

**CALAMUS LUTHERAN PARISH**

**Faith Lutheran Church**

**8:00 a.m.**

**Our Savior's Lutheran Church**

**10:30 a.m.**

**First Sunday in Advent**

**November 29, 2015**

Welcome in Jesus' name.

Please consider using the prelude as a time for meditation and silent prayer. This is the ideal time for quiet preparation, as we come to worship God.

Prelude

Ring of the Bell

Welcome and Announcements

**Hanging of the Christmas Greens  
A Service for the Beginning of Advent**

**OPENING PRAYER**

P. Our Father, we long for the simple beauty of Christmas – for all the old familiar melodies, words, and symbols that remind us of that great miracle when God who had made all things came one night as a babe, to lie in the crook of a woman's arm. But in that longing, let us even more yearn for your renewed presence among us even as we celebrate and expect the Coming of your Son.

Before such mystery we kneel, as we follow the shepherds and Wise Men to bring You the gift of our love – a love we confess that has not always been as warm or sincere or real as it should have been. Now, as we enter into this Advent Season, we pray that love would find its Beloved, and from You receive the grace to make it pure again, warm and real.

We bring You our gratitude for every token of Your love, for all the ways You have heaped blessings upon us during the years that have gone. And we do pray, Lord Jesus, that as we begin this four-week journey of expectation and hope, we may do it in a manner well pleasing to You. May all we do and say, every tribute of our hearts, bring honor to Your name,

that we, Your people, may remember Your birth and feel Your presence among us even yet.

May the loving kindness of this Advent Season and the true Spirit of Christmas not only creep into our hearts this season, but there abide, so that not even the return to earthly cares and responsibilities, not all the festivities of our own devising may cause it to creep away weeping. May the joy and spirit of Christmas remain with us now and forever. In the name of Jesus, who came to save His people from their sins, even in that lovely name we pray.

**Cong: Amen.**

### **THE MEANING OF THE SERVICE**

P. As we begin the Christian Year, we also celebrate the Holy Season known as Advent. It is a time when we prepare ourselves for the coming of our Messiah. Advent means "Coming." We celebrate these days of Advent in expectation and preparation for Christ's arrival.

Through the centuries, Christians have observed a time of waiting and expectation before celebrating the birth of the Savior at Christmas. The Advent season is a time for reflection and preparation, but its mood is joyful. Advent has been enriched by Christian tradition to reflect its distinctive Christian meaning. It proclaims the revelation of God's love as expressed in Christ's birth in a humble stable, His sacrificial death on the cross, and His victorious resurrection! It points to the hope of Christ's coming again as the King of kings and Lord of lords. Advent makes innkeepers out of all of us, asking each of us to make room for the arrival of Christ The King. Let us, today, prepare Him room in our hearts, our lives, and our homes!

**Congregational Song: "Canticle of the Turning" – Hymn 723**

### **LESSONS OF ADVENT – Terri Boussetot/Deb Detlefs**

Over these next weeks of Advent, let us listen to the lessons of the years and the centuries, not just to impressions of the moment. The images in the biblical story are often discouraging - war, hate, famine, epidemics, a Caesar on his throne, a Paul in prison, Christians being persecuted. But

now, after the centuries, the Caesar is gone; Paul is a symbol of Faith; and Jesus, the Truth and the Light, is reaching out to every nation!

Let us, through the great traditions of our Faith, join with the shepherds of Bethlehem, the wise men from the east, and the seekers throughout the ages, to welcome the One who came at Christmas. Let us at Christmastide bring our gifts to Him, and may the message of our songs be "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth, Peace and goodwill to peoples everywhere."

**Congregational Song: "All Earth Is Hopeful" – Hymn 266**

**First Reading: Jeremiah 33:14—16**

L: A reading from Jeremiah.

The days are surely coming, says the LORD, when I will fulfill the promise I made to the house of Israel and the house of Judah. In those days and at that time I will cause a righteous Branch to spring up for David; and he shall execute justice and righteousness in the land. In those days Judah will be saved and Jerusalem will live in safety. And this is the name by which it will be called: "The LORD is our righteousness."

