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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) Phone: 763-784-8784
School Phone: 763-784-6340 Grades: Kindergarten-8th
Church Year: Advent 3 Date: December 16, 2012

✠ **THE ORDER OF WORSHIP** ✠

Worship Preparation: Psalm 130, TLH p. 153

Hymn: TLH 66: Hark the Glad Sound! The Savior Comes

Liturgy: TLH, p. 5 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 6 - 9.

Introit: Tune of TLH 58: O Lord, How Shall I Meet Thee
Rejoice, rejoice, ye Christians, Again I say: Rejoice!
Lead lives of moderation, The Savior is at hand;
Be full of care for nothing, Address the Lord in prayer.
He leads us out of prison, Brings Jacob safely there.

Advent Candle Lighting: The Shepherd Candle
We light this candle as a symbol of joy. This we experience as Christ comes into our hearts. May the joyful promise of Your presence, O God, make us rejoice in our hope of salvation, just as it did for the shepherds that first Christmas night!
O come, O come, Emmanuel!

Response: TLH 62, st. 3: Oh, Come, Oh, Come, Emmanuel
Oh, come, Thou Dayspring from on high,
And cheer us by Thy drawing nigh;
Disperse the gloomy clouds of night,
And death's dark shadows put to flight.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel
Shall come to thee, O Israel.



First Reading: Zephaniah 3:14-17
Rejoice, dear Christians, for the Lord will be in our midst.

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. I will send My messenger ahead of You,
C: Who will prepare Your way before You. Alleluia.



Second Reading: **Philippians 4:4-7**

Rejoice, dear Christians, patiently waiting on the Lord.

Confession of Faith: **Apostolic Creed, TLH p. 12**

Hymn: **TLH 75: Ye Sons of Men, Oh, Hearken**

Sermon: **Luke 3:7-18**

⁷Then he said to the multitudes that came out to be baptized by him, "Brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the wrath to come? ⁸Therefore bear fruits worthy of repentance, and do not begin to say to yourselves, 'We have Abraham as our father.' For I say to you that God is able to raise up children to Abraham from these stones. ⁹And even now the ax is laid to the root of the trees. Therefore every tree which does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire." ¹⁰So the people asked him, saying, "What shall we do then?" ¹¹He answered and said to them, "He who has two tunics, let him give to him who has none; and he who has food, let him do likewise." ¹²Then tax collectors also came to be baptized, and said to him, "Teacher, what shall we do?" ¹³And he said to them, "Collect no more than what is appointed for you." ¹⁴Likewise the soldiers asked him, saying, "And what shall we do?" So he said to them, "Do not intimidate anyone or accuse falsely, and be content with your wages." ¹⁵Now as the people were in expectation, and all reasoned in their hearts about John, whether he was the Christ or not, ¹⁶John answered, saying to all, "I indeed baptize you with water; but One mightier than I is coming, whose sandal strap I am not worthy to loose. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. ¹⁷His winnowing fan is in His hand, and He will thoroughly clean out His threshing floor, and gather the wheat into His barn; but the chaff He will burn with unquenchable fire." ¹⁸And with many other exhortations he preached to the people. (NKJVTM)

"GET YOUR TREE READY FOR CHRISTMAS"

Offertory: TLH p. 12 f.

Hymn: TLH 89: To Thee My Heart I Offer

Offering, Prayers, Benediction: TLH p. 14

Hymn: TLH 85, st. 13-15: From Heaven Above to Earth I Come

✠ THE ANNOUNCEMENTS ✠

- ◆ **Candlelight Worship:** This Wednesday at 7 pm will be our annual candlelight service with hymns and Bible readings. We continue our meditations on Silent Night! Holy Night! Christ the Savior is born!
- ◆ **Christmas Meal:** Please join us for a fellowship meal at 6 pm prior to the Candlelight service this Wednesday. Those attending may bring sandwiches, salads, desserts, or a dish to share.
- ◆ **Christmas Eve Service:** This is the remaining rehearsal schedule:
 - ◆ Sun., Dec. 16: 12-2 pm (luncheon at church and may start a bit early)
 - ◆ Sun., Dec. 23: 8:45-9:45 am (please be here at 8:45 am so that we can start promptly in order to get through everything)
- ◆ **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 Cross in the Christmas Tree*. Christmas Day worship will be held at 10:00 am.
- ◆ **2013 Cleaning:** The 2013 cleaning sign-up list is now posted on the bulletin board in the fellowship hall. Please consider signing up.
- ◆ **Catechism Class:** Class will be suspended on Dec. 26 and Jan. 2 for the Christmas break. Class will resume on Jan. 9.
- ◆ **ILC Christmas Concert:** This year's Christmas concert is this Fri., Dec. 21, 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 sign-up list for the trip. Plans are for the bus to depart around 4:45 pm.
- ◆ **From the Elders:** All loose offerings collected during December will be distributed equally among the congregation's called workers.
- ◆ **CLC News:** Pastor Thomas Schuetze has returned the call to Rock of Ages in Grand Rapids, MI.
- ◆ **Sunday School Memory Work:** Christmas Eve Service



