea you led your people Israel from slavery into freedom. At the river your Son was baptized by John and anointed with the Holy Spirit. By water and your Word you claim us as daughters and sons, making us heirs of your promise and servants of all.

C We praise you for the gift of water that sustains life, and above all we praise you for the gift of new life in Jesus Christ. Shower us with your Spirit, and renew our lives with your forgiveness, grace, and love.

P To you be given honor and praise through Jesus Christ our Lord in the unity of the Holy Spirit, now and forever.

C Amen.

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE
GATHERING HYMN

“O Come All Ye Faithful”

ELW 283

GREETING

P 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

SONG OF PRAISE

“Angel We Have Heard on High”

ELW 289

PRAYER OF THE DAY

P Let us pray. Almighty God, you made this holy night shine with the brightness of the true Light. Grant that here on earth we may walk in the light of Jesus’ presence and in the last day wake to the brightness of his glory; through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C Amen

LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT CANDLES

(Please be seated)

FIRST READING

Isaiah 9:2-7

This poem promises deliverance from Assyrian oppression, a hope based on the birth of a royal child with a name full of promise. While Judah’s king will practice justice and righteousness, the real basis for faith lies in God’s passion for the people: The zeal of the LORD of hosts will do this!

L A reading from Isaiah, the ninth chapter

L The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who lived in a land of deep darkness—on them light has shined. You have multiplied exultation; you have increased its joy; they rejoice before you as with joy at the harvest, as people exult when dividing plunder. For the yoke of their burden and the bar across their shoulders, the rod of their oppressor, you have broken as on the day of Midian. For all the boots of the tramping warriors and all the garments rolled in blood shall be burned as fuel for the fire. For a child has been born for us, a son given to us; authority rests upon his shoulders, and he is named Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Great will be his authority, and there shall be endless peace for the throne of David and his kingdom. He will establish and uphold it with justice and with righteousness from this time onward and forevermore. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will do this.

L The word of the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

PSALM

Psalm 96

- L** Let us say the Psalm responsively
- L** Sing to the LORD a new song; sing to the LORD, all the earth.
- C** **Sing to the LORD, bless the name of the LORD; proclaim God's salvation from day to day.**
- L** Declare God's glory among the nations and God's wonders among all peoples.
- C** **For great is the LORD and greatly to be praised, more to be feared than all gods.**
- L** As for all the gods of the nations, they are but idols; but you, O LORD, have made the heavens.
- C** **Majesty and magnificence are in your presence; power and splendor are in your sanctuary.**
- L** Ascribe to the LORD, you families of the peoples, ascribe to the LORD honor and power.
- C** **Ascribe to the LORD the honor due the holy name; bring offerings and enter the courts of the LORD.**
- L** Worship the LORD in the beauty of holiness; tremble before the LORD, all the earth.
- C** **Tell it out among the nations: "The LORD is king! The one who made the world so firm that it cannot be moved will judge the peoples with equity."**
- L** Let the heavens rejoice, and let the earth be glad; let the sea thunder and all that is in it; let the field be joyful and all that is therein.
- C** **Then shall all the trees of the wood shout for joy at your coming, O LORD, for you come to judge the earth.**
- L** You will judge the world with righteousness and the peoples with your truth.

SECOND READING

Titus 2:11-14

The appearance of God's grace in Jesus Christ brings salvation for all humanity. Consequently, in the present we live wisely and justly while also anticipating the hope of our Savior's final appearance.

- L** A reading from Titus, the second chapter.
- L** The grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all, training us to renounce impiety and worldly passions and in the present age to live lives that are self-controlled, upright, and godly, while we wait for the blessed hope and the manifestation of the glory of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ. He it is who gave himself for us that he might redeem us from all iniquity and purify for himself a people of his own who are zealous for good deeds.
- L** The word of the Lord.
- C** **Thanks be to God.**

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION “Go Tell It On the Mountain” (verse 3) ELW 290

(Please stand as you are able)

GOSPEL

Luke 2:1-14 [15-20]

God’s greatest gift comes as a baby in a manger. Angels announce the “good news of great joy” and proclaim God’s blessing of peace

P The Holy Gospel according to St. Luke.

