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Grace Lutheran Church & School



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Home Page: www.CLCGraceLutheranChurch.org

Member: CHURCH OF THE LUTHERAN CONFESSION



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

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Grades: Kindergarten-8th

Church Year: Advent 4

Date: December 23, 2012

✠ THE ORDER OF WORSHIP ✠

Worship Preparation: Psalm 85, TLH p. 140

Hymn: TLH 90: Come, Your Hearts and Voices Raising

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
Drop down with grace, ye heavens, Drop down now from above.
And let the skies show favor With righteousness and love.
Let earth bring forth salvation, Let His bright light arise!
The heav'ns declare His glory, The firmament His praise.

Advent Candle Lighting: The Angel Candle

We light this candle as a symbol of purity. This we will experience when the pure and holy angels accompany Jesus' coming again on the last day. May the visitation of Your Holy Spirit, O God, purify us that we may be ready for the coming of Jesus, our hope and joy.

O come, O come, Emmanuel!

Response: TLH 62, st. 4: Oh, Come, Oh, Come, Emmanuel

Oh, come, Thou Key of David, come
And open wide our heav'nly home;
Make safe the way that leads on high
And close the path to misery.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel
Shall come to thee, O Israel.



First Reading: Micah 5:2-5a

Even in the Old Testament there is a clear prophesy that the Savior would be born in Bethlehem. He would rule as the Shepherd of His people.

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. The virgin will be with Child and give birth to a Son,

C: And they will call His name Immanuel, God with us. Alleluia.



Second Reading: Hebrews 10:5-10

Christ became flesh to fulfill the will of God the Father. Ultimately, this was fulfilled by becoming the necessary sacrifice for sin. Even when we ponder the manger at Bethlehem, the cross at Calvary stands on the horizon.

Confession of Faith: Apostolic Creed, TLH p. 12

Hymn: TLH 274, st. 1-2, 4-6: Praise We the Lord This Day

Sermon: Luke 1:39-45

³⁹ Now Mary arose in those days and went into the hill country with haste, to a city of Judah, ⁴⁰ and entered the house of Zacharias and greeted Elizabeth. ⁴¹ And it happened, when Elizabeth heard the greeting of Mary, that the babe leaped in her womb; and Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit. ⁴² Then she spoke out with a loud voice and said, "Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb! ⁴³ But why is this granted to me, that the mother of my Lord should come to me? ⁴⁴ For indeed, as soon as the voice of your greeting sounded in my ears, the babe leaped in my womb for joy. ⁴⁵ Blessed is she who believed, for there will be a fulfillment of those things which were told her from the Lord." (NKJVTM)

"A MOMENTOUS FAMILY GET-TOGETHER AT CHRISTMAS"

Offertory: TLH p. 12 f.

Hymn: TLH 98: Of the Father's Love Begotten

Offering, Prayers, Benediction: TLH p. 14

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

Welcome to our guests and visitors. We appreciate the opportunity to share God's Word with you today. Please come again! Those interested in learning more about the Scriptures and our doctrinal position, please speak with Pastor Hein. He would be delighted to visit with you!

✠ THE ANNOUNCEMENTS ✠

- ♦ **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. Come and worship the newborn King!
- ♦ **Video Tape:** A reminder that we are having a Christmas Eve service instead of a Christmas Eve program. Therefore, we ask that parents and friends avoid taking flash pictures and videotaping during this service so that the focus remains on the joyous message of our Savior's birth. Our Christmas Eve service will be discreetly videotaped and made available by request. If you are interested in a copy, please speak with Pastor, Frank Radichel, or Rick Nelson. Your cooperation is greatly appreciated.
- ♦ **Christmas Greetings:** Various Christmas greetings are posted on the bulletin board outside pastor's office. They are from some of the church bodies around the world with whom we are in fellowship.
- ♦ **New Years Eve:** On New Years Eve we will be having a worship service along with the Lord's Supper. Afterward the congregation is invited to a party in the fellowship hall. Please bring an appetizer to share along with any of your favorite games. Sparkling cider will be provided. If you have any questions, please speak with Trudy Wales.
- ♦ **Among Us:** Last weekend Marvin Wagner was hospitalized with pneumonia and heart problems. He has returned home. Charlotte Dick, Michael's mother, passed away on Dec. 13 and the funeral was this past week. Charlotte was a member at our sister congregation, Holy Cross in Phoenix, AZ. May the certain hope of the resurrection comfort the family at this time. Michael's address: 1953 130th Lane NW; Coon Rapids, MN 55448. Viola Schweikert fell and broke her femur recently. She is 104 years old. She is now a permanent resident at the New Brighton Care Center. However, the family requests no visitors at this time. Cards can be sent to her at: 805 6th Ave. NW; New Brighton, MN 55112. Also, this past week Pal Dauer broke her leg. She is hospitalized at North Memorial in Robbinsdale. Curt Miesen is now being treated at the Univ. Medical Center for a blood clot in his lung. This will temporarily delay the plan to try an experimental treatment for his leukemia. Former Grace member, Peter Fleischer, has been weakening and his health has been deteriorating. He is also unable to receive any more treatment for his cancer. May the Lord continue to tend to Peter's spiritual needs and strengthen His faith through the Word which he has dearly treasured. Peter's address: 19824 515th Ave.; Lake Crystal, MN 56055-2181. Jack and Sue Anne Kirkham also request prayers for Cynthia Huerta, their 15-year-old grandniece in Mexico who is undergoing chemotherapy for a large tumor on her spine. There are obviously a number of things for which to pray. We do so with the confidence that the peace which Christ came to bring at Christmas will be that which fills the hearts of His people during this blessed season.

