December 2017

God’s peace and blessing to you and yours as we begin this Advent and Christmas season!

The fullness of God’s work in redemption begins with the sending of His Son, our Lord Jesus Christ. During Advent we wait and prepare ourselves for the revealing of God’s work through this Child.

“Behold, I send my messenger before your face, who will prepare your way, the voice of one crying in the wilderness: ‘Prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight,’”

Mark 1:3 ESV

As you prepare this year, remember that we, too, have the blessing of being used by God to herald the coming gift of God in Christ Jesus our Lord for the salvation of the world. Merry Christmas, God Bless, and Peace, are words of comfort that we share when we gather together as the body of Christ; they can be words of comfort for those broken by sin in this dying world. Speak comfort, speak peace, and speak blessing as you go about your daily lives. Then, come and receive that same blessing of the Lord as we, together, gather and receive His gifts here at His house.

Peace,
Pastor Tkac
**December 2017 Acolyte and Reader Schedule**

**Saturday 6:30 p.m.**  
02/03 Acolyte: Emma Carlson  
Reader: Mark Bunarek  
Jaystin Slavik  
Jon Parlette  
09/10 Acolyte: Theo Fisher  
Reader: Pastor Merrell  
Brianna Squanda  
Beth Schreiner  
16/17 Acolyte: Sam Powell  
Reader: Ginny McDonald  
Jaystin Slavik  
Elise Tilley  
23/24 Acolyte: Scotty Dobson  
Reader: Pastor Merrell  
Brianna Squanda  
Bob Poe  
30/31 Acolyte: Olivia Fisher  
Reader: Judy Harroun  
Jaystin Slavik  
Beth Schreiner

**Sunday 10:30 a.m.**

Acolyte Midweek Advent / Christmas Worship Services

Wednesday Advent I 7:00 p.m.  12/06 Sam Powell  
Wednesday Advent II 7:00 p.m.  12/13 Scotty Dobson  
Wednesday Advent III 7:00 p.m.  12/20 Emma Carlson  
Sunday Christmas Eve 7:00 p.m.  12/24 Scotty Dobson  
Monday Christmas Day 10:00 a.m.  12/25 Sam Powell

**No New Year’s Eve Worship Service**

**December Elders:** Bill Krueger  
Jim Rich  
**December Altar Guild:** Rachelle Junis / Anna Skavik

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**NOTE FROM THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY!** Please do not use your 2018 contribution envelopes until January 2018. Your envelope number may change and contributions would be credited incorrectly.
### December 2017

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<tr>
<td>First Sunday in Advent</td>
<td>5:30-6:30 pm 7/8th Grade Confirmation</td>
<td>7:00 pm All welcome to join us for our monthly Prayer Meeting</td>
<td>6:6:40 pm Midweek Advent I Dinner</td>
<td>2:30 pm Adult Bible Class</td>
<td>12 pm Kid's Christmas Rehearsal</td>
<td>6:30 pm Worship / Holy Communion</td>
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<td>Second Sunday in Advent</td>
<td>5:30-6:30 pm 7/8th Grade Confirmation</td>
<td>8:30-1 pm Pastors' Conference / Living Word, Rochester</td>
<td>6-6:40 pm Midweek Advent II Dinner</td>
<td>6:30 pm Advent by Candlelight</td>
<td>2:30 pm Adult Bible Class</td>
<td>6:30 pm Worship</td>
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<td>Third Sunday in Advent</td>
<td>NO Confirmation Christmas Break</td>
<td>NO Confirmation Christmas Break</td>
<td>6-6:40 pm Midweek Advent III Dinner</td>
<td>2:30 pm Adult Bible Class</td>
<td>6:30 pm Worship</td>
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<td>Fourth Sunday in Advent</td>
<td>10:00 am Christmas Day Worship / Holy Communion</td>
<td>NO Confirmation Christmas Break</td>
<td>2:30 pm Adult Bible Class</td>
<td>6:30 pm Worship</td>
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**God gave us eternal life, and this life is in his Son.**  
1 John 5:11
Men’s Breakfast Bible Study

Join us for Bible study and breakfast on Saturday, December 2. Come and feed both soul and body. We will gather at 9:00 a.m. for breakfast and finish with Bible study taught by Pastor Tkac. You will surely be built up in the faith that leads to life eternal as the Holy Spirit works within you!

Houghton School Winter Clothing Needed

Cold is indeed in the air, on the rooftops, and on the ground. The children at our mission school, Houghton Elementary, are in need of winter clothing to keep warm. A list of those items is listed on the large box located in the narthex. Please consider helping His little ones in need. Thank you!

Youth News . . .

Christmas Caroling

All women and girls are invited. Plan to join us for an evening of visiting, beautiful music, and delicious dessert. Gather with us as we prepare our hearts for the Season of Advent and Christmas.

Rejoice in JESUS

Let’s Go Caroling

Date: Thursday, December 7
Time: 6:30 p.m. appetizers / 7:00 p.m. program
Place: Peace Lutheran Church
A sign up sheet is posted on the bulletin board. Feel free to bring a guest!

