

# ST. JOHN'S LUTHERAN CHURCH

Helen Township, Minnesota

(Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod)

Dennis Reichow, Pastor (320) 864-3093

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Christmas Day

December 25, 2011

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**WELCOME!** *"Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is Christ the Lord."* Welcome to all in the name of Jesus, the baby born in Bethlehem, our Lord and Savior. Let us worship and bow down before him who has come and made his dwelling among us.

*A special welcome to the visitors worshipping with us this morning. May you be spiritually edified through your worship with us. We would enjoy the opportunity to get to know you. Please sign our guest book and we will be happy to share with you more information about our church.*

**Thoughts for a Prayer Before Worship:** The Father has given us the greatest gift ever – his Son wrapped in human flesh. By Christ, who is true God and true Man, our salvation has been won. Pray that he leads you to keep Jesus at the center of your heart and life.

## SILENT PRAYER AND MEDITATION WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION

### *Order of Worship*

**Pre-service:** *"On Christmas Night"*

**OPENING HYMN: 55** "Oh, Come, All Ye Faithful"  
*[The Christ candle is lit]*

### 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 Christ Candle

**Choir:** *"A Celtic Silent Night"*

### THE CHRISTMAS CONFESSION OF SINS

**P:** Unto us the Christ is born! O come, let us worship him!  
Acknowledging your need for a Savior, let us confess our sins:

**C: Heavenly Father, we come in lowliness, because we have broken your commandments by our words, thoughts and actions. We have nothing to offer except only what you have given us, Jesus, born as our Savior. You have assured us that those who wait on you will never be sent away empty. Have mercy and forgive us.**

**O merciful God, who has sent your Son to be born for us and to die for us, for his sake grant us remission of all our sins.**

**P:** Fear not, behold the good tidings of great joy: to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior. As a called messenger of that good news and by the authority of God's promise, I declare complete pardon for all your sins through Christ, the Lord.

**C: Amen.** (spoken)

**P:** The Lord has given us the peace of forgiveness, let us praise him.

**HYMN: 42 v. 1-3** "Come, Your Hearts and Voices Raising"

### PRAYER OF THE DAY

**P:** Son of God, we praise you for coming to earth on the first Christmas to live the life we could not live and to die the death we were doomed to die. We thank you for still coming to us today in Holy Communion. How grateful we are that together with the bread and wine, you share with us your very body and blood, given

and shed for us on the cross. As we celebrate your coming to earth to become one of us, help us rejoice also in your continual coming to us in this precious Sacrament. Strengthen our faith. Cause our love to increase and our hope to grow. Bless all we say and do to the glory of your Name.

**C: Amen.**

**Lesson: Isaiah 52:7-10 (Pew Bible p. 1113)**

As God once used an angel host to announce the birth of his Son, so he also uses preachers of the gospel to share the same message. Just as the shepherds rejoiced, all nations can rejoice in the salvation which God gives to us through the birth of his Son.

**Choir: “Songs of Joy”**

**Lesson: Hebrews 1:1-9 (Pew Bible p. 1802)**

As we recall the endearing picture of the baby Jesus in the manger, we also remember that he is true God. He is superior to the angels. He rules all things for all time.

**HYMN: 48** “When Christmas Morn Is Dawning”

**CHRISTMAS MESSAGE John 1:1-16 (Pew Bible p. 1594)**

*“What Happens When God Comes Near?”*

1. An unusual birth – a Light for all
2. People are changed

**NICENE CREED** (page 18)

**Chimes: “Christmas Bells”**

**OFFERING** (Music offering: “Angels From The Realms Of Glory”)

**PRAYER OF THE CHURCH**

**P:** Father, we praise you for proclaiming to us the message of Christ, your Son, born to redeem us. We join the heavenly host of angels in lifting up our voices and shouting for joy at the good tidings of peace which you have brought us. We sing your praises for comforting us with the message of salvation.