L: The Word of the Lord.

**C: Thanks be to God.**

**Psalm 25:1—10**

To you, O LORD, I lift up my soul.

**O my God, in you I trust;  
do not let me be put to shame;  
do not let my enemies exult over me.**

Do not let those who wait for you be put to shame;  
let them be ashamed who are wantonly treacherous.

**Make me to know your ways, O LORD;  
teach me your paths.**

Lead me in your truth, and teach me,  
for you are the God of my salvation;  
for you I wait all day long.

**Be mindful of your mercy, O LORD, and of your steadfast love,  
for they have been from of old.**

Do not remember the sins of my youth or my transgressions;  
according to your steadfast love remember me,  
for your goodness' sake, O LORD!

**Good and upright is the LORD;  
therefore he instructs sinners in the way.**

He leads the humble in what is right,  
and teaches the humble his way.

**All the paths of the LORD are steadfast love and faithfulness,  
for those who keep his covenant and his decrees.**

### **Second Reading: 1 Thessalonians 3:9—13**

L: A reading from 1 Thessalonians.

For we now live, if you continue to stand firm in the Lord. How can we thank God enough for you in return for all the joy that we feel before our God because of you? Night and day we pray most earnestly that we may see you face to face and restore whatever is lacking in your faith.

Now may our God and Father himself and our Lord Jesus direct our way to you. And may the Lord make you increase and abound in love for one another and for all, just as we abound in love for you. And may he so strengthen your hearts in holiness that you may be blameless before our God and Father at the coming of our Lord Jesus with all his saints.

L: The Word of the Lord.

**C: Thanks be to God.**

\*P: The Holy Gospel according to St. Luke the twenty-first chapter.

**C: Glory to you, O Lord.**

### **Gospel: Luke 21:25—36**

"There will be signs in the sun, the moon, and the stars, and on the earth distress among nations confused by the roaring of the sea and the waves. People will faint from fear and foreboding of what is coming upon the world, for the powers of the heavens will be shaken. Then they will see 'the Son of Man coming in a cloud' with power and great glory. Now when these things begin to take place, stand up and raise your heads, because your redemption is drawing near."

Then he told them a parable: "Look at the fig tree and all the trees; as soon as they sprout leaves you can see for yourselves and know that summer is already near. So also, when you see these things taking place,

you know that the kingdom of God is near. Truly I tell you, this generation will not pass away until all things have taken place. Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away.

"Be on guard so that your hearts are not weighed down with dissipation and drunkenness and the worries of this life, and that day does not catch you unexpectedly, like a trap. For it will come upon all who live on the face of the whole earth. Be alert at all times, praying that you may have the strength to escape all these things that will take place, and to stand before the Son of Man."

P: The Gospel of the Lord.

C: **Praise to you, O Christ.**

### **THE SANCTUARY EVERGREENS**

**Diane Christensen/Marcia Edens**

The most striking and the most universal feature of Christmas is the use of evergreens in churches and homes. Among ancient Romans evergreens were an emblem of peace, joy, and victory. The early Christians placed them in their windows to indicate that Christ had entered the home. Holly and ivy, along with pine, and fir are called evergreens because they never change color. They are ever - green, ever - alive, even in the midst of winter. They symbolize the unchanging nature of our God, and they remind us of the everlasting life that is ours through Christ Jesus.

Under Christian thought and sentiment, holly became widely used in church celebrations. Holly was considered as the burning bush, or a symbol of Mary whose being glows with the Holy Spirit. The red berries represented the blood drops from the cruel thorns in the crown of Jesus.

In Isaiah 60:13 we find these words: "The Glory of Lebanon shall come unto you, the fir tree, the pine tree and the box together, to beautify the place of your sanctuary."

Our forefathers called the procuring of these evergreens, "Bringing home Christmas!"

**Congregational Song: "Blessed Be the God of Israel" – Hymn 250**

*(Action: As the song is sung, the evergreens on the side walls and front are hung, and any other evergreens are put in place.)*

## **THE CHRISTMAS TREE – Mark Witte/Kay Olson**

Today, the Christmas tree is the center of our festivities. Glittering with lights and ornaments, it is a part of the beauty and meaning of Christmas. There are several legends and stories about the Christmas tree.

