

# ST. JOHN'S LUTHERAN CHURCH

Helen Township, Minnesota

(Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod)

Dennis Reichow, Pastor (320) 864-3093

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**Fourth Sunday in Advent**

**December 18, 2011**

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**WELCOME:** *"Hear us, O Shepherd of Israel, you who lead Joseph like a flock; you who sit enthroned between the cherubim, shine forth."* (Psalm 80:1) *Welcome to all in the name of our gracious God. May his blessings rest on you. If you are visiting with us today, we would enjoy the opportunity to get to know you. Please sign our guest book before you leave and we'd love to have you join us again!*

**Theme:** Jesus is the royal heir from David's family.

**Thoughts for a Prayer Before Worship:** The Lord directs his holy angels to minister to his people here on earth. We benefit from their work and activity, although we don't always know and acknowledge it. Pray that the Lord lead us to appreciate all that he graciously provides for us through his angels.

## SILENT PRAYER AND MEDITATION

### WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION

*Order of Worship: Service of the Word (p. 38-adapted)*

**OPENING SONG** (Sung to hymn tune #23)

*[The forth Advent candle is lit]*

How long, Oh Lord, until the day you come;  
How long, Oh Lord, until you take us home,  
To live with you eternally  
Where tears and hunger nevermore will be?  
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel  
Shall come and gather us with him to dwell!

## INVOCATION

**P:** In the name of God the Father, who promised to send a Redeemer to

crush the power of the devil and restore us to the joy of his presence:

**C: Father, we praise and worship you.**

**P:** In the name of Jesus Christ, the Son of God, whose birth was announced by angels, and whose life and death restored us to the Father:

**C: Lord Jesus, we praise and worship you.**

**P:** In the name of the Holy Spirit, who brings us to faith and nourishes us through Word and Sacrament to keep us in that faith:

**C: Holy Spirit, we praise and worship you. Amen.**

## Celebrating the Light of Christ – The Angels' Candle

**Sing Hymn 63** (verse 1)

**Angels we have heard on high, Sweetly singing o'er the plains,  
And the mountains in reply, Echoing their joyous strains,  
Gloria in excelsis Deo; Gloria in excelsis Deo.**

## CONFESSION OF SINS

**P:** With heartfelt repentance, let us acknowledge our sins before the Lord. We make confession through the words of Hymn 306.

**Sing Hymn 306** (verses 1 and 2)

**Before you, God, the Judge of all,  
With grief and shame I humbly fall.  
I see my sins against you, Lord  
My sins of thought and deed and word.  
They press me sore; to you I flee:  
O God, be merciful to me!**

**O Lord, my God, to you I pray:  
Oh, cast me not in wrath away!  
Let your good Spirit ne'er depart,  
But let him draw to you my heart  
That truly penitent I be:  
O God, be merciful to me!**

## ANNOUNCEMENT OF FORGIVENESS

**P:** Oh how great is the love our Heavenly Father has poured out on us! He has made us his dear children. He sent his Son into this

world to suffer the punishment for our sins and rescue us from eternal condemnation. By his authority, I now declare to you: your sins are forgiven. Indeed, the Lord has done great things for us!

**P:** With confident faith, let us sing of the hope we have in God's promise of forgiveness.

**Sing Hymn 304** (verses 6 and 7)

**Oh, how blest it is to know, Were as scarlet my transgression,  
It shall be as white as snow By your blood and bitter passion,  
For these words I do believe – Jesus sinners does receive.**

**Jesus sinners does receive, Even I have been forgiven.  
And when I this earth must leave, I shall find an open heaven.  
Dying, still to him I cleave – Jesus sinners does receive.**

### **PRAYER OF THE DAY**

*Minister speaks the prayer of the day.*

**C: Amen** (spoken)

**Chimes** *“Let All Mortal Flesh Keep Silence”*

**Lesson:** **2 Samuel 7:8-16 (Pew Bible p. 463)**

God reminds King David that he took him from the flocks of sheep and made him a great king. God also promises that he will set up a lasting kingdom for David and the people of Israel. Although David would not build a house for the Lord, the Lord would build a house for him—an everlasting kingdom on whose throne King Jesus would sit.

**Chimes** *“Angels We Have Heard On High”*

**Lesson:** **Luke 1:26-38 (Pew Bible 1538)**

The angel Gabriel announces the birth of the savior to the Virgin Mary. The angel tells Mary that God would give her Son the throne of his father David, and Mary humbly accedes to the Lord's will.

