

CALAMUS LUTHERAN PARISH

Faith Lutheran Church

8:00 am

Our Savior's Lutheran Church

10:30 am

First Sunday in Advent

December 3, 2017

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

Ringing of the Bell

Welcome and Announcements

Hanging of the Christmas Greens

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.

Congregation: 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

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 from Isaiah 64:1-9

L: A reading from Isaiah.

O that you would tear open the heavens and come down,
so that the mountains would quake at your presence--
as when fire kindles brushwood
and the fire causes water to boil—
to make your name known to your adversaries,
so that the nations might tremble at your presence!

When you did awesome deeds that we did not expect,
you came down, the mountains quaked at your presence.

From ages past no one has heard,
no ear has perceived,
no eye has seen any God besides you,
who works for those who wait for him.

You meet those who gladly do right,
those who remember you in your ways.

But you were angry, and we sinned;
because you hid yourself we transgressed.

We have all become like one who is unclean,
and all our righteous deeds are like a filthy cloth.
We all fade like a leaf,
and our iniquities, like the wind, take us away.

There is no one who calls on your name,
or attempts to take hold of you;
for you have hidden your face from us,
and have delivered us into the hand of our iniquity.

Yet, O LORD, you are our Father;
we are the clay, and you are our potter;
we are all the work of your hand.

Do not be exceedingly angry, O LORD,
and do not remember iniquity forever.
Now consider, we are all your people.

L: The Word of the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God.

Psalm 80:1-7, 17-19

Give ear, O Shepherd of Israel,
you who lead Joseph like a flock!

You who are enthroned upon the cherubim, shine forth
before Ephraim and Benjamin and Manasseh.

Stir up your might, and come to save us!

Restore us, O God;
let your face shine, that we may be saved.

O LORD God of hosts,

how long will you be angry with your people's prayers?

You have fed them with the bread of tears,
and given them tears to drink in full measure.

**You make us the scorn of our neighbors;
our enemies laugh among themselves.**

Restore us, O God of hosts;
let your face shine, that we may be saved.

**But let your hand be upon the one at your right hand,
the one whom you made strong for yourself.**

Then we will never turn back from you;
give us life, and we will call on your name.

**Restore us, O LORD God of hosts;
let your face shine, that we may be saved.**

Second Reading from 1st Corinthians 1:3-9

L: A reading from 1st Corinthians.

Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. I give thanks to my God always for you because of the grace of God that has been given you in Christ Jesus, for in every way you have been enriched in him, in speech and knowledge of every kind-- just as the testimony of Christ has been strengthened among you-- so that you are not lacking in any spiritual gift as you wait for the revealing of our Lord Jesus Christ. He will also strengthen you to the end, so that you may be blameless on the day of our Lord Jesus Christ. God is faithful; by him you were called into the fellowship of his Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

L: The Word of the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God.

(Please stand.)

P: The Holy Gospel according to St. Mark the thirteenth chapter.

C: Glory to you, O Lord.

Gospel: Gospel Mark 13:24-37

"But in those days, after that suffering,
the sun will be darkened,
and the moon will not give its light,
and the stars will be falling from heaven,

and the powers in the heavens will be shaken.

Then they will see 'the Son of Man coming in clouds' with great power and glory. Then he will send out the angels, and gather his elect from the four winds, from the ends of the earth to the ends of heaven.

"From the fig tree learn its lesson: as soon as its branch becomes tender and puts forth its leaves, you know that summer is near. So also, when you see these things taking place, you know that he is near, at the very gates. Truly I tell you, this generation will not pass away until all these things have taken place. Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away.

"But about that day or hour no one knows, neither the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father. Beware, keep alert; for you do not know when the time will come. It is like a man going on a journey, when he leaves home and puts his slaves in charge, each with his work, and commands the doorkeeper to be on the watch. Therefore, keep awake--for you do not know when the master of the house will come, in the evening, or at midnight, or at cockcrow, or at dawn, or else he may find you asleep when he comes suddenly. And what I say to you I say to all: Keep awake."

P: The Gospel of the Lord.

C: Praise to you, O Christ.

(Please be seated.)

THE SANCTUARY EVERGREENS

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

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 271

♪ **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

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,

(Action: As the song is sung, the flowers are put into place around the front of the church.)

THE PARAMENTS AND ADVENT COLORS

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

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

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

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

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.

C: Amen.

Lords Prayer?????

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.

