December 8, 2024

Saint Thomas Lutheran

23801 Kelly Road, Eastpointe, Michigan 48021 - 586-772-3370

www.stl-eastpointe.org

Senior Pastor - Rev. Dietrick Gladden – 248-719-2766

pastor@stl-eastpointe.org

Specific Ministry Pastor - Rev. Richard A. VanBriggle, Deacon Don Cooley

Connecting Individuals to Jesus and to One Another
Educating Minds – Growing Faith – Serving People

We are here to serve our community. As you worship with us online, the Lord Jesus is at work, uniting us as friends and family. If you are curious to learn more out ministry in the community, go to *www.stl-eastpointe.org*, or like us on Face Book. To get your questions answered in a more personal way, contact the church office (586-772-3370) and ask for a pastor/staff member to give you a call.

2nd Sunday in Advent
Divine Service

Prelude

The Lighting of the Advent Wreath

Announcements and Attendance/Communion Registration

We would like to know you attended service today!

To record your attendance, you can scan this QR code with your phone's camera, it will take you to the web page/form for attendance. Fill out the form and hit the submit button.

Opening Hymn *"Hark the Glad Sound"* LSB 349

1 Hark the glad sound! The Savior comes, The Savior promised long;
Let ev'ry heart prepare a throne And ev'ry voice a song.

2 He comes the pris'ners to release, In Satan's bondage held.
The gates of brass before Him burst, The iron fetters yield.

3 He comes the broken heart to bind, The bleeding soul to cure,
And with the treasures of His grace To enrich the humble poor.

△4 Our glad hosannas, Prince of Peace, Thy welcome shall proclaim,
And heav'n's eternal arches ring With Thy belovèd name.

Opening Liturgy

L: In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.
C: Amen.

Prayer of the Day

L: Stir up your power, O Lord, and come. Protect us by your strength,
C: And save us from the threatening dangers of our sins.
L: Grant us the gift of Your divine peace and pardon,

C: And bless Your Church, here and scattered throughout the world, as we proclaim the Gospel and call all nations to faith.

Proclamation of the Good News

L: Stir up our hearts, O Lord, to make ready the way of Your only-begotten Son, that by His coming we may be enabled to serve You with pure minds; through the same Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C: Amen.

Sharing of the Peace

L: The peace of the Lord be with you.

C: And also with you.

(share the peace with one another)

Anthem *"O come, O Come, Emmanuel"* J. Van Valey/ S. Berry

The Service of the Word

Old Testament Reading **Malachi 3:1-7B**

"Behold, I send my messenger and he will prepare the way before me. And the Lord whom you seek will suddenly come to his temple; and the messenger of the covenant in whom you delight, behold, he is coming, says the LORD of hosts. But who can endure the day of his coming, and who can stand when he appears? For he is like a refiner's fire and like fullers' soap. He will sit as a refiner and purifier of silver, and he will purify the sons of Levi and refine them like gold and silver, and they will bring offerings in righteousness to the LORD. Then the offering of Judah and Jerusalem will be pleasing to the LORD as in the days of old and as in former years.

"Then I will draw near to you for judgment. I will be a swift witness against the sorcerers, against the adulterers, against those who swear falsely, against those who oppress the hired worker in his wages, the widow and the fatherless, against those who thrust aside the sojourner, and do not fear me, says the LORD of hosts.

"For I the LORD do not change; therefore you, O children of Jacob, are not consumed. From the days of your fathers you have turned aside from my statutes and have not kept them."

(after the reading)

R: This is the word of the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God.

New Testament Reading **Philippians 1:2-11**

Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

I thank my God in all my remembrance of you, always in every prayer of mine for you all making my prayer with joy, because of your partnership in the gospel from the first day until now. And I am sure of this, that he who began a good work in you will bring it to completion at the day of Jesus Christ. It is right for me to feel this way about you all, because I hold you in my heart, for you are all partakers with me of grace, both in my imprisonment and in the defense and confirmation of the gospel. For God is my witness, how I yearn for you all with the affection of Christ Jesus. And it is my prayer that your love may abound more and more, with knowledge and all discernment, so that you may approve what is excellent, and so be pure and blameless for the day of Christ, filled with the fruit of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ, to the glory and praise of God.

(*after the reading)*

R: This is the word of the Lord.
C: Thanks be to God.

