

CHAPEL OF THE CROSS

LUTHERAN



FAITH • HOPE • LOVE

Welcome to Chapel of the Cross - Lutheran!

To Our Visitors

We offer you a very warm welcome to Chapel of the Cross - Lutheran! We are happy to have you worshipping with us and hope that your worship here today and the Word of God that is shared will assist you in the week ahead. If you are looking for a church home, we hope that you would prayerfully consider making Chapel of the Cross that home. May God bless your week!

Nursery

If you need to take your infant or toddler out of the worship service, the nursery is available for your use. The worship service is broadcast to the nursery. An usher will be happy to show you where it is located.

Sunday School and Bible Study

We have an exciting Sunday School program for children age 2 and up. We also offer Bible studies for youth and adults at 9:45 a.m. Sunday School rooms are in the Lower Level. Check the Chapel Weekly handout for Bible study locations. An usher will be happy to take you to the appropriate place.

Holy Communion

Holy Communion is celebrated regularly and often here at Chapel of the Cross. If you have questions about Holy Communion and what we as a church believe about it, please speak with the Pastor before the service. Children are invited to come forward with their parents for a blessing.

Sound Enhancement Devices

If you are hearing impaired there are sound enhancement devices available. Please ask an usher for a personal receiver.

The Mission of Chapel of the Cross

Chapel of the Cross - Lutheran exists to show the love of Jesus to the people of North County and beyond so that all may have a living relationship with Christ.

Third Sunday in Advent

December 14, 2025

8:30 a.m.

Please note: This worship service is live streamed and recorded.

AS WE GATHER

John is the greatest of all the prophets, and yet he is not without anxiety. He came to prepare the way of the Lord but then found himself in prison—the world unchanged—and those who followed him uncertain about the future. Now, two thousand years later, we look around at our own world with the same anxiety. We are still waiting, but we are not waiting for improvements in the world around us or our own progress in holiness; we are waiting upon the Lord. God is at work, focusing our wondering hearts not at what might be but at what has been in the death and resurrection that gives us hope and confidence. Because of this, we wait for the future He has prepared to unfold, doing the work He has given us to do and sure that He will keep His Word and bring to fruition all that He has begun—in His own time.

PRELUDE

WELCOME, ANNOUNCEMENTS, AND EXCHANGE OF PEACE

It is important to recognize that some people are especially susceptible to viruses that can be spread by contact and that some immune systems are very sensitive. Please understand that some may choose not to shake hands during the Exchange of Peace, but might simply greet you with a verbal greeting, a wave, or a smile.

✠ PREPARATION ✠

The congregation turns and faces the cross as the procession approaches the altar reminding us that Christ leads us into the presence of God.

Please stand

ENTRANCE HYMN

354 Arise, O Christian People

INVOCATION

Leader: In the name of the Father and of the ✠ Son and of the Holy Spirit.

People: Amen.

CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION

Leader: Blessed are they whose transgressions are forgiven, whose sins are covered.

People: Blessed are they whose sin the Lord does not count against them.

Leader: Let us confess our sins to the Lord.

People: Almighty and merciful Father, we have strayed from Your ways like lost sheep. We have followed what we have devised and desired in our hearts. We have offended You and sinned against Your holy law. We have done those things that we should not have done, and we have not done those things that we should have done. Have mercy on us, Lord! Spare us, forgive us, and restore us, according to Your promises in Christ Jesus.

Silence for meditation and reflection

Leader: God, our merciful Father, has forgiven all our sins. He sent His Son, Jesus Christ, to be our Redeemer and Savior. Jesus paid the penalty for our guilt by His death on the cross and freed us from death by His resurrection from the grave. We have peace with God now and forever.

People: **Amen.**

LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT WREATH

Leader: Isaiah wrote, "A highway will be there, and it will be called the Way of Holiness; they unclean will not journey on it. It will be for those who walk in that way."

(sung) **O come, Thou Key of David, come,
And open wide our heav'nly home;
Make safe the way that leads on high,
And close the path to misery.
 Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel
 Shall come to thee, O Israel!**

Leader: Isaiah wrote, "The ransomed of the Lord will return and will enter Zion with singing."
Let us pray, O Key of David and scepter of the house of Israel, You open and no one can close. You close and no one can open:

People: **Come and rescue the prisoners who are in darkness and the shadow of death.**

(sung) **O come, O come, Emmanuel,
And ransom captive Israel,
That mourns in lonely exile here
Until the son of God appear.
 Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel
 Shall come to thee, O Israel!**

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Leader: The Lord be with you.