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

P In those days a decree went out from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be registered. This was the first registration and was taken while Quirinius was governor of Syria. All went to their own towns to be registered. Joseph also went from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to the city of David called Bethlehem, because he was descended from the house and family of David. He went to be registered with Mary, to whom he was engaged and who was expecting a child. While they were there, the time came for her to deliver her child. And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in bands of cloth and laid him in a manger, because there was no place in the guest room.

Now in that same region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. But the angel said to them, “Do not be afraid, for see, I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord. This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger.” And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying, “Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace among those whom he favors!” [When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, “Let us go now to Bethlehem and see this thing that has taken place, which the Lord has made known to us.” So they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph and the child lying in the manger. When they saw this, they made known what had been told them about this child, and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds told them, and Mary treasured all these words and pondered them in her heart. The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, just as it had been told them.]

L The Gospel of the Lord

C **Praise to you, O Christ**

(Please be seated)

SERMON

HYMN OF THE DAY

“Mary Did You Know” (5PM)

“Silent Was the Night” (9PM)

Chancel Choir

NICENE CREED

ELW PAGE 104

(Please be seated.)

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

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

(A brief silence.)

A Gathering God, you bring your people from every corner of the earth together before the manger that you have made a throne. Unite the church in love as we rejoice in the news of your coming. Hear us, O God.

C **Your mercy is great.**

A Creating God, you brought forth the earth and all that is in it. Join our voices with the roaring seas, the exulting fields, and the trees of the forest singing for joy on this holy night. Hear us, O God.

C **Your mercy is great.**

A Transforming God, the world trembles amid violence and war. Empower our hands, feet, and hearts with your Spirit to shatter the rod of the oppressor and turn swords into plowshares. Hear us, O God.

C **Your mercy is great.**

A Shepherding God, you lead us to your love in the face of our neighbor. Send us into the world to find your Word made flesh in one another, especially those who are sick or struggling (*especially*). Hear us, O God.

C **Your mercy is great.**

A Nurturing God, you dwell with us in humble places. Sustain housing and clothing ministries in this community, that all find shelter and warmth. We pray especially for youth seeking safety and care. Hear us, O God.

C **Your mercy is great.**

A Welcoming God, remember all who are confined to their homes and health care centers from our community and congregation. Today we pray for *Shirley Goldsmith, Richard Brinkmeier, Lori Miller, Janis Kampmeier, Mary Ellen Aurand, Verda Werkheiser, Carol Byers, Gina Boop, Jerry Harnish, Ron Fluegel, Louise Cuccio, Donna Freedlund, and Connie Melville*. Hear us, O God.

C **Your mercy is great.**

A Abiding God, you remain at the side of all the departed. Grant all who mourn hope in the resurrection and peace in Christ Jesus. 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.**

PEACE

- P** The peace of Christ be with you always.
C **And also with you.**
P Let us share signs of peace with one another.

OFFERING HYMN

“What Child Is This”

ELW 296

(Please stand as you are able.)

OFFERING PRAYER

- A** Let us pray.
A Holy God, gracious and merciful, you bring forth food from the earth and nourish your whole creation. Turn our hearts toward those who hunger in any way, that all may know your care; and prepare us now to feast on the bread of life, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.
C **Amen.**

DIALOGUE

ELW Page 144

- 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.**



St. John's Giving page QR code

PREFACE

P It is indeed right, our duty and our joy, that we should at all times and in all places give thanks and praise to you, almighty and merciful God, through our Savior Jesus Christ. In the wonder and mystery of the Word made flesh you have opened the eyes of faith to a new and radiant vision of your glory, that, beholding the God made visible, we may be drawn to love the God whom we cannot see. And so, with all the choirs of angels, with the church on earth and the hosts of heaven, we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

HOLY, HOLY, HOLY

“Hark! The Herald Angel Sing”

ELW 270

THANKSGIVING AT THE TABLE

P We give you thanks, Father, through Jesus Christ, your beloved Son, whom you sent in this end of the ages to save and redeem us and to proclaim to us your will. He is your Word, inseparable from you, through whom you created all things, and in whom you take delight. He is your Word, sent from heaven to a virgin's womb. He there took on our nature and our lot and was shown forth as your Son, born of the Holy Spirit and of the virgin Mary.

