

ST. JOHN'S EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH

120 N. Main St., Lewistown, PA 17044-1719

Main Office: 717-248-8780 Mon., Tues., Thurs. 8:00AM-4:00 PM Fri. 8-Noon

stjohnslewestown@gmail.com

Interim Pastor: Rev. Allen Hulslander 570-220-4402 (cell)

Office Hours: Tues. 9am-Noon and Thurs. 9am-Noon *please call ahead.

Director of Music/Organist: Mrs. Patricia O. Loudenslager

<http://www.stjohnslewestown.com>

www.facebook.com/St.John'sLutheranChurch,LewistownPA

Sunday, January 4th, 2026, *Epiphany of Our Lord /Setting 3*



INTRODUCTION

The feast of Epiphany ("manifestation") concludes the Christmas season with a celebration of God's glory revealed in the person of Jesus Christ. In Isaiah and Ephesians, that glory is proclaimed for all nations and people. Like the light of the star that guided the magi to Jesus, the light of Christ reveals who we are: children of God who are claimed and washed in the waters of baptism. We are sent out to be beacons of the light of Christ, sharing the good news of God's love to all people.

WELCOME to worship at St. John's, whether virtually or in person. We are delighted to share this time together. St. John's focus is to share the Good News of Jesus Christ, strengthen believers and care for those in Need.

HOLY COMMUNION is served by a 2-line procession down the center aisle. We will celebrate with bread, wine, or grape juice. Gluten-free wafers are also available.

GIVE TO ST. JOHN'S Offering plates are located at each entrance. If you prefer to give electronically, visit our website, and click on the **E-Giving Tab**. Use your existing login information. For new users, search for St John's Lutheran Church Lewistown. Information on **E-Giving** is available on the SJLC resource table. Thank you for your continued support.

IF YOU ARE A VISITOR, we would like to get to know you. Please fill out a visitor's card from the pew rack and place it on the offering plate at the entrances. May Christ's spirit be with each and every one of us in our congregational life and faith journey.

LARGE PRINT SERVICE BOOKLETS are available, please see a door greeter.

SERVING TODAY

Pastor – Rev. Allen Hulslander

Acolytes – Anderson Bitner, Jameson Phillips

Altar Guild Volunteers – Gloria Stewart, Jenny McCardle, Mariah King

Cantor – Sue Shawver

Communion Assistants – Scott Price, Jim Rosenberry, Melissa Rosenberry

Crucifer – Scott Price

Lay Reader – TBA

Ushers – Ed Stewart – head, Pam Tressler, Gloria Stewart

Media & Production – Grant and Carrie Stufft, Nancy Ressler, and Mary Barr

PRELUDE "Procession of the Magi" George Blake, 1985 Lorenz Pub. Co.

WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS

GATHERING

*Please stand as you are able. Congregational responses are in **Bold**.*

Red Hymnal (ELW) will be used for parts of the service.

Confession and Forgiveness

Blessed be the holy Trinity, one God,
Wonderful Counselor, Mighty Savior, Prince of Peace.
Amen.

Trusting in God's steadfast love and faithfulness,
let us confess our sin.

Silence is kept for reflection.

Reconciling God,
we yearn for your presence to transform our grief, pain, and despair.
We confess that we have not always prepared room in our hearts
for your love; we have not always recognized your presence among us;
we have not always embraced your message of peace.
We cry out, weary with the burden of violence, oppression, and fear.
We confess our failure to make room for those seeking refuge;
our participation in violent systems that harm your innocent ones;
our reluctance to embody your good news.
Be born in us today and teach us to sing the joyful song of your salvation.
Amen.

God's grace upon grace flows over you.
Christ's presence redeems the whole creation.
Your sins are forgiven. Let the earth rejoice and be glad!
Amen.

Processional Hymn

ELW #300 "The First Noel"

GREETING

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.

Kyrie

ELW page #138 Setting 3

Glory to God

ELW page #139 Setting 3

PRAYER OF THE DAY

O God, on this day you revealed your Son to the nations by the leading of a star. Lead us now by faith to know your presence in our lives and bring us at last to the full vision of your glory, through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Amen.

Please be seated.

Special Music
“We Three Kings”
Congregation
Please see back of Bulletin

CHILDRENS MESSAGE *All children are invited forward.*

WORD

First Reading: Isaiah 60:1-6

Jerusalem is assured that nations will make a pilgrimage to her because the light of God's presence is in her midst. The bountiful food of the sea and the profits of international trade will come streaming to Jerusalem and thereby declare God's praise.