Last Week's Stats: Dec. 9, 2012 Sun.: 89 S.S.: 13 B.Cl.:37 Wed.: 54			
Sun. Offering:	Grace:	\$2,301.50	CLC: \$687.00
Sun. Offering:	Grace:	\$300.00	CLC: \$50.00
Weekly Need:	Grace:	3,030.00	CLC: 960.00
-Under / +Over:	Grace:	-428.50	CLC: -223.00
Year-to-Date Offering::	Grace:	\$142,888.07	CLC: \$43,215.00
Year-to-Date Need:	Grace:	151,500.00	CLC: 48,000.00
Year-to-Date (+/-)	Grace:	-8,611.93	CLC: -4,785.00
Other Offerings:	Living Faith:	0.00	Tuition Aid: 350.00
GLC Other: 300.00	MDF:	0.00	Kinship: 50.00
ILC Student Aid: 20.00	ILC Bldg.	30.00	IIF: 0.00 CEF: 0.00

Also \$30 Ruth Sydow Memorial to SAF Endowment

ANOTHER MASS MURDER THIS WEEK –

Words cannot express the awful horror experienced in the Connecticut city where a young man (20-years-old and said to have a personality disorder) murdered his mother at home, then entered the kindergarten classroom where his mother had been a teacher, shooting to death 20 children and eight others on the school staff. After the rampage, the killer killed himself.

A number of Scriptures come to mind, including: *“But we know that the law is good if one uses it lawfully, knowing this: that the law is not made for a righteous person, but for the lawless and insubordinate, for the ungodly and for sinners, for the unholy and profane, for murderers of fathers and murderers of mothers, for manslayers, for fornicators, for sodomites, for kidnappers, for liars, for perjurers, and if there is any other thing that is contrary to sound doctrine, according to the glorious gospel of the blessed God...”* (1 Timothy 1:8-11).

The grief of the parents and others who suffered the loss of loved ones is beyond what we ourselves can conceive. Doubtless, psychoanalysts and school grief counselors will be doing what they always do, seeking to discover and explain reasons for such a barbaric act. But apart from Holy Scripture nothing the god-less, unbelieving worldly/secular/humanistic counselors come up with will get to the bottom of the problem of such violence in our culture-of-death society. Bible-believing Christians, on the other hand, know the root cause of such violence and thus can begin to understand it and, with that, prescribe the solution to such senseless slaughter.

It was and is more than just a “Bible story.” Think of the grief and trauma our very first parents, Adam and Eve, experienced when their very first son Cain murdered their second son Abel (Genesis 4). Contributing to their grief and trauma had to be that the parents knew it was their own disobedience and fall into sin (Genesis 3) that had brought death into the world. What their killer-son did could be and had to be traced to the sin they passed along to him! Still today, the disobedience of Adam and Eve is the root cause of all sin, including murder.

When Jesus the Savior wanted His own disciples to realize what it was that “defiled” a man, He told them: *“Out of the [sinful] heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies....”* (Matt. 15:19f). The sad and holy truth then is that it is the heart of all unregenerate people—and our own sinful nature as Christians!—which gives birth to the most vicious and heinous of crimes, including murder.

Recognition and acceptance of this ugly truth suggests the (only!) solution to sin and all its consequences and ramifications. That solution is the gospel of Jesus Christ which teaches how it is that sinners become “righteous,” that is, through a new birth which creates faith in the Savior.

Council Meeting Notes – November 18, 2012

The meeting was opened with prayer. Minutes of the October 7 meeting were approved as read, with minor corrections. Treasurer Paul Lentz was absent. The report will be submitted at the next meeting.

Pastor's report:

- Remi Vandever was baptized 10/28 during the worship service.
- Andrew Vandever publicly confessed his sin of fornication before the congregation on 10/28.

Elders' report:

- Al Rosendahl observed that Alvin Jask's relatives seemed to be having trouble following the worship service. Discussion followed about things that could be done to make it easier for new people and visitors to follow the service. The projection project would likely help.
- The possibility was discussed of mounting a projector on the ceiling in the fellowship hall.

Board of Education report:

- Playground slides are broken. They will be replaced with monies gained through the labels and box tops fund.
- A survey will be taken to ascertain the reasons people do or do not send their children to Grace School.

Trustees report:

- The fall clean-up went well.
- A comment was made that the pavers around the shed looked great.
- The mower battery still drains quickly after a full charge. Discussion of wiring the shed with 110 volt service.
- The water heater is still causing the hot water to have a bad odor.
- The deck needs treatment.

Old Business:

- A review of the Voters Roster and attendance was conducted. A recommendation will be brought to the Jan. meeting. Discussion regarding the recent failure to reach a Voters quorum. Should the quorum be reduced? Should the meeting time be moved to immediately after worship service? Should attendance expectations be raised?
- Christmas Eve rehearsals will commence. It was agreed that a light lunch should be served before each rehearsal, and should be funded by the elders budget.

New Business: None.

