

Welcome to Worship at
Joyful Harvest Lutheran Church
Growing Together for Christ
Rev. Ken Gibson, Interim Pastor
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www.joyfulharvest.org



December 28 th , 2025	First Sunday of Christmas
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We worship in-person and on-line at 9:00 am. There is a link on our website to join the on-line Worship Service through Zoom!
Stay safe and God bless!

Gathering

Welcome/Greeting/Announcements

Call to Worship

P: All creation, all people: praise the Lord!

**C: stars shooting across the sky,
sing glad songs to our God!**

P: Snow clouds approaching, birds sitting on a branch:
praise the Lord!

**C: Sleeping cats and barking dogs,
sing new choruses of praise!**

P: Rich and poor, leaders and followers:
praise the Lord!

**C: Old and young, families and singles,
we will lift our joy to our God!**

Gathering Songs: Joy to the World
(Please join us in "Sharing the Peace")
What Child Is This

Prayer of the Day

Word

FIRST READING: Isaiah 63:7-9

⁷ I will recount the gracious deeds of the LORD, the praiseworthy acts of the LORD, because of all that the LORD has done for us and the great favor to the house of Israel that he has shown them according to his mercy, according to the abundance of his steadfast love. ⁸ For he said, "Surely they are my people, children who will not act deceitfully," and he became their savior ⁹ in all their distress. It was no messenger or angel but his presence that saved them; in his love and pity it was he who redeemed them; he lifted them up and carried them all the days of old.

PSALM: Psalm 148:1-14

¹ Hallelujah! Praise the LORD from the heavens; praise God in the heights.

² **Praise the LORD, all you angels; sing praise, all you hosts of heaven.**

³ Praise the LORD, sun and moon; sing praise, all you shining stars.

⁴ **Praise the LORD, heaven of heavens, and you waters above the heavens.**

⁵ Let them praise the name of the LORD, who commanded, and they were created,

⁶ **who made them stand fast forever and ever, giving them a law that shall not pass away.**

⁷ Praise the LORD from the earth, you sea monsters and all deeps;

⁸ **fire and hail, snow and fog, tempestuous wind, doing God's will;**

⁹ mountains and all hills, fruit trees and all cedars;

¹⁰ **wild beasts and all cattle, creeping things and flying birds;**

¹¹ **sovereigns of the earth and all peoples, princes and all rulers of the world;**

¹² **young men and maidens, old and young together.**

¹³ **Let them praise the name of the LORD, whose name only is exalted, whose splendor is over earth and heaven.**

¹⁴ **The LORD has raised up strength for the people and praise for all faithful servants, the children of Israel, a people who are near the Lord.**

Hallelujah!

SECOND READING: Hebrews 2:10-18

¹⁰ It was fitting that God, for whom and through whom all things exist, in bringing many children to glory, should make the pioneer of their salvation perfect through sufferings. ¹¹ For the one who sanctifies and those who are sanctified all have one Father. For this reason Jesus is not ashamed to call them brothers and sisters, ¹² saying, "I will proclaim your name to my brothers and sisters; in the midst of the congregation I will praise you."

¹³ And again, "I will put my trust in him." And again, "Here am I and the children whom God has given me."

¹⁴ Since, therefore, the children share flesh and blood, he himself likewise shared the same things, so that through death he might destroy the one who has the power of death, that is, the devil, ¹⁵ and free those who all their lives were held in slavery by the fear of death. ¹⁶ For it is clear that he did not come to help angels but the descendants of Abraham.

¹⁷ Therefore he had to become like his brothers and sisters in every respect, so that he might become a merciful and faithful high priest in the service of God, to make a sacrifice of atonement for the sins of the people. ¹⁸ Because he himself was tested by what he suffered, he is able to help those who are being tested.

GOSPEL: Matthew 2:13-23

P: The Holy Gospel according to Matthew.

C: Glory to you, O Lord!

P: ¹³ Now after [the magi] had left, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph...

P: This is the gospel of the Lord!

