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Grace Lutheran Church & School



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Member: CHURCH OF THE LUTHERAN CONFESSION



Pastor: John Hein (Cell 612-408-1635)

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Grades: Kindergarten-8th

Church Year: Epiphany

Date: January 6, 2013

✠ THE ORDER OF WORSHIP ✠

Worship Preparation: Psalm 72, TLH p. 138

Hymn: TLH 136: Angels from the Realms of Glory

Liturgy: TLH, p. 15 ff. (Also available on laminated sheet in pew)

Introit (followed by Gloria Patri, The Kyrie): TLH, pp. 16-17

P: Endow the King with Your justice, O God,

C: The royal Son with Your righteousness.

P: He will judge Your people in righteousness,

C: Your afflicted ones with justice.

P: For He will deliver the needy who cry out,

C: He will take pity on the weak and the needy, and save the needy from death. Glory be to God!

Gloria in Excelsis: TLH 131, st. 5

All glory, Jesus, be to Thee

For this Thy glad epiphany;

Whom with the Father we adore

And Holy Ghost forevermore.

First Reading: Isaiah 60:1-6

Gentiles shall come to honor the Light of the world.

Gradual:

P: Praise the Lord, all you nations; extol Him, all you peoples.

C: For great is His love toward us; and the faithfulness of the Lord endures forever.

P: Ascribe to the Lord the glory due His name;

C: Bring an offering and come into His courts.

P: Alleluia. Alleluia. We saw His star in the east

C: And have come to worship Him. Alleluia.

Second Reading: Ephesians 3:2-12

God's grace in Christ Jesus is universal, shown toward the entire world.

Confession of Faith: Nicene Creed, TLH p. 22

Hymn: TLH 128: Brightest and Best of the Sons of the Morning

Sermon: Matthew 2:1-12

¹ Now after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod the king, behold, wise men from the East came to Jerusalem, ² saying, "Where is He who has been born King of the Jews? For we have seen His star in the East and have come to worship Him." ³ When Herod the king heard *this*, he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him. ⁴ And when he had gathered all the chief priests and scribes of the people together, he inquired of them where the Christ was to be born. ⁵ So they said to him, "In Bethlehem of Judea, for thus it is written by the prophet: ⁶ 'But you, Bethlehem, *in* the land of Judah, Are not the least among the rulers of Judah; For out of you shall come a Ruler Who will shepherd My people Israel.'" ⁷ Then Herod, when he had secretly called the wise men, determined from them what time the star appeared. ⁸ And he sent them to Bethlehem and said, "Go and search carefully for the young Child, and when you have found *Him*, bring back word to me, that I may come and worship Him also." ⁹ When they heard the king, they departed; and behold, the star which they had seen in the East went before them, till it came and stood over where the young Child was. ¹⁰ When they saw the star, they rejoiced with exceedingly great joy. ¹¹ And when they had come into the house, they saw the young Child with Mary His mother, and fell down and worshiped Him. And when they had opened their treasures, they presented gifts to Him: gold, frankincense, and myrrh. ¹² Then, being divinely warned in a dream that they should not return to Herod, they departed for their own country another way. (NKJVTM)

WHAT MAKES ONE WISE?

Offertory: TLH p. 22 f.

Hymn: TLH 127: As with Gladness Men of Old

Offering & Prayer:

Liturgy for the Lord's Supper: TLH p. 24 ff.

Distribution: TLH 312; TLH 120

Note: In obedience to God's Word, and out of concern for the welfare of souls (1 Corinthians 11:29), and finally that we may honestly express the unity of faith and hope that binds us, we ask that only such as have identified with Grace through public confession of faith or another CLC congregation, approach the altar at the usher's direction.

Nunc Dimittis, Prayer, Benediction: TLH 29 ff.