The Holy Gospel *(all rise)* **Luke 3:1-14**

C: (sung) Savior of the nations come, Virgin's Son, make here Your home! LSB 332, v. 1
By Your mighty pow'r make whole All our ills of flesh and soul.

L: The Holy Gospel according to St. Luke the 3rd chapter.
C: Glory to you, O Lord.

In the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Caesar, Pontius Pilate being governor of Judea, and Herod being tetrarch of Galilee, and his brother Philip tetrarch of the region of Ituraea and Trachonitis, and Lysanias tetrarch of Abilene, during the high priesthood of Annas and Caiaphas, the word of God came to John the son of Zechariah in the wilderness. And he went into all the region around the Jordan, proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. As it is written in the book of the words of Isaiah the prophet, "The voice of one crying in the wilderness: 'Prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight. Every valley shall be filled, and every mountain and hill shall be made low, and the crooked shall become straight, and the rough places shall become level ways, and all flesh shall see the salvation of God.'"

He said therefore to the crowds that came out to be baptized by him, "You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the wrath to come? Bear fruits in keeping with repentance. And do not begin to say to yourselves, 'We have Abraham as our father.' For I tell you, God is able from these stones to raise up children for Abraham. Even now the axe is laid to the root of the trees. Every tree therefore that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire."

And the crowds asked him, "What then shall we do?" And he answered them, "Whoever has two tunics is to share with him who has none, and whoever has food is to do likewise." Tax collectors also came to be baptized and said to him, "Teacher, what shall we do?" And he said to them, "Collect no more than you are authorized to do." Soldiers also asked him, "And we, what shall we do?" And he said to them, "Do not extort money from anyone by threats or by false accusation, and be content with your wages."

(after the reading)

L: This is the Gospel of the Lord.
C: Praise to you, O Christ.

C: (sung) Glory to the Father sing, Glory to the Son, our King, LSB 332, v. 8
Glory to the Spirit be Now and through eternity.

The Nicene Creed LSB inside rear cover

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

Children's Sermon

Hymn of the Day *"On Jordan's Bank the Baptist's Cry"* LSB 344

1 On Jordan's bank the Baptist's cry Announces that the Lord is nigh;
Awake and hearken, for he brings Glad tidings of the King of kings!

2 Then cleansed be ev'ry life from sin; Make straight the way for God within,
And let us all our hearts prepare For Christ to come and enter there.

3 We hail Thee as our Savior, Lord, Our refuge and our great reward;
Without Thy grace we waste away Like flow'rs that wither and decay.

4 Lay on the sick Thy healing hand And make the fallen strong to stand;
Show us the glory of Thy face Till beauty springs in ev'ry place.

△ 5 All praise, eternal Son, to Thee Whose advent sets Thy people free,
Whom with the Father we adore And Holy Spirit evermore.

Text: Public domain

Sermon *"God's Saving Love Stirs up My Heart"* **Malachi 4:1-6**

Our Response to God's Word

Prayer of the Church

L: O Lord, our God, You declared Israel to be Your people and brought them out of Egypt. You desired their salvation even when they would not listen to Your voice. Since You have called and gathered us also to be Your people, open our hearts to listen and gladly submit to Your Word.

(after each petition)

L: Lord in your mercy,
C: Hear our prayer.

L: All these things and whatever else You know that we need, grant us, Father, for the sake of Him who died and rose again and now lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God forever.
C: Amen.

Confession and Absolution *(please rise)*

L: If the Lord our God kept a record of sins, who could stand before him?
C: But with Him there is forgiveness, therefore He is feared.
L: We are gathered in His presence to hear His Word, call upon Him in prayer, and receive the body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ. Let us, therefore, first consider our unworthiness and confess before God and one another that we have sinned in thought, word, and deed, and that we cannot save ourselves. Together as God's people, let us take refuge in the infinite mercy of our heavenly Father, seeking His grace for the sake of Christ, and pray:
C: Almighty God, have mercy upon us, forgive us our sins, and lead us to everlasting life. Amen.

(silence for reflection and self-examination)

L: Almighty God, merciful Father, in Holy Baptism You declared us to be Your children and gathered us into Your one, holy Church, in which You daily and richly forgive us our sins and grant us new life through Your Spirit. Be in our midst, enliven our faith, and graciously receive our prayer and praise; through Your Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord.