¹ Arise, shine, for your light has come,
and the glory of the LORD has risen upon you.

² For darkness shall cover the earth
and thick darkness the peoples,
but the LORD will arise upon you,
and his glory will appear over you.

³ Nations shall come to your light
and kings to the brightness of your dawn.

⁴ Lift up your eyes and look around;
they all gather together; they come to you;
your sons shall come from far away,
and your daughters shall be carried in their nurses' arms.

⁵ Then you shall see and be radiant;

your heart shall thrill and rejoice,
because the abundance of the sea shall be brought to you;
the wealth of the nations shall come to you.

⁶ A multitude of camels shall cover you,
the young camels of Midian and Ephah;
all those from Sheba shall come.

They shall bring gold and frankincense
and shall proclaim the praise of the LORD.

Reader ends with: **“The Word of the Lord.”**

Congregation responds: **“Thanks be to God.”**

Psalm: Psalm 72:1-7, 10-14

All kings shall bow down before him. (Ps. 72:11)

¹ Give the king your justice, O God,
and your righteousness to the king's son;

² **that he may rule your people righteously
and the poor with justice;**

³ that the mountains may bring prosperity to the people,
and the hills, in righteousness.

⁴ **Let him defend the needy among the people,
rescue the poor, and crush the oppressor.**

⁵ May he live as long as the sun and moon endure,
from one generation to another.

⁶ **Let him come down like rain upon the mown field,
like showers that water the earth.**

⁷ In his time may the righteous flourish;
and let there be an abundance of peace till the moon shall be no more.

¹⁰ **May the kings of Tarshish and of the isles pay tribute,
and the kings of Sheba and Seba offer gifts.**

¹¹ May all kings bow down before him,
and all the nations do him service.

¹² **For the king delivers the poor who cry out in distress,
the oppressed, and those who have no helper.**

¹³ He has compassion on the lowly and poor,
and preserves the lives of the needy.

¹⁴ **From oppression and violence he redeems their lives,
and precious is their blood in his sight.**

Second Reading: Ephesians 3:1-12

What had been hidden from previous generations is now made known through the gospel ministry of Paul and others. In Christ both Jews and Gentiles participate in the richness of God's promised salvation.

¹ This is the reason that I, Paul, am a prisoner for Christ Jesus for the sake of you gentiles, ² for surely you have already heard of the commission of God's grace that was given me for you ³ and how the mystery was made known to me by revelation, as I wrote above in a few words, ⁴ a reading of which will enable you to perceive my understanding of the mystery of Christ. ⁵ In former generations this mystery was not made known to humankind, as it has now been revealed to his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit: ⁶ that is, the gentiles have become fellow heirs, members of the same body, and sharers in the promise in Christ Jesus through the gospel.

⁷ Of this gospel I have become a servant according to the gift of God's grace that was given me by the working of his power. ⁸ Although I am the very least of all the saints, this grace was given to me to bring to the gentiles the news of the boundless riches of Christ ⁹ and to make everyone see what is the plan of the mystery hidden for ages in God, who created all things, ¹⁰ so that through the church the wisdom of God in its rich variety might now be made known to the rulers and authorities in the heavenly places. ¹¹ This was in accordance with the eternal purpose that he has carried out in Christ Jesus our Lord, ¹² in whom we have access in boldness and confidence through faith in him.

Reader ends with: **“The Word of the Lord.”**

Congregation responds: **“Thanks be to God.”**

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION Please stand as you are able.



Al - le - lu - ia. Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the



words of e - ter - nal life. Al - le - lu - ia. Al - le - lu - ia.

The Holy Gospel according to Matthew the 2nd, Chapter.

Glory to you, O Lord.

Gospel: Matthew 2:1-12

God's promise shines bright in the night as magi follow a star to honor a new king.

Strangers from a faraway land, they welcome the long-awaited messiah of Israel.

¹ In the time of King Herod, after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, magi from the east came to Jerusalem, ² asking, “Where is the child who has been born king of the Jews? For we observed his star in the east and have come to pay him homage.” ³ When King Herod heard this, he was frightened, and all Jerusalem with him, ⁴ and calling together all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Messiah was to be born. ⁵ They told him, “In Bethlehem of Judea, for so it has been written by the prophet:

⁶ ‘And you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah,
are by no means least among the rulers of Judah,
for from you shall come a ruler
who is to shepherd my people Israel.’ ”

⁷ Then Herod secretly called for the magi and learned from them the exact time when the star had appeared. ⁸ Then he sent them to Bethlehem, saying, “Go and search diligently for the child, and when you have found him, bring me word so that I may also go and pay him homage.” ⁹ When they had heard the king, they set out, and there, ahead of them, went the star that they had seen in the east, until it stopped over the place where the child was. ¹⁰ When they saw that the star had stopped, they were overwhelmed with joy. ¹¹ On entering the house, they saw the child with Mary his mother, and they knelt down and paid him homage. Then, opening their treasure chests, they offered him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. ¹² And having been warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they left for their own country by another road.

