

We ask that all members join the Women of ELCA and pray this prayer as you rise in the morning, and as you prepare to retire each evening.

Lord, Jesus Christ, I bring to you:

Jada, Myles, & Conner Garske; Britain Hahn; Amara Brandau; Chase Brandau; Avery Brueggen; Riley, Aria & Hudson Brueggen; Nolan & Logan Buchholz; Thadyn & Ayawyn Conner; Vanessa & Elliott Ornes; Lailah Eckes, Maevis Shock; Lena Ornes; Porter Sorenson; Josie Ornes; Brooklyn, Madelyn, Kaylin, Emma, Bryce, Marah, Bria, Ava, Katie, & Benjamin Gruen; Braylee Zimmerman; MaKenzie & Cooper Powell; Wesson & Arden Mayne; Vanessa, Mia, & Brek Anderson; Carlee, Collin, & Camden Neidfeldt; Morgan Speicher; Krista & Sierra Cook; Franklin & Douglas Wildes; Sophia, Derek & Deacon Erdman; Kody Tormoen; Callie Fleming; Miranda, Daphne & Linus Arndt; Emma Elder; Bryson Lamb, Elizabeth Wildes; Alaina & Braxton Holthaus; Jayda Leis; David, Sam & Zachary Ross; Gannon & Ellory Tormoen; Jase & Margo Picha; Watson and Duke Sebranek, Violet Ford, Hunter Puhl, Eason Kelbel, Cole, Caleb & Connor Redding; Luke and Joelle Kroeger; Peyton Oelson, Greyson Resop; Kendall Christopherson, Hudson Birkholz, Alayna, Alivia & Levi Wyttenbach. Brooke, Claire, Grace & Bree Olson. We pray for all children throughout the world, especially those in war zones.

That your spirit will dwell with them according to your will. That they will grow in the knowledge of you and know that they are dearly loved by you. I pray that you will protect them from deception by the evil one and all his darts that would lead them astray. May they do well in school, learning and discerning what direction you have in mind for them. I also pray for all children every where, that you would keep them in your care.

In Jesus name I pray.

Amen



St. Paul's Evangelical Lutheran Church

Wilton, WI

Third Sunday of Advent

December 14, 2025

10:15 AM

**Inviting People to
Journey with Christ's Family
In Spreading God's Love and Mercy**

A note of joyful expectation marks today's worship. Isaiah announces that the desert shall rejoice and blossom, and Jesus points to the unexpected and transforming signs of God's reign. We wait with patience for the coming of the Lord, even as we rejoice at his presence among us this day: in word and holy supper, in church and in our homes, in silent reflection and in works of justice and love. We pray that God would open our eyes and ears to the wonders of Christ's advent among us.

*(Indicates the people should stand as they are able.)

*Welcome and Announcements

***PEACE**

The peace of Christ be with you always.

And also with you.

Let us greet one another with a sign of Christ's peace.

***Hymn "Be Still and Know" Bulletin Page 15**

In the darkness, a light shines.

In the waiting, life stirs.

As we remember that Christ is the "life-light" bringing life to the world and filling the darkness with light.

With each candle we light, we proclaim that the light of Christ is stronger than the shadows, and the life He brings is everlasting.

Today we light the third candle of Advent, the candle of Joy.

SONGS FOR COMING TO WORSHIP

Be Still and Know 10

Blessed Is the One

Text: Psalm 118:26

Music: BLESSED IS THE ONE, Nathan Hougé, b. 1977

IN OUR PRAYERS

Gloria Meltesen, Linda, Jeremy Munson, Kristy Gwin Solovey, Gordy O'Rourke, Marilyn O'Rourke, Larry Arndt, Nick Evans, Jack Arndt, Collin Niedfeldt, Mark Drews, Carol Lydon Fronk, Jeri Bauer Weger, Patty Von Haden, Ben Bender, Jeff Bruce, Pastor Bob Gerke, Brian, Jim Summerfield, Darlene Diekrager, Allan Martin

