

St. John Ev. Lutheran Church

Palmer, Kansas 66962

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December 25, 2024

The Nativity of Our Lord

Welcome to St. John Evangelical Lutheran Church. If you are a guest or visitor with us today, we welcome you and invite you to come and worship with us again. Please take the time to introduce yourself to Pastor Hayes, and we hope to see you again soon.

Remember that the Worship Service begins when you enter. As the Music for Meditation begins, you are invited to join in quiet, preparation time for worship. Before the service, speak to the Lord; during the service, let the Lord speak to you; after the service, speak to one another.

Liturgy - Divine Service Setting Three (pg. 184)

Opening Hymn: 379 "O Come, All Ye Faithful"

Alleluia Hymn: 382 "We Praise You, Jesus, at Your Birth" (replaces Alleluia & Verse)

Gospel Motet: 358 "From Heaven Above to Earth I Come"

**Sung throughout the Gospel reading*

Hymn of the Day: 372 "O Jesus Christ, Thy Manger Is"

Distribution Hymn: 368 "Angels We Have Heard on High"

Distribution Hymn: 380 "Hark! The Herald Angels Sing"

Distribution Hymn: 361 "O Little Town of Bethlehem"

Distribution Hymn: 375 "Come, Your Hearts and Voices Raising"

Closing Hymn: 387 "Joy to the World"

Prayer Requests

Please email prayer requests to Pastor Hayes at pastor.hayes@outlook.com.

Prayer requests will remain for 2 weeks unless you specify a length of time.

Angie Reinert, Marilyn Ohlde, Loraine Oldehoeft, Lorna Heitman, Loren Bott,

JoAnn Ohlde, & Marilynne Ohlde (nursing home)

Acolyte Sun., Dec. 29th - Sophia Hiltgen

Ushers today - *Aaron Stuenkel, Dylan Ohlde, Emmitt Tiemeyer, & Conner Ohlde

Ushers Dec. 29th - *Ryan Stuenkel, Ethan Bott, Mason Tiemeyer, & Noah Thalmann

LYF Fellowship Service Dec. 29th & Jan. 5th - Aiden Sweet & Liam Voelker

From Martin Luther's Sermon for The Principal Feast of the Nativity of Our Lord

This gospel text allows of no other doctrine beside it; it desires only to testify of Christ and lead men to him, who is the Light. Therefore, O Lord God, these words, "He was not the Light," are truly worthy to be capitalized and to be well remembered against the men who set themselves up as the light and give to men doctrines and laws of their own fabrication. They pretend to enlighten men, but lead them with themselves into the depths of hell; for they do not teach faith, and are not willing to teach it; and no one teaches it except John, who is sent of God, and the holy Gospel. Truly much could be said on this point.

In short, he who does not preach the Gospel to you, reject and refuse to hear him. He, however, preaches the Gospel who teaches you to believe and trust in Christ, the eternal Light, and not to build on any of your own works. Therefore beware of everything told you that does not agree with the Gospel; do not put your trust in it, nor accept it as some- thing external, as you regard eating and drinking, which are necessary for your body, and which you may use at your pleasure or at the pleasure of another; but by no means as something necessary to your salvation. For this purpose nothing is necessary or of use to you except this Light.

O, these abominable doctrines of men, which are now so prevalent and which have almost banished this Light! They all wish to be this light themselves, but not to be witnesses of it. They advocate themselves and teach their own fancies, but are silent about this Light, or teach it in a way as to preach themselves along with it. This is worse than to be entirely silent; for by such teaching they make Samaritans who partly worship God and partly worship idols (2 Kings 17,33).

Another Quote from Martin Luther...

Although the Gospel was obscured and the proper understanding of it hidden, God still kept it for the salvation of His own. These words too, "And the Word became flesh," were held in reverence. They were sung daily in every Mass in a slow tempo and were set to a special melody, different from that for the other words. And when the congregation came to the words, "from the Virgin Mary and was made man," every one genuflected and removed his hat. It would still be proper and appropriate to kneel at the words "and was made man," to sing them with long notes as formerly, to listen with happy hearts to the message that the Divine Majesty abased Himself and became like us poor bags of worms, and to thank God for the ineffable mercy and compassion

reflected in the incarnation of the Deity. But who can ever do justice to that theme?

THE LORD'S SUPPER

The Lord's Supper is celebrated at this congregation in the confession and glad confidence that, as He says, our Lord gives into our mouths not only bread and wine but His very body and blood to eat and to drink for the forgiveness of sins and to strengthen our union with Him and with one another. Our Lord invites to His Table those who trust His words, repent all sins, and set aside any refusal to forgive and love as He forgives and loves us, that they may show forth His death until He comes.

Because those who eat and drink our Lord's body and blood unworthily, according to Holy Scripture, do so to their great harm and because Holy Communion is a confession of the faith which is confessed at this altar, any who are not yet instructed, in doubt, or who hold a confession differing from that of this congregation and the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod, are asked to refrain from communing with us until such a time as they are properly instructed.

A short, more detailed explanation of our Confessional practice is available from our Ushers or Elders. If you would like to learn more about the Sacrament of the Altar and our confessional position, I would be happy to visit with you.

-Rev. Joshua Hayes, Pastor, St. John Ev. Lutheran Church

In preparation for Holy Communion, you may use the following statements as part of your self-examination:

- I admit that I am a sinner. **(1 John 1:8-10)**
- I believe that Jesus Christ is my only Lord and Savior from all sin, from Satan and death. **(Acts 4:10-12; John 14:6)**
- I desire to live as God wants me to. **(John 14:15; 1 John 2:6)**
- I am sure of my eternal salvation because Jesus died for me and rose again. **(John 3:16; Romans 8:14; & 1 John 5:11-12)**
- I believe the Risen Christ is really present in Holy Communion and that with the bread and wine I receive His Body and Blood. **(Matthew 26:26-28; Mark 4:22-24; 1 Cor. 10:16-17; Luke 22:17-20)**
- I forgive those who have wronged me.

