



DECEMBER 2017 NEWSLETTER



December Sunday Worship

A Time of Repentance, Preparation and Redirection

During the month of December we will be encouraged to slow down and reflect on the coming of God in the flesh of Jesus to our world. Before Jesus' arrival God send a messenger of preparation, John the Baptist. His purpose was foretold by an angel of the Lord to his father, Zechariah. When the angel appeared to Zechariah, the angel said of the coming birth of his son, John, with these words: "He will bring back many of the people of Israel to the Lord their God . . . to turn the hearts of the parents to their children and the disobedient to the wisdom the righteous—to make read a people prepared for the Lord." (Luke 1:16-17) Who is your "John the Baptist?" John's word to us is always: "Repent!" Repentance is nothing more than a change of direction, a re-orientation in living, a re-commitment to return to the Lord and His ways. Will you allow John the Baptist to speak to you this year? Join on Sundays as we listen to the word of preparation for the coming of the Lord!

December 3 – (Mark 13:24-37) – **Advent 1**

"Stir up your power, Lord Jesus, and come" is our prayer on this first Sunday in Advent. The new church year begins with a wake-up call: Christ is coming soon. Advent is always about the "coming" day and that we live with great expectation for that day.

December 10 – (Mark 1:1-8) – **Advent 2**

John calls us to repent, to clear the decks, to completely reorder our lives so that nothing will get in the way of the Lord's coming. We are also reminded that the Lord is not slow in coming. He is being patient, wanting none to perish and all to come to repentance.

December 17 – (John 1:6-8, 19-28) – **Advent 3**

John the Baptist continues his call to repentance where God promises to give us garland instead of ashes, the oil of gladness instead of mourning, and a mantle of praise instead of a faint spirit to those you turn to the Lord.

December 24 – (Luke 1:26-38) - **Advent 4**

Today is a double purpose day: the 4th Sunday in Advent and Christmas Eve. As we hear the conception of Jesus by the angel Gabriel, we celebrate the birth of Jesus later in the day on Christmas Eve and Day! May we live like Mary and be able to say: "God, count me in!" I will make known the name of Jesus in my life!

Christmas Eve Services

Sunday, December 24, at 5 PM and 11 PM

After worshipping on Sunday morning, we will gather for our candlelight service in the evening with two worship opportunities. Our first candlelight service (5 PM) will be a family Christmas Eve service with the Sunday school involved in the service. We will be using pre-recorded videos of the children interviewing various members of the congregation about the Christmas story. The children will also be singing and reading scripture. The congregation will be singing traditional Christmas carols, sharing the Lord's Supper, singing Silent Night with lit candles, with a short message by Pastor Steve. Another candlelight service will be held at 11 PM at the close of the evening. This service is more reflective, pausing to consider the importance of this day, like Mary pondered all these things after the birth of Jesus. Again, this service will include Christmas carols, communion, lit candles while singing Silent Night, and a message from Pastor Steve.

Mid-week Advent Service

Wednesdays (Nov. 29, Dec. 6, 13, & 20)

Our theme for our mid-week Advent services is "**Call His Name Jesus,**" where each week we will be examining various names given the Son of God, born of Mary. Our service will begin at 7 PM each week where we will be using the Holden Evening Prayer service. Each service will be preceded with a free-will offering soup supper in the fellowship hall, beginning at 6:15 p.m.

November 29 – Jesus our **Savior**: it is the name we love, the name by which we are saved, as we prepare this Advent season to celebrate His birth and anticipate his return on the Last Day. Come, Lord Jesus!

December 6 – Jesus as the **Lamb of God**: we will remember how God saved the people of Israel from slavery in Egypt and how He saved us, when our sins were washed away in the blood of Jesus, the Lamb of God!

December 13 – Jesus our **Good Shepherd**: whose birth was announced to shepherds in Bethlehem, is also our Shepherd. Our shepherd continues to feed us with His Word and with His body and blood, and shelters us in His care.

December 20 – Jesus is **Emmanuel**: we will reflect on the name that describes who Jesus is—Emmanuel, God with us. God Himself took on human flesh, being born among us as one of us, for the sake of our salvation.

Congregational Meeting

Sunday, December 17 – immediately after worship

Our annual congregational meeting to pass our budget for 2018 we will be held on Sunday, December 17, immediately following worship in the fellowship hall. The budget will be distributed to the congregation with a time for discussion before our final presentation. On Sunday, December 3, immediately following worship, the congregation is invited to gather in the fellowship hall for a time of presentation, discussion, ask questions, seek clarification, etc. before our official meeting on December 17.