Based on Minutes submitted by Jack Kirkham, Secretary

The law--whether of man or of God!--can only check or restrain sin to a degree. Truly, *"the law [of God] is good if a one uses it lawfully,"* but the law cannot change or alter the sinful human heart. That is the gospel's domain, for it teaches, *"If anyone is in Christ, he is a new creature, old things are passed away, behold all things are become new"* (2 Cor. 5:17). The new birth brought about through the regenerating work of the Holy Spirit in the sacrament of Holy Baptism (Titus 3:5-7) instills a new and clean heart. By the same Spirit God's reborn children are able to "rule" over the sin within. *"The LORD said to Cain, Why are you angry? And why has your countenance fallen? If you do well, will you not be accepted? And if you do not do well, sin lies at the door. And its desire is for you, but you should rule over it"* (Gen. 4:6f). Allowing his sin to rule him, Cain's angry rage snuffed out the life of his brother.

Consider also King David. Himself guilty of adultery and murder (2 Sam. 11), David was led by the Holy Spirit to record the only solution to his on-going sin problem (which remains the problem of all descendants of Adam and Eve). The king turned to God in contrition and repentance, pleading: *"Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me...Deliver me from the guilt of bloodshed, O God, the God of my salvation, and my tongue shall sing aloud of Your righteousness"* (51:10,14).

For sure, it is not God's fault when such horrific things as mass murders happen. God has been and remains a loving and merciful God. By His grace He has also provided the solution to the "sin problem" within and across this evil, fallen world. That solution is His gospel with its teaching of a Savior from sin and of a Spirit who enables "born-again" sinners to crucify their sinful flesh (Gal. 5:14), thus by the Spirit's power "ruling" over the sin within.

As such scriptural truths help to explain the "why?" behind mass murders, the same Holy Scriptures are the place to turn for the victims—and for you and me as we all languish under the anguish of sin's ugly consequences. Jesus Christ was born to die for us. Jesus overcame sin and death by willingly enduring the horror of God-forsakenness and (innocent!) crucifixion for us. He, our Wonderful Counselor, invites the broken-hearted to come to Him for healing, saying: *"Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest"* (Matt. 11:28).

Rev. Paul Fleischer, 12/2012

The following is the nomination slate for 2013:

- President: Al Rosendahl
- Vice President: Eli Wales
- Secretary: Jack Kirkham
- Treasurer: Brian Bergstrom, Roger Ochsner
- Elder: Frank Radichel, Brandt Wendland
- Education: Alex Baker, Ole Olmanson, Brandt Wendland
- Trustee: Brandon Paplow, Bill Rust, Lyle Trulin

✠ TODAY AT GRACE ✠

Organist: Sue Nelson

Elder: Larry Nelson

Ushers: David Stifter, Scott Baker, Al Rosendahl,
Dylan Stifter, Lyle Trulin, Michael Ude

Counting Team 1: Dan Degnan; Larry Nelson; Phil Radichel;
Pat Paplow

Hospitality Team 1: Phil & Jackie Radichel; Lynn & Janice
Sandhoefner

Church Cleaners: Brad Kitzman School Cleaners: Flesner

✠ NEXT WEEK AT GRACE ✠

Ushers: David Stifter, Scott Baker, Al Rosendahl,
Dylan Stifter, Lyle Trulin, Michael Ude

Counting Team 2: Gary Gunther; Bill Rust; Bob Vandever;
Clint Welker; Mark Wales

Hospitality Team 2: Janelle Hein; Chris Lentz; Jenny
Kleifgen

Church Cleaners: Brad Kitzman School Cleaners: Flesner

✠ OUR SCHEDULE ✠

- Sun., Dec. 16:** 9:00 am – Bible Class & Sunday School
10:00 am – Worship Service (Advent 3)
11:15 am – Hospitality
12:00-2:00 pm – Christmas Eve Rehearsal
- Wed., Dec. 19:** 4:30-6:15 pm – Catechism for Public School Students
6:00 pm – Congregational Christmas Dinner
7:00 pm – Candlelight Worship
- Thu., Dec. 20:** 2:00 pm – Christian Day School Concert at Northtown Mall
- Fri., Dec. 21:** Grace School Christmas Party
4:45 pm – ILC Christmas Concert Bus Departs
7:30 pm – ILC Christmas Concert @ Messiah in Eau Claire
- Sun., Dec. 23:** 8:30 am – Choir Practice
8:45 am – Christmas Eve Rehearsal
9:00 am – Bible Class
10:00 am – Worship Service (Advent 4)
11:15 am – Hospitality
12:00 pm – Council Meeting
- Mon., Dec. 24:** 6:00 pm – Christmas Eve Worship
- Tue., Dec. 25:** 10:00 am – Christmas Day Worship
- Sun., Dec. 30:** 10:00 am – Worship Service
(Bible Class, Sunday School, Hospitality suspended)
- Mon., Dec. 31:** 7:00 pm – New Years Eve Worship w/Lord's Supper

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“GET YOUR TREE READY FOR CHRISTMAS”