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

Please be seated.

SERMON

Pastor Allen

Apostles' Creed

Please stand as you are able.

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

**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 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.**

**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.**

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

The petitions end with: "*Hear us, O God*"

And the Congregational response is:

"your mercy is great"

SHARING of GOD'S PEACE

Share the Peace in a safe manner.

Simply say the words. "*Peace be with You.*"

"And also with you."

Keep In Prayer: Deb Montgomery,
Steve & Vicki Yohn, Jack Stull, Larry
Niemond, Peter Marsh, Gail Ingram,
Linda Goss, Nellie Wilson, Joanne
Troutman, Darlene Vamer, Toby
Sweigart, Freda Hook, Lou
Sonnenberg, and the Call
Committee.

*To have someone added to the
Prayer Guide-with their permission-

MEAL *Please continue to stand.*

Let the Vineyards Be Fruitful *Offering Song*

Let the vine - yards be fruit - ful, Lord, and fill to the brim our cup of
bless - ing. Gath - er a har - vest from the seeds that were sown, that we may be
fed with the bread of life. Gath - er the hopes and the dreams of all; u -
nite them with the prayers we of - fer now. Grace our ta - ble with your
pres - ence, and give us a fore - taste of the feast to come.

OFFERING PRAYER

God of glory, great are your wonders among us and many are the blessings you bestow. Use us and these your gifts for the needs of the world, that all the ends of the earth may rejoice in your saving grace, through Christ our Savior.

Amen.

GREAT THANKSGIVING (spoken)

The Lord be with you. **And also with you.**

Lift up your hearts. **We lift them to the lord.**

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God. **It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

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. You comforted your people with the promise of the Redeemer, through whom you will also make all things new in the day when he comes to judge the world in righteousness. 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:

THANKSGIVING AT THE TABLE

In the night in which he was betrayed, our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks; broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying:

Take and eat; this is my body, given for you.

Do this for the remembrance of me.

Again, after supper, 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.

For as often as we eat of this bread and drink from this cup, we proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.

Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again.

With this bread and cup we remember your Word dwelling among us, full of grace and truth. We remember our new birth in his death and resurrection. We look with hope for his coming.

Come, Lord Jesus.

Holy God, we long for your Spirit. Come among us. Bless this meal.

May your Word take flesh in us. Awaken your people.

Fill us with your light. Bring the gift of peace on earth.

Come, Holy Spirit.

All praise and glory are yours, Holy One of Israel, Word of God incarnate, Power of the Most High, one God, now and forever.

Amen.

The Lord's Prayer (SUNG) Inside back cover of Hymnal.

Our Father, which 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 debts, as we forgive our debtors; and lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil.

For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.

INVITATION

God is now in flesh appearing. Come to the feast of joy!

Lamb of God

ELW pg. #208 Setting 3



Lamb of God, you take a-way the sin of the world; have
mer-cy on us. Lamb of God, you take a-way the sin of the
world; have mer-cy on us. Lamb of God, you take a-way the
world; have mer-cy on us. Lamb of God, you take a-way the
sin of the world; grant us peace.

COMMUNION

All who are baptized are invited to come forward. Children, if not already communing, may be brought forward for a blessing from the Pastor. Please hold both hands out to receive the bread, then choose a cup from the Acolyte. Please dispose of your communion cup in the nearby waste basket.

Communion Music

“Star of the East” Amanda Kennedy, Arr. Roger C. Wilson, 1977 Lorenz Pub. Co.

“Morning Star” J.P. Harding, Arr. Dorothy Wells, 1979 Lorenz Pub. Co.

“Bright Star and Silver Wings” Edward Broughton, 1987 Lorenz Pub. Co.

POST-COMMUNION BLESSING

The body and the blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen you and keep you in his grace. **Amen.**

POST-COMMUNION PRAYER

Incarnate God, you are among us at this table. May we treasure this gift and ponder in our hearts the mystery of your presence. Move us to discover the wonders of your love in the everyday moments of our lives, through Christ born in us. **Amen.**

Sending

BLESSING

The triune God, glorious Mystery, holy Incarnate One, abiding Comforter, bless you with endless grace, peace, and joy. **Amen.**

SENDING HYMN

ELW #301 “Bright and Glorious Is the Sky”

Silent Meditation

DISMISSAL

Glory to God in the highest!