**C: Help us spread the good news of a Savior from sin to all the ends of the earth.**

**P:** Gracious Lord God, we thank you for fulfilling the message you spoke through the prophets, to send your Son to be born of a virgin. We praise you for speaking to us through your Son who is the very radiance of your glory and the exact representation of your being. We rejoice that your Son provided purification for all sins and still sustains all things by his powerful word.

**C: Cause us to respond to the gift of your Son by returning to you the firstfruits of all we are and have.**

*Special prayers and intercessions may follow*

**P:** Hear us, Lord, as we bring you our private petitions.

*Silent prayer*

**P:** Merciful Father in heaven, as we today receive the assurance of our salvation in the blessed Sacrament of the Altar, help us recognize and appreciate the bond of faith that unites us. Preserve among us the right understanding and use of the Means of Grace, and assist us in passing on these precious treasures to the generations yet to come.

**C: Amen.**

**LORD’S PRAYER**

**THE SACRAMENT** (pages 21-25 of CW)

**DIST. HYMNS: 41** “Let All Together Praise Our God”  
**47** “Behold, a Branch Is Growing”

**SONG OF SIMEON**

**PRAYER**

**BLESSING**

**CLOSING HYMN: 61** “Hark! The Herald Angels Sing”

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**Organist: Christy Ittel**                      **Violin & solo: Rebecca Litzau**  
**Trumpets: Justin Koeppe, Tyler Koeppe, Stephanie Koeppe**

**A MEASURE OF OUR FAITHFULNESS**

*At worship, Sunday, December 18<sup>th</sup>: 85*

*Attendance at weekly Bible Studies: 26*

## THIS WEEK IF GOD WILLS

Today 9:00 am Worship  
Sunday 9:00 am Worship

**THE LORD'S SUPPER:** *We are celebrating the Lord's Supper today. All those planning to partake, please review the information about the Lord's Supper printed on the laminated sheet in the hymnal racks or pews in the balcony.*

**NEWSLETTERS** for January are available. Please pick up your copy today.

**OFFERING ENVELOPE PACKETS** are on the table in the meeting room. Please take your packet if you haven't done so.

**DIRECTORY UPDATES:** *If your address or phone number has changed in the past year, please contact Ruth Lange or Pastor Reichow with updates for the 2012 directory. Thanks!*

**THANK YOU!!** *Pastor, Tanya, Rachel, Taryn, Jacob, Kayla & Zachary greatly appreciate all the cards, gifts and words of encouragement you have given them during this holiday season. Thank you for all your acts of kindness. May you have a blessed and Christ-filled Christmas and a Happy New Year.*

**PASTOR & FAMILY WILL BE AWAY** *visiting with family over the Christmas break from Dec. 26<sup>th</sup> through Jan. 2<sup>nd</sup>. If you are in need of Pastoral help during this time, you may contact Pastor Bruce Hanneman from Arlington. He can be reached at (507) 964-2731 at his office or (507) 964-2109 at home. You may also speak with an Elder - Dennis Rabe (507) 964-2317, Chad Koenen (320) 864-6928 or any council member.*

**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.*

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

**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.*

**SERMONS FOR THE FUTURE:** *What will you do in the new year? What can you expect from the Lord? Come next week to hear more about it. In preparation read, Psalm 121.*

### A song of ascents.

- <sup>1</sup> I lift up my eyes to the hills—  
where does my help come from?
- <sup>2</sup> My help comes from the LORD,  
the Maker of heaven and earth.
- <sup>3</sup> He will not let your foot slip—  
he who watches over you will not slumber;
- <sup>4</sup> indeed, he who watches over Israel  
will neither slumber nor sleep.
- <sup>5</sup> The LORD watches over you—  
the LORD is your shade at your right hand;
- <sup>6</sup> the sun will not harm you by day,  
nor the moon by night.
- <sup>7</sup> The LORD will keep you from all harm—  
he will watch over your life;
- <sup>8</sup> the LORD will watch over your coming and going  
both now and forevermore.