C: Amen. Lord, have mercy; Christ, have mercy. Lord, have mercy.

The Service of the Sacrament

"As we receive the True Body and Blood of our Lord, our faith is fed, our spirits are encouraged, and we are moved to share God's grace with the world."

[Because of the closeness of this sharing (and the concerns expressed in 1 Corinthians 11:27-29) we ask that those who have not been taught the faith at STL speak with a pastor or elder before communing.]

Preparation for the Sacrament

L: The Lord be with you.

C: And also with you.

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

C: It is right to give him thanks and praise.

L: Assembled with angels and archangels and the whole company of heaven, we laud and magnify Your glorious name, evermore praising You and saying:

C: Thanks be to God.

The Lord's Prayer

LSB back cover

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

L: The Peace of the Lord be with you always.

C: Amen.

Distribution of the Sacrament

Alcohol-free wine is available in the center of each individual cup tray.
Gluten-free host is available upon request from the host server.
If you are coming for a blessing, please cross your arms across your chest.

Entrance Hymn *"Lift Up Your Heads, Ye Mighty Gates"* LSB 341, vv. 1, 2

1 Lift up your heads, ye mighty gates! Behold, the King of glory waits.
The King of kings is drawing near; The Savior of the world is here.
Life and salvation He doth bring; Therefore rejoice and gladly sing.
To God the Father raise Your joyful songs of praise.

2 A righteous Helper comes to thee; His chariot is humility,
His kingly crown is holiness, His scepter, pity in distress.
The end of all our woe He brings; Therefore the earth is glad and sings.
To Christ the Savior raise Your grateful hymns of praise.

Hymns during Distribution

"Come, Thou Precious Ransom, Come" LSB 350

1 Come, Thou precious Ransom, come, Only hope for sinful mortals!
Come, O Savior of the world! Open are to Thee all portals.
Come, Thy beauty let us see; Anxiously we wait for Thee.

2 Enter now my waiting heart, Glorious King and Lord most holy.
Dwell in me and ne'er depart, Though I am but poor and lowly.
Ah, what riches will be mine When Thou art my guest divine!

3 My hosannas and my palms Graciously receive, I pray Thee;
Evermore, as best I can, Savior, I will homage pay Thee,
And in faith I will embrace, Lord, Thy merit through Thy grace.

4 Hail! Hosanna, David's Son! Jesus, hear our supplication!
Let Thy kingdom, scepter, crown, Bring us blessing and salvation,
That forever we may sing: Hail! Hosanna to our King.

"What Hope! An Eden Prophesied" LSB 342, vv. 1, 3, 4

1 What hope! An Eden prophesied Where tame live with the wild;
The lamb and lion side by side, Led by a little child!

3 As banner of God's love unfurled, Christ came to suffer loss,
That by His death a dying world Would rally to the cross.

4 Come, Jesus, come, Messiah Lord, Lost Paradise restore;
Lead past the angel's flaming sword Come, open heaven's door.

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Post-Communion Canticle

"Lift Up Your Heads, Ye Mighty Gates" LSB 341, vv. 5

5 Redeemer, come and open wide My heart to Thee; here, Lord, abide!
O enter with Thy grace divine; Thy face of mercy on me shine.
Thy Holy Spirit guide us on Until our glorious goal is won.
Eternal praise and fame We offer to Thy name.

Post-Communion Collect

Benediction

Sending Greeting

L: Go in peace and serve the Lord.
C: Thanks be to God.

Sending Hymn *"Prepare the Royal Highway"* LSB **343**

1 Prepare the royal highway; The King of kings is near!
Let ev'ry hill and valley A level road appear!
Then greet the King of Glory Foretold in sacred story: **Refrain**

Refrain: Hosanna to the Lord, For He fulfills God's Word!