The first use of the Christmas tree was in the medieval German Paradise Plays, held outdoors and portraying the creation of humankind. The Tree of Life was a fir tree decorated with apples. Later other ornaments were hung upon them, such as paper flowers and gilded nuts. In England branches or whole trees were forced into bloom indoors for Christmas. From these beginnings the use of a tree at Christmas was established.

Martin Luther was perhaps the first to use a lighted tree. The story is told that on one Christmas Eve Martin Luther wandered outdoors and became enraptured with the beauty of the starry sky. Its brilliance and loveliness led him to reflect on the glory of the first Christmas Eve as seen in Bethlehem's radiant skies. Wishing to share with his wife and children the enchantment he had felt, he cut from the forest an evergreen, glistening with snow, and took it home. He placed upon it candles to represent the glorious heavens he had seen. The use of a candle-lighted tree spread to all Europe, then America came to regard it as the central ornament of Christmas.

**Congregational Song: "I Am So Glad Each Christmas Eve" – Hymn**

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**♪ When mother trims the Christmas tree  
Which fills the room with light,  
She tells me of the wondrous Star  
That made the dark world bright.**

**She says the Star is shining still,  
And never will grow dim;  
And if it shines upon my way,  
It leads me up to him.**

*(Action: After the song is sung, the tree is decorated. After the decorations have been placed on the tree, the lights are turned on.)*

## **THE CHRISTMAS POINSETTIA – Terri Bousselot/Deb Detlefs**

Most Christmas greenery reflects European traditions. But one colorful plant, which looks like a flaming star, the poinsettia, is a native to the American continent. It was named after Dr. Joel Robert Poinset, an ambassador to Mexico who first introduced it to the United States in 1828. The people of Mexico and Central America call the brilliant tropical plant the "Flower of the Holy Night." The Poinsettia is a many-pointed star that has become a symbol of the Star of Bethlehem.

**Congregational Song: "Lo, How a Rose E'er Blooming"** – Hymn 272 vv. 1, 4  
*(Action: As the song is sung, the flowers are put into place around the front of the church.*

## **THE PARAMENTS AND ADVENT COLORS**

**Diane Christensen/Marcia Edens**

Both visual and performing arts have always been important ways to communicate the Christian faith. The use of music has helped believers understand their Godly hope. Other forms of visual art have been used from the beginning to help express various aspects of Christian doctrine and life.

Colors, altar paraments or coverings, and banners are some of the most important visual ways Christians have used to express their faith in worship. The objective in covering the Communion Table with cloths of various colors was to help focus the attention of worshippers on the special nature of Christ as the Perfect Sacrifice. In the early days of Christian worship, Advent and Christmas were seen as a somber time, much like Lent is today. Purple table coverings were used to speak of Christ's Kingship, but the mood was somber.

As Christians began to share their celebration of Christmas with their non-Christian neighbors they began to focus on the joy of the Christmas event. As the emphasis of Christmas began to change to one of joyful celebration the color used also changed to express Christ the King in that more happy way. While purple is still used in some churches and at certain times, many Christian churches now use blue to speak of the Kingship of Christ when the occasion is joyful. At Advent we wait with anticipation and celebration for our coming Christ.

**Congregational Song: "People Look East" – Hymn 248**

*(Action: As the song is sung, the paraments are changed to blue, the color for Advent. Banners are hung.)*

**THE ADVENT CANDLES – Mark Witte/Kay Olson**

Advent is a time of expectation, and this is symbolized, not only by the four-week period of preparation, but also by the lighting of an Advent Candle on each Sunday of the season. The flame of each new candle reminds us, the worshipers, that something is happening, and something more is still to come.

The candles are arranged in a circle to remind us of the continuous power of God, which knows neither beginning nor ending. There is also symbolism in the colors of the candles. The blue candles symbolize the coming of Christ from the royal line of David. He is coming as the King of Kings as well as the Prince of Peace. The large white candle in the center is known as the Christ candle, and points to Jesus as the Christ, the Light of the world.

