

Epiphany

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

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WELCOME To all of you who are visiting our service this morning, we extend a most cordial welcome in Jesus' name. It is our hope that you will feel at home in our midst and will be blessed by our message of Christ crucified and risen for the sins of the world.

Organ Prelude Mrs. Kathy Lueck

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

P: Though it is already the 6th of January, we're using this day to mark the passing 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 Sinful thoughts cannot be withdrawn.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 20188, 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.

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

Christ 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 2018, four of our fellow Christians, Beverly Olson, Violet Schmidt, Dale Aden, and Evelyn Aden were summoned from this vale of tears to the eternal joys of heaven. We praise God for preserving them in the faith and for the blessings He provided through them. We long for the day when we will join them 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: 2018 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."

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

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: 2018 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: 2018 was a year of many changes. On a global and personal level, changes have come for good or bad. As we enter 2019, more change is likely. Nevertheless, our greatest need and our greatest hope will never change:

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

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

Epistle Reading 1 Corinthians 1:26-31 For you see your calling, brethren, that not many wise according to the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, *are called*.²⁷ But God has chosen the foolish things of the world to put to shame the wise, and God has chosen the weak things of the world to put to shame the things which are mighty;²⁸ and the base things of the world and the things which are despised God has chosen, and the things which are not, to bring to nothing the things that are,²⁹ that no flesh should glory in His presence.³⁰ But of Him you are in Christ Jesus, who became for us wisdom from God—and righteousness and sanctification and redemption—³¹ that, as it is written, "He who glories, let him glory in the Lord."

Gospel Lesson Matthew 2:1-12 Now after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod the king, behold, wise men from the East came to Jerusalem, saying, "Where is He who has been born King of the Jews? For we have seen His star in the East and have come to worship Him." When Herod the king heard this, he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him. And when he had gathered all the chief priests and scribes of the people together, he inquired of them where the Christ was to be born. So they said to him, "In Bethlehem of Judea, for thus it is written by the prophet: 'But you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, Are not the least among the rulers of Judah; For out of you shall come a Ruler Who will shepherd My people Israel.' " Then Herod, when he had secretly called the wise men, determined from them what time the star appeared. And he sent them to Bethlehem and said, "Go and search carefully for the young Child, and when you have found Him, bring back word to me, that I may come and worship Him also." When they heard the king, they departed; and behold, the star which they had seen in the East went before them, till it came and stood over where the young Child was. When they saw the star, they rejoiced with exceedingly great joy. And when they had come into the house, they saw the young Child with Mary His mother, and fell down and worshiped Him. And when they had opened their treasures, they

presented gifts to Him: gold, frankincense, and myrrh. Then, being divinely warned in a dream that they should not return to Herod, they departed for their own country another way.

Installation of Officers

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

Sermon Matthew 2:1ff.

The Truly Wise...

Offering of Thankful Hearts

Hymn 127 *As With Gladness Men of Old*

Prayer + The Lord's Prayer

Benediction

Hymn 129 *Hail, Thou Source of Every Blessing*

DECORATIONS We plan to pack away the Christmas decorations after the service today. All help will be appreciated.

ANNUAL REPORT Please check your address information in the master copy on the entryway table and make changes as needed.

SUNDAY SCHOOL Our students will be working on a new song to be sung in church. Please see Ruth Eigenberg for more information.

ANNUAL MEETING The next voters meeting is on January 20. The agenda will likely include the calling of a teacher for the 2019-2020 school year.

BABY ITEMS DRIVE The donation box is near the steps that lead to the basement. Proceeds will be given to one of the area Pregnancy Centers.

USHERS Phil S., Zachary S., Nathan V., Anthony F., Ryan D.
Bruce E., Steve R., Joe L., Nathan A., Josh T.

CLEANING (Wk 3) The Luecks, P. Strike
D. Iverson, D. Ling, S. Sumeay