IN THE MILITARY

Jacob Picha, Dylan Dougherty, Danelle Dougherty, Robert Cale, Allen Roscovious, Matthew Dutton

CALENDAR

Sun., Dec. 14	Sunday School Worship (Baptism)	9:00 AM 10:15 AM
Wed., Dec. 17	Caroling	
Sun., Dec. 21	Sunday School Worship	9:00 AM 10:15 AM
	Bishop Felix Malpica	
	Council Meeting	11:30 PM
Wed., Dec. 24	Christmas Sing	6:00 PM
	Worship	7:00 PM
Sun., Dec. 28	Worship	10:15 AM

It shines with warmth and celebration, like the first light of morning after a long night. Christ's light brings joy — joy that cannot be dimmed by sorrow, for it is born of life eternal.

ALL:

**God of joy, fill our hearts with light and happiness.
Help us to rejoice in your coming,
And to share your life-giving light with all.
Amen.**

***Hymn: "Joy to the World"**

ELW#267

Gathering

The Holy Spirit calls us together as the people of God.

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

And also with you

***Prayer of the Day**

Stir up the wills of all who look to you, Lord God, and strengthen our faith in your coming, that, transformed by grace, we may walk in your way; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Amen.

WORD

God speaks to us in scripture reading, preaching, and song.

FIRST READING

The prophet describes the return from the Babylonian captivity as a joyous procession to Zion. God's coming reign will bring a renewal of creation in which health and wholeness will be restored. There is no need for fear, for God is coming to save.

A reading from Isaiah 35:1-10

¹ The wilderness and the dry land shall be glad;
the desert shall rejoice and blossom;
like the crocus
² it shall blossom abundantly
and rejoice with joy and shouting.
The glory of Lebanon shall be given to it,
the majesty of Carmel and Sharon.
They shall see the glory of the LORD,
the majesty of our God.
³ Strengthen the weak hands
and make firm the feeble knees.
⁴ Say to those who are of a fearful heart,
“Be strong, do not fear!
Here is your God.
He will come with vengeance,
with terrible recompense.
He will come and save you.”
⁵ Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened,
and the ears of the deaf shall be opened;
⁶ then the lame shall leap like a deer,
and the tongue of the speechless sing for joy.
For waters shall break forth in the wilderness
and streams in the desert;
⁷ the burning sand shall become a pool
and the thirsty ground springs of water;
the haunt of jackals shall become a swamp;
the grass shall become reeds and rushes.
⁸ A highway shall be there,
and it shall be called the Holy Way;
the unclean shall not travel on it,
but it shall be for God’s people;
no traveler, not even fools, shall go astray.
⁹ No lion shall be there,
nor shall any ravenous beast come up on it;
they shall not be found there,
but the redeemed shall walk there.

Joelle, child of God, you have been sealed by the Holy Spirit and marked with the cross of Christ forever. Amen.

WELCOME

Pastor Karen: Let your light so shine before others that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven.—

Matthew 5:16

Pastor Dawn: Let us welcome the newly baptized.

People: **We welcome you into the body of Christ and into the mission we share: join us in giving thanks and praise to God and bearing God's creative and redeeming word to all the world.**

SENDING

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

*BLESSING

May God who comes among us,
Father, ☩ Son, and Holy Spirit,
grant you patience in waiting, peace in the darkness,
and good news to share today and always.

Amen.

Hymn

“Borning Cry”

ELW#732

DISMISSAL

Go in peace. Keep awake.

Thanks be to God.

THOSE SERVING TODAY

Ministers: All God’s People; Synod Authorized Minister:
Karen Sparling; Organist: Nalani Bever; Reader: Joel Arndt;
Acolytes: Linus Arndt, Alaina Holthaus

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 to judge the living and the dead. Do you believe in God the Holy Spirit? 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.