And peace to God's people on earth!

Go in joy. Embody God's redeeming grace.

Thanks be to God.

POSTLUDE “As with Gladness Men of Old” (#302 in our hymnal)

From *Sundays and Seasons.com*. Copyright © 2026 Augsburg Fortress. All rights reserved. Reprinted by permission under Augsburg Fortress Liturgies Annual License. New Revised Standard Version Bible, Copyright © 1989, Division of Christian Education of the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the United States of America. Used by permission. All rights reserved. Revised Common Lectionary, Copyright © 1992 Consultation on Common Texts, admin Augsburg Fortress. Used by permission. **NOTICE: Audio/Video recording** When you enter a St. John's Evangelical Lutheran worship service/event, you will be entering an area where photography, video and audio recording may occur. Please see notes at entrances for further details. Live-Streaming will continue as needed- if you are behind camera, you will not be on camera.

DEDICATIONS

TODAY'S ALTAR FLOWERS are presented by Sara Werner in loving memory of Mr. and Mrs. U.C. Showers and Mr. and Mrs. Harold Werner.

TODAY'S BASKET is presented by Sharon and Pete Marsh in loving memory of Dolores Bickhart.

THIS WEEK'S BULLETIN is presented by Norma Fisher in honor of her 12 great grandchildren.

THIS WEEK'S ETERNAL CANDLE BURNS in memory of Gilbert and Cora Shirey by Norma Fisher.

THE COMMUNION WINE this morning is given by Judy Spencer in memory of her husband Wayne Spencer.

ST. JOHN'S

THANK YOU! Joy and I thank the congregation for the Christmas gift, cards, cookies and treats. We wish you a blessed New Year.

MEET & EAT first ladies luncheon of 2026 will be **Tuesday, January 6th** at **SJL Church** for pizza and games. Please arrive at 11:30am to place pizza order.

CHOIR starts back up on **January 7th, 2026**.

THE BARNABAS BROTHERS will meet **Saturday, January 10th** at Kish Park at 8:00am to take down the Nativity scene and transport it back to the church. All help is appreciated. Thank you.

THE ORGAN UPDATE WILL BEGIN ON JANUARY 12th. THEY WILL BE USING THE FELLOWSHIP HALL FOR STAGING CONSTRUCTION. THE ROOM WILL BE CLOSED FOR THE TIME THEY ARE HERE. THANK YOU. PASTOR ALLEN.

THE BARNABAS BROTHERS meetings resume on **Saturday, January 17th**, at 8am at **Vince's Family Restaurant** in Burnham back room. Scheduled Guest Speaker is Mr. Rick Esh, Secretary of the Central Pa. Meat Canning Project. Please note the meeting location change. The Barnabas Brothers traditionally pledge \$500.00, to the Meat Canning Project in honor of Founding Member Mr. Max Hook and dedicated supporter Barnabas Brother the Honorable William H. Logan Jr. The Meat Canning Project was started at St. John's Lutheran Church Lewistown with initial meetings held at the church with founding Member Mr. Max Hook. The Meat Canning Project provides meat locally, within the state, nationally and internationally serving Our Brothers and Sisters in Christ. All Men of the Church are cordially invited to attend a breakfast meeting with a dynamic Speaker, delicious meal and Christian Fellowship. If you have any questions, please contact Steve Burk at 717-250-7410.

2026 PROPOSED BUDGET There are copies of the proposed budget on the resource table for review prior to the annual meeting.

ELCA WORLD HUNGER Campaign is seeking donations. Your gifts help the response to hunger and poverty in more than 60 counties around the world, including the United States. If interested in donating to the campaign, you can simply mark it on your offering envelope. Don't have an offering envelope? Simply put your donation in a blank envelope labeled World Hunger Campaign.

2026 OFFERING ENVELOPES are on the table in the Fellowship Hall. If you go through the via electronic giving or bank/retirement fund check and wish to have envelopes for the Special Offerings please contact Sue Shawver.

GODLY PLAY is an amazing experience for all ages where scriptures and parables "come alive" where children learn and experience their own spirituality through wonder and play. Godly Play will meet after services in the Godly Playroom in the Sunday School wing. The

dates are as follows: **Sunday, January 11th, February 8th, March 8th, April 12th, and May 10th**. All are welcome!

