

December 15th, 2013



BETHESDA LUTHERAN CHURCH OF MALMO

21590 State Highway 47, Isle, MN 56342

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Church Web Site: blcmalmo.org

Pastor: Rev. James Raisanen

Church Secretary: Secretary Mary Kramer

Parish Nurses: Darlene Christensen, RN, C 320-684-2846

Patti Honnold, RN CNP 320-676-8421

Kathy Berland RN ANP 320-495-3988

Ministers: All Members of the Congregation

MISSION STATEMENT

We will grow spiritually and in numbers as we serve Christ. We will reach out and address the hurts and hopes in our community. We will maintain a church home that is reverently joyous and extend a welcome to all who seek to join us in our mission.

Hearing Assistance is available during the service.

Please notify usher if you would like assistance

Sunday, December 15, 2013
Third Sunday of Advent

INTRODUCTION

A note of joyful expectation marks today's worship. Isaiah announces that the desert shall rejoice and blossom. Jesus points to signs of God's reign: the blind see, the lame walk, lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear. We wait with patience for the coming of the Lord, even as we rejoice at his presence among us this day: in word and holy supper, in church and in our homes, in silent reflection and in works of justice and love. We pray that God would open our eyes and ears to the wonders of Christ's advent among us.

PRELUDE

“I Heard the Bells on Christmas Day”

ANNOUNCEMENTS

OPENING HYMN:

“What a Fellowship, What a Joy Divine”

#774 ELW

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

Blessed be the holy Trinity, + one God, our life, our mercy, our might.
Amen.

As we await the day of the Lord, let us confess our sin.

Silence is kept for reflection.

Great and Holy One,

in this time of waning daylight, we confess the shadows of sin in our lives.

We build ourselves up at the expense of others.

We rely on our own efforts to make our lives secure.

Yet you, O Lord, are the potter, and we are the clay.

Come to restore us in your image, remake us into your people,

and rebuild what sin has broken, that we and the whole creation may rejoice.

Amen.

Fear not, people of God:

the Almighty has done great things for us.

God casts away our sin from us

and makes of us a new creation.

In + Jesus Christ, God comes to set you free.

Take heart in the tender compassion of our God.

Amen.

GREETING

From the one who is and who was and who is to come, and from Jesus Christ, the first fruits of the resurrection grace and peace be with you all.

And also with you.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Almighty God, you once called John the Baptist to give witness to the coming of your Son and to prepare his way. Grant us, your people, the wisdom to see your purpose today and the openness to hear your will, that we may witness to Christ's coming and so prepare his way; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen

BELLS

”Angels We Have Heard on High”

BAPTISM

Ava Rain Hunt Second Service

FIRST READING

Isaiah 35:1-10

The prophet describes the return from the Babylonian captivity as a joyous procession to Zion. God's coming reign will bring a renewal of creation in which health and wholeness will be restored. There is no need for fear, for God is coming to save.

The wilderness and the dry land shall be glad, the desert shall rejoice and blossom; like the crocus it shall blossom abundantly, and rejoice with joy and singing. The glory of Lebanon shall be given to it, the majesty of Carmel and Sharon. They shall see the glory of the LORD, the majesty of our God. Strengthen the weak hands, and make firm the feeble knees. Say to those who are of a fearful heart, "Be strong, do not fear! Here is your God. He will come with vengeance, with terrible recompense. He will come and save you." Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf unstopped; then the lame shall leap like a deer, and the tongue of the speechless sing for joy. For waters shall break forth in the wilderness, and streams in the desert; the burning sand shall become a pool, and the thirsty ground springs of water; the haunt of jackals shall become a swamp, the grass shall become reeds and rushes. A highway shall be there, and it shall be called the Holy Way; the unclean shall not travel on it, but it shall be for God's people; no traveler, not even fools, shall go astray. No lion shall be there, nor shall any ravenous beast come up on it; they shall not be found there, but the redeemed shall walk there.

And the ransomed of the LORD shall return, and come to Zion with singing; everlasting joy shall be upon their heads; they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.

PSALM

Luke 1:46b-55

Refrain: My spirit rejoices in God my Savior. (Luke 1:47)

"My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord, my spirit rejoices in God my Savior,
for you, Lord, have looked with favor on your lowly servant.

From this day all generations will call me blessed:

you, the Almighty, have done great things for me and holy is your name.

You have mercy on those who fear you, from generation to generation. R

You have shown strength with your arm and scattered the proud in their conceit,
casting down the mighty from their thrones and lifting up the lowly.

You have filled the hungry with good things and sent the rich away empty.

You have come to the aid of your servant Israel,

to remember the promise of mercy,

the promise made to our forbears, to Abraham and his children forever." **R**

GOSPEL:

James 5:7-10

In anticipation of the Lord's coming, Christians are called upon to cultivate patience rather than discontent.

Be patient, therefore, beloved, until the coming of the Lord. The farmer waits for the precious crop from the earth, being patient with it until it receives the early and the late rains. You also must be patient. Strengthen your hearts, for the coming of the Lord is near. Beloved, do not grumble against one another, so that you may not be judged. See, the Judge is standing at the doors! As an example of suffering and patience, beloved, take the prophets who spoke in the name of the Lord.