C: Praise to you, O Christ!

Children's Message

Pastor Ken Gibson

Sermon

Pastor Ken Gibson

Hymn of the Day: Emmanuel

Prayers of Intercession

A: "Hear us, O God",C: **"Your mercy is great"**

Offering: Friends, an offering is an act of Worship, given freely to share God's love through this congregation. Please place your offering in the basket as it is passed around, you may come forward to put your gift in the offering plate, or send your gifts to the church at: **5050 N. Johnsburg Rd., Johnsburg, IL 60051** or give online at www.joyfulharvest.org

Offering Prayer

Meal

Confession & Forgiveness

P: We know all that God has done for us, as well as all we could have done for others. Let us confess to God our failures and weaknesses, as we pray together, saying,

C: We could proclaim your name, God of this holy season, but we spend too much time talking about celebrities. We could tell others about all your gracious deeds, but are comparing notes about the exploits of our favorite athletes. We could let your Word guide our lives, but instead we do what the politicians think is best.

Why? Because we forget who we are called to be. But you remember, Faithful God. You remember that we put our trust in others, not you; you remember how we chase after idols, not follow you; you remember to save us in our distress, which is why you sent Jesus to us, our Lord, our Savior. Amen.

(Silence is kept)

P: In the silence, in the dreams, in the wonder, in the words, God comes to save us and have mercy on us.

C: It is fitting that we offer our thanks and praise to the One who forgives us. Thanks be to God! Amen.

Lord's Supper

Prayer of Thanksgiving and Words of Institution

Lord's Prayer

P: Gathered into one by the Holy Spirit, let us pray as Jesus has taught us:

C: 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: *Christ is truly present with us today, especially in the gifts of bread and wine. God's table is open; we invite you to join us at the Lord's Table! After the choir is served, come up the center aisle, from front to back. If you are unable to come forward, please let the pastor or another worship leader know, and we will bring communion to you. If you do not receive communion, you are welcome to come forward for a blessing, simply keep your hands folded. The dark colored liquid is wine, and the light-colored liquid is juice. Please let the pastor know if you need a gluten free wafer. All are welcome!*

Communion Song: Christmas Hallelujah

Prayer After Communion

Sending

Sending Song: Hark the Herald Angels Sing

Sending and Benediction

P: Praising God is not enough.

C: And so we will go to offer practical help to our neighbors.

P: Joyful noises do not feed those around us.

C: And so we will go with Jesus to the food pantries and shelters, to care for those forgotten by our society.

P: Songs of thanksgiving do not replace service.

C: And so we will go to share the peace of the Spirit with a broken, yet hopeful world.

Commissioning

P: At Joyful Harvest Church,

C: our mission is growing together for Christ.

P: As disciples of Jesus Christ, we value:

C: Family Worship, Relying on Prayer, Unity in Christ, Instruction in the Word, Telling Others, and Service to God's Community.

P: Glory to God in the highest!

C: And peace to God's people on earth!

P: Go in joy. Embody God's redeeming grace.

C: Thanks be to God.

Announcements

If you are looking for a place to worship with your family, join us any Sunday at 9:00 am! Thank you for worshipping with us today.



Un-Hanging of the Greens - Sat. Jan 10th @ 9:00 a.m.:

Please help us as we take down the decorations in the sanctuary and pack them away for next year. The more hands the better!

Annual Meeting Sun. Jan 11th @ 10:30 a.m.

Come and hear about all the exciting things happening at Joyful Harvest. Get updates on the call process, new budget, and upcoming events. Your attendance is very important as a quorum of voting members is required to conduct church business.



Joyful Readers Book Club: Do you like to read, are you looking for a way to connect with other women? Consider joining the ladies of Joyful Harvest as they embark in this fellowship opportunity. The next meeting will be Sat, Jan 24th at 9:00a.m. They're reading "*The Lonely Hearts Book Club*" by Lucy Gilmore. Contact Kim DuBois for more info!

