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*Grace Lutheran Church & School*

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Home Page: [www.CLCGraceLutheranChurch.org](http://www.CLCGraceLutheranChurch.org)  
Member: CHURCH OF THE LUTHERAN CONFESSION

Pastor: John Hein (Cell 612-408-1635) Phone: 763-784-8784  
School Phone: 763-784-6340 Grades: 1<sup>st</sup>-8<sup>th</sup>  
Church Year: Advent 2 Date: December 4, 2011

† THE ORDER OF WORSHIP †

**Worship Preparation:** ..... *Psalm 85, TLH p. 140*

**Hymn:** ..... *WS 701: Prepare the Royal Highway*

**Liturgy:** ..... *TLH, p. 15 ff. (Laminated Sheet in Pew Also Available)*

Note: Today we will sing the introit and have the Advent candle lighting in place of the liturgy from pages 16 - 19.

**Introit:** ..... *Tune of TLH 58: O Lord, How Shall I Meet Thee*

Behold, Daughter of Zion, Salvation now draws near;  
The Lord will speak His message That all may rightly hear.  
Grant us a heart with gladness, Shepherd of Israel, dear,  
Thou leadest us like Joseph, With Thee we have no fear.

**Advent Candle Lighting:** ..... *The Bethlehem Candle*

*We light this candle as a symbol of proclamation. This we experience because Christ came to earth at Bethlehem. May the Word sent from God through the apostles and prophets lead us to the way of salvation.*

*O come, O come, Emmanuel!*

**Response:** ..... *TLH 62: Oh, Come, Oh, Come, Emmanuel*

Oh, come, Thou Wisdom from on high,  
And order all things, far and nigh,  
To us the path of knowledge show,  
And cause us in her ways to go.  
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel  
Shall come to thee, O Israel.



**First Reading:** ..... *2 Peter 3:8-14*

This sinful world as we know it will be destroyed on Judgment Day. We look forward to the new eternal paradise God has prepared for those who love Him.

**Gradual:**

P: Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion!  
**C: Shout, daughter of Jerusalem!**  
P: See, your King comes to you,  
**C: Righteous and having salvation.**  
P: Alleluia, Alleluia. Prepare the way for the Lord,  
make straight paths for Him;  
**C: All mankind will see God's salvation! Alleluia.**



**Second Reading:** ..... *Mark 1:1-8*

John the Baptist prepared the people for Christ's coming by preaching a message of repentance.

**Confession of Faith:** ..... *Nicene Creed, TLH p. 22*

**Hymn:** ..... *TLH 63: On Jordan's Banks the Baptist's Cry*

**Sermon:** ..... *Isaiah 40:1-8*

(1) "Comfort, yes, comfort My people!" Says your God. (2) "Speak comfort to Jerusalem, and cry out to her, That her warfare is ended, That her iniquity is pardoned; For she has received from the Lord's hand Double for all her sins." (3) The voice of one crying in the wilderness: "Prepare the way of the LORD; Make straight in the desert A highway for our God. (4) Every valley shall be exalted And every mountain and hill brought low; The crooked places shall be made straight And the rough places smooth; (5) The glory of the LORD shall be revealed, And all flesh shall see it together; For the mouth of the LORD has spoken." (6) The voice said, "Cry out!" And he said, "What shall I cry?" "All flesh is grass, And all its loveliness is like the flower of the field. (7) The grass withers, the flower fades, Because the breath of the LORD blows upon it; Surely the people are grass. (8) The grass withers, the flower fades, But the word of our God stands forever." (NKJV™)

