

The Sunday after Christmas

ST. JOHN'S EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH AND SCHOOL

P.O. Box 98, Okabena, MN 56161

A member congregation of the
Church of the Lutheran Confession

James Albrecht, Pastor – 507-853-4417

Rebecca Kazemba, Teacher – 507-329-2061

Lana Strike, Teacher – 507-360-9491

Jolene Albrecht – Kindergarten – 507-351-1204

Church/School Phone – 507-853-4550

www.okabenalutheran.org



Organ Prelude Mrs. Kathy Lueck

Hymn 111 *Thou Who Roll'st the Year Around*

P: Today we mark the end of another year of our lives. Every thought, every word, and every action is now behind us. Not a single moment of the past can be changed. Actions cannot be undone. Words cannot be taken back. Sinful thoughts cannot be withdrawn. As we survey the past twelve months of 2017, we bow our heads in humble repentance and confess:

C: "But we are all like an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are like filthy rages; We all fade as a leaf, and our iniquities, like the wind, have taken us away."

P: The sinfulness of mankind is universal. All of us, without exception, are unclean before God because of our sin. Our depravity is total, we are completely sinful by nature. We are lost unless we have forgiveness. Therefore we rejoice in the Word of our God:

C: Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow.

(WS 716)

1. Now greet the swiftly changing year With joy and penitence sincere.
Rejoice! Rejoice! With thanks embrace Another year of grace.

3. This Jesus came to end sin's war; This Name of names for us He bore.
Rejoice! Rejoice! With thanks embrace Another year of grace.

P: We have passed through another springtime, summer, and fall, and are now in the midst of winter. Though the seasons pass without our notice, they teach us that our lives grow shorter and shorter each day:

C: So teach us to number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom.

P: In 2017, one of our fellow Christians, Lester Ruthenbeck II, summoned from this vale of tears to the eternal joys of heaven. We praise God for preserving him in the faith and for the blessings He provided through him. We long for the day when we will join Les and all believers around the throne of God forever.

C: Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth, yea, saith the Spirit, they do rest from their labors and their works do follow them.

P: 2017 was a year of sickness for some of our members. There were hospitalizations, surgeries, and tests of faith. Our earthly bodies, which the Lord created to live forever, have been infected and ruined by sin. The Lord graciously hears and answers our prayers.

C: "I am the LORD who heals you." "He heals the brokenhearted and binds up their wounds."

4. His love abundant far exceeds The volume of a whole year's needs.
Rejoice! Rejoice! With thanks embrace Another year of grace.

5. With Him as Lord to lead our way In want and in prosperity,
What need we fear in earth or space In this new year of grace.

P: 2017 was a year where God was present among us in His Word and Sacrament. Faithfully and eagerly the Lord came through His means of grace to bless us with the assurance that we are His forgiven children in Christ.

C: "Where two or three are gathered together in My name, there am I in the midst of them."

P: 2016 was a year of many changes. On a global and personal level, changes have come for good or bad. As we step into 2018, more change is likely. Nevertheless, our greatest need and our greatest hope will never change:

C: "Jesus Christ, the same, yesterday, today, and forever."

6. "All glory be to God on high, And peace on earth!" The angels cry.
Rejoice! Rejoice! With thanks embrace Another year of grace!

Scripture Lesson

Installation of Officers

Hymn 112:1-4, 6 *To God the Anthem Raising*

Sermon Galatians 5:22-23 "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control."

The Fruit of the Spirit is: Self-Control

Offering of Thankful Hearts

The Words of Institution

Distribution Hymns 710, 715, 109, 96, 98, 106

M: Restore to me the joy of Your salvation and grant me a willing spirit, to sustain me. (Psalm 51:12)

C: Restore and sustain us O Lord

M: Restore us, O Lord God Almighty; make Your face shine upon us, that we may be saved. (Psalm 80:19)

C: Restore and rekindle us O Lord

M: He makes me lie down in green pastures, He leads me beside quiet waters, He restores my soul. He guides me in paths of righteousness for His name's sake. (Psalm 23:2-3)

C: Restore, refresh and guide us O Lord

M: Restore us, O God; make Your face shine upon us, that we may be saved. (Psalm 80:3)

C: Restore and awaken us O Lord

M: And the God of all grace, who called you to His eternal glory in Christ, after you have suffered a little while, will Himself restore you and make you strong, firm and steadfast.

C: To Him be the power forever and ever. Amen. (1 Peter 5:10-11)

Choir *The Benediction*

Closing Hymn: 97 *Let Us All with Gladsome Voice*

HOLY COMMUNION The Bible exhorts us to be "*perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment.*" Holy Communion is therefore both a communing with God and a public statement that those communing together believe the same thing. We therefore ask that anyone who has not established this unity through membership in a CLC congregation first schedule a meeting with the pastor before communing. We hold this position in loving obedience to the Word of God, not in judgment of anyone's Christian faith, sincerity, or standing before God.

THANK YOU The pastor and teachers wish to extend their heartfelt thanks for all of the kindnesses you have shown them this Christmas season. Your gifts are a tremendous blessing and encouragement!

CLEANING (Wk 2) L. Boernsen, The Liepolds
The Luecks, P. Strike