



"WE PREACH CHRIST CRUCIFIED..."

~1 CORINTHIANS 1:23

LUTHER MEMORIAL
CHURCH & SCHOOL K-8

134 21st Street
Fond du Lac, WI 54935

An Affiliate of the Church of the Lutheran Confession ♦ www.clclutheran.org



9:00am Sunday School & Bible Class / 10:00am Divine Service

Visit us at: www.FDLlutheran.com ♦ Church/Office (920) 922-7421

Pastor Neal Radichel ♦ Principal Dave Bernthal ♦ Teacher Jennifer Wiese

Altar cloths are purple; the color of royalty signifies Christ's rule in His eternal Kingdom.

Welcome to all! This week's focus:

So they made signs to his father -- what he would have him called. And he asked for a writing tablet, and wrote, saying, "His name is John." So they all marveled. ...And all those who heard them kept them in their hearts, saying, "What kind of child will this be?"

Luke 1:62-63, 66

Today's Service Liturgy (how God's Word serves us): **Tan Supplement p.22**

703 ♦ 645 ♦ 710 ♦ 712

Pre-Service Meditation Ps 119-IX. (Red Hymnal p.150) ~Opening Bells / Prayer

Our worship service centers and glorifies our Savior, Jesus Christ. Please turn off your cell phones to avoid distraction.

THE ORDER OF SERVICE

I. WE PREPARE TO MEET OUR LORD

THE INVOCATION

We invoke ("call upon") the name of our Triune God.

PASTOR: We begin our worship service today in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit!

ALL: Amen!

OPENING HYMN: #703 [Tan Supplement]

CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION OF SINS

We come before our Holy God recognizing that we are sinful and daily need His forgiveness.

P: God is light and in Him is no darkness at all.

ALL: If we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin.

P: If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

ALL: Almighty God, merciful Father, we are sinful by nature, and have sinned against You in our thoughts, words, and actions. But we are sorry for our transgressions and pray You, of Your bountiful mercy, to be gracious and merciful unto us. Forgive us for Jesus' sake, renew us by Your Spirit, and lead us in the way everlasting.

P: Jesus Christ is the satisfactory payment for our sins, and not for our only, but also for the sins of the whole world. You are forgiven. With boldness and confidence we may approach the throne to find grace to help in time of need. In the peace of Jesus Christ's forgiveness, let us praise the Lord!

ALL: Amen!

PRAYER OF THE DAY

P: Let us pray . . . through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Congregation (speaks): Amen.

III. OUR LORD SPEAKS TO US

1ST SCRIPTURE LESSON ~ ZECHARIAH 6:12-15

This prophecy of the Man called the "Branch", would be the one who will build the temple of the LORD, who will rule it, and be its high priest. Because Jesus, the Branch, is both king and priest He alone establishes the counsel of peace through the message of His work and Word of salvation.

12 "Then speak to him, saying, 'Thus says the LORD of hosts, saying: "Behold, the Man whose name is the BRANCH! From His place

He shall branch out, And He shall build the temple of the LORD; **13** Yes, He shall build the temple of the LORD. He shall bear the glory, And shall sit and rule on His throne; So He shall be a priest on His throne, And the counsel of peace shall be between them both." ' **14** "Now the elaborate crown shall be for a memorial in the temple of the LORD for Helem, Tobijah, Jedaiah, and Hen the son of Zephaniah. **15** "Even those from afar shall come and build the temple of the LORD. Then you shall know that the LORD of hosts has sent Me to you. And this shall come to pass if you diligently obey the voice of the LORD your God."

2ND SCRIPTURE LESSON ~ LUKE 1:56-66

With the birth of John the Baptizer, his father Zacharias goes from a mute to a messenger praising God. John would be the "Voice of one crying in the wilderness" proclaiming the message of peace. All the people marveled what kind of child would John be? In this way, John also prepared the way for the Christ child, where people would even more so ask that same question, "What child is this?"

