

St. Stephen Lutheran Church and School

A member of the Church of the Lutheran Confession (clclutheran.org)

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Teachers: Kirsten Gullerud (Principal), Rebecca Lillo

School Office: (650) 961-2071 School Website: ssls.org

Guest Organist: Barb Gullerud



December 17, 2017 † Advent 3

We Welcome Our Visitors who are with us this morning.

We hope that you are uplifted by the Gospel at our worship service.

We invite you to join us every Sunday. Please sign our guestbook in the entry.

† Preparation for Worship: Read Psalm 89 (Lutheran Service Book or Pew Bible) †

Opening Hymn: 344 v. 1-4 *On Jordan's Bank the Baptist's Cry* LSB 344 v. 1-4

Advent Invocation

We invoke ("call upon") the name of the one true God – Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

P In the name of the Triune God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

C Amen.

Confession and Absolution

We come before our Holy God recognizing that we are sinful and daily need His forgiveness.

P Jesus is the Light of the World, and in Him is no darkness at all.

C **If we walk in the light as He is in the light,
we have fellowship with one another,
and the blood of Jesus Christ, God's Son, cleanses us from all sin.**

P In this Advent season we celebrate the *coming* of Jesus, the Light of the World.

C **Dear Jesus, we celebrate Your coming at Your birth in Bethlehem.
We thank You for coming into our hearts by Your gift of faith,
and we look forward to Your coming on the Last Day when You will take us,
and all believers, to be with You forever in heaven.**

P As we meditate on Your manger, Your cross, Your empty tomb, and Your Word, we come before Your throne today confessing our sins and asking for Your forgiveness.

C **Lord of heaven and earth, forgive us all our sins.
As we see the world in darkness and in need of Your light,
increase our faith, love, courage, and strength.
Give us Your power to be lights in this world, reflecting Your love. Amen.**

P Our Father in Heaven has been good and merciful to us.
In His love He has given us, His children, the greatest Gift: He sent His Son Jesus, the Christ Child, whose birth in Bethlehem so long ago we celebrate.
Jesus came as a lowly servant to be the atoning sacrifice for our sins, and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world. By His shed blood on the cross we are forgiven! In peace and joy let us sing of our salvation!

LSB 344 v. 5



5 All praise, e - ter - nal Son, to Thee Whose ad - vent
sets Thy peo - ple free, Whom with the Fa - ther
we a - dore And Ho - ly Spir - it ev - er - more.

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Prayer of the Day

P We pray:

Lord Jesus Christ, we ask You to hear our prayers and praises. Lighten the darkness of our hearts and give us Your joy by Your gracious visitation. We pray this through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C Amen.

First Reading

Isaiah 40:1-8 (NKJV)

"Comfort, yes, comfort My people!" Says your God. ² "Speak comfort to Jerusalem, and cry out to her, That her warfare is ended, That her iniquity is pardoned; For she has received from the LORD's hand Double for all her sins." ³ The voice of one crying in the wilderness: "Prepare the way of the LORD; Make straight in the desert A highway for our God. ⁴ Every valley shall be exalted And every mountain and hill brought low; The crooked places shall be made straight And the rough places smooth; ⁵ The glory of the LORD shall be revealed, And all flesh shall see it together; For the mouth of the LORD has spoken." ⁶ The voice said, "Cry out!" And he said, "What shall I cry?" "All flesh is grass, And all its loveliness is like the flower of the field. ⁷ The grass withers, the flower fades, Because the breath of the LORD blows upon it; Surely the people are grass. ⁸ The grass withers, the flower fades, But the word of our God stands forever."

Second Reading

John 1:14-18 (NKJV)

P The Gospel reading is from John 1:14-18.

C Sanctify us by Your truth, O LORD. Your Word is truth!

¹⁴ And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth. ¹⁵ John bore witness of Him and cried out, saying, "This was He of whom I said, 'He who comes after me is preferred before me, for He was before me.' " ¹⁶ And of His fullness we have all received, and grace for grace. ¹⁷ For the law was given through Moses, but grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. ¹⁸ No one has seen God at any time. The only begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, He has declared Him.

P Here ends our Scripture readings.

Alleluia and Verse

When God speaks to us in His Word it is natural for us to respond. We sing "Allelujah!"—meaning, "Praise the Lord!"



Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia.



These things are writ-ten that you may be - lieve that



Je - sus is the Christ, the Son of God.



Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia.

The 2nd Article of the Apostle's Creed *with explanation from Luther's Catechism (Sydow, p. 87)*

I believe in Jesus Christ, His only Son, Our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead, and buried; He descended into hell; the third day He rose again from the dead; He ascended into heaven and sits on the right hand of God, the Father Almighty; from there He shall come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe that Jesus Christ, true God, begotten of the Father from eternity, and also true man, born of the virgin Mary is my Lord.

**He has redeemed me, a lost and condemned person,
purchased and won me from all sin, from death, and from the power of the devil,
not with gold or silver, but with His holy, precious blood
and His innocent suffering and death.**

**He did this that I should be His very own, live under Him in His kingdom,
and serve Him in eternal righteousness, innocence, and joy;
just as He is risen from death, lives and reigns in eternity.**

This is most certainly true!