He, our Lord Jesus, fulfilled all your will and won for you a holy people; he stretched out his hands in suffering in order to free from suffering those who trust you. He is the one who, handed over to a death he freely accepted, in order to destroy death, to break the bonds of the evil one, to crush hell underfoot, to give light to the righteous, to establish his covenant, and to show forth the resurrection, taking bread and giving thanks to you, said: Take and eat; this is my body, given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me.

In the same way he took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it for all to drink, saying: This cup is the new covenant in my blood, shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin. Do this for the remembrance of me.

Remembering, then, his death and resurrection, we take this bread and cup, giving you thanks that you have made us worthy to stand before you and to serve you as your priestly people. Send your Spirit upon these gifts of your church; gather into one all who share this bread and wine; fill us with your Holy Spirit to establish our faith in truth, that we may praise and glorify you through your Son Jesus Christ; through whom all glory and honor are yours, almighty Father, with the Holy Spirit, in your holy church, both now and forever.

P Gathered into one by the Holy Spirit, let us pray as Jesus taught us.

LORD'S PRAYER

ELW PAGE 154

INVITATION TO COMMUNION

P Here is life. God is with us. Come, receive what God has promised.

*Communion instruction – as we gather for Holy Communion, you will come down the center aisle, receive the bread and cup, and return by the side aisle. Wine is the dark liquid and grape juice is the light liquid in the center ring. **If you wish to receive gluten free, it is available. Please ask.** If you wish to only receive a blessing, please come forward with your arms crossed. This is a time where all God's people find unity.*

RECEIVING OF HOLY COMMUNION

P The body of Christ, given for you. The blood of Christ, shed for you. **Amen.**

COMMUNION BLESSING

P The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen you and keep you in God's grace.

C **Amen.**

POST-COMMUNION PRAYER

A Let us pray. Radiant God, with our eyes we have seen your salvation, and in this meal we have feasted on your grace. May your Word take flesh in us, that we may be your holy people, revealing your glory made known to us in Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

C **Amen**

PARISH ANNOUNCEMENTS

BLESSING

P The God of steadfastness and encouragement grant you to live in harmony with one another, in accordance with Christ Jesus.

C **Amen.**

P The God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that you may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.

C **Amen.**

P The God of all grace  bless you now and forever.

C **Amen.**

SENDING

P God blesses us and sends us in mission to the world.

CANDLE LIGHTING

SENDING SONG

“Silent Night, Holy Night”

ELW 281

DISMISSAL

A Go in peace. Share the good news!

C **Thanks be to God.**

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CONTACT INFORMATION

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Mon., Tues., Wed. 6:00-11:00 AM

St. John's Website
www.stjohnspearlcity.org

This Week at St. John's Wednesday, December 24, 2025

5p Christmas Eve service
9p Christmas Eve candlelight service

Thursday, December 25, 2025 **10a** Community Christmas meal

Friday, December 26, 2025 **JANUARY NEWSLETTER DEADLINE**

Sunday, December 28, 2025 **10a** Worship

Sunday, December 28, 2025

Isaiah 63:7-9 Psalm 148

Hebrews 1:10-18 Matthew 2:13-23

Confirmation: We continue to meet on the first and third Sunday of the month. We are into the study of the Apostles' Creed and are looking into the second section of the creed which is about Jesus Christ. Just a reminder that our Christmas party will be on Sunday, December 21st right after the church service. We will not meet again until January 18, 2026. If your child is not going to attend confirmation, please text me at 630-965-2016 prior to our meeting so that we are not waiting for them to show up. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.—Blessings, Shawn Kuhlemeier

Sunday School: As we enter the holiday season, we have a bit of a different schedule for Sunday School. We will meet on December 7, 14, and the 21. We will **not** meet on December 28th or January 4th but will reconvene on January 11th with a lesson on Jesus' Baptism. We would still welcome volunteers to help out with teaching Sunday School. If you have any questions, please speak with Morgan Scharping, Theresa Snetcher, or Grace Heimerdinger-Baake.

Don't forget that we are still playing dominoes on the first Tuesday of each month at 9AM. The next date is Tuesday, January 6th. Cards and dominoes are still on for the second and fourth Thursday of each month at 1PM as well. The next date is Thursday, January 8th at 1PM! An extra date of dominoes has also been set for Tuesday, December 30th at 9AM in Luther Hall!

Women's Gathering News ...

