

# CHAPEL OF THE CROSS

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## 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.*

# Second Sunday After Christmas

January 4, 2026

11:00 a.m.

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

## AS WE GATHER

We can't figure God out. Mary and Joseph must have been completely confused about Jesus' desire to stay in the temple, but it was obvious to Him. There was a long list of blessings God was able to give to Solomon; fortunately, the king chose the right one. The Epistle tells us what God wants and what He has done for us, regardless of if we have understood His plan. He has chosen us, given us the Holy Spirit, and included us in a gracious inheritance. And it all revolves around our Savior—His birth, suffering, death, and resurrection. Jesus did all that was necessary for grace to be poured out on us, thanks be to God. It is all certainly beyond our understanding.

## 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

**375** Come, Your Hearts and Voices Raising

### INVOCATION

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

**People:** Amen.

### CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION

**Pastor:** If we claim to be without sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us.

**People:** If we confess our sins, God is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.

**Pastor:** Let us confess our sins to the Lord.

**People:** Holy God, gracious Father, I am sinful by nature and have sinned against You in my thoughts, words, and actions. I have not loved You with my whole heart; I have not loved others as I should. I deserve Your punishment both now and forever. But Jesus, my Savior, paid for my sins with His innocent suffering and death. Trusting in Him, I pray: God, have mercy on me, a sinner.

*Silence for meditation and reflection*

**Pastor:** Our gracious Father in heaven has been merciful to us. He sent His only Son, Jesus Christ, who gave His life as the atoning sacrifice for the sins of the whole world. Therefore, as a called and ordained servant of Christ and by His authority, I forgive You all Your sins in the name of the Father and of the ✠ Son and of the Holy Spirit.

**People:** Amen.

## HYMN OF PRAISE

390 Let Us All with Gladsome Voice

1 Let us all with gladsome voice  
Praise the God of heaven,  
Who, to bid our hearts rejoice,  
His own Son hath given.

2 To this vale of tears He comes,  
Here to serve in sadness,  
That with Him in heav'n's fair homes  
We may reign in gladness.

3 We are rich, for He was poor;  
Is not this a wonder?  
Therefore praise God evermore  
Here on earth and yonder.

4 Christ, our Lord and Savior dear,  
Be Thou ever near us.  
Grant us now a glad new year.  
Amen, Jesus, hear us.

*Text: Public domain*

## PRAYER OF THE DAY

Pastor: The Lord be with you.

People: And also with you.

Pastor: Let us pray.

People: Almighty God, You have poured into our hearts the true Light of Your incarnate Word. Grant that this Light may shine forth in our lives; through the same Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

## MINISTRY MINUTE

## ✠ WORD ✠

### OLD TESTAMENT READING

1 Kings 3:4–15

*(Solomon asks for an understanding mind, a listening heart.)*

<sup>4</sup> The king went to Gibeon to offer sacrifices, for that was the most important high place, and Solomon offered a thousand burnt offerings on that altar. <sup>5</sup> At Gibeon the LORD appeared to Solomon during the night in a dream, and God said, "Ask for whatever you want me to give you."

<sup>6</sup> Solomon answered, "You have shown great kindness to your servant, my father David, because he was faithful to you and righteous and upright in heart. You have continued this great kindness to him and have given him a son to sit on his throne this very day.

<sup>7</sup> "Now, O LORD my God, you have made your servant king in place of my father David. But I am only a little child and do not know how to carry out my duties. <sup>8</sup> Your servant is here among the people you have chosen, a great people, too numerous to count or number. <sup>9</sup> So give your servant a discerning heart to govern your people and to distinguish between right and wrong. For who is able to govern this great people of yours?"

<sup>10</sup> The Lord was pleased that Solomon had asked for this. <sup>11</sup> So God said to him, "Since you have asked for this and not for long life or wealth for yourself, nor have asked for the death of your enemies but for discernment in administering justice, <sup>12</sup> I will do what you have asked. I will give you a wise and discerning heart, so that there will never have been anyone like you, nor will there ever be. <sup>13</sup> Moreover, I will give you what you have not asked for--both riches and honor--so that in your lifetime you will have no equal among kings. <sup>14</sup> And if you walk in my ways and obey my statutes and commands as David your father did, I will give you a long life." <sup>15</sup> Then Solomon awoke--and he realized it had been a dream.

He returned to Jerusalem, stood before the ark of the Lord's covenant and sacrificed burnt offerings and fellowship offerings. Then he gave a feast for all his court.

Lector: This is the Word of the Lord.

People: **Thanks be to God.**

## PSALM

Psalms 119:97-104

Pastor: Oh, how I love your law! I meditate on it all day long.

**People: Your commands make me wiser than my enemies, for they are ever with me.**

Pastor: I have more insight than all my teachers, for I meditate on your statutes.