FROM THE MARTIN LUTHER CHRISTMAS BOOK

"And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host." ... They were "praising God, and saying, Glory to God in the highest."

See what God did in heaven about this birth which the world despised and did not even see and know. The joy was so great that the angels could not stay in heaven, but had to break out and tell man on earth. The angels proclaimed to the shepherds "tidings of great joy." This is a mighty comfort to us. What the world despised the angels honored. They would have had a much bigger celebration if God had allowed them, but he wished to teach us through His Son to despise the pomp of the world.

All the angels in heaven, not one excepted, sang, "Glory to God in the highest." What a shame that all men should not preach this word when all the angels in heaven play it on organs and pipes in eternity! The angels had no bigger congregation than two shepherds in a field. They were filled with too great joy for words. And we who hear this message, "Behold I bring you good tidings," never feel one spark of joy. I hate myself because when I see Him laid in the manger, in the lap of His mother, and hear the angels sing, my heart does not leap into flame. With what good reason should we all despise ourselves that remain so cold when this word is spoken to us over which all men should dance and leap and burn for joy! We act as though it were a frigid, historical fact that does not smite our hearts, as if someone were merely relating that the sultan has a crown of gold.

"And on earth peace," sang the angels, "good will toward men." The Kingdom of Christ is a proclamation of peace and grace, as the angels sang that He should be the Savior of the whole world to free His people and save them from their sins. That He has done and still is doing. He is not the sort of Lord who fights with the sword and has to do with civil government. Rather He rules with the gracious preaching of peace. For that reason He is called Jesus, meaning a Savior who helps His people to turn and be saved. We have often explained, and again explain, how to understand the Kingdom of our Lord; how to distinguish the spiritual and the temporal realms; that this Lord Christ does not build castles, towns, and villages like an emperor, king, or elector of Saxony, or even like me in my own household, but he saves his people from their sins. This is a fair, dear, and precious assurance to troubled and tormented consciences laden with sins, that to them and to us all a Child is born who will rule and vindicate, who will help, and not destroy, murder, strangle, or kill.

The following is the nomination slate for 2013:
<ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ 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

“ON EARTH PEACE ...” declared the angels to the shepherds on the night of the Savior’s birth. In view of the use that is made of that message of the angels, particularly at Christmas time, how shall we understand the expression? Does the angelic declaration of peace on earth refer to some millennial peace during which time Jesus is allegedly to return and set up His kingdom on earth? Or does it refer to a cessation of war and violence of nation against nation and people against people?

The first suggestion of millennial peace we reject because the very premise of a millennial rule of Christ on earth is contrary to Scripture! The second sounds more appealing because who does not want war and violence to end? And most assuredly we pray for peace between nations and an end to violence of men and against men. David said in the 34th Psalm “Depart from evil and do good; seek peace and pursue it” (Psalm 34:14). However, when has there ever been peace on earth for which society yearns? When has there not been war somewhere on the globe? When has there not been violence since the time that Cain murdered Abel? Were the angels speaking an empty hope on the Bethlehem fields? No, because the interpretation society places on the message is wrong.

The temporal peace for which men yearn will at best always be a temporary peace, if ever it exists at all. The peace for which society yearns will not be unless all men everywhere acknowledge and repent of their sin before the holy God and understand the meaning of that which the heavenly messengers proclaimed. This is outside the realm of possibility in a godless world.

What is the basic reason of unrest and lack of peace in the world? The reason lies in man’s rebellion against God. God is not the author of evil. He did not introduce rebellion, war, and violence into the world. Man did. Man bowed to the will and deceit of the devil and sinned. With man’s sin came all the evil from which society now seeks relief.