Hymn: WS 702, st. 6-7: As Angels Joyed with One Accord

✠ THE ANNOUNCEMENTS ✠

- ◆ **Christmas Eve DVD:** Copies are now available from Pastor.
- ◆ **Quilt Day:** Back by popular demand, on Sat., Jan. 19, those who are interested are invited to help assemble two quilts for the ILC after-banquet party. We will be making a Morning Glorious quilt and a Dominoes quilt. We hope to start bright and early at 9:00 am and stay until 2:00pm. Please bring something to add to the lunch menu. Sewing machines, irons, ironing boards, and cutting tools will be needed. You don't have to be a sewer to help out. We need ironers, cutters, and someone to do the lunch. It is a fun time for all.- Ann Radichel
- ◆ **Mexico:** From CLC President Eichstadt: Your prayers for the Spirit's blessings are requested in regard to a new foreign contact. Several months ago Pastor Mike Roehl received an email from a pastor in Torreón, Mexico, who, along with his small congregation would very much like to establish fellowship ties with the CLC. Correspondence has proceeded to the point where I feel a face-to-face meeting is appropriate. Pastor Roehl, Board of Doctrine chairman Dan Fleischer and I have made arrangements to meet with this pastor and possibly others at the end of the month in Nuevo Progreso, just across the border from Weslaco, TX.
- ◆ **CLC News:** Pastor Michael Wilke of Gethsemane at Saginaw, MI, has returned the call from the CLC Board of Missions to be missionary to India and East Africa.
- ◆ **Sunday School Memory Work:** #16, Second Article, Part 1

NEW YEAR'S WISH

What shall I wish thee? Treasures of earth?
Songs in the spring time, pleasures, or mirth?
Flowers on thy pathway, skies ever clear, -
Would this insure thee a Happy New Year?

What shall I wish thee? What can be found
Bringing thee sunshine all the year round?
Where is the treasure, lasting and dear,
That shall insure thee a Happy New Year?

Faith that increaseth, walking in light;
Hope that aboundeth, happy and bright;
Love that is perfect, casting out fear, -
These shall insure thee a Happy New Year.

Peace in the Savior, rest at His feet;
Smile of His countenance, radiant and sweet;
Joy in His presence, Christ ever near, -
These will insure thee a Happy New Year.

From The Lutheran Witness, (Jan. 12, 1915/Jan. 6, 1942), by Frances E. Havergal.

TAX THE RICH?

The seed of greed is latent in all of us. Greed for position, for power, for honor, and for wealth afflicts all to greater or lesser degree. But the degree is of no consequence. Sin is sin and offends the holy God.

Greed is not a sin of *having* much. It describes an *attitude* of the heart. Money and stuff is not the root of evil. Scripture does not warn against having much. They that are *consumed with being rich* fall into many temptations (1 Timothy 6: 10). Money and stuff gained through good and faithful use of the physical and mental gifts God has given are a blessing from God. If the Father from whom comes every good and perfect gift chooses to bless honest labor with good return, how shall we call that sin? Scripture does warn against gaining goods by unrighteousness (Leviticus 19:35, Jeremiah 22:13). It warns against loving money (1 Timothy 6:10), and putting trust in riches which is idolatry. It further warns against the “deceitfulness of riches” (Matthew 13:22).

Interestingly it is in the context of speaking of material things—“What shall we eat? What shall we wear?”—that Jesus said, “Your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things” (Matthew 6:31, 32). That the Lord knows and supplies our need is not invitation to laziness. It does tell us we need not spend time worrying. Thereupon the Lord instructs us to put first things first: “But seek *first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you*” (6:33).

Scripture is full of references to the proper use of that with which we are blessed—to help the poor and needy, to support the brethren in their need, to support the preaching and sharing of the Gospel, to care for the family, as well as fulfill our responsibilities to Caesar. The early church remains a stirring example of using material blessings to the welfare of one another (Acts 2: 44, 45). Having all things in common, and sharing them was not a forced program of government or church, but a spontaneous exercise of faith which was also manifest by “continuing steadfastly in the apostles’ doctrine and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in prayers” (Acts 2:42).

We grant that in our society, contrary to the will of God, attainment of wealth is all too often accomplished through deceit and graft, and by taking advantage of others. But we also live in society in which it is implied that there is something evil in the accumulation of wealth and that somehow it is wrong and unfair for some to live more comfortably than others. Consequently we are told that the answer to what is deemed unfair is to “tax the rich.”