**People: I have more understanding than the elders, for I obey your precepts.**

Pastor: I have kept my feet from every evil path so that I might obey your word.

**People: I have not departed from your laws, for you yourself have taught me.**

Pastor: How sweet are your words to my taste, sweeter than honey to my mouth!

**People: I gain understanding from your precepts; therefore I hate every wrong path.**

## ANTHEM

In Dulci Jubilo

Michael Praetorius

*In dulci jubilo (in sweet rejoicing),*

*let us our homage show!*

*Our hearts' joy reclineth*

*In praesepe (in the manger),*

*and like a bright star shineth,*

*matris in gremio (in the mother's lap).*

*Alpha es et o (You are the Alpha and Omega)!*

## EPISTLE

Ephesians 1:3–14

*(Paul tries to explain the overwhelming grace of God and our response to it.)*

<sup>3</sup> Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in the heavenly realms with every spiritual blessing in Christ. <sup>4</sup> For he chose us in him before the creation of the world to be holy and blameless in his sight. In love <sup>5</sup> he predestined us to be adopted as his sons through Jesus Christ, in accordance with his pleasure and will-- <sup>6</sup> to the praise of his glorious grace, which he has freely given us in the One he loves. <sup>7</sup> In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, in accordance with the riches of God's grace <sup>8</sup> that he lavished on us with all wisdom and understanding. <sup>9</sup> And he made known to us the mystery of his will according to his good pleasure, which he purposed in Christ, <sup>10</sup> to be put into effect when the times will have reached their fulfillment--to bring all things in heaven and on earth together under one head, even Christ.

<sup>11</sup> In him we were also chosen, having been predestined according to the plan of him who works out everything in conformity with the purpose of his will, <sup>12</sup> in order that we, who were the first to hope in Christ, might be for the praise of his glory.

<sup>13</sup> And you also were included in Christ when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation. Having believed, you were marked in him with a seal, the promised Holy Spirit, <sup>14</sup> who is a deposit guaranteeing our inheritance until the redemption of those who are God's possession--to the praise of his glory.

Lector: This is the Word of the Lord.

People: **Thanks be to God.**

## HYMN

410 Within the Father's House



*Please stand*

**Pastor:** The Holy Gospel according to St. Luke, the second chapter.

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

## **HOLY GOSPEL**

Luke 2:40–52

*(The boy Jesus is found in the temple.)*

<sup>40</sup> And the child grew and became strong; he was filled with wisdom, and the grace of God was on him.

<sup>41</sup> Every year his parents went to Jerusalem for the Feast of the Passover. <sup>42</sup> When he was twelve years old, they went up to the Feast, according to the custom. <sup>43</sup> After the Feast was over, while his parents were returning home, the boy Jesus stayed behind in Jerusalem, but they were unaware of it. <sup>44</sup> Thinking he was in their company, they traveled on for a day. Then they began looking for him among their relatives and friends. <sup>45</sup> When they did not find him, they went back to Jerusalem to look for him.

<sup>46</sup> After three days they found him in the temple courts, sitting among the teachers, listening to them and asking them questions. <sup>47</sup> Everyone who heard him was amazed at his understanding and his answers. <sup>48</sup> When his parents saw him, they were astonished. His mother said to him, "Son, why have you treated us like this? Your father and I have been anxiously searching for you."

<sup>49</sup> "Why were you searching for me?" he asked. "Didn't you know I had to be in my Father's house?" <sup>50</sup> But they did not understand what he was saying to them.

<sup>51</sup> Then he went down to Nazareth with them and was obedient to them. But his mother treasured all these things in her heart. <sup>52</sup> And Jesus grew in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and men.

**Pastor:** This is the Gospel of the Lord.

**People:** **Praise to You, O Christ.**

## **CHILDREN'S MESSAGE**

## HYMN

384 Of The Father's Love Begotten

## PROCLAMATION OF THE WORD

*Please stand*

### APOSTLES' CREED

**I believe in God, the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth.**

**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.**

**I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy Christian Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.**

