

The Third Sunday in Advent

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 – 507-351-8584

Lana Strike, Upper Grades – 507-360-9491

Ruth Eigenberg, Lower Grades – 507-360-7725

Church/School Phone – 507-853-4550

www.okabenalutheran.org



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.

If you are looking for a church home or would like to know more about our beliefs and practices, please see the pastor. He will be glad to visit with you at your convenience. Be sure to join us again.

Prelude Mrs. Kathy Lueck

Hymn 60 *Hark! A Thrilling Voice is Sounding*

Liturgy page 12 ff. in the Worship Supplement

Epistle Lesson 1 Thessalonians 5:16-24 Rejoice always. Pray without ceasing. In everything give thanks. For this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus. Do not extinguish the Spirit. Do not treat prophecies with contempt. But test everything. Hold on to the good. Keep away from every kind of evil.

May the God of peace Himself sanctify you completely, and may your whole spirit, soul, and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. The One who calls you is faithful, and He will do it.

Trio "*Christmastime*" by Michael W. Smith

Gospel Lesson John 1:6-8, 19-28 There was a man, sent from God, whose name was John. He came as an eyewitness to testify about the light so that everyone would believe through him. He was not the light, but he came to testify about the light.

This is the testimony John gave when the Jews from Jerusalem sent priests and Levites to ask him, "Who are you?" He confessed and did not deny. He confessed, "I am not the Christ." And they asked him, "Who are you then? Are you Elijah?" He said, "I am not." "Are you the Prophet?" "No," he answered. Then they asked him, "Who are you? Tell us so we can give an answer to those who sent us. What do you say about yourself?" He said, "I am the voice of one crying out in the wilderness, 'Make straight the way of the Lord,' just as Isaiah the prophet said."

They had been sent from the Pharisees. So they asked John, "Why then do you baptize, if you are not the Christ, or Elijah, or the Prophet?" "I baptize with water," John answered. "Among you stands one you do not know. He is the one coming after me, whose sandal strap I am not worthy to untie."

These things happened in Bethany beyond the Jordan, where John was baptizing.

Hymn 75 *Ye Sons of Men, Oh, Harken*

Sermon Isaiah 61:1-3, 8-10 The Spirit of the Lord God is upon Me, because the Lord has anointed Me to bring good news to the poor; He has sent Me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to those who are bound; to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort

all who mourn; to grant to those who mourn in Zion—to give them a beautiful headdress instead of ashes, the oil of gladness instead of mourning, the garment of praise instead of a faint spirit; that they may be called oaks of righteousness, the planting of the Lord, that He may be glorified.

I will greatly rejoice in the Lord; my soul shall exult in my God, for He has clothed me with the garments of salvation; He has covered me with the robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decks himself like a priest with a beautiful headdress, and as a bride adorns herself with her jewels. For as the earth brings forth its sprouts, and as a garden causes what is sown in it to sprout up, so the Lord God will cause righteousness and praise to sprout up before all the nations.

Celebrate Like It's the Jubilee...

The Offertory

Choir *O Come Emmanuel*

Hymn 715 *Rejoice, Rejoice, Believers (tune from Insert)*

Prayer + The Lord's Prayer

The Benediction

Hymn 83 *Hark! What Mean Those Holy Voices*

CHRISTMAS SCHEDULE Our third Midweek Advent service will be held on Wednesday evening at 7. We will hold a regular service next Sunday morning, with the Children's Christmas Eve service at 6:30 p.m. The Christmas Day service will be on Monday morning at 9:30.

CARD SHOWER A card shower will be held for Iona Gehrls. Her birthday is on December 23. Her address: Pineview Assisted Living #2, 750 4th Ave, Windom, MN 56101.

HOLIDAY DRIVE We are holding a holiday wish drive for the Helping Hand Pregnancy Center in Worthington, and also for our Christian Day School here at St. John's. See the wish list for the Center in the entryway. There is a giving tree for the school on the wall downstairs.

END TIMES If you've not been able to attend Bible Class and would like a Lutheran perspective on things such as the Rapture, the Millennium, whether the land of Palestine belongs to Israel by divine decree, etc., there are booklets available on the entryway table.

CLC NEWS Pastor Michael Wilke, Saginaw, MI has returned the call to Marquette/Iron River, MI. Pastor David Pfeiffer, W. Columbia, SC has returned the call to Mankato. Jennifer Wiese, teacher at Luther Memorial School in Fond du Lac, WI is resigning at the end of the 2023-2024 school year.

New Link For ILC Morning Chapel Immanuel Lutheran College morning chapel services provide daily edification for the ILC family. It has also served people across the CLC through an email subscription service. Unfortunately, the previous email delivery service is no longer viable. Another more reliable service has been set up, but previous users will need to re-subscribe. If you would like morning chapel sent to your email each day, simply go to <https://ilc.edu/faith-worship/chapel-list/>, scroll to the bottom, and sign up with your email address.

ILC CHRISTMAS CHORAL SERVICE REPLAY A replay of the Immanuel Lutheran Christmas Choral Service The King in the Cradle from December 15, 2023 is online. The strings, flute choir, and band play the first portion. The choral service begins at the 47 minute mark. A copy of the program booklet is available. The video is located at: bit.ly/23ccs

2024 CLC Mission Helper Trip – Applications are now being accepted for the 2024 CLC Mission Helper Trip to Africa. Mission Helpers will be privileged to help spread the Gospel to children in either Kenya/Uganda, Tanzania, or Zambia for about three weeks. The application deadline is January 16th. More information online at: www.mht.lutheranmissions.org.

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- USHERS** 12/17 Kendall B., Larry B. Jonathen L.
12/24 Phil S., Nathan V., Anthony F., Daniel R.
12/31 Trevor B., Tim Z., Joshua E., Christian K., David R.

CLEANING (Wk. 1) The Ruthenbecks
J. Appel, S. Winters, J. Zuehlke