**PREPARING THE HIGHWAY OF OUR HEARTS:  
REPENTANCE**

1. THE CUT OF THE LAW
2. THE FILL OF THE GOSPEL

**Hymn:** ..... *TLH 61: Comfort, Comfort, Ye My People*

**Offertory, Offering, & Prayer:** ..... *TLH p. 22 ff.*

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

**Distribution:** ..... *TLH 314; TLH 65*

**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 †

- ◆ **Among Us:** Elnora Smith returned home this past Wed. and is back to health. May the Lord continue to be with her!
- ◆ **Midweek Advent Services:** On Wednesdays, Dec. 7, 14, and 21, at 7 pm, we will have our series of three midweek services with the theme: “*Stars of Promise.*” Our last midweek service on December 21 will be our annual candlelight service preceded by the congregational Christmas meal at 6 pm.
- ◆ **Christmas Meal:** Please join us for a fellowship meal at 6 pm prior to the Candlelight service on December 21. Dessert is being provided from the Dorcas Guild’s Christmas cookie bake. Those attending may bring sandwiches, salads, or a dish to share. Dorcas Guild group #2 will be serving.
- ◆ **Christmas Eve Rehearsals:** Our children will be rehearsing for the service on the following dates:
  - ◆ Sun., Dec. 4: 12-2 pm (luncheon at church and may start a bit early)
  - ◆ Sun., Dec. 11: 12-2 pm (luncheon at church and may start a bit early)
  - ◆ Sun., Dec. 18: 9-9:45 am (please be here at 8:45 am so that we can start promptly in order to get through everything)

December is a busy month, but please understand the importance of these rehearsals for a successful Christmas Eve service. Each child should attend at least 2 out of the 3 sessions, but attending all three is obviously the most preferable. The children have a wonderful opportunity to express the Good News of our salvation through Jesus Christ. The parents’ help is greatly appreciated to make everything go well, as is evident by how well things have gone the past few years.
- ◆ **Christmas Worship:** Our Christmas Eve service will be held at 6:00 pm with our children presenting the Christmas Gospel. The theme this year is: *The Stars of Christmas.* Christmas Day worship (on a Sunday this year) will be held at 10:00 am. May the Morning Star of Jesus Christ arise in your own heart this Christmas!
- ◆ **ILC Recital:** The ILC music teachers extend an invitation to attend the student Piano/Organ Recital next Sunday, Dec. 11, at 3:00 p.m. in the ILC Fieldhouse.
- ◆ **ILC Christmas Concert:** This year’s Christmas concert will be held on Fri., Dec. 16, 7:30 pm, at Messiah Lutheran in Eau Claire, WI. For those who wish to sign up for a ride on the bus, there is a signup list for the trip.
- ◆ **Northtown Concert:** It has been decided not to have the school participate in the Northtown Concert this year.
- ◆ **Catechism Class:** Class will be suspended on Dec. 28 for the Christmas break. Class will resume on Jan. 4.

- ◆ **Thanks:** Alice Weibye would like to thank her fellow Christians for sharing expressions of love and encouragement through the cards that were sent to her and the prayers that were in her behalf. She says, “God bless you all.” Alice is at home after her hip injury.
- ◆ **2012 Cleaning:** The 2012 cleaning sign-up list is now posted on the bulletin board in the fellowship hall. Please consider signing up.
- ◆ **Nomination Slate for 2012:**
  - President: Al Rosendahl
  - Vice President: Eli Wales
  - Secretary: Jack Kirkham
  - Treasurer: Paul Lentz
  - Elder: Phil Radichel, Dave Rust
  - Education: Roger Ochsner, Michael Ude
  - Trustee: Ryan Oman, Brandt Wendland
- ◆ **From the Elders:** All loose offerings collected during December will be distributed equally among the congregation’s called workers.
- ◆ **News from ILC President Pfeiffer:** I am pleased to announce that the Board of Regents of Immanuel Lutheran College has authorized the hiring Paul Heinze as our Facilities Manager. In addition, they have authorized the hiring of Ronald Porath as our assistant maintenance worker. We are thankful that the Lord has provided His Church with two able servants and pray that He will bless their labor.
- ◆ **2012 Mission Helper Trip to East Africa:** The application deadline is just over a month away. Please go to: <http://mht.lutheranmissions.org/> to download an application and to find more information.