Morning Prayer

I thank you, my heavenly Father, through Jesus Christ, Your dear Son, that You have kept me this night from all harm and danger; and I pray that You would keep me this day also from sin and every evil, that all my doings and life may please You. For into Your hands I

commend myself, my body and soul, and all things. Let Your holy angel be with me, that the evil foe may have no power over me. Amen.



Introit *(Psalm 93:1-2, 5; antiphon: Isaiah 9:2a, 6a, c)*

The people who walked in darkness have seen a | great light.*
To us a | child is born.
His name shall be called Wonderful Counselor, | Mighty God,*
Everlasting Father, | Prince of Peace.

**The Lord reigns; he is robed in | majesty;*
the Lord is robed; he has put on strength | as his belt.
Yes, the world is es- | tablished;*
it shall nev- | er be moved.
Your throne is established | from of old;*
you are from ever- | lasting.
Your decrees are very | trustworthy;*
holiness befits your house, O Lord, for- | evermore.
Glory be to the Father and | to the Son*
and to the Holy | Spirit;
as it was in the be- | ginning,*
is now, and will be forever. | Amen.**

The people who walked in darkness have seen a | great light.*
To us a | child is born.
His name shall be called Wonderful Counselor, | Mighty God,*
Everlasting Father, | Prince of Peace.

Collect for Christmas Dawn

Most merciful God, You gave Your eternal Word to become incarnate of the pure Virgin. Grant Your people grace to put away fleshly lusts, that they may be ready for Your visitation; through Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Old Testament Reading: *Micah 5:2-5a*

2 But you, O Bethlehem Ephrathah,
who are too little to be among the clans of Judah,
from you shall come forth for me
one who is to be ruler in Israel,
whose origin is from of old,
from ancient days.
3 Therefore he shall give them up until the time
when she who is in labor has given birth;
then the rest of his brothers shall return
to the people of Israel.
4 And he shall stand and shepherd his flock in the strength of the Lord,
in the majesty of the name of the Lord his God.
And they shall dwell secure, for now he shall be great
to the ends of the earth.
5 And he shall be their peace.

Gradual (*Psalm 118:26a, 27a, 23*)

Blessèd is he who comes in the name of the Lord!

**The Lord is God, and he has made his light to shine upon us.
This is the Lord's doing;
it is marvelous in our eyes.**

Epistle Reading: *Titus 3:4-7*

4 When the goodness and loving kindness of God our Savior appeared, 5 he saved us, not because of works done by us in righteousness, but according to his own mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit, 6 whom he poured out on us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior, 7 so that being justified by his grace we might become heirs according to the hope of eternal life.

Gospel Reading: *Luke 2:1-20*

1 And it came to pass in those days, that there went out a decree from Cæsar Augustus, that all the world should be taxed. 2 (*And this taxing was first made when Cyrenius was governor of Syria.*) 3 And all went to be taxed, every one into his own city. 4 And Joseph also went up from Galilee, out of the city of Nazareth, into Judæa, unto the city of David, which is called Bethlehem; (because he was of the house and lineage of David:) 5 to be taxed with Mary, his espoused wife, being great with child. 6 And so it was, that, while they were there, the days were accomplished that she should be delivered. 7 And she brought forth her firstborn son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger; because there was no room for them in the inn.

8 And there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. 9 And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them: and they were sore afraid. (358:1-4) 10 And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. 11 For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord. 12 And this *shall be* a sign unto you; Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger. (v. 5) 13 And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying,

14 Glory to God in the highest,
And on earth peace, good will toward men.

15 And it came to pass, as the angels were gone away from them into heaven, the shepherds said one to another, Let us now go even unto Bethlehem, and see this thing which is come to pass, which the Lord hath made known unto us. (vv. 6-9) 16 And they came with haste, and found Mary, and Joseph, and the babe lying in a manger. 17 And when they had seen *it*, they made known abroad the saying which was told them concerning this child. 18 And all they that heard *it* wondered at those things which were told them by the shepherds. (vv. 10-13) 19 But Mary kept all these things, and pondered *them* in her heart. 20 And the

shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things that they had heard and seen, as it was told unto them. (vv. 14-15)

THE SEASON OF CHRISTMAS

BEGINS CHRISTMAS DAY

Christmas means Christ Mass, that is, the liturgy celebrated on the day when Christ came among us as one of us. The church celebrates the mystery of salvation revealed in Christ's birth, rather than the birthday itself. We celebrate the mystery of God become man in Christ, who is both our King and our Savior.

The Christmas season also places special emphasis on the name of the Lord our God because Jesus would have received His name eight days after His birth when He was circumcised.

When the angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph and told him that Mary was with child through the Holy Spirit, the angel also told Joseph what to name the child: Jesus, which means the LORD saves (Matthew 1:20-21). Eight days after Jesus' birth, when He was circumcised, Joseph and Mary name Jesus as the angel had instructed.

Calendar: The Twelve Days of Christmas always fall on Dec. 25th - Jan. 5th.

Customs: The color white symbolizes the joy and the theme of light that plays so large a part in the Biblical texts associated with the season. Christmas carols also express the joy and wonder of Christ's birth. On Christmas Day, add the figures of Jesus, the angel, and the shepherds to the creche or nativity scene at church or at home. Add the Magi on Epiphany (January 6th). The Christmas tree should stand throughout the 12 days of Christmas and be removed on Epiphany. Read the Christmas story from Luke 2 with your family.

- from The Lord Will Answer: A Daily Prayer Catechism

...and the Word became flesh and dwelt among us.



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