A progression is noted in the lighting of the candles of the Advent wreath each Sunday. Each candle symbolizes various aspects of our waiting experience. The culmination of the season comes as we light the Christ Candle on Christmas Eve. We join in rejoicing that the promise of long ago has been fulfilled.

**Congregational Song: "Light One Candle to Watch for Messiah" –**

Hymn 240 v. 1

*(Action: After the song is sung, one of the blue candles is lit.)*

**THE NATIVITY –Terri Bousselot/Deb Detlefs**

One of the most heart-warming expressions of Christmas is the Nativity. The Nativity speaks of the mystery of God's wisdom. Why God chose to send his son into our world as a baby of humble birth, born in common surroundings, we do not know. What we do know is that God reached out to all people including the poor and wealthy, the simple and the wise, the powerless and the powerful. All who found him knelt in humility before him. Knowing God is possible because he came to us, at our level.



Whenever we see a Nativity we find ourselves with Mary and Joseph; with the Shepherds, and with the Wise Men; bowing before the manger, overwhelmed by God's expression of love in coming to us.

**Congregational Song: "Away in a Manger"** – Hymn 277 verse 1  
(*Action: After the song is sung, the nativity is put in place.*)

### **GIFTS OF CHRISTMAS –Diane Christensen/Marcia Edens**

From the beginning of Christmas celebrations, gift giving has been a part of the season. The Wise Men gave out of their treasures, and the Shepherds gave of themselves. Both express the Gift of God in giving Christ as the Savior of the World.

Unique in our history of generous givers is the story of Saint Nicholas, Bishop of Myra in Lycia in the fourth century A.D. He is reputed to have been wealthy, his emblem being three purses and three golden balls. This was the symbol of rich Italian families of his time. It survives today in the signs of some of our pawnshops. The good Bishop gave his money away secretly to those whom he found in need. He was deeply interested in young people, giving his wealth especially to maidens whose lack of a dowry was affecting their matrimonial future, and to needy boys. Gifts coming from unknown sources were commonly attributed to him and parents customarily gave him credit for their gifts to their children.

The discovery of his generosity is said to have been made by the father of three dowry-less daughters. The eldest two each received from the chimney on successive nights a substantial gift of gold with her name on it. The father resolved to watch and see who their generous benefactor could be. His vigil revealed the good Saint Nicholas as the donor of the gifts. His name survives today as the human embodiment of unselfish giving.

Hanging up our stockings in pleasant anticipation of Santa's gifts may have originated from the fact that the maidens of this Bishopric of Myra, needing and expecting a dowry from the good Saint Nicholas, suspended a stocking to catch the money purse the generous Bishop was sure to drop down the chimney.

**Congregational Song: "What Child is This"** – Hymn 296  
(*As hymn is sung, the offering is collected*)

## **THE CHRIST OF CHRISTMAS – Mark Witte/Kay Olson**

The greatest Gift of Christmas is the Gift of God in Christ Jesus. All that we do at this Holy Season points to that expression of Holy Love. Christ came as a babe in Bethlehem, God's gift at Christmas. As Christians we seek to pass on our heritage to our children and to those who, by faith in Christ, become part of the Family of God. It is through the work of the Holy Spirit in your life and mine that the Gift goes on.

**Congregational Song: "That Boy-Child of Mary" - Hymn 293**

### **CONCLUDING PRAYER**

P. O God, you have caused this world to shine with the illumination of the true Light. You have given us your only-begotten Son to take our nature upon Him to reveal to us your glory and grace. As you have given this gift in love, may we receive it with joy. Grant that we, being regenerate and made your children by adoption and grace may daily be renewed by your Holy Spirit. Grant us, we pray, that as we have known the mystery of that Light upon earth, so may we also reflect that light to a darkened world; through the same Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

**Cong: Amen.**

### **THE BLESSING**

P. May God direct your ways in peace,  
make you abound in love for one another and for all.  
and strengthen your hearts  
until the coming of our Lord Jesus.  
Almighty God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit,  
bless you now and forever.