56 And Mary remained with her about three months, and returned to her house. **57** Now Elizabeth's full time came for her to be delivered, and she brought forth a son. **58** When her neighbors and relatives heard how the Lord had shown great mercy to her, they rejoiced with her. **59** So it was, on the eighth day, that they came to circumcise the child; and they would have called him by the name of his father, Zacharias. **60** His mother answered and said, "No; he shall be called John." **61** But they said to her, "There is no one among your relatives who is called by this name." **62** So they made signs to his father -- what he would have him called. **63** And he asked for a writing tablet, and wrote, saying, "His name is John." So they all marveled. **64** Immediately his mouth was opened and his tongue loosed, and he spoke, praising God. **65** Then fear came on all who dwelt around them; and all these sayings were discussed throughout all the hill country of Judea. **66** And all those who heard them kept them in their hearts, saying, "What kind of child will this be?" And the hand of the Lord was with him.

OUR CONFESSION OF FAITH ~ THE THIRD ARTICLE (SANCTIFICATION)

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy Christian Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting.

I believe that I cannot by my own reason or strength believe in Jesus Christ, my Lord, or come to Him. But the Holy Spirit has

called me by the Gospel, enlightened me with His gifts, sanctified, and kept me in true faith. In the same way He calls, gathers, enlightens, and sanctifies the whole Christian Church on earth and keeps it with Jesus Christ in the one true faith. In this Christian Church He daily and richly forgives all sins to me and all believers. On the Last Day He will raise me and all the dead and give to me and all believers in Christ eternal life.

This is most certainly true.

HYMN OF THE DAY: #645 [Red Hymnal]

CHILDREN'S SERMON

But Jesus said, 'Let the little children come to Me, and do not forbid them; for of such is the kingdom of heaven.'" ~Matthew 19:14

SERMON MEDITATION read/watch sermons and services online at www.fdlutheran.org

Jesus said, "...Blessed are those who hear the word of God and keep it!" ~Luke 11:28

1 Peter 4:3-9

3 For we have spent enough of our past lifetime in doing the will of the Gentiles -- when we walked in lewdness, lusts, drunkenness, revelries, drinking parties, and abominable idolatries. **4** In regard to these, they think it strange that you do not run with them in the same flood of dissipation, speaking evil of you. **5** They will give an account to Him who is ready to judge the living and the dead. **6** For this reason the gospel was preached also to those who are dead, that they might be judged according to men in the flesh, but live according to God in the spirit. **7** But the end of all things is at hand; therefore be serious and watchful in your prayers. **8** And above all things have fervent love for one another, for "love will cover a multitude of sins." **9** Be hospitable to one another without grumbling.

"For THESE Reasons, the Gospel was (and IS) preached!"

1. *Because of the last 3 weeks...*

2. *Because we were and still are preparing!*

SERMON HYMN: #710 [Tan Supplement]

IV. WE OFFER OURSELVES TO OUR LORD

AN OFFERING OF THANKFUL HEARTS TO THE LORD

"So let each one give as he purposes in his heart, not grudgingly or of necessity; for God loves a cheerful giver." ~ 2 Corinthians 9:7

OFFERING MEDITATION: "GOD LOVES ME DEARLY" (WS #709)

God loves me dearly, grants me salvation,
God loves me dearly, loves even me. **(Refrain)**

**Therefore I'll say again: God loves me dearly,
God loves me dearly, loves even me.**

I was in bondage, sin, death, and darkness;
God's love was working to make me free. **(Refrain)**

He sent forth Jesus, my dear Redeemer,
He sent forth Jesus and set me free. **(Refrain)**

Jesus, my Savior, Himself did offer;
Jesus, my Savior, paid all I owed. **(Refrain)**

FOLLOWED BY THE OFFERING HYMN: [Red Hymnal #69:1,6]

**Arise, sons of the Kingdom! Our King is drawing near;
Arise and hail with gladness, Our Savior now is here!
All Christians, gather here! Your praise and honor bring Him
Let glad hosannas sing Him; No other love compares!**

**Oh, rich the gifts You bring us, Yourself made poor and weak!
O Love beyond expression, That You for sinners seek!
For this, O Lord, will we, Our joyous tribute bring You
Our glad hosannas sing You, And ever grateful be!**

SPECIAL PRAYERS ~ GENERAL PRAYER ~ **SAY LORD'S PRAYER**

V. OUR LORD BLESSES US

BENEDICTION

God's blessing of His people (Numbers 6:24-26).

P: The LORD bless you and keep you; The LORD make His face shine upon you and be gracious to you; The LORD lift up His countenance upon you and give you His peace.