HYMN:

“O Come, O Come Emmanuel”

#257 ELW

SERMON:

“Be Patient!”

OFFERING & OFFERTORY PRAYER

God of abundance, we bring before you the precious fruits of your creation, and with them our very lives. Teach us patience and hope as we care for all those in need until the coming of your Son, our Savior and Lord. Amen.

Prayers of Intercession

In hope and anticipation, we pray for the church, those in need, and all of God's creation.

A brief silence.

Stir up in our hearts an eagerness for your coming. Grant us patience in our waiting, and while we wait, strengthen us to persevere in ways of justice and righteousness. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

In this season, nurture dry and dormant lands so that they will blossom in the coming months. Spread your abundance throughout all lands, that every living thing may be filled. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Draw near to all who are oppressed or neglected. Lift up all who are cast down. Deliver those in the captivity of loneliness and poverty into your freedom. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Strengthen those who are made weak by the heavy burdens that they carry (*especially*). Surround them with messengers who announce your presence with them. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Raise the expectations of all who seek you in this season. Turn us from material things, and open us to a life full of healing and renewal, where all people receive good news. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Here other intercessions may be offered.

Remembering the saints who have entered into your eternal reign, sustain us through their witness to your everlasting faithfulness until we are united in the fullness of your kingdom. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Almighty God, we entrust to you all for whom we pray, confident that you fulfill your promises through Christ our Savior and Lord.

Amen.

THE APOSTLES CREED

I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth.

I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried; he descended into hell. On the third day he rose again; he ascended into heaven, he is seated at the right hand of the Father, and he will come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen

WORDS OF INSTITUTION

THE LORD'S PRAYER

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

God of wonder,

**we give thanks that you have fed us once again
with this foretaste of the feast to come.**

**Strengthen us through this gift
to serve our neighbor with joy,
that all may come to see your glory
reflected in the lives of your people;
through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.
Amen.**

BLESSING

The God of hope,
through Christ our peace,
in the power of the Holy Spirit,
+ bless you now and forever.
Amen.

CLOSING HYMN:

“Joy to the World”

#267 ELW

ANNOUNCEMENTS

WELCOME!-little **Ava Rain Hunt** to the Family of God. Her baptism today is a Covenant with God. Let us as a congregation support her spiritual growth and encourage her family to grow in the Lord. Parents are Terick and Monique Hunt.

AITKIN COUNTY OPERATION CHRISTMAS-Thank you! Your generosity is most appreciated. Bonnie Mickelson will take our gifts from Bethesda after church, today, Sunday December 15, 2013 to the Aitkin Moose Lodge. On Wednesday December 18, 2013 qualifying families' will be invited to "shop". Thank you again for your donations. Your kindness will make a child's Christmas extra special.

PLEASE PICK UP your offering envelopes. Help distribute them to each other.

IRENE LONG'S ADDRESS-206 Elm Street N, Apt 270, Onamia, MN 56359. Her phone number is (320) 532-2060. She is at Lake Song Assisted Living that is connected to the Mille Lacs Hospital and Clinic in Onamia.

CANTATA-"Bethlehem's Child" will be sung by the Bethesda Choir on December 22, 2013 at 9:00 am. This is the beginning of our winter church schedule with one service per Sunday. There will be choir practice on Wednesday December 18 at 6:00 pm and Saturday December 21 at 10:00 am.

BETHESDA SERVE!-love like Jesus. If you want to help local people at Christmas time check out the annual Bethesda Santa Christmas Outreach program. Do you know a neighbor or church member who is going through a tough time? Please leave their name and address in the wooden "Santa Box" in the entry or make a donation to this program, just mark your envelope. Look at the "tents" on our tables at coffee time for more ideas.

Christmas Worship Schedule

December 22 Sunday Cantata 9:00 am (One Service Only)

December 24 Tuesday Candle Light Christmas Eve Service 3:30 pm and 5:00 pm

December 25 Wednesday Christmas Day Service 10:00 am with Christmas Potluck following the Service. Ham will be provided. All are welcome!

December 29 First Sunday after Christmas 9:00 am (One Service Only)

THOSE SERVING THIS WEEK OF DECEMBER 16 – DECEMBER 21, 2013

Organist: Marlys Beavers

Ushers: 8:30 Wayne & Janice Olson 10:00 Darrell Kelly

Lectors: 8:30 Myra Honl 10:00 Jeannine Bruesewitz

Coffee Servers: Bev & Wally Swenson and Marlys LeClaire and Judy Wozney

Greeters: Dennis & Audrey Bistodeau

Thank you for your service!

Response to God's Word Last Week (12/8/2013)

Attendance: 8:30 - 70 10:00 - 34

THIS WEEK at Bethesda December 16 thru December 21, 2013

Monday 12/16 7:00 pm AA & Alanon

Tuesday 12/17 8:30 am Pastor's Tech Study

Wednesday 12/18 8:30 am Bible Study
9:30 am No WELCA
9:30 am Hardanger
11:00 am Bible Study
6:00 pm Choir
7:00 pm Praise Team
7:00 pm Confirmation

Thursday 12/19 8:00 am R.O.M.E.O.S
1:00 pm Fun Timers
5:30 pm Bells

Friday 12/20 10:00 am Bone Builders

Saturday 12/21 10:00 am Choir