*Women's Gathering has dish cloths for sale. They are \$1.50 each. Contact the church office or Lynda Palmer if you are interested.

*Prayer Shawl Outreach will meet on Sunday, January 4th. Start a shawl/quilt or work on one already started. Someone will be available to help.

*The next bible study will be on Tuesday, January 20th at 9:45 a.m. - refreshments (served by Kris Eden and Janet Ferguson) 10 a.m. - bible study led by Shawn Kuhlemeier. Sit N Sew will be at noon.

*The Women's Gathering funeral lunch committee thanks everyone who donated food and for money donations for the lunch following Carol Garnhart's funeral service at St. John's on December 6th and Joyce Kempel's funeral service on December 16th. We appreciate the donations and for all the help in planning, serving and clean-up. Thanks!

*A big THANK YOU to everyone who donated toward the Christmas gift cards for 73 children from Pearl City School. Women's Gathering will still be collecting through the end of the year. If we collect more than \$1825, we will donate the balance to the Food Pantry.

The Healthy Wolves backpack ministry is very thankful for your continuing financial support. Without you, we would not be able to supply weekend meals for those in need. The number of students needing help is twice the amount of last school year. You are indeed a blessing to our community.

The Social Ministry committee will start their Giving Tree collection on November 30th. We will be collecting children's gloves for Pearl City School and we will also be collecting shelf stable food, paper products, and toiletries for The Veterans Footlocker. The collection will run through January 4th. To take part in this collection just remove a paper ornament from the tree of an item you would like to donate. Put a regular ornament (provided) on the tree in the spot where you removed the paper ornament. Regular ornaments are in a box by the elevator. Purchase the item listed on the paper ornament. Bring the purchased item to church and place it in the donation box next to the tree. All items will be delivered after January 4th. Thank you for taking part in this important ministry.

*Women's Gathering invites the congregation/guests to eat out together. The next one will be on Sunday, January 4th at the Brew & Chew in Pearl City at 11:30 AM. Please sign up in the lobby by December 28th! Car pooling will be set up!

Date	Greeters	Ushers	Lector
Jan. 4	Rollin & Judy Nelson	Earl & Cindy Heimerdinger	Ethan Bremmer
Acolytes		Tech Support	
Jonah Schubert		Arianna Schoenhard	



Happy Birthday!
Gertrude Heimerdinger Paige Hille
Dailynn Kittoe

Grace Meal News. . .

A special thank you to the Pearl City National Honor Society who helped with the November Grace Meal: Kameron Downs, Xander Krolow, Mackenzie Lotz, Oscar Ugalde-Sanchez, Scarlett Snyder and Nataleigh Todd. Also, a special thank you to Theresa Albers, Cara Brinkmeier, Dennis Downs, Kris & Marion Eden, Randy & Sandy Faust, Grace Heimerdinger-Baake, Jim Heimerdinger, Lois Hunsaker, Joan & Marvin Klatt, Judy & Rollin Nelson, DJ Scott, Marilyn Smital and Marge & Bob Roiland. We had a total of 283 meals served. There were 35 deliveries and 248 picked up curbside. The December Meal will be a community meal on Christmas Day, December 25th. Meals can be picked up between 11:00 a.m. and 12:00 p.m. on the 25th. Reservations are due in the church office by Monday, December 22nd.

The Grace Meal Committee would like to thank the congregation for stepping up and making financial donations to help the great ministry continue serving meals each month. If you think you can help prepare or serve a meal talk to Kris Eden, Marge Roiland, or Lois Hunsaker!

At the monthly zoom meeting for all call committees in the Northern Illinois synod, we met our new transitions leader. Our previous leader, Pastor Jen Beamsley, has taken a call in Washington, Il. That church has been without a pastor for five years. Our new transitions leader is Pastor Jen Henry. She lives in LeClere, Iowa. Pastor Jen is very excited to be part of NI synod's call process and brings an abundance of knowledge and enthusiasm. The entire meeting was taken up by all of us introducing ourselves and congregations to Pastor Jen. We did learn there are approximately seventeen congregations without pastors in the synod. There are no pastors looking to move right now as it is the Christmas season. Hopefully after the first of the year, there will be more pastors looking to move. Please keep all congregations, seminarians, and pastors discerning the call process in your prayers.