**Cong: Amen**

Ring of the Bell  
Postlude

<b>Pianist:</b>	Faith:	Rachel Boussetlot
<b>Organist:</b>	Our Savior's:	Linda Whitman
<b>Altar Ministry:</b>	Faith:	Larry & Marilyn Schau
<b>Greeter:</b>	Faith:	Keith Steward
<b>Acolyte:</b>	Faith:	Kale Whitman, Karragan Whitman
	Our Savior's:	Chase Knoche
<b>Lector:</b>	Faith:	Marsha Witte
	Our Savior's:	David Olson
<b>Ushers:</b>	Faith:	Marilyn Schau, Larry Schau, Diane Wilhelm, Herb Wilhelm
	Our Savior's:	Mark Olson, Shane Glover
<b>Cleaners:</b>	Our Savior's:	Shane and Amy Glover

**Welcome to our guests and visitors.** We are glad to have you worship with us this morning. Thank you for worshipping with us and please come back to worship with us again.

There is a **"cry room"** available in the back of each church, if you would like to make use of the accommodations.

**Those to keep in prayer this week:** For Vera St. John, Scott Fisher, Elizabeth Goddard, Katy Petersen, Mallory Boussetlot, Vicki Sharp, Josie Watham, Nancy Ramige, Malinda Malmanger, Alice Schroeder, Florence Petersen, Geri Schutt and Myrna Kay Petersen.

**There is a Sunday School class for all those three years of age and above.** Please join us at 9:25 a.m. at Our Savior's Church.

**During Advent, Confirmation Class will meet on Wednesdays, December 2 and 9 at Faith and December 16 at Our Savior's from 6:15—6:45 p.m. p.m.**

**Sunday School Christmas Program Rehearsal** will be held each Wednesday at 6:00 p.m. at the church building where we will gather for Advent Worship. A rehearsal will also be held on Saturday, December 19 at 9:00 a.m. at Our Savior's.

### Midweek Advent Schedule:

7:00 p.m. - Wednesdays

- ◆ December 2 and 9 – Faith Church
- ◆ December 16 – Our Savior's Church

*(A 6:00 meal precedes each Advent Midweek Worship)*

**Please note a change in plans:** The December 2 Advent meal at Faith will be prepared and served by the Faith Council; on December 9 at Faith the meal will be prepared and served by the God Squad; On December 16 at Our Savior's the meal will be a potluck meal.

**Choir Rehearsal** at Faith following the mid-week Advent Worship.



**The God Squad will soon be shopping for our local Angel Tree.** We have not yet received our Angel Tree names but if you are interested in either shopping for an angel or making a donation and have the God Squad shop for you, please contact Heather Grau, Ashley Steffens or Colette Christiansen.

## **This Week At A Glance**

Today	8:00 a.m. -	Worship Service at Faith Church
	9:25 a.m. -	Sunday School/Adult Class – Our Savior's
	10:30 a.m. -	Worship Service at Our Savior's Church
Wednesday	6:00 p.m. -	Advent Meal at Faith Church
	6:00 p.m. -	Christmas Program Practice at Faith
	6:15 p.m. -	Confirmation Class at Faith Church
	7:00 p.m. -	Advent Worship Service at Faith Church
	7:45 p.m. -	Choir Rehearsal at Faith Church
Sunday	8:00 a.m. -	Worship Service at Faith Church
	9:25 a.m. -	Sunday School/Adult Class – Our Savior's
	10:30 a.m. -	Worship Service at Our Savior's Church

### **Faith:**

Worship Attendance, November 22.....	46
Offering, Sunday, November 22.....	\$810.00
Needed Weekly to Meet Budget .....	\$2,066.00
Thanksgiving Worship Attendance, November 22.....	60

### **Our Savior's:**

Worship Attendance, November 22.....	39
Sunday School Attendance, November 22.....	26
God Squad Attendance, November 22.....	7
Adult Class Attendance, November 22.....	20

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<b>Calamus Lutheran Parish.....</b>	<b>Church Office 246-2622</b>
<b>Pastor's Office .....</b>	<b>246-2558</b>
<b>Pastor William Runaas, Jr. Cell Phone.....</b>	<b>319-231-5262</b>
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