Celebration of our Savior’s birth addresses the matter of riches, though from a different perspective. It reminds us from whom and where true riches come, as well as to appreciate that the riches of which we speak are ours to have and retain. At the same time they are riches we *will want to share* with others bearing in mind that to share these riches does not diminish our portion! These riches cannot be stolen from us, cannot be taxed, and are not held unfairly for no one is excluded from possessing them in equal measure.

Paul was writing to the Corinthians. He was writing to believers in Christ when he wrote, "For you know the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, that though He was rich, yet for your sakes He became poor, that *you* through His poverty *might become rich*" (2 Corinthians 8: 9). This passage is in the context of giving liberally for "the fellowship of the ministering to the saints" (8:4). Paul was not shaming the Corinthians into such giving, but was reminding them of the manner of Christ who left the glory of heaven to live on earth where he had no place to lay His head (Matthew 8:20), while enriching them with riches that far surpassed any material thing they were encouraged to share with others.

From the lowliness of the manger bed, through shame of the cross, to the glory of the ascension mount, Jesus was the face of God's love to the world. The riches He has freely given and which are possessed by faith are nothing of which to be ashamed, but reason to be thankful! The riches that Christ brought from heaven and which are intended for all are forgiveness of sins, reconciliation with God the Father, and finally eternal life. The gift of eternal life is an inheritance that is "reserved in heaven for you, who are kept by the power of God through faith for salvation ready to be revealed in the last time (1 Peter 1: 4, 5). The gifts that the Father gives in Christ Jesus reserved for us as they are, no earthly potentate and no government entity can take or extract from a child of God. No one can lay a guilt trip on us for possessing the riches showered upon us in abundance in Christ.

Therefore, lay not up for yourselves treasure on earth where moth and rust corrupt and thieves break in and steal (Matthew 6:19, 20). Receive with thanksgiving the good things of the earth that the Lord provides according to the riches of His grace, but keep your attention focused on things above (Colossians 3: 1, 2).

While enduring the trials and afflictions of this life, as well as the slings and arrows of the world which are contrary to our Lord and to His people, remember that the name "Immanuel" is more than an identifier of our ever present Lord. "God with us" is a name of rich comfort for waiting Christians, "Fear not, I have redeemed you; I have called you by your name; you are mine" (Isaiah 43:1), and again, "For the mountains shall depart and the hills be removed, but my kindness shall not depart from you, nor shall my covenant of peace be removed, says the Lord who has mercy on you (Isaiah 54:10). These rich words of promise sustain us now and until we hear the ultimate grand invitation of our Lord, "Come, you blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world" (Matthew 25:34).

Whether through the machinations of men or at the final trump, all earthly riches pass away. The riches we have in Christ do not pass away; neither can anything or anyone rob us of what the Lord has reserved for us.

Rev. Daniel Fleischer, 12/2012

From CLC President Michael Eichstadt (January Newsletter):

If you live in the Midwest you know from experience that this is the time of year when a snowstorm can transform a quick 30 minute drive through the country into a treacherous two-hour white knuckle ordeal. Especially at night, blowing snow can be blinding, the ice invisible, and in a matter of seconds you can be stuck in the ditch. So it happened occasionally when I was growing up on the farm that a stranded motorist would show up at our door in the middle of a blizzard looking for help. How did they find their way? They spotted the light on the tall pole in the farmyard. Even from the highway and through the snow they could see the light which they followed to the warmth of our kitchen and the help of my dad and the tractor to get their vehicle back on the road.

Isn't that what Epiphany is all about too: following the light God provides through the darkness of sin and the blizzard of fear, guilt, and uncertainty into the warmth and safety of the Savior's presence? The Wise Men had the special star sent by God, but we have an even brighter light source in the gospel Word. The psalmist joyfully looked to that light: "Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light for my path" (Ps. 119:105). That Word illuminates the way to Jesus and reveals Him to be the Word-made-flesh, our Brother and the Savior of all nations.