Relief from the evils in the world can only occur if the heart of man is changed for Scripture says, “Out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies” (Matthew 15:19). Unless sinners recognize the reality of the evil heart, repent of their sins, and believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, things will continue as they are in the world. Indeed Scripture tells us that in the last times the downhill spiral will continue and accelerate. So were the angels “blowing smoke?” No!



The peace of which the angels sang was not an empty hope. They sang of peace which finds its substance in connection with Jesus. “Unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, Who is Christ the Lord” (Luke 2: 11). Jesus was the Father’s answer to the sin problem. The wall of separation that separated fallen man from God with the consequence that there is no peace to the wicked was knocked down by the Christ, the Son of God. Jesus removed the wall through taking the sin of mankind upon Himself, taking it to the cross, and shedding His blood for the sins of the world. Thus Paul says, “God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not imputing their trespasses to them” (2 Corinthians 5:15).

The peace of which the angels spoke was the peace that fills the heart that upon confession of sin believes that Jesus made our peace with God. The peace of the angel’s song is the peace that passes all understanding. It is the peace, the quietness, the rest from fear which Jesus pronounced to the disciples saying, “Peace I leave with you, My peace I give unto you; not as the world gives do I give unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid” (John 14: 27). Note this significant word of the Lord, “These things I have spoken to you that in Me you may have peace: in the world you will have tribulation, but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world” (John 16:33). Peace in the midst of tribulation!

The disciples indeed had tribulation. In this world of sin we have tribulation. Through much tribulation we enter the kingdom of God (Acts 14:22). The world hated Christ; it hates those who are Christ’s. Paul tells us that the Thessalonians endured persecutions and tribulations (2 Thessalonians 1:4). Through the ages the blood of Christian martyrs has flowed.

“Peace on earth” was not a prediction of the cessation of trial, affliction, sorrow, or even death. It is the peace that comes in connection with Christ’s atonement; it is a peace that fills the heart of the believer who finds comfort in knowing that he is redeemed. And that he is known by the Father (Isaiah 43:1). It is the peace that fills the heart of those who confess, “The Lord is my light and my salvation. Whom shall I fear? The Lord is the strength of my life ... (Psalm 27:1).

The angels were not predicting a peace in some distant time in the future. Of what benefit would that have been to the shepherds? Jesus did not speak to His disciples of some distant peace. He, the Prince of Peace, spoke of an immediate peace in the Lord Jesus. We need not wait for peace of heaven which lies in our future. We have peace now through the Gospel; peace now in Christ while the whole world without Christ is quaking in fear.

“Now may the Lord of peace Himself give you peace always in every way. The Lord be with you all” (2 Thessalonians 3:16).

✠ TODAY AT GRACE ✠

Organist: **Maureen Ochsner** Elder: **Larry Nelson**
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**

✠ NEXT WEEK AT GRACE ✠

Ushers: **David Stifter, Scott Baker, Al Rosendahl,**
 Dylan Stifter, Lyle Trulin, Michael Ude
Counting Team 3: **Don Auel; Brian Eichstadt; Jack**
 Kirkham; Benno Sydow; Brandt Wendland
Church Cleaners: **Brad Kitzman** School Cleaners: **None**

✠ OUR SCHEDULE ✠

Sun., Dec. 23: 8:45 am – Christmas Eve Rehearsal
 9:00 am – Bible Class
 10:00 am – Worship Service (Advent 4)
 11:15 am – Hospitality
 3:00 pm – Caroling
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
 8:00 pm – New Years Eve Party
Sun., Jan. 6: 8:30 am – Choir Practice
 9:00 am – Bible Class & Sunday School
 10:00 am – Worship Service (Advent 4)
 11:15 am – Hospitality

Last Week's Stats: Dec. 16, 2012 Sun.: 113 S.S.: 15 B.Cl.:42 Wed.: 81

Sun. Offering:	Grace:	\$2,531.00	CLC:	\$971.00
Wed. Offering:	Grace:	\$470.00	CLC:	\$200.00
Weekly Need:	Grace:	3,030.00	CLC:	960.00
-Under / +Over:	Grace:	-29.00	CLC:	+211.00
Year-to-Date Offering::	Grace:	\$145,889.07	CLC:	\$44,386.00
Year-to-Date Need:	Grace:	154,530.00	CLC:	48,960.00
Year-to-Date (+/-)	Grace:	-8,640.93	CLC:	-4,574.00
Other Offerings:	Living Faith:	4.00	Tuition Aid:	320.00
GLC Other: 560.75	MDF:	0.00	Kinship:	50.00
ILC Student Aid: 20.00	ILC Bldg.	100.00	IIF: 4.00	CEF: 0.00

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