People: **And also with you.**

Leader: Let us pray.

People: **Lord Jesus Christ, we implore You to hear our prayers and to lighten the darkness of our hearts by Your gracious visitation; for You live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one god, now and forever. Amen.**

✠ WORD ✠

OLD TESTAMENT READING

Isaiah 35:1–10

("Everlasting joy shall be upon their heads.")

¹ The desert and the parched land will be glad; the wilderness will rejoice and blossom. Like the crocus, ² it will burst into bloom; it will rejoice greatly and shout for joy. The glory of Lebanon will be given to it, the splendor of Carmel and Sharon; they will see the glory of the LORD, the splendor of our God.

³ Strengthen the feeble hands, steady the knees that give way; ⁴ say to those with fearful hearts, "Be strong, do not fear; your God will come, he will come with vengeance; with divine retribution he will come to save you."

⁵ Then will the eyes of the blind be opened and the ears of the deaf unstopped. ⁶ Then will the lame leap like a deer, and the mute tongue shout for joy. Water will gush forth in the wilderness and streams in the desert. ⁷ The burning sand will become a pool, the thirsty ground bubbling springs. In the haunts where jackals once lay, grass and reeds and papyrus will grow.

⁸ And a highway will be there; it will be called the Way of Holiness. The unclean will not journey on it; it will be for those who walk in that Way; wicked fools will not go about on it. ⁹ No lion will be there, nor will any ferocious beast get up on it; they will not be found there. But only the redeemed will walk there, ¹⁰ and the ransomed of the LORD will return. They will enter Zion with singing; everlasting joy will crown their heads. Gladness and joy will overtake them, and sorrow and sighing will flee away.

Lector: This is the Word of the Lord.

People: **Thanks be to God.**

PSALM

Psalm 146

Leader: Praise the LORD.

People: **Praise the LORD, O my soul.**

Leader: I will praise the LORD all my life;

People: **I will sing praise to my God as long as I live.**

Leader: Do not put your trust in princes,

People: **in mortal men, who cannot save.**

Leader: When their spirit departs, they return to the ground;

People: **on that very day their plans come to nothing.**

Leader: Blessed is he whose help is the God of Jacob,

People: **whose hope is in the LORD his God,**

Leader: the Maker of heaven and earth, the sea, and everything in them

People: **the LORD, who remains faithful forever.**

Leader: He upholds the cause of the oppressed

People: **and gives food to the hungry.**

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Leader: The LORD sets prisoners free, the LORD gives sight to the blind,
People: **the LORD lifts up those who are bowed down, the LORD loves the righteous.**

Leader: The LORD watches over the alien and sustains the fatherless and the widow,
People: **but he frustrates the ways of the wicked.**

Leader: The LORD reigns forever,
People: **your God, O Zion, for all generations. Praise the LORD.**

EPISTLE

James 5:7–11

("Be patient . . . until the coming of the Lord.")

⁷ Be patient, then, brothers, until the Lord's coming. See how the farmer waits for the land to yield its valuable crop and how patient he is for the autumn and spring rains. ⁸ You too, be patient and stand firm, because the Lord's coming is near. ⁹ Don't grumble against each other, brothers, or you will be judged. The Judge is standing at the door!

¹⁰ Brothers, as an example of patience in the face of suffering, take the prophets who spoke in the name of the Lord. ¹¹ As you know, we consider blessed those who have persevered. You have heard of Job's perseverance and have seen what the Lord finally brought about. The Lord is full of compassion and mercy.

Lector: This is the Word of the Lord.
People: **Thanks be to God.**

ANTHEM

"Come, Come Emmanuel"

Lynn Bailey and Becki Mayo

Refrain

Come, come Messiah, come.

Come, Emmanuel.

Come, come O Promised One.

Come, Emmanuel.

Prophets of old have told of Your coming;

Long we have waited, long we have prayed.

Kingdoms and kings will bow down before You.