## INSTALLATION OF BOARD OF DIRECTORS AND ELDERS

## PRAYER OF THE CHURCH

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

+ + + **Special Intercessions** + + +

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

Pastor: 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*

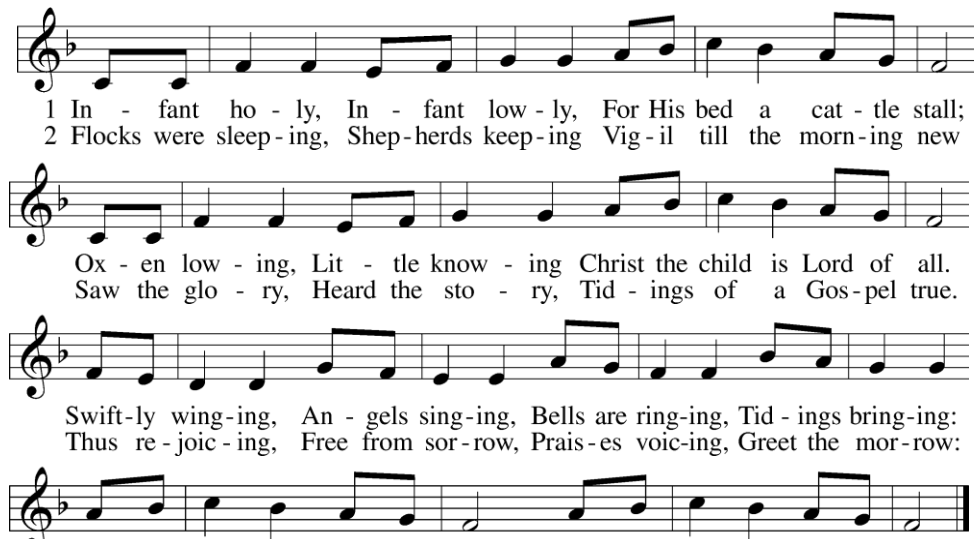


*Scan to give online*

*Please stand*

## OFFERTORY

393 Infant Holy, Infant Lowly



1 In - fant ho - ly, In - fant low - ly, For His bed a cat - tle stall;  
2 Flocks were sleep - ing, Shep - herds keep - ing Vig - il till the morn - ing new

Ox - en low - ing, Lit - tle know - ing Christ the child is Lord of all.  
Saw the glo - ry, Heard the sto - ry, Tid - ings of a Gos - pel true.

Swift - ly wing - ing, An - gels sing - ing, Bells are ring - ing, Tid - ings bring - ing:  
Thus re - joic - ing, Free from sor - row, Prais - es voic - ing, Greet the mor - row:

Christ the child is Lord of all! Christ the child is Lord of all!  
Christ the child was born for you! Christ the child was born for you!

Text and tune: Public domain

## PRAYER

**Pastor:** Almighty God, we thank You for teaching us the things You want us to believe and do. Help us by Your Holy Spirit to keep Your Word in pure hearts that we may be strengthened in faith, guided in holiness, and comforted in life and in death, through Jesus Christ our Lord who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

**People:** Amen.

## 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.

## 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

368 Angels We Have Heard on High

## POSTLUDE

Prepare for next weekend's worship by reading:

Isaiah 42:1-9; Romans 6:1-11; Matthew 3:13-17

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.	Charles Wallace
	8:30 a.m.	Charles Wallace
	11:00 a.m.	Ellory Glenn
Lectors:	8:30 a.m.	Judy Kooi
	11:00 a.m.	John Zvirgzdins
Acolytes:	8:30 a.m.	Logan Hill
	11:00 a.m.	Bella Moss
Singers:	11:00 a.m.	Lynda Christian
		Matt McEuen
Organist:	Stephanie Gibbs	

## Chapel of the Cross - Lutheran

11645 Benham Road, St. Louis, MO 63136  
(314) 741-3737      [www.chapelofthecross.org](http://www.chapelofthecross.org)  
Email: [office@chapelofthecross.org](mailto:office@chapelofthecross.org)

## Worship and Christian Education

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

Worship Service broadcast on KFUE 850 AM Sundays at 4:00 p.m.  
Live internet streaming at [www.chapelofthecross.org](http://www.chapelofthecross.org) Sundays at 11:00 a.m.

*Holy Communion is celebrated the 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> Sundays of the month at 8:30 a.m.,  
the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> Sundays of the month at 11:00 a.m.,  
and the 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> 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	<a href="mailto:pastorlaesch@chapelofthecross.org">pastorlaesch@chapelofthecross.org</a>
Ellory Glenn, Specific Ministry Pastor	314-369-8014	<a href="mailto:ellory.glenn@chapelofthecross.org">ellory.glenn@chapelofthecross.org</a>
Charles Wallace, Vicar	985-852-7958	<a href="mailto:vicarchuck@chapelofthecross.org">vicarchuck@chapelofthecross.org</a>
Bill Rusnak, Director of Adult Ministry	314-200-9797	<a href="mailto:bill.rusnak@chapelofthecross.org">bill.rusnak@chapelofthecross.org</a>
Clifford Bischoff, Pastoral Assistant	314-921-1107	<a href="mailto:pastorbischoff@chapelofthecross.org">pastorbischoff@chapelofthecross.org</a>
Mary Laesch, Children and Family Ministry Coord.	314-355-0688	<a href="mailto:family@chapelofthecross.org">family@chapelofthecross.org</a>

## 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
KFUE 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*