THANKSGIVING AT THE FONT

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. Through the waters of the flood you delivered Noah and his family, and 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 the baptism of Jesus' death and resurrection you set us free from the power of sin and death and raise us up to live in you. Pour out your Holy Spirit, the power of your living Word, that those who are washed in the waters of baptism may be given new life. To you be given honor and praise through Jesus Christ our Lord, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, now and forever. Amen.

BAPTISM

Joelle, I baptize you in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

LAYING ON OF HANDS

Let us pray.

We give you thanks, O God, that through water and the Holy Spirit you give your daughters and sons new birth, cleanse them from sin, and raise them to eternal life. Sustain Joelle with the gift of your Holy Spirit: the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and the fear of the Lord, the spirit of joy in your presence, both now and forever.

Amen

¹⁰ And the ransomed of the LORD shall return and come to Zion with singing; everlasting joy shall be upon their heads; they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.

The word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

Psalm 146:5-10

⁵ Happy are they who have the God of Jacob for their help, whose hope is in the LORD their God;

⁶ **who made heaven and earth, the seas, and all that is in them;**

who keeps promises forever;

⁷ who gives justice to those who are oppressed, and food to those who hunger.

The LORD sets the captive free.

⁸ **The LORD opens the eyes of the blind; the LORD lifts up those who are bowed down; the LORD loves the righteous.**

⁹ The LORD cares for the stranger; the LORD sustains the orphan and widow, but frustrates the way of the wicked.

¹⁰ **The LORD shall reign forever, your God, O Zion, throughout all generations.**
Hallelujah!

SECOND READING

In anticipation of the Lord's coming, Christians are called upon to cultivate patience rather than discontent.

A reading from James 5:7-10

⁷ Be patient, therefore, brothers and sisters, until the coming of the Lord. The farmer waits for the precious crop from the earth, being patient with it until it receives the early and the

late rains.⁸ You also must be patient. Strengthen your hearts, for the coming of the Lord is near.⁹ Brothers and sisters, do not grumble against one another, so that you may not be judged. See, the Judge is standing at the doors!¹⁰ As an example of suffering and patience, brothers and sisters, take the prophets who spoke in the name of the Lord.

The word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

*Gospel Acclamation Sung to "What Child is This?"

What Word is this on printed page,
proclaimed and lived among us?
O living Christ, the nations rage,
What hope and truth will you bring us?
Peace, peace, is what we pray,
thy kingdom come among us.
Come, Lord, renew our hearts;
Your children, we are listening.

***GOSPEL READING**

John the Baptist expects the Messiah to bring God's judgment upon the earth (Matt. 3:11-12). From a prison cell, he wonders whether Jesus is the one who will do this. Jesus' response indicates that God's reign is indeed being fulfilled already through healing and restoration.

The holy gospel according to Matthew 11:2-11

Glory to you, O Lord.

² When John heard in prison what the Messiah was doing, he sent word by his disciples ³ and said to him, "Are you the one who is to come, or are we to wait for another?" ⁴ Jesus answered them, "Go and tell John what you hear and see: ⁵ the blind receive their sight, the lame walk, those with a skin disease are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the poor have good news brought to them.

⁶ And blessed is anyone who takes no offense at me.”

Pastor Dawn: As you bring Joelle to receive the gift of baptism, you are entrusted with responsibilities: to live with her among God's faithful people, bring her to the word of God and the holy supper, teach her the Lord's Prayer, the Creed, and the Ten Commandments, place in her hands the holy scriptures, and nurture her in faith and prayer, so that Joelle may learn to trust God, proclaim Christ through word and deed, care for others and the world God made, and work for justice and peace. Do you promise to help Joelle grow in the Christian faith and life?

Parents: I do.

Pastor Dawn: Sponsors, do you promise to nurture Joelle in the Christian faith as you are empowered by God's Spirit, and to help her live in the covenant of baptism and in communion with the church?

Sponsors: I do.