Come, Emmanuel, today. (Refrain)

We are your children, You are our Savior.

Lovingly guide us, guide us we pray.

Help us to follow, help us to listen.

Come, Emmanuel, today: (Refrain)

Please stand

Leader: The Holy Gospel according to St. Matthew, the eleventh chapter.

People: **Glory to You, O Lord.**

HOLY GOSPEL

Matthew 11:2–15

("He who has ears to hear, let him hear.")

² When John heard in prison what Christ was doing, he sent his disciples ³ to ask him, "Are you the one who was to come, or should we expect someone else?"

⁴ Jesus replied, "Go back and report to John what you hear and see: ⁵ The blind receive sight, the lame walk, those who have leprosy are cured, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the good news is preached to the poor. ⁶ Blessed is the man who does not fall away on account of me."

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⁷ As John's disciples were leaving, Jesus began to speak to the crowd about John: "What did you go out into the desert to see? A reed swayed by the wind? ⁸ If not, what did you go out to see? A man dressed in fine clothes? No, those who wear fine clothes are in kings' palaces. ⁹ Then what 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:

" 'I will send my messenger ahead of you, who will prepare your way before you.'

¹¹ I tell you the truth: Among those born of women there has not risen anyone greater than John the Baptist; yet he who is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he.

¹² From the days of John the Baptist until now, the kingdom of heaven has been forcefully advancing, and forceful men lay hold of it. ¹³ For all the Prophets and the Law prophesied until John. ¹⁴ And if you are willing to accept it, he is the Elijah who was to come. ¹⁵ He who has ears, let him hear.

Leader: This is the Gospel of the Lord.

People: Praise to You, O Christ.

HYMN

345 Hark! A Thrilling Voice is Sounding

PROCLAMATION OF THE WORD

Please stand

NICENE CREED

I believe in one God, the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth and of all things visible and invisible.

And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Son of God, begotten of His Father before all worlds, God of God, Light of Light, very God of very God, begotten, not made, being of one substance with the Father, by whom all things were made; who for us men and for our salvation came down from heaven and was incarnate by the Holy Spirit of the virgin Mary and was made man; and was crucified also for us under Pontius Pilate. He suffered and was buried. And the third day He rose again according to the Scriptures and ascended into heaven and sits at the right hand of the Father. And He will come again with glory to judge both the living and the dead, whose kingdom will have no end.

And I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord and giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son, who with the Father and the Son together is worshiped and glorified, who spoke by the prophets. And I believe in one holy Christian and apostolic Church, I acknowledge one Baptism for the remission of sins, and I look for the resurrection of the dead and the life of the world to come. Amen.

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH

Leader: Let us pray for the whole people of God in Christ Jesus and for all people according to their needs.

+ + + Special Intercessions + + +

Each concluding: **Leader:** Lord, in Your mercy, **People:** hear our prayer.

Leader: Into Your hands, O Lord, we commend ourselves and all for whom we pray, trusting in Your mercy, through Your Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord.

People: **Amen.**

OFFERING

*During the offering, please sign
the Record of Fellowship found
at the end of each pew*



Scan to give online

Please stand

OFFERTORY

338 Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus

1 Come, Thou long-expected Jesus,
Born to set Thy people free;
From our fears and sins release us;
Let us find our rest in Thee.
Israel's strength and consolation,
Hope of all the earth Thou art,
Dear desire of ev'ry nation,
Joy of ev'ry longing heart.

2 Born Thy people to deliver;
Born a child and yet a king!
Born to reign in us forever,
Now Thy gracious kingdom bring.
By Thine own eternal Spirit
Rule in all our hearts alone;
By Thine all-sufficient merit
Raise us to Thy glorious throne.

Text: Public domain

✠ SACRAMENT ✠

In the Lord's Supper we receive Christ's body and blood in and with the bread and wine. The two great blessings of the Lord's Supper are the forgiveness of sins and strength to live an improved Christian life. In response to the Lord's command we are to examine ourselves privately prior to partaking of the Sacrament. There are three basic questions on which we should examine ourselves, all of which we should be able to answer in the affirmative if we are to partake of the Sacrament worthily: 1) Am I truly sorry for my sins? 2) Do I believe Jesus Christ is my Savior? 3) Do I promise with God's help to live a Christian life? If you agree with the above statement, we invite you to the Sacrament.