The beginning of a new calendar year is a good time for us to re-focus on spending personal quality time in the Word. With busy schedules which revolve around using the Word in classes and worship, it's easy to overlook and postpone our own following of the light. But we, as much as any of our members, need it for ourselves and our own particular challenges and burdens. May we all take time for the Word with the prayer: "Open my eyes that I may see wonderful things in your law" (Ps. 119:18). And may we encourage both young and old in our congregations to live in the light of the Lord through Bible reading and family devotions at home.

Living in the light, we are equipped by the Spirit to shine out with it into the lives of others. "God so loved the world ..." Ponder what that means in practical terms. His love in Christ is not just for a few select people, one tiny tribe, or just "good" people. His love extends to all: to the fellow believer you see every Sunday in church to the worst felon in prison to the person living in some obscure village in the Himalayas. He loved you and me, as insignificant as we are among the billions on earth. Having received that best of all possible gifts, God's own Son, there is no better way to show our joy than to let His light shine out as individuals, congregations, and a church body! May the God who put that special star in the sky for the Wise Men cause us to shine wherever we are.

✠ TODAY AT GRACE ✠

Organist: Maureen Ochsner Elder: Larry Nelson
Ushers: David Stifter, Scott Baker, Al Rosendahl,
 Dylan Stifter, Lyle Trulin, Michael Ude
Counting Team 4: Ed Lentz; Roger Ochsner; Al Rosendahl;
 Dave Rust; Lynn Sandhoefner
Hospitality Team 4: Mark & Trudy Wales; Karen Auel; Bob &
 Suki Vandever
Church Cleaners: Kirkham School Cleaners: Hein

✠ NEXT WEEK AT GRACE ✠

Ushers: Larry Brandt, Roger Brandt, Charles Davis,
 Nick Duehlmeier, Dale Enns, Lynn Sandhoefner,
 Ned Sandhoefner
Counting Team 1: Dan Degnan; Larry Nelson; Phil Radichel;
 Pat Paplow
Hospitality Team 5: Pat & Dawn Paplow; Mike & Pat Dick;
 Frank & Ann Radichel
Church Cleaners: Kirkham School Cleaners: Hein

✠ OUR SCHEDULE ✠

Sun., Jan. 6: 9:00 am – Bible Class & Sunday School
 10:00 am – Worship Service w/Lord's Supper (Epiphany)
 11:15 am – Hospitality
Mon., Jan 7: 10:00 am – MN Pastoral Study Club @ Mankato
Wed., Jan. 9: 4:30 pm – Catechism for Public School Students
Sun., Jan. 13: 9:00 am – Bible Class & Sunday School
 10:00 am – Worship Service
 11:15 am – Hospitality; 12:00 pm – Council Meeting
Sat., Jan. 19: 9:00 am – Quilt Day
Sun., Jan. 20: 11:30 am – Voters & Dorcas Guild Meetings
Sat., Jan. 26: 9:00 am – Grace Work Day

Last Week's Stats: Dec. 30 Sun.: 127 NY Eve: 62

Sun. Offering:	Grace:	\$1,801.00	CLC:	\$551.00
New Years Eve Offering:	Grace:	\$1,390.00	CLC:	\$125.00
Weekly Need:	Grace:	3,030.00	CLC:	960.00
-Under / +Over:	Grace:	+161.00	CLC:	-284.00
Year Total Offering::	Grace:	\$152,538.65	CLC:	\$47,322.00
Year Total Need:	Grace:	157,500.00	CLC:	50,000.00
Year-to-Date (+/-)	Grace:	-4,961.35	CLC:	-2,678.00
Other Offerings:	Living Faith:	0.00	Tuition Aid:	700.00
GLC Other: 666.25	MDF:	0.00	Kinship:	0.00
ILC Student Aid: 4.00	ILC Bldg.:	104.00	IIF: 20.00	CEF: 100.00

\$75 ILC SAF Endowment

Grace Lutheran
Church & School



Worshiped

him.

MATTHEW 2:11