Pastor Dawn: People of God, do you promise to support Joelle and pray for her in her new life in Christ?

People: We do.

PROFESSION OF FAITH

I ask you to profess your faith in Christ Jesus, reject sin, and confess the faith of the church. Do you renounce the devil and all the forces that defy God?

Response: I renounce them.

Do you renounce the powers of this world that rebel against God?
Response: **I renounce them.**

Do you renounce the ways of sin that draw you from God?
Response: **I renounce them.**

Do you believe in God the Father?

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

Do you believe in Jesus Christ, the Son of God?

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

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

Amen.

PRESENTATION

Pastor Dawn: God, who is rich in mercy and love, gives us a new birth into a living hope through the sacrament of baptism. By water and the Word God delivers us from sin and death and raises us to new life in Jesus Christ. We are united with all the baptized in the one body of Christ, anointed with the gift of the Holy Spirit, and joined in God's mission for the life of the world. As we pour the water for this baptism, we will listen to what Jesus said about baptism, because it is his Word and promise that gives this water its power to save. [One of the parents pours the water.]

Lori Arndt: Jesus said, "I am the resurrection and the life. Those who believe in me, even though they die, will live, and everyone who lives and believes in me will never die."

Joel Arndt: Jesus said, "I tell you, no one can enter the kingdom of God without being born of water and Spirit.

Pastor Karen: Jesus said, "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, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. Remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age."

THE PROMISES OF PARENTS AND SPONSORS

Sponsors: We present Joelle to receive the Sacrament of Holy Baptism.

Pastor Dawn: Called by the Holy Spirit, trusting in the grace and love of God, do you desire to have Joelle baptized into Christ?

Parents: I do.

⁷ As they went away, Jesus began to speak to the crowds about John: "What did you go out into the wilderness to look at? A reed shaken by the wind? ⁸ What, then, did you go out to see? Someone dressed in soft robes? Look, those who wear soft robes are in royal palaces. ⁹ What, then, did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, I tell you, and more than a prophet. ¹⁰ This is the one about whom it is written,

'See, I am sending my messenger ahead of you,
who will prepare your way before you.'

¹¹ "Truly I tell you, among those born of women no one has arisen greater than John the Baptist, yet the least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he."

The gospel of the Lord. **Praise to you, O Christ.**

Sermon

Karen Sparling

Synod Authorized Minister

Hymn

"Christ, Be Our Light"

ELW #715

***PRAYERS**

(God of grace. Hear our prayer.)

In our waiting and watching, we come to you in prayer, O God, trusting your promise to renew the church, the nations, and the whole creation.

OFFERING

*OFFERING HYMN

***Hymn** **"Blessed Is the One"** **Bulletin Page 15**

*OFFERING PRAYER

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

MEAL

God feeds us with the presence of Jesus Christ

*THANKSGIVING AT THE TABLE

*GREAT THANKSGIVING

Words of Institution

*LORD'S PRAYER

Gathered into one, let us pray as Jesus taught us:

**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.

INVITATION TO COMMUNION

Here is life. God is with us.

Come, receive what God has promised.

Everyone who believes in Jesus is welcome at Christ's table.

"Lamb of God"

Oh.. Lamb of God,
You take away
The sin of the world,
Have mercy, we pray

Oh.. Lamb of God,
you take away

Sung to "The First Noel"

the sin of the world,
have mercy, we pray

Oh..Lamb of God, Oh.. Lamb of God!
Give us your peace on earth today.

Distribution

*PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

God our host,
at this table you have fed us with joy and gladness.
**Send us forth, eager to share the feast,
welcome the stranger,
and bear good fruit in the name of Jesus.**
Amen.

THE SACRAMENT OF HOLY BAPTISM

Blessed be the holy Trinity, ☩ one God,
the fountain of living water,
the rock who gave us birth,
our light and our salvation.

Amen.

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.

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. 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. We praise you for the gift of water that sustains life, and