PREFACE

Pastor: The Lord be with you.

People: **And also with you.**

Pastor: Lift up your hearts.

People: **We lift them to the Lord.**

Pastor: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

People: **It is right to give Him thanks and praise.**

Pastor: It is truly good and right that we should at all times and in all places give You thanks, O Lord, holy Father, almighty and everlasting God, through Jesus Christ our Lord whose way John the Baptist prepared when he called people to repentance and pointed to Jesus as the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world. Therefore, with all the saints on earth and hosts of heaven, we praise Your holy name and join their glorious song:

SANCTUS (*Holy, holy, holy*)



Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord God of Sab - a - oth;



heav'n and earth are full of Thy glo - ry. Ho - san - na,



ho - san - na, ho - san - na in the high - est. Bless-ed is He,



bless-ed is He, bless - ed is He that com-eth in the name of the Lord.



Ho-san - na, ho - san - na, ho - san - na in the high - est.

LORD'S PRAYER

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.

WORDS OF INSTITUTION

Pastor: Our Lord Jesus Christ, on the night when He was betrayed, took bread, and when He had given thanks, He broke it and gave it to the disciples and said: Take, eat; this is my body, which is given for you. This do in remembrance of me.

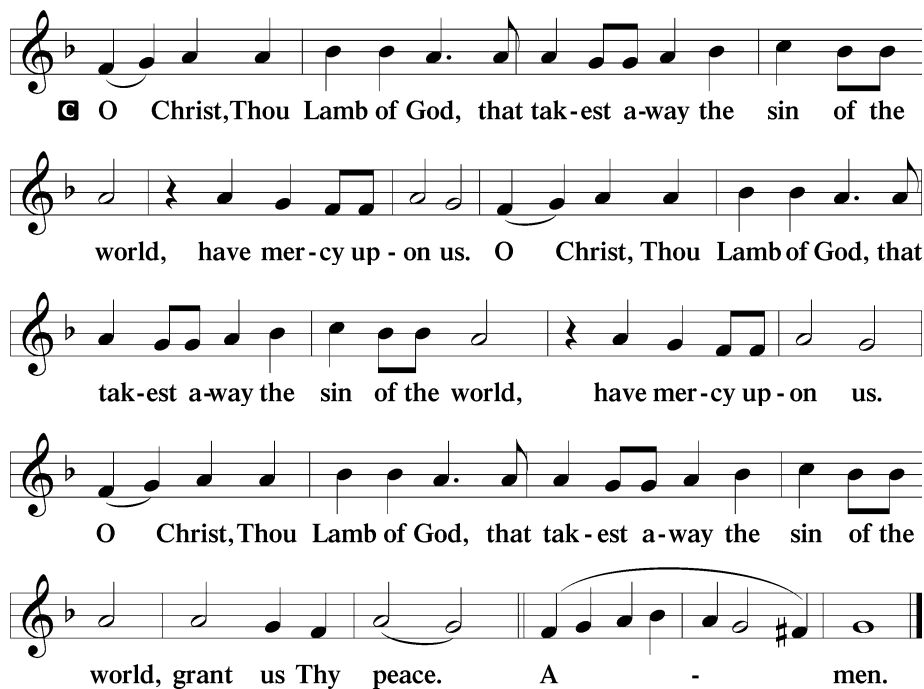
In the same way also He took the cup after supper, and when He had given thanks, He gave it to them, saying: Drink of it, all of you; this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for you for the forgiveness of sins. This do, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me.

PEACE OF THE LORD

Pastor: The peace of the Lord be with you always.

People: **And also with you.**

AGNUS DEI (*Lamb of God*)



O Christ, Thou Lamb of God, that tak-est a-way the sin of the world, have mer-cy up - on us. O Christ, Thou Lamb of God, that tak-est a-way the sin of the world, have mer-cy up - on us. O Christ, Thou Lamb of God, that tak - est a-way the sin of the world, grant us Thy peace. A - men.

If you wish to take communion in the pew, please raise your hand when the communion assistant comes down the aisle.

When the wine is distributed, individual glasses will be offered first, then the common cup. Communicants may take whichever is preferred. If taking the individual glass, please keep the glass visible so that the communion assistant with the common cup will know who has already communed.