Pastor Steve's Letter — "Five Pillars of the Reformation: #5 "God's Glory Alone"

Historians and theologians have long recognized that at the heart of the 16th Century Protestant Reformation were five declarations ("solas" = "alone") that distinguished the movement from other expressions of the Christian faith. Celebrating the 500th Anniversary of the Reformation this fall (Martin Luther posted his 95 Theses on the door of Castle Church in Wittenberg, Germany, on October 31, 1517), we live in a different time with fresh challenges to our faith. Yet these rallying cries of the Reformation continue to speak to us, addressing a wide range of contemporary issues. During the next five newsletters I will be writing on each "solas" (alone): **Grace Alone** (salvation as a gift of God) - [August newsletter](#); **Faith Alone** (the doctrine of justification) - [September newsletter](#); **God's Word Alone** (the authority of scripture) - [October newsletter](#); **Christ Alone** (the uniqueness of Jesus as Savior) - [November newsletter](#); and **God's Glory Alone** (the majestic heart of the Christian faith and life) - [December newsletter](#). Zonderan Publishing has published a 5-volume book series on each sola in celebration of the 500th Anniversary of the Reformation. This month we look at [God's Glory Alone: The Majestic Heart of Christian Faith and Life](#) with some of the main points of this volume of work by David Vandrunen.

As we end our conversations on the five solas of the Reformation, we come to the supreme end of them all – **God's Glory Alone**. These are the words of praise the angels sang at the birth of Jesus to lowly shepherds in the field and these are the words of the heavenly chorus sung to the Lamb of God in heaven in John's vision in the book of Revelation. Each of these five solas probe at the heart of the Reformation – its theology, its ethics, its worship, and its piety. David Vandrunen writes: "**Christ alone**, and no other redeemer, is the mediator of our salvation. **Grace alone**, and not any human contribution, saves us. **Faith alone**, and no other human action, is the instrument by which we are saved. **Word alone**, and no merely human word, is our ultimate standard of authority. **God's Glory alone**, and that of no creature, is the supreme end of all things." (Page 14) To put it another way, Vandrunen writes: "By holding forth *solī Deo Gloria* as the lifeblood of the *solas*, we remind ourselves that the biblical religion recaptured by the Reformation is not ultimately about ourselves, but about God. Our focus so easily becomes self-centered, even when we ask the same important questions that occupied the Reformers: Where can *I* find God's authoritative revelation? How can *I* escape the wrath of God? What must *I* do to be saved? The other four *solas* provide necessary and life-changing answers to such questions, but *solī Deo Gloria* puts them in proper perspective: the highest purpose of God's plan of salvation in Christ, made known in Scripture, is not our own beatitude, wonderful as that is. The highest purpose is God's own glory. God glorifies himself through the abundant blessings he bestows upon us." (Pages 15-16)

So as we close our reflections and conversations on the five solas of the Reformation, we come this month to celebrate Jesus' birth and join in with the angels' great joy: "Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace to those on whom His favor rests." (Luke 2:14) As a worshiping Christian in the 21st Century, I am so thankful for Christ, grace, faith, God's Word, and God's glory. I am so thankful that is no other redeemer I need to know, no human work I must do, no other action or word that I need to accomplish or read. All I need has been given to me by the works of Christ and the love of God. These simple, yet important solas of the Reformation, stirs my heart once again to sing, "Solī Deo gratia, Glory to God!" Throughout Scripture and every page of human history, God has shown to us His glory. He will continue to show us His glory until that one great day of coming – the return of Christ who will come bring all living things in the world into the glorious presence of God!

As we enter another season of Advent, may we wait with eager anticipation the coming glory of God. May our lives continue to glorify our God in what we do and what say. May we glorify God by living as Paul exhorts us to do with his words: "And whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him." (Colossians 3:17)

To God be the glory now and forever!

BIRTHDAYS and ANNIVERSARIES

- 12/4 Jeanne Nicholson
- 12/8 Haleigh Roberts
- 12/9 Gabriel Olson
- 12/11 Sharon Boelman
- 12/14 Don Knee
- 12/17 Cody Loughrey
- 12/17 Marilyn Woolard
- 12/19 Shirley Theil
- 12/23 Don Burke
- 12/25 Marilyn Nickols
- 12/28 Richard Sinkbeil
- 12/29 Janet Hrouda
- 12/29 Richard Olson
- 12/29 *Leonard & Fern Zechmann*

God’s blessings to everyone celebrating this month!
If your birthday or anniversary is not listed, please provide the office with the month, day and year.

Thanks for the prayers, cards and support while I was having chemotherapy. My last treatment was October 25. I will start radiation the end of November. Continued prayers will be appreciated as I take another step in this journey.

Linda Miller

To my Christ the Servant family,

It was so great to have you all make the trip to Seward. CTS has been such a great place to worship and feel God’s presence. Your love and inspiration was a great help through my journey. It truly helped me “Experience God.”

My prayers will be constant for your congregation. Always be watching for God’s plans. Sometimes they are more than you think you can handle. Don’t worry, He won’t let you down.