FOURTH QUARTER SPECIAL OFFERING will go towards Mother Hubbard's Cupboard.

ORGAN FUND There is now an option through Vanco (on-line giving) for donations to go towards the organ fund.

COMMUNION ROBES If your communion robe is in need of cleaning (i.e. wine) please place it in the laundry basket in the robe room.

LUMINA CENTER The new **2026** Restaurant Discount Cards are now available. The cost is \$10.00, and discounts apply to 16 local restaurants in the community. Please see Steve Burk, Mary Barr or the SJLC Office to purchase.

SJLC OFFICE lunch hour Tuesday and Thursday is between 11:30am -12:30pm.

LOST & FOUND there is a lost and found box in the lobby on the shelf above the coat rack. Please check for any items that you may be missing.

WEATHER ALERT If the Mifflin County School District is delayed, closed, or closing due to snow and ice, the SJLC Office and all activities in the church facility will be postponed or cancelled.

COMMITTEES/ORGANIZATIONS

REMINDER to submit your yearly report for the SJLC annual report and thank those who have submitted theirs. It's greatly appreciated!

SJLC COUNCIL is not meeting in December. The next council meeting will be on **Tuesday, January 6th, 2026** at 6:30pm.

THE WELCA meeting is after church on Sunday, **January 11th**.

THE FINANCE COMMITTEE meeting is on **Thursday, January 29th** at 1:00pm.

HAM SANDWICH SALE is on the second Friday of every month at SJLC. Orders are due the Monday before.

Worship

SCHEDULE

January 11 [Baptism of Our Lord] 9:00am Worship, 10:15am Sunday School/Godly Play
January 18 [Second Sunday after Epiphany] 9:00am Worship, 10:15am Sunday School
January 25 [Third Sunday after Epiphany] 9:00am Worship, 10:15am Sunday School
February 1 [Fourth Sunday after Epiphany] 9:00am Worship, 10:15am Sunday School
February 8 [Fifth Sunday after Epiphany] 9:00am Worship, 10:15am Sunday School/Godly Play

Meetings (Please see above for details)

Tue. 01/06 SJLC Council meeting at 6:30pm.
Sun. 01/11 WELCA meeting after church.
Thu. 01/29 Finance Committee meeting at 1:00pm.
Wed. Handbell 6:00pm and Chancel Choir at 7:00pm.
Sun. Praise and Worship Choir at 8:00am
Sun. 01/11, 02/8, 03/8, 04/12, 05/10 Godly Play Sunday School

Reminders for January 2026

Acolytes – Anderson Bitner, Jameson Phillips
Altar Guild Volunteers – Gloria Stewart, Jenny McCardle, Mariah King

Communion Assistants – Scott Price – crucifer, Jim Rosenberry, Melissa Rosenberry

Ushers – Ed Stewart – head, Pam Tressler, Gloria Stewart

Money Counters – Andrew Thierwechter, Gloria Stewart

Lay Lectors

January 4 – Joyce Tanner
January 11 – Youth
January 18 – Ed Deamer
January 25 – Sue Shawver

Next Sunday Readings: *Isaiah 42:1-9, Psalm 29, Acts 10:34-43, Matthew 3:13-17*

208

We Three Kings of Orient Are

WORDS: John H. Hopkins Jr., 1857

MUSIC: John H. Hopkins Jr., 1857, alt.

KINGS OF ORIENT

88.86 with Refrain



1. We three kings of O - ri - ent are, bear - ing gifts we trav-erse a - far,
 2. Born a king on Beth-le-hem's plain, gold I bring to crown Him a - gain;
 3. Frank - in - cense to of - fer have I, in - cense owns a de - i - ty nigh;
 4. Myrrh is mine, its bit - ter per - fume breathes a life of gath - er-ing gloom:
 5. Glo - rious now be - hold Him a - rise, King and God and Sac - ri - fice;



field and foun-tain, moor and moun-tain, fol - low - ing yon - der star.
 King for - ev - er, ceas - ing nev - er, o - ver us all to reign.
 prayer and prais-ing, voic - es rais - ing, wor - ship - ing God on high.
 sor - rowing, sigh - ing, bleed-ing, dy - ing, sealed in the stone-cold tomb.
 Al - le - lu - ia! Al - le - lu - ia! sounds through the earth and skies.



Refrain
 O star of won - der, star of night, star with roy - al beau - ty bright,



west - ward lead - ing, still pro - ceed - ing, guide us to thy per - fect light.