Non-alcoholic wine is available in the center of the communion tray for those who have a sensitivity to the alcohol in wine.

DISTRIBUTION OF HOLY COMMUNION

- 848 Lord, Whose Love through Humble Service
659 Lord of Our Life
849 Praise the One Who Breaks the Darkness

SILENT PRAYER

You may pray the following prayer as we give thanks to God for His good gifts:

Lord God of mercy, I give You thanks for the body and blood of Your Son; for the Word by which You give me forgiveness; for Your promises by which You give me life. May the gifts of Your heavenly banquet fortify me against the Evil One and strengthen me in the face of the world. Help me to live as one who hungers for Your grace, who thirsts after righteousness, who longs to taste of Your goodness, that I may sit at Your table at the heavenly feast which has no end. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Please stand

PRAYER

Pastor: Oh give thanks to the LORD, for He is good,

People: for His steadfast love endures forever.

Pastor: Almighty God, heavenly Father, grant to Your people patience for the days of waiting, knowing that You are at work bringing to completion all that You began in us in our Baptism. Keep us from the torment of doubt, from the prison of fear, and from the wandering of a soul ungrounded in Your Word and favor, and bring us at last to heavenly joy in Your presence forevermore; through Jesus Christ, our Lord, who with the Father and the Spirit are one God, now and even to the end of all the ages.

People: Amen.

BENEDICTION

Pastor: The Lord bless you and keep you.
 The Lord make His face shine on you and be gracious to you.
 The Lord look upon you with favor and ✠ give you peace.
People: **Amen.**

Please turn towards the cross as it is carried out of the church, and remain facing it until the hymn is completed. This symbolizes our following Christ into the world as we leave.

RECESSIONAL HYMN

398 Hail to the Lord's Anointed

POSTLUDE

Prepare for next weekend's worship by reading:

Isaiah 7:10-17; Romans 1:1-7; Matthew 1:18-25

Find a devotional guide on the readings at <https://chapelofthecross.org/devotions>

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Serving at Chapel

Preacher:	Theodore Laesch	
Liturgists:	5:00 p.m.	Theodore Laesch
	8:30 a.m.	Charles Wallace
Lectors:	8:30 a.m.	Jonathan Kersten
Acolytes:	8:30 a.m.	Eve Zvirgzdins
	11:00 a.m.	Nyla Hill
Soloist:	8:30 a.m.	Mark Petersen
Organist:	Johnathan Clayton	
Elder of the Week:	Stan Schwede	

Chapel of the Cross - Lutheran

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Email: office@chapelofthecross.org

Worship and Christian Education

Saturday - 5:00 p.m.
Sunday - 8:30 and 11:00 a.m.

Worship Service broadcast on KFUD 850 AM Sundays at 4:00 p.m.
Live internet streaming at www.chapelofthecross.org Sundays at 11:00 a.m.

*Holy Communion is celebrated the 1st and 3rd and 5th Sundays of the month at 8:30 a.m.,
the 2nd and 4th and 5th Sundays of the month at 11:00 a.m.,
and the 1st and 3rd and 5th Saturdays of the month at 5:00 p.m.*

Sunday school for children, Sunday Bible classes for adults and youth – 9:45 a.m.

Chapel Ministry Staff

	<u>Home Phone</u>	<u>E-mail</u>
Theodore Laesch, Pastor	314-355-0688	pastorlaesch@chapelofthecross.org
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Mary Laesch, Children and Family Ministry Coord.	314-355-0688	family@chapelofthecross.org

Missions

Chapel of the Cross supports the ministry of the English District and the Lutheran Church Missouri Synod as well as the Lutheran High School Association. We also assist the following ministries and organizations:

*Friends of New Americans	*Shoebox Ministry	*Helping Hands Food Pantry
Lutheran Chaplains	Lutheran Heritage Foundation	Lutherans for Life
Concordia Seminary	Friend of Moms	Day 3 Seeds
KFUD Radio	L.A.M.P. Lutheran Assoc. of Missionaries & Pilots	

** indicates special emphasis in 2025*

*Chapel of the Cross - Lutheran is affiliated with the
English District of the Lutheran Church Missouri Synod*