2 God's people, see Him coming: Your own eternal king!
Palm branches strew before Him! Spread garments! Shout and sing!
God's promise will not fail you! No more shall doubt assail you! **Refrain**

3 Then fling the gates wide open To greet your promised king!
Your king, yet ev'ry nation Its tribute too should bring.
All lands, bow down before Him! All nations, now adore Him! **Refrain**

4 His is no earthly kingdom; It comes from heav'n above.
His rule is peace and freedom And justice, truth, and love.
So let your praise be sounding For kindness so abounding: **Refrain**

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EASY WAYS TO SUPPORT THE STL MISSION There is a variety of ways to give your support to the mission of STL. For many the easiest is to simply mail in a check or drop your offering off at the church. If you prefer electronic giving, STL offers multiple options:

- Text "GIVE" to 1-586-800-2223
- Visit: https://www.stl-eastpointe.org/2015/07/13/mission-support/
- Go to https://www.elexiogiving.com/app/giving/stthoms
- Through your Pay Pal account
- Scan this Quick Response (QR) code

These will connect you to our on-line giving form, where you can have your mission support offering automatically taken from your checking account or use your credit or debit card (STL is charged extra fees for debit and credit card transactions). **You can even set up recurring giving with many of these options!** IF YOU HAVE QUESTIONS, OR DESIRE ASSISTANCE, PLEASE CALL THE CHURCH OFFICE (586-772-3370).

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Up Coming Worship and Events

December 11 & 18 Advent Midweek Worship at 7 pm

December 14 – Clothing Closet open 11 am – 1 pm

December 14 – Advent Aglow – 6 p.m.

December 15 – Gifts do back in the church

December 20 - Holiday food basket packing 5:30 pm

Help is needed!

December 21 - Holiday food basket distribution starting at 10 am

Help is needed starting at 9 am!

December 24 - Christmas Eve Celebration at 4 pm

December 25 - Christmas Day at 10 am

December 31 –NYE service at 7 pm

(for more information on any of these events, please call the church office)

Does the church have all your current information?

Current address? Home Phone # active? Cell phone #? E-mail address?

Please fill out a "Change of Address" form (found on tables) or use the attendance form on last page and update your information with the church office. We will be using this information to communicate and share information with the congregation.

Giving Tree Remember to stop by the Giving Tree in the west entrance and select a card for a person who needs you to share Christ's love this season. The cards are for our Great Start Readiness Program Preschool – 20 children and 30 children from Evergreen Lutheran Church & School in Detroit. **Please follow the directions on the table for each card selected. Gifts must be back at the church by December 15!**

Patrons are needed to help defray the cost of the professional musicians we hire to accompany the Kapelle and enhance our Christmas Eve service. Please place your donation in an envelope marked "Patron for Kapelle" and place it in the offering plate, offering box, bring it to the church office or give electronically. Thank you for your support of the music ministry.

Godsword4u.org - Deacon Don has launched his website **Godsword4u.org.** You will find a Tuesday devotion, sermons, and merchandise on the site. With the ultimate goal of taking any profit from the purchases will go towards purchasing time on the local electronic billboards to post scripture. For any questions contact Deacon Don.

On Christmas Eve at 4pm we will be presenting The Living Crèche, a joyous musical celebration that weaves scripture, ancient Legend, and carols from around the world into a Christmas pageant. **Communion, candles, handbells and instrumentalists will add to this beautiful Christmas Eve service. All children in attendance will receive a special gift, compliments of the Kapelle. Plan now to attend!**

MCREST is in need of some help with providing transportation money for their guests. Not every week is sponsored by a church, and the need to provide, approximately $25.00 per guest per week, for transportation is not being met. (about $1,000.00 a week) Can you help with this in addition to your weekly giving? If so, please put "MCREST – TRANSPORTATION" on one of the envelopes by the offering boxes, and the church office will forward it to MCREST. Thank You!

It's *Lutheran Witness* time! This is the time to order or renew subscriptions of the *Lutheran Witness* (LW), the official periodical of the LCMS. It is published 11 times a year and provides laypeople with stories and information that complement congregational life, fosters personal growth in faith, and helps interpret the contemporary world from the Lutheran Christian perspective. The subscription year is March 2025 through February 2026. Yearly subscriptions are $21.20/year each if orders are placed through the St. Thomas church office (if not the cost is $24.99). Orders and money need to be in the office by December 8 (checks made payable to St. Thomas).

Advent Aglow – December 14th, at 6 pm, in the gym. A time for the women of St. Thomas and their friends to gather, worship and celebrate the upcoming birth of our Lord, before the busyness of the season takes over. All women are welcome either to host a table or just attend. Reservations are needed. Please see Kelly Crivella in the west entrance, following the service, to sign up for hosting or attending, or call her at 313-550-2950.

Advent Devotionals Pick up your copy of "Come, Let Us Adore Him" advent devotional from LHM. They are available in baskets by each of the entrances and on tables throughout the building.