Hymn of the Day: 347 *Comfort, Comfort Ye My People*

LSB 347

Sermon: “The Gifts of Christmas” – Grace & Peace

Text: Romans 1:1-7 (NKJV)

Paul, a bondservant of Jesus Christ, called to be an apostle, separated to the gospel of God² which He promised before through His prophets in the Holy Scriptures,³ concerning His Son Jesus Christ our Lord, who was born of the seed of David according to the flesh,⁴ and declared to be the Son of God with power according to the Spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead.⁵ Through Him we have received grace and apostleship for obedience to the faith among all nations for His name,⁶ among whom you also are the called of Jesus Christ;⁷ To all who are in Rome, beloved of God, called to be saints: Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.



Offertory

LSB 956

956 Create in Me

Cre - ate in me a clean heart, O God, and re - new
a right spir - it with - in me. Cast me not a - way
from Thy pres - ence; and take not Thy Ho - ly Spir - it
from me. Re - store un - to me the joy of Thy sal - va - tion;
and up - hold me with Thy free spir - it. A - men.

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Offering *We offer our gifts to the Lord, remembering that He has first given to us that we might have to give to Him.*

Choir Song: "Oh Come, Oh Come, Emmanuel"

Prayer of the Church / Prayer Requests *We bring our prayers to God.*

Lord's Prayer

Sermon Hymn: 353 Jesus Came, the Heavens Adoring

LSB 353

Service of the Sacrament

*Now we approach the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper in which Jesus comes to bless us with His very body and blood.
We move toward the Sacrament with prayers of thanksgiving and songs of adoration.*

The Words of Institution

The words spoken by Jesus the night He instituted the Lord's Supper, by which our Lord assured to His Church the real presence of His body and blood in the Sacrament.

Prayer Before the Lord's Supper

Adapted from *The Lutheran Hymnal*, p. 4

C Dear Savior, upon Your gracious invitation I come to Your altar.
Let me find favor in Your eyes that I may approach Your table in true faith
and receive the Lord's Supper for the forgiveness of my sins and the
strengthening of my faith. Amen

P The peace of the Lord be with you always!

C Amen.

Hymn of Preparation

619 Thy Body, Given for Me, O Savior

LSB 619 v. 1

1 Thy bod - y, giv'n for me, O Sav - ior, Thy blood which Thou for
me didst shed, These are my life and strength for -
ev - er, By them my hun - gry soul is fed.

Refrain
Lord, may Thy bod - y and Thy blood Be
for my soul the high - est good!

The Distribution

Note to our Guests: We are so glad you are worshiping with us this morning. The Word of God treats the Lord's Supper with great care. The Word of God considers the Lord's Supper to be a wonderful Means of Grace – a way in which Christ forgives and blesses. It is also considered an opportunity for congregations to express unity and oneness (1 Corinthians 10:16-17) – that is, to say to the world "This is what we believe!" But God's Word also warns against taking the Sacrament to our judgment (1 Corinthians 11:27-30). For these reasons our congregation asks that you fully understand our teachings before partaking. We respectfully ask that those who have joined this congregation through public confession of faith, or who are members of another congregation of the Church of the Lutheran Confession (CLC) approach the altar at the usher's direction. Speak to our pastor anytime and he will be glad to provide the information you would need – and want. We look forward to communing together, Lord willing, in the future.

Prayer After the Lord's Supper

Adapted from The Lutheran Hymnal, p. 4

G O blessed Savior, Jesus Christ, You have given Yourself to me in this holy Sacrament, keep me in Your faith and favor. As You live in me, let me also live in You. May Your body and blood preserve me in the true faith unto everlasting life! Amen.

P Go in peace. Serve the Lord with gladness!

The Thanksgiving

619 My Heart Has Now Become Thy Dwelling

LSB 619 v. 5

5 My heart has now be-come Thy dwell-ing, O bless-ed, ho-ly
Trin-i-ty. With an-gels I, Thy prais-es
tell-ing, Shall live in joy e-ter-nal-ly.

Refrain

Lord, may Thy bod - y and Thy blood Be
for my soul the high - est good!

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Benediction *The blessing given by God for the blessing of His people (Numbers 6:24-26).*

- ☐ The Lord bless you and keep you.
The Lord make His face shine on you and be gracious to you.
The Lord lift up His countenance upon you and ✠ give you peace.

☐ A-men, a-men, a - men.

