

The Third Midweek Advent Service

ST. JOHN'S EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH AND SCHOOL

P.O. Box 98, Okabena, MN 56161

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Church of the Lutheran Confession

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Organist Mrs. Kathy Lueck

Opening Hymn 66 *Hark the Glad Sound! The Savior Comes*

Invocation ... Psalm 84:1-4

P How lovely is Your dwelling place, O Lord of hosts!

C My soul longs, yes, faints for the courts of the Lord;

P My heart and flesh sing for joy to the living God. Even the sparrow finds a home, and the swallow a nest for herself,

C Where she may lay her young, at your altars, O Lord of hosts, my King and my God.

P Blessed are those who dwell in Your house,

C Ever singing Your praise!

P During His public ministry, the Lord Jesus said, "The Son of Man has nowhere to lay His head." The son of Mary first laid His head to rest in a manger bed. "And while they were there, the time came for her to give birth. And she gave birth to her firstborn Son

C And wrapped Him in swaddling cloths and laid Him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn."

P The third candle on our Advent wreath is to remind us of our Savior's humble birth. There was no place for Him; a manger was His bed.

C Jesus, crucified and risen Lord, You ascended to prepare a place for us. We look forward to the day when You will return to take us to Yourself forever!

Confession and Absolution

P Let us confess our sins to God and ask His forgiveness.

C Almighty God, we confess that we have turned away from Your will for us. We do not follow Your commandments and we daily sin against You in our thoughts, words and actions. We seek to satisfy our own sinful desires and listen to the temptations of the world around us. Have mercy on us and forgive our sins.

P God has had mercy on us. He sent His Son to be our Savior. Jesus suffered, died and rose from death for us. Through faith in His name we will have a home in His presence forever. I announce to you that your sins are forgiven in the name of the Father and of the + Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

C Blessed are those who dwell in Your house, ever singing Your praise!

Prayer of the Day

P Heavenly Father, when the time was right, You fulfilled Your promise and sent Your Son into the world to be our Savior. Our crucified and risen Lord, Who once slept in a humble manger in Bethlehem, has now ascended to rule at Your right hand and prepare a place for us. We look forward with joy to the day when He will return in glory to take us to Himself forever. Hear our prayer in the name of our Advent King. Amen.

Let us all with gladsome voice Praise the God of heaven,
Who, to bid our hearts rejoice, His own Son hath given.

To this vale of tears He comes, Here to serve in sadness,
That with Him in heaven's fair homes We may reign in gladness.

We are rich, for He was poor; Is not this a wonder?
Therefore praise God evermore Here on earth and yonder.

Old Testament Reading ... Genesis 12:1-5

Epistle Reading ... Hebrews 11:8-10, 13-16

Gospel Reading ... John 14:1-6

Hymn *The Angel Gabriel from Heaven Came*

The angel Gabriel from heaven came,
His wings as drifted snow, his eyes as flame;
"All hail," said he to meek and lowly Mary,
"Most highly favored maiden." Gloria!

"I come from heav'n to tell the Lord's decree:
A blessed virgin mother you shall be.
Your Son shall be Immanuel, by seers foretold,
Most highly favored maiden." Gloria!

Then gentle Mary meekly bowed her head;
"To me be as it pleases God," she said.
"My soul shall praise and magnify his holy name."
Most highly favored maiden, Gloria!

Of her Immanuel, the Christ, was born
In Bethlehem, all on a Christmas morn,
And Christian folk throughout the world will ever say,
"Most highly favored maiden." Gloria!

Sermon Luke 2:7

No Room for Them

O Lord Christ, our Savior dear, Be Thou ever near us.
Grant us now a glad new year. Amen, Jesus, hear us!

Offering

Choir *O Come, Emmanuel*

O come, O come, Emmanuel, and ransom captive Israel,
That mourns in lonely exile here until the Son of God appear.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel.

O come Thou Dayspring, come and cheer our spirits by Thine advent here;
Disperse the gloom and clouds of night, and death's dark shadows put to flight.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel.

O come, Desire of nations, bind all peoples in one heart and mind;
Bid envy, strife, and quarrels cease; Fill the whole world with heaven's peace.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel.

Prayers

P Lord Jesus, there was no place for You in Bethlehem's inn, so Your first bed was a humble manger in a stable. You laid aside Your majesty to take on human flesh, to be born among us for the sake of our salvation. We praise You, Lamb of God, for Your redeeming death and resurrection. Lord, we long for our eternal home and so we pray,

C Come, Lord Jesus!

P Lord Jesus, especially during this Christmas season, fill us with compassion for those who are lonely, for those who cannot get home and for those who have no home. Help us to seek out opportunities to help others, providing them with shelter, food or clothing as they have need. We pray that they might see Your love through our service and witness and so come to worship You as their Savior. Lord, we long for our eternal home and so we pray,

C Come, Lord Jesus!

P Lord Jesus, we give You praise and thanks for our earthly homes, for our families and for all of the gifts that You have given us. Yet with Abraham we too long for another home, a lasting home, the city that has foundations, that heavenly city whose designer and builder is God. We pray that You would come quickly, as You have promised, to take us home. Lord, we long for our eternal home and so we pray,

C Come, Lord Jesus!

P Amen.

The Lord's Prayer

The Benediction (John 14:3-5; 2 Thessalonians 3:16)

P Jesus said, "If I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and will take you to Myself, that where I am you may be also. And you know the way to where I am going."

C Thomas said to him, "Lord, we do not know where You are going. How can we know the way?"

P Jesus said to him, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life.

C No one comes to the Father except through Me."

P Now may the Lord of peace Himself give you peace at all times in every way. The Lord be with you all.

C Amen.

Closing Hymn 711 *See in Yonder Manger Low*