2025 Envelopes are available in the west hallway! Please stop by the table, print your name on the list next to the envelope # you are taking home. Information for electronic giving is printed in the worship folders. If you have any questions, contact Linda in the church office. **Please, do not use these envelopes until 2025!**

October through December Mission Envelopes
CAMP RESTORE - DETROIT
(Housed in Mt. Calvary Lutheran Church)

DID YOU KNOW? The area surrounding Camp Restore Detroit (9th Precinct of Detroit) is only 20% populated. This means many houses, lots, and even entire blocks are abandoned. Camp Restore works to restore hope in the community through hosting groups of all ages and sizes, housing and feeding them, and partnering with community leaders and community organizations in activities of environmental cleanup, construction, and human care.

100% of your Mission Envelope donations (either using the envelop provided in your box or through your designation electronically or with a different envelope) to STL during the months of October, November, and December will be given directly to CAMP RESTORE DETROIT. For more information on the ministry, go to www.camprestore.org or call 313-527-3366.

NEXT SUNDAY
3rd Sunday in Advent
"God's Love at Christmas"
December 15, 2024

Scripture Readings: Isaiah 40:1-11, Philippians 4:4-7, Luke 7:19-28

Fundraiser for H.I.S. II

Hungry Howies's Fundraiser Card for $10.00

Get over $45 in Savings!

See one of the H.I.S. II ladies in the west entrance to purchase yours!

Also available from the Linda in the church office.

The purchase of this card will help H.I.S. II with their funding for servant events in the upcoming year.

Thank You for your support!

Our Confession of Faith

As members of the Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod (LC-MS), we subscribe to the three ecumenical creeds (Apostles, Nicene and Athanasian) and the Christian faith as confessed in the Book of Concord. This includes believing that:

- Jesus Christ is both true God and true man who died for our sins and rose again to save us.
- His body/blood are truly present in communion under the form of bread/wine (page 326).
- Communion is, among other things, an expression of doctrinal unity.
- Infant baptism is a Means of Grace through which God delivers one from sin and gives eternal salvation to all who believe (page 325 in Lutheran Service Book).

Weekly Worship with Communion - Sunday at 9:30 a.m.
Monday at 7:30 p.m.

"The Flock" for children and Crosstraining JC Style for youth

Faith Hope Love Gatherings - Sunday and throughout the week

PRAYERS OF THE CHURCH

Your personal prayer guide for the week of:

December 8, 2024

Our Primary Prayer focus this week is upon God's Work through STL:

- As we reflect upon what God has done through STL over the years.
- As we pray for the pastoral call committee and process.
- As we look to how he is shaping STL for a dynamic future.
- As we invite and welcome new people into our fellowship.

And we remember all children who hear the gospel in church and from their parents, and those in hospice care.

To connect to the STL PRAYER CHAIN, contact Karen Dolan (mdolan421@gmail.com), text "Prayer" to 1-586-800-2223, or scan this QR code, with your phone's camera, to be taken to the prayer request form.

† In Our Thoughts and Prayers †

✞**For Loved Ones Called Home:** The family of Carol Vietzke, member at Mt. Calvary, who was called home this week. Her service is at 2 pm today at Mt. Calvary. The family of Ralph Aiello, husband of Marilyn Hieber (former member).

✞**God's Healing Hand on:** John Cherry, Russ Semenjuk, Larry Cichocki, Janet Edwards, Roy Leidich, Tim Schnepper (nephew of John Hupp and Ann), Steven Eubanks (Barbara's son), Robert Miller (Heather's father), Tim Setter (nephew of Caroline Henze), John Belvedere (son-in-law of Caroline Henze), Julie Tyner (friend of Caroline Henze), Doug Klawender (son of Shirley).

✞**Continued prayers for Healing & Strength for:** Janet Semenjuk, Joanne Awe, Brenda Finger, Harrison Ahee, Andrew Brejnak, 19, (grandson of Gerry & Nola Klonowski, son of their daughter, Lisa), Robert Laroche (family of Jan Adams), Jan Adams, Claire Armstrong (granddaughter of Clyde & Carolyn Armstrong), Kennedy Pank (great-granddaughter of Marilyn Redmond), Sally Burk (sister of Lois Revard), Tamara Sommer (Connie's daughter-in-law).