C: Amen

Ringling of the Bell

Postlude

Alternate Worship Texts: *Sundays & Seasons*, copyright ©2017 Augsburg Fortress

Welcome to our guests and visitors. We are happy to have you worship with us this morning. We invite you to return and 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 Ruth Braet, Ginny Barnard, Chris Forret, Craig Henning, June Reimers, Andrea Shelton, Nan Anderson, George Tulley, Dennis Pewe, Will Wade, Mary Ann Washburn Stuedemann, Lauren Dudley, Ethan Friedrich, Scott Fisher, and Vicki Sharp; For the homebound: Geneva Meadows, Bus Seastrand, Hazel Richards, Ron Gasper, Alice Schroeder, Geri Schutt, Bob Barnard, and Myrna Kay Petersen.

Pastor: Rev. William Runaas, Jr.

Pianist: Faith: Rachel Boussetot

Organist: Our Savior's: Linda Whitman

Altar Ministry: Faith: Larry & Sharyl Banowetz

Greeter: Faith: Gary Braet

Acolytes: Faith: Ryan Dick

Our Savior's: Courtney Knoche

Lectors: Faith: Brian Tulley

Our Savior's: Amy Glover

Ushers: Faith: Mark Witte, Dirk Braet

Brian Tulley, Gary Braet

Our Savior's: Mark Olson, Art Boussetot

Cleaners: Our Savior's: Brain Boussetot and Dylan Boussetot

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.

The first **Children's Christmas Program rehearsal** is at 5:45 p.m. on Wednesday, December 6. The children will be dismissed in time to eat.

Wednesday Advent Services

December 6 - 6:00 p.m. Pot Luck Meal & 7:00 p.m. Worship at OS
(set-up and clean-up by Faith Council)

December 13 - 6:00 p.m. Pot Luck Meal & 7:00 p.m. Worship at OS
(set-up and clean-up by Our Savior's Council)

December 20 - 6:00 p.m. Meal & 7:00 p.m. Worship at Faith
(set-up and clean-up by God Squad)

Bake Sales - Support your sweet tooth and God Squad by buying homemade treats on Dec. 10 and Dec. 17.

Jars Needed - God Squad is looking for wide-mouth, quart-size canning jars for an upcoming fundraiser. If you have any to donate, please contact Heather Grau at (563) 424-0507

Love-In-A-Jar Fundraiser - God Squad is selling cookies and soups in a jar for \$5.00. Sign up for yours today with any God Squad youth or in the back of the church. Jars will be ready for pick-up on December 17 during service.

Jar Assembly Day - All God Squad youth should meet at Faith church on December 6 at 12:30 to assemble the cookies and soups in jars. (This is an early-out Wednesday.)

Angel Tree - God Squad and Calamus Lutheran Parish are participating the Angel Tree project. If you would like to sponsor a child, please take their name off the tree in the narthex. All gifts must be wrapped and

tagged and brought back by December 15. If you need help, contact Heather Grau at (563) 424-0507.

There is **no Confirmation** during lent. Please pick up home work from Pastor Bill.

This Week At A Glance

Today 8:00 am – Worship Service at Faith Church
 9:25 am – Sunday School/Adult Class at Our Savior's
 10:30 am – Worship Service at Our Savior's Church
Tuesday 9:00 am – Coffee & a Little Jesus at Heather Grau
Wednesday 5:45 pm – Children's program practice at Our Savior's
 6:00 pm – Advent Meal at Our Savior's
 7:00 pm – Advent Worship Service at Our Savior's
Sunday 8:00 am – Worship Service at Faith Church
 9:25 am – Sunday School/Adult Class at Our Savior's
 10:30 am – Worship Service at Our Savior's Church

Faith:

Worship Attendance, November 26, 2017.....50
Offering, November 26, 2017.....\$2,125.00
Needed weekly to meet budget.....\$2,182.00

Our Savior's:

Worship Attendance, November 26, 2017.....22
Sunday School Attendance, November 26, 2017.....20
God Squad Attendance, November 26, 2017.....5
Adult Class Attendance, November 26, 2017.....13

Calamus Lutheran Parish Church Office.....246-2622
Pastor's Office246-2558
Pastor Bill's Cell Phone319-231-5262
Pastor Bill's Email Address.....clparishpastor@fbcom.net

Church Email Address.....clparish@fbcom.net

Church Web Site.....www.clparish.org