Closing Hymn: 380 *Hark! The Herald Angels Sing*

LSB 380

Acknowledgments - Created by Lutheran Service Builder © 2006 Concordia Publishing House.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Today: **Children's Christmas Eve Service Practice** – After Worship Service

This Week: Wednesday – **Christmas Break Begins for SSLS @ 2:30pm**
(School resumes on Thurs. 1/4 @ 8am)
Catechism Classes (via Skype) (Fossum) – 7pm
Thursday – **Choir Practice – 6:30pm**

Next Sunday:
12/24/17

Christmas Eve



St. Stephen – West (Mt. View):

Christmas Eve Worship & Children’s Program – 10am
(Children please arrive at 9:15am. Choir at 9:40am)

St. Stephen – East Bay (Hayward): **Christmas Eve Worship – 1pm**

Christmas Day (Mon. 12/25) – **Joint-Parish Christmas Day Worship** (Hayward) – **11am**
(Worship location: Grace Lutheran Church – 1836 B Street – Hayward, CA 94541)

December Elder & Usher: Michael Slattengren (Elder) & Brenton Horrillo (Usher)

Christmas Season Worship Schedule

Christmas Eve – Sun. Dec. 24th –

10am (Mt. View) - Christmas Eve Worship & Children’s Program
1pm (Hayward) - Christmas Eve Worship Service

Christmas Day – Mon. Dec. 25th –

11am (Hayward) - Christmas Day Worship (**NO Worship service in Mt. View**)

Wedding Service – Fri. Dec. 29th – Pastor Luke Bernthal & Julia Anderson

Noon (Mt. View) Refreshments following the wedding service

New Year’s Eve – Sun. Dec. 31st – Pastor Mark Bernthal (guest preaching)

10am (Mt. View) NO Bible Class & **NO Worship in East Bay (Hayward)**



Food Donations for Christmas – THIS WEEK –

We are collecting non-perishable food items to deliver to the Community Service Agency (CSA) in Mountain View for Christmas. There is a large box in the church entry marked “Food Drive.” We will be taking in the donation THIS WEEK, so please turn in your donations by **Thursday (Dec. 21st)**.

Christmas Eve Worship Service & Children's Program Next Sunday –

The theme of our Christmas Eve Worship services next Sunday is **"From Heaven Above,"** based on Martin Luther's Christmas hymn of the same name. Our worship in **Mountain View** will be at **10am**, and will include the children from our school and congregation as well as songs by our choir. Children are asked to arrive at **9:15am**. The choir is asked to arrive at **9:40am**. Please invite your friends and family to join us in worshipping and celebrating the birth of Christ our King and Savior!



Christmas Day Worship – Mon. 12/25 @ 11am - Hayward – Our Christmas Day Worship service will be a combined worship service for both St. Stephen West and East Bay congregations on **Monday, December 25th at 11am in Hayward** (1836 "B" Street – Grace Lutheran Church). Please make plans to join us, and our brothers and sisters in the East Bay, for Christmas Day worship!

CLC News – Pastor Nathan Pfeiffer, of Trinity Lutheran, Spokane, WA, has returned the call to be co-pastor at Immanuel Lutheran, Mankato, MN.

2018 CLC Mission Helper Trip to Africa – Applications are being accepted for the 2018 Mission Helper Trip to Africa. The deadline for application is **January 12th, 2018**. You can find more information and apply online at: www.mht.lutheranmissions.org/

Mission Helper Trip Sponsorships – If you would like to help sponsor a Mission Helper a group of young people from our CLC congregation in the Milwaukee area sent the following letter (see next page).

2018 CLC Mission Helper Trip
East Africa
Tanzania, Kenya, Uganda, Zambia



July
2018

MISSION
HELPER PROGRAM

For More Information Contact:
Missionary Todd Ohlmann
thohlmann@gmail.com
www.mht.lutheranmissions.org
(application deadline: January 12th, 2018)

Dear Friends in Christ,

As you may know, the Mission Helper Trip to Africa is taking place this summer. The Mission Helper Program is intended to spread God's Saving Word to those abroad. We have been blessed with the amazing opportunity to go along on this mission to share the incredible news of forgiveness overseas. We pray that our efforts throughout Africa will strengthen the faith of those we are serving and that the time leading up to, during, and after our trip will strengthen our own faith and broaden our ability to serve our gracious God.

We gratefully request your prayers on our behalf as we prepare for our trip to Africa. We hope to come home nourished and invigorated with an even greater wish to fulfill God's purpose for us. There is much to be done in preparation, and your continuous support will be very appreciated. Included in our many preparations for departure to Africa is fundraising to help defray the cost of this endeavor. The trip is estimated to cost between \$3,000 and \$3,500, of which we each need to pay a deposit of \$2,000 by early February. In addition to prayers on our behalf, we respectfully request those who are willing and able to please consider a monetary donation as another avenue to help the spread of His Word. Donations will benefit not only us, but the entire Mission Helper Program. Checks may be written to Messiah Lutheran Church; be sure to note Mission Helper Trip contribution.

Address for Messiah Lutheran Church:
12145 W Edgerton Ave,
Hales Corners, WI 53130

We would be humbled to receive donations of any amount, knowing that the Holy Spirit will be hard at work through the funds contributed.

Please keep us in your prayers throughout our preparations and the trip itself. The support received, in whatever form, will aid us, those we are serving in Africa, and all those involved with the Mission Helper Program.

In His Service,

Lydia Albrecht
Danielle Gerbitz
Olivia Albrecht
Leah Mackensen
Sam Schierenbeck
Jaqi Gerbitz