Blessings,

Pastor Scott Krohn
Living Word Lutheran Church

Pastoral Acts

Nevaeh Rose Newman
Baptized Nov. 12, 2017

October Local Benevolence

\$431.17 to Norfolk Good Neighbors/Food Pantry

Volunteers Needed

Ushers Coffee servers Communion assistants Offering counters (two teams)

KITCHEN FUNDRAISER

Winners of the drawings for meat bundles from Wausa Lockers were Linda Praest, Louise Skoglund, Tammy Larson and Kathy Drda. Guessing winners were Jane Christiansen (caramels), Danita Broders (candy corn) and Elizabeth Broders (Reese’s). Doris Childers was the silent auction winner of a cookie jar and cookies for a year. Volunteers are needed to bake a batch of cookies; watch for the signup sheet in the back.

Warmth, Peace & Pajamas

The Salvation Army is collecting new pajamas. The greatest need is children sizes 6-14, boys and girls, and adult sizes S-XL. Monetary donations can be dropped off or mailed to Salvation Army, 112 North 7th St., Norfolk (make check payable to Norfolk Salvation Army Pajama Project). Pajamas can be dropped off at Salvation Army or WJAG radio station. Deadline is December 17.

PieceMakers

The quilting ladies of Christ the Servant made 32 quilts this year. One was sent with Pastor Matt to Okoboji Lutheran Bible Camp. Three were given to our seniors who graduated in May. Two were given to the Norfolk Rescue Mission and one was given to Orphan Grain Train. Twenty-three were sent to Minneapolis to Lutheran World Relief and two were kept to give away.

The quilts being sent to Minneapolis are no longer taken free as the past owner sold his business and the new owner needs to be paid, so all organizations sending boxes need to give a donation.. The Sunday after the quilts were sent, we sent two cans out to make a “noisy shipping donation offering to the Lord.” You really showed great support of our quilting project as you blessed us with \$159.58. We always buy the batting and material, unless donated, that goes into our senior quilts and our camp quilt, and the church has always paid that. Now we’ll be able to use some of the money for that and the balance we will give for the shipping of the quilts.

Next year on the Sunday the quilts are put out, we will take a “noisy shipping donation to the Lord” and they’ll get our balance from this year plus whatever we receive next year. Any questions, ask Doris Hoffart.

We thank all of the people that have helped in any way to make all these quilts, and all the material, mattress pads, drapes, blankets and flannel that we put inside the quilts that someone donates during the year.

We can always use more help on the first Thursday of each month at 9:00 a.m.

Sunday School Christmas Program

Christmas Eve, Dec. 24, at 5 p.m.

This year’s Christmas program will once again take place during the 5:00 Christmas Eve service and will feature the simplicity and honesty of children. They will get to ask questions to learn what it was like when Jesus was born and how the nativity story can connect to our daily lives.

Inspired by an idea between Pastor Matt and I last year, we are going to try something a little different this year. I invite you to come experience The Living Nativity and learn with our kids that Jesus’ story is always important and will always be a part of our lives.

Amanda Cyboron
Sunday School Superintendent

December 2017

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					1 <i>Pastor out of office</i> 5:30 Girl Scouts <i>Kathy (vacation)</i>	2
3 <i>Advent 1</i> Sunday school 8:45 Adult study 9:00 Worship 10:00 Cong meeting to review proposed budget	4	5 6:30 Childcare oversight 6:30 Women of CTS	6 1:30 Growing Up 5:30 Confirmation 6:15 Advent meal 7:00 Worship 7:45 Youth group	7 9:00 PieceMakers 6:30 MOPS steering committee	8 <i>Pastor out of office</i>	9
10 <i>Advent 2</i> Sunday school 8:45 Adult study 9:00 Worship 10:00 Potluck	11 6:00 Via de Cristo Ultreya 6:30 Welcome & Hospitality	12	13 1:30 Growing Up 5:30 Confirmation 6:15 Advent meal 7:00 Worship 7:45 Youth group <i>Kathy (vacation)</i>	14 9:00 Agape Circle	15 <i>Pastor out of office</i> 5 to 7 p.m. Chili feed fundraiser 5:30 Girl Scouts	16 6:00 PM Christmas caroling to members
17 <i>Advent 3</i> Sunday school 8:45 Adult study 9:00 Worship 10:00 Fellowship Cong. meeting to pass 2018 budget	18 6:30 Board of Administration	19 6:30 Spiritual Oversight	20 1:30 Growing Up 5:30 Confirmation 6:15 Advent meal 7:00 Worship 7:45 Youth group	21 2:00 Card Club 6:45 MOPS/MOMSnext	22 <i>Pastor out of office</i>	23
<i>Christmas Eve</i> 10:00 Worship no Sunday school 5:00 Christmas program 11:00 Candlelight service	<i>Christmas Day</i> <i>Childcare & office closed</i>	26 7:00 Worship committee	27 1:30 Growing Up	28	29	30
Pastor Steve on vacation						
<i>New Year's Eve</i> 10:00 Worship no Sunday school Fellowship	<i>New Year's Day</i> <i>Childcare & office closed</i>		<i>Wednesday Night Alive will resume January 10</i>			