

The Fourth 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

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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. Lana Strike

Hymn 90:1-6 *Come, Your Hearts and Voices Raising*

Liturgy page 5 ff. in The Lutheran Hymnal

Old Testament Lesson 2 Samuel 7:1-11, 16 It happened that when the king was living in his palace, and when the Lord had given him rest from his enemies all around, the king said to Nathan the prophet, “Look, I live in a house of cedar, but the Ark of God sits under tent curtains.”

Nathan said to the king, “Go and do everything that is in your heart, because the Lord is with you.”

But that night the word of the Lord came to Nathan. He said, “Go and tell my servant David all these things.”

This is what the Lord says. Are you the one to build a house for me to live in? I have not lived in a house from the day I brought the people of Israel up from Egypt until today. I have been moving around in the Tent and the Dwelling. I have traveled everywhere with all the people of Israel. Did I ever speak a word to any of the judges of Israel, whom I commanded to shepherd my people, or ask them, “Why have you not built a house of cedar for me?”

You are also to say the following to my servant David.

This is what the Lord of Armies says. I took you from the pasture, from following sheep, to be ruler over my people, over Israel. I have been with you wherever you went. I have cut off all your enemies from before you. I will make your reputation great, like that of the great ones on the earth. I will set up a place for my people Israel, and I will plant them there. They will dwell there, and they will not be disturbed again. Violent men will not afflict them again as they did at the beginning and ever since the day I appointed judges over my people Israel. I will give you rest from all your enemies.

The Lord also declares to you that the Lord himself will make a house for you.

Your house will stand firm, and your kingdom will endure forever before you. Your throne will be established forever. [EHV]

Gospel Lesson Luke 1:46-55 And Mary said:

“My soul magnifies the Lord,
And my spirit has rejoiced in God my Savior.
For He has regarded the lowly state of His maidservant;
For behold, henceforth all generations will call me blessed.
For He who is mighty has done great things for me,
And holy is His name.
And His mercy is on those who fear Him
From generation to generation.
He has shown strength with His arm;
He has scattered the proud in the imagination of their hearts.
He has put down the mighty from their thrones,
And exalted the lowly.
He has filled the hungry with good things,
And the rich He has sent away empty.
He has helped His servant Israel,
In remembrance of His mercy,
As He spoke to our fathers,
To Abraham and to his seed forever.”

Hymn 102 *Oh Come, All Ye Faithful*

Sermon Luke 2:15-18 So it was, when the angels had gone away from them into heaven, that the shepherds said to one another, “Let us now go to Bethlehem and see this thing that has come to pass, which the Lord has made known to us.” And they came with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the Babe lying in a manger. Now when they had seen *Him*, they made widely known the saying which was told them concerning this Child. And all those who heard *it* marveled at those things which were told them by the shepherds.

Come for Christmas...

The Offertory

Choir *As Lately We Watched*

Hymn *Angels We Have Heard on High*

Prayer + The Lord's Prayer

The Benediction

Hymn 707 *On Christmas Night All Christians Sing*

CHRISTMAS SCHEDULE Parents, please have your children at church before 6:10 this evening so that the students can rehearse with the choir.

Our Christmas Day service will be held tomorrow morning at 9:30.

Our New Year's Eve service will be held next Sunday morning. No evening service is planned.

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.

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 12/24 Phil S., Nathan V., Anthony F., Daniel R.

12/31 Trevor B., Tim Z., Joshua E., Christian K., David R.

01/07 Kendall B., Larry B. Jonathen L.

CLEANING (Wk. 2) J. Appel, S. Winters, J. Zuehlke
E. Bass, S. DeWall