Weekly Calendar

Tue. Dec 30	Breakfast Club at Midwest Breakfast	8:00 a.m.
Tue. Dec 30	Food Pantry Service Opportunity	3:00-6:00 p.m.
Wed. Dec 31	New Years Eve	N/A
Thur. Jan 01	NO Food Pantry Service – (New Years Day)	N/A
Sun. Jan 04	Sunday Worship	9:00 a.m.
Sun. Jan 04	Faith Formation Class	10:30 a.m.

Upcoming Events

Wed. Jan 07	Council Meeting	6:00 p.m.
Sat. Jan 10	Un-hanging of the greens	9:00 a.m.
Sun. Jan 11	Annual Meeting	10:30 a.m.
Wed. Jan 24	Joyful Readers Book Club	9:00 a.m.

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DECEMBER 28, 2025
FIRST SUNDAY OF CHRISTMAS



The coming of Christ brings joy but causes fear.

DAILY BIBLE READINGS

These passages are related to the Lectionary texts for this Sunday.

Sunday	Matthew 2:13-23	The escape to Egypt
Monday	Isaiah 63:7-9	God’s mercy remembered
Tuesday	Hebrews 2:10-18	Jesus the high priest
Wednesday	Psalms 103:1-5	Thanksgiving for God’s goodness
Thursday	Isaiah 41:8-13	Israel assured of God’s help
Friday	Exodus 1:15-2:10	Moses is born to a slave people
Saturday	Psalms 148	Let all things praise the Lord
Sunday	John 1:1-18	The Word became flesh

SCRIPTURE VERSE FOR THIS WEEK

Now after they had left, an angel of the Lord appears to Joseph in a dream and said, “Get up, take the child and his mother, and flee to Egypt, and remain there until I tell you, for Herod is about to search for the child, to destroy him.”
Matthew 2:13 (NRSV)

PRAYERS AND BLESSING

A Prayer for the Week:

Dear merciful God, bring your comfort and protection to all who experience violence and suffering, through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Mealtime Prayer:

We thank you for this food; may all who journey through life experiencing hunger be blessed with the food you give. Amen.

A Blessing to Give:

May our Lord and Savior lift you up in love.



WEEKLY MILESTONES



Take a moment to tell or think about a recent mountain high and/or valley low in your life.

CARING CONVERSATIONS



Discuss in your home, small group, or use for personal reflections:

- When is a time you or someone you know needed protection? What happened?
- Is there a time when you have felt God's protection? Explain.

DEVOTIONS



Read: Matthew 2:13-23.

Christmas time is a wonderful opportunity to sing Christmas hymns, see beautiful lights and contemplate peace on earth. However, Matthew 2 brings us back to the daily anxieties and violence that continue around us. Innocent children are slaughtered because a king fears for his power. The slaughter of innocent children continues to this day because of fearful leaders. The holy family flees to a land that once enslaved God's people, yet there the family is protected. People seek protection today as refugees in historic numbers. Christ's birth is powerful because sin and death remain realities. Christ's birth brings violence from those who fear God's design and rule. The life of the church is the life of faithful and courageous opposition to all powers that are an affront to the salvation of God in Jesus Christ.

Discuss: *Where have you seen peace and justice shared with refugees in today's world?*

Pray: **O, Holy Jesus, your path of love and salvation brings hope to a world that needs your care and grace. Blessed be the name of the Lord. Amen.**

SERVICE



Jesus calls us to serve our neighbor in love. Based on the Daily Bible Readings and theme for this week, how can you help care for refugees or homeless people near you?

RITUALS AND TRADITIONS



Read Psalm 148. As you are reading, highlight or circle the word praise in each verse. Make a list of all the things in God's creation that are praising God throughout Psalm 148 (for example: the sun, the moon, and even sea monsters!). Take a moment to read through the list. Think or talk about what you can add to the list that you praise God for (for example: friends, family, and pets).

Say: **Praise the Lord! Praise the Lord from the heavens; praise him in the heights! Praise the Lord!** (Psalm 148:1)



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