Children/Youth Christmas Pageant

The Children/Youth Christmas Pageant will be Sunday, December 10, 2017, during the 10:30 a.m. worship service. We will have practice dates on Saturday, December 2 and December 9, from 12-1:30 pm. On Sunday, December 10, participants need to be at the church to get dressed for the program by 9:30 am. Parents are asked to let Monica Tkac know at 248-673-0042 if you can help.

Advent Is Here!

Saturday/Sunday, December 2/3 begins the Season of Advent. Join us for worship and a light dinner for our midweek Advent Worship Services on December 6, 13, and 20. Dinner is at 6:00 p.m. followed by worship at 7:00 p.m. Join us as we prepare for Christmas, a time of patient waiting for the reappearing of Christ, and a time to nurture the gift of patience for daily life.

Our Shut-ins Love It!

Lest They Be Forgotten

We will hold a pancake fund raiser for the FALLEN HEROES Memorial Foundation on Saturday, January 27, from 8-11 a.m. The Fallen Heroes Memorial Foundation mission is to construct and dedicate a Lest They Be Forgotten Memorial in the hometowns of our military service members who have lost their lives defending the United States of America in the war against terrorism. The total cost of the Oakland County Memorial (on Telegraph Road) is $70,000. The remaining needed to complete the memorial is $20,000. We are hoping to put a nice dent in that remainder through your support of our pancake fundraiser. Be sure to invite family, friends, and neighbors!
If you were to read the literature produced by the various Church Growth entrepreneurs whose vocation in life is to assist worship leaders in preparing more relevant and exciting worship services for their congregations, you will rarely find anything remotely resembling an understanding of Divine Service. Rather, you will find a concept of worship that argues, with some merit, that one style of worship is as valuable as another.

For me to judge my neighbor’s worship is a bit presumptuous of me, don’t you think? Unless I can show that my neighbor’s worship, rather than ascribing worth to God in fact blasphemes him or mocks him or tells lies about him, what gives me the right to stand in criticism of it, as if God appointed me judge and jury over the heart-felt offering of praise of my brothers and sisters in Christ? Or has God revealed in the New Testament a kind of Levitical worship code designed for the New Testament Church? Have we not been set free by the blood of Jesus to offer up sacrifices of praise and thanksgiving to God? Do we really need extra-biblical rules imposed upon us by liturgically correct and often “High Church” self-appointed experts who are bound and determined to curb our evangelical freedom as Christians?

If worship is all that happens on a Sunday morning, I think we can sympathize with the opinions of the Church Growth enthusiasts who make these and similar arguments against the conservative insistence on retaining the historic liturgy of the church. If the church service is essentially our offering to God, who is to say whose style of praying is any better than his neighbor’s is? Is your music prettier? Is your voice sweeter? Is your poetry more compelling? Is your zeal more authentic?

But when we learn to look at the Sunday morning service as God’s service to us, then the issue of what takes place becomes a matter of life and death. To put it bluntly, the way I worship God won’t save me, but the way God serves me will save me.

In the historic Gospel Lesson for Maundy Thursday recorded in John 13, Jesus, the Lord, does the task of the servant, by washing his disciples’ feet. When he comes to Peter, Peter objects. In response to Peter’s objection, Jesus says, “If I do not wash you, you have no part with me.” (John 13:8) One need not insist that this washing is an allusion to baptism in order to make the more basic point: You must be served by Jesus or you have no part with him. You cannot be his disciple. You cannot be a child of God. You cannot know God. And you cannot worship God. Indeed, your worship will be a vain boast or failed bribe or useless discharge of meaningless words unless and until Jesus has served you. In fact, if God serves me, I get saved. If God doesn’t serve me, I have no part of him at all.

Now those who teach that Jesus ascended up to heaven to remain there, far away from his church here on earth, are not the ones to teach us why we should go to church. Surely, if Jesus is ascended up on high, not to fill all things as the Bible says, but to keep his body off of the Altar and as far away from the sacramental bread as heaven is above the earth, as the Reformed teach, then obviously Jesus cannot be serving us every Sunday in the Divine Service. But Jesus promised that he would be present with his church forever. It is utter folly for Lutherans to ask the Reformed to teach us how to do what needs doing on a Sunday morning. The Reformed don’t believe that God saves you by serving you in the Divine Service. Lutherans believe that God most certainly does save us in the Divine Service. This is the difference. This is why the Reformed churches can easily discard the historic liturgy of the church. They don’t need it. God isn’t going to save them by means of it anyway. They may retain it for aesthetic purposes (after all, it is quite beautiful) but they don’t particularly require it for spiritual purposes for the simple reason that whatever saving God is going to do God will do with or without the Divine Service that occurs on Sunday morning.

*Soli Deo Gloria* ☩  To God Alone Be Glory

Part III will appear in the January 2018 Newsletter.