**HYMN: 15** “Hark! A Thrilling Voice Is Sounding”

**SERMON** **Matthew 25:31 (Pew Bible p. 1494)**

*“Will Your Experience With Angels Give You Delight?”*

1. Angels in his story
2. Angels in the future

### **APOSTLES' CREED**

### **OFFERING**

**PRAYER OF THE CHURCH** (Hymnal page 123)

### **LORD'S PRAYER**

**HYMN: 2** “Savior of the Nations, Come”

### **PRAYER**

**P:** Almighty God, we thank you for teaching us the things you want us to believe and do. Help us by your Holy Spirit to keep your Word in pure hearts that we may be strengthened in faith, guided in holiness, and comforted in life and in death, through Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

**C: Amen.** (spoken)

### **BLESSING**

**C: Amen. Amen. Amen.** (Sung)

### **CLOSING HYMN SING**

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**Organist: Christy Ittel**

### **A MEASURE OF OUR FAITHFULNESS**

*At worship, Sunday, December 11<sup>th</sup>: 104*

*Attendance at weekly Bible Studies: 6*

**DOOR COLLECTION:** *We will be having a door collection for the children's Christmas bags after worship today. Your generous support is appreciated!*

**CHILDREN'S CHRISTMAS PRACTICE:** *We will practice our Children's Christmas Eve program today for most of our Sunday School time. Parents are asked to work through Sunday School lessons at home with their children. Practice runs until noon. Any questions, speak with Pastor Reichow or Dennis Rabe.*

**JOB OPENINGS:** *The custodian position and the secretary position are open! Please see one of our trustees or Tim Schuth for more information on either position.*

## THIS WEEK IF GOD WILLS

Today	9:00 am	Worship
	10:00am	Sunday School
Monday	7:00 pm	SS Teacher Meeting
Tuesday	7:00 pm	Table Talk
Wednesday	3:45 pm	Jr. Catechism
	4:45 pm	Sr. Catechism
	6:30 pm	Chimes
	7:30 pm	Choir
Saturday	7:00 pm	Christmas Eve Service
Sunday	9:00 am	Worship

**TIME OF GRACE CHRISTMAS SPECIAL:** *“Time Of Grace” will be broadcasting a special Christmas program. Times this week are: Dec. 23<sup>rd</sup> on the Discovery channel at 7:30am CST & Dec. 25<sup>th</sup> on Lifetime at 8:30am CST.*

**SEEKING MEMBERS WILLING TO SERVE:** *The new Church Constitution was approved by the voters on December 11<sup>th</sup>. The Nominating Committee (Leonard Lange, Earl Lange & Dennis Dittmer) is now seeking members to serve on the newly structured church council. Members interested in serving or those who have a question are to contact a committee member. The new structure: 6 coordinating council positions to be filled by male members 21 and older are 1) President, 2) Vice President, 3) Elder, 4) Facilities Manager, 5) Treasurer, 6) Ministry Advancement Chairman; and the 3 Assistant positions to be filled by any member 18 and older are 1) Treasurer Assistant, 2) Ministry Advancement Assistant, 3) Ministry Advancement Assistant.*

**WISH LIST TEAM:** *A couple of members have chosen to discontinue serving on the Wish List Team. We are looking for a couple of people to fill the vacant spots. We meet 3-4 times a year. If you are interested in serving on the Wish List Team, contact a Wish List Team member - Corky Milbrand, John Glawe, Ruth Lange, Mark Raddatz, Pastor Reichow or Jenny Scherer.*

**LOOKING FOR SUGGESTIONS:** *The Wish List Team is also looking for new ideas or projects that would enhance our church facilities. Please forward your ideas and suggestions to a Wish List Team member. (See previous note with team members.)*

**SERMONS FOR THE FUTURE:** *How has Christmas impacted your life? What change(s) has it made in your life? Maybe you haven't considered these kinds of questions before. Come next week to hear more about the impact of Christmas on our lives. In preparation read, John 1:1-16.*

### The Word Became Flesh

<sup>1</sup> In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. <sup>2</sup> He was with God in the beginning.

<sup>3</sup> Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made. <sup>4</sup> In him was life, and that life was the light of men. <sup>5</sup> The light shines in the darkness, but the darkness has not understood it.

<sup>6</sup> There came a man who was sent from God; his name was John. <sup>7</sup> He came as a witness to testify concerning that light, so that through him all men might believe. <sup>8</sup> He himself was not the light; he came only as a witness to the light. <sup>9</sup> The true light that gives light to every man was coming into the world.

<sup>10</sup> He was in the world, and though the world was made through him, the world did not recognize him. <sup>11</sup> He came to that which was his own, but his own did not receive him. <sup>12</sup> Yet to all who received him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God— <sup>13</sup> children born not of natural descent, nor of human decision or a husband's will, but born of God.

<sup>14</sup> The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the One and Only, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.

<sup>15</sup> John testifies concerning him. He cries out, saying, “This was he of whom I said, ‘He who comes after me has surpassed me because he was before me.’” <sup>16</sup> From the fullness of his grace we have all received one blessing after another.