### ◆ Sunday School Memory Work: Christmas Eve Group Parts

**Last Week’s Stats:** Nov. 27, 2011 Sun.: 105 S.S.: 19 B.Cl.: 50

Sun. Offering:	Grace:	\$2,375.69	CLC:	\$585.00
Weekly Need:	Grace:	2,850.00	CLC:	960.00
-Under / +Over:	Grace:	-474.31	CLC:	-375.00
Year-to-Date Offering::	Grace:	\$137,895.12	CLC:	\$44,044.00
Year-to-Date Need:	Grace:	136,800.00	CLC:	46,080.00
Year-to-Date (+/-)	Grace:	+1,095.12	CLC:	-2,036.00
Other Offerings:	Living Faith:	100.00	Tuition Aid:	420.00
GLC Other: 406.00	MDF:	0.00	Kinship:	50.00
ILC Student Aid: 50.00	ILC Bldg.	135.00	IIF: 0.00	CEF: 0.00

## Repentance

The change of mind from a rebellious state to one of harmony with the will of God, from trusting in human merit to trusting in the merit of Christ. It embraces contrition, consciousness and conviction of sin, accompanied by the sorrow for it, and above all, faith, which is followed by renunciation of the former walks and habits of life and sanctification. Repentance is a total change of heart and life, its author being God Himself (Jer. 31:18 f.; Acts 26:29; 5:31). The means to repentance is the Word of God. (Lutheran Cyclopedia).

## CHRISTMAS 2011

As Christmas approaches many people are waiting with anticipation for the season. We can fairly say that not all are anticipating the season for the same reasons.

We would like to hope that all who profess the Christian faith are anticipating it for the reason that it is the celebration of the birth of God the Father's gift to us in the person of His Son. But we are not sure that even all Christians remember what or Who Christmas is about.

While we as confessing Christians engage in the same preparations and many of the same activities that characterize Christmas celebrations of others, we choose to believe that *our* Christmas celebration is established upon the solid foundation of God's Word. We celebrate Christmas because it is the celebration of the birth of our Savior into the world. It is not insignificant that what we celebrate is the entrance into the world of God become flesh as John was moved to write. "And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us ..." (John 1:14).

The necessity of Jesus' miraculous conception (Isaiah 7:14, Matthew 1:23), and His subsequent birth in Bethlehem calls our attention to the faithfulness of God. Mary's husband's reaction to what he had heard from the angel was that he was "minded to put her away secretly" (Matthew 1: 19). Surely we can believe that Joseph who was a devout man knew the prophecies of the Old Testament. But the announcement of the moment caught him unawares, and overwhelmed him. As he thought on these things, he came to understand that "*All this was done that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the Lord through the prophet ...*" (Matthew 1:22). Specific reference is made to Isaiah 7:14 that the virgin would conceive a child, and bear a Son whose name would be Immanuel—"God with us" (Matthew 1:23). "God with us" is one and the same as He who was called Jesus, so named "for He shall save His people from their sins" (Matthew 1:21).

Thus God the Father fulfilled the promise made first to Adam and Eve in the garden, a promise reiterated throughout the Old Testament. The work of the Son of God was declared in the Old Testament in word and through prophetic pictures as in the sacrifices, the deliverance of Israel from Egypt, the Sabbath, and the casting forth of Jonah from the belly of the sea creature. Christmas tells us that God is faithful who has promised! Jesus came according to the will and Word of God. Jesus fulfilled the purpose for which He came—He died and rose again that we might be reconciled unto the Father and have eternal life through Him.

In the Old Testament age the promise of a Savior from sin was meaningful only to those who acknowledged the desperate situation in which mankind found itself after the fall. The celebration of the Savior's birth is meaningful today only to those who know that by reason of sin they are lost and condemned creatures. The celebration of Christmas by those who do not recognize their sin is nothing but a charade. Only people who are willing to say with Paul, "O wretched man that I am! Who will deliver me from this body of death? I thank God—through Jesus Christ our Lord!"—only they can celebrate Christmas with meaning and appreciation. They will celebrate it because the Savior from sin was born, and they will celebrate it with thanksgiving because it declares the *faithfulness* of God the Father.

Our existence in this present world is fraught with every manner of discouragement, fear, evil, affliction, and danger. It has never been any different. But what has sustained God's people is the assurance of God's grace in Christ, the certainty of His presence among us in His Word and sacrament. The promise of His abiding presence sustains us through the evil days. For us now there is nothing for which to wait more eagerly than the fulfillment of the final deliverance to eternal life through the merit of Jesus. For this blessing we wait with certainty because *God Who promised is faithful* (1 Corinthians 1:9, 2 Thessalonians 3:3, 2 Timothy 2:13)!

As in spirit and faith we remember and mediate at the manger side of our Lord Jesus Christ this Christmas, may we see there God's promise kept, as well as the confirmation of every promise that the Lord has made to us. In the face of Jesus Who has redeemed us—body and soul—we have evidence of that which is recorded in the book of Joshua (21:45), "Not a word failed of any good thing which the Lord had spoken to the house of Israel. All came to pass." In the face of Jesus we see the smiling face of God.

You troubled and waiting souls, look into the manger, and believe. There is *your* Savior from sin. There is He Who shall bear you up on angel's wings to heaven. "Beloved, now we are children of God; and it has not yet been revealed what we shall be, but we *know* that when He is revealed, we shall be like Him, for *we shall see Him* as He is" (1 John 3:2). As that which has come to pass, so shall all that is yet promised! Thanks be to God for His promise, and His faithfulness!

Written by Rev. Daniel Fleischer, 12/2011

† **TODAY AT GRACE** †

Organist: Sue Nelson                      Elder: Frank Radichel  
Ushers: Larry Brandt, Roger Brandt, Nick Duehlmeier, Dale  
Enns, Lynn Sandhoefner  
Counting Team 3: Don Auel; Brian Eichstadt; Jack  
Kirkham; Benno Sydow; Michael Ude  
Hospitality Team 5: Pat & Dawn Paplow; Mike & Pat Dick;  
Frank & Ann Radichel

Church Cleaners: Kitzman              School: Wales

† **NEXT WEEK AT GRACE** †

Ushers: Pat Paplow, Gerald Anderson, Dan Degnan, Ryan  
Oman, Brandon Paplow, Andrew Rosendahl  
Counting Team 4: Ed Lentz; Roger Ochsner; Al Rosendahl;  
Dave Rust; Lynn Sandhoefner  
Hospitality Team 6: Richard & Shauna Rhinesmith; Brian &  
Maureen Eichstadt; Brandt Wendland; Eli & Laura Wales  
Church Cleaners: Kitzman              School: Baker

† **OUR SCHEDULE** †

**Today:** 9:00 am – Bible Class & Sunday School  
10:00 am –Worship Service w/Lord's Supper  
11:15 am – Hospitality  
12-2 pm – Christmas Eve Rehearsal  
**Wed., Dec. 7:** 4:00 pm – Catechism for Public School Students  
7:00 pm – Midweek Advent Worship  
**Sun., Dec. 11:** 8:30 am – Choir Practice  
9:00 am – Bible Class & Sunday School  
10:00 am – Worship Service  
11:15 am – Hospitality  
12-2 pm – Christmas Eve Rehearsal  
3:00 pm – ILC Piano & Organ Recital  
**Wed., Dec. 14:** 7:00 pm – Midweek Advent Worship  
**Fri., Dec. 16:** 7:30 pm – ILC Christmas Concert  
**Sun., Dec. 18:** 9:00 am – Christmas Eve Rehearsal  
12:00 pm – Council Meeting  
**Wed., Dec. 21:** 6:00 pm – Congregational Christmas Dinner  
7:00 pm – Candlelight Worship  
**Sat., Dec. 24:** 6:00 pm – Christmas Eve Worship  
**Sun., Dec. 25:** 10:00 am – Christmas Day Worship

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