ALL: Amen!

CLOSING HYMN: #712 [Tan Supplement]

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Welcome to all! Guests, please sign our guest book in entryway and we hope you will come and join us again! Questions? (920) 922-7421

THIS WEEK AT A GLANCE: "If the LORD wills, we will do this or that." James 4:15

*Online calendar at FDLutheran.com or go to facebook.com/FDL.lutheran

Dec 24 Sun Usher Team #1: Lowell B, Reuel D, Rodney K, Tyler K, Alex S, John S
 Organist: Rhoda E / Counters: Eric W, Don E
9a Christmas Practice / Bible Class (Growing in Prayer)
10a Sunday Service (Advent 4)
6p Christmas Eve Children's Service

Dec 25 Mon **10a** Christmas Day Service

Dec 25 – Jan 8 **LMS Christmas School Break**

Dec 31 Sun Usher Team #2: Don S, Pete A, Mark R, Don G, Gene M, Stuart P
 Organist: Adrienne F / Counters: Eric W, Don E
9a NO Sunday School / Bible Class (Sunday following Christmas)
10a Sunday Service
6p New Year's Eve Service (with Communion)

Jan 1 Mon **NO** New Year's Day Service (Council)

UPCOMING DATES: _____➔

Jan 9 Tue 6:30p Church Council

Jan 12 Fri 6p Family Game Night – Taco bar

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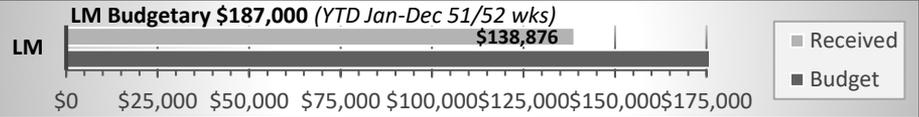
CLC Call News The Rev. Neal Radichel, pastor of Luther Memorial, Fond du Lac, WI, has the call to be co-pastor at Immanuel Lutheran, Mankato MN.

IN OUR PRAYERS *If you are hospitalized, please let pastor know if you would like a visit!*

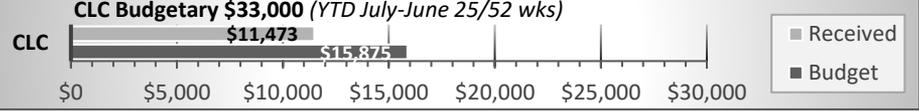
Currently Hospitalized: None that pastor or the elders are aware of at this time.
Shut-ins: Dan Immel (Woodlands), Ed Jacobs (868 W Scott St), Gloria Jacobs (Woodlands), Doris Kaiser (Woodlands), Jeanette Keipe (675 S. Main St.), John Lenburg (769 Mustang Ln), Marion Mach (Lutheran Home), Lois "Jean" Martin (Woodlands), Jim Steffen (At home).

FRUITS OF FAITH—LAST SUNDAY / FOR THE YEAR *Bible Class 22 Worship 97*

<u>LUTHER MEMORIAL CHURCH</u>	<u>CHURCH OF THE LUTHERAN CONFESSION</u>
Budgetary (\$3596 budgeted per week)	Budgetary (\$635 needed per week)
\$3679 LM General Budget	\$477 CLC General Budget
Non-Budgetary	Non-Budgetary
\$ _____ LM School	\$10 _____ ILC Student Aid Fund
\$ _____ LM Student Aid Fund	\$ _____ ILC Building Fund
\$ _____ LM Debt Retirement	\$ _____ ILC Improvement Fund
\$ _____ LM Maintenance & Improvements	\$10 _____ Mission Development-(MDF)
\$4 _____ LM Local Missions/Outreach	\$10/0 _____ Project Kinship/Orphanage
\$ _____ LM Other: RRF (Building Fund)	\$ _____ CLC Other: Foreign
<input type="checkbox"/> Memorial (Designated):	



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Christian Giving – Part 4

4. A scriptural plan for giving.

- a. **With the first-fruits** - Offerings should not be with what is leftover. It always has been and always should be that we give to God off the top. *Honor the Lord with your possessions, And with the firstfruits of all your increase,* (Proverbs 3:9)
- b. **With the best of what we have** - Whether it is time, talent, or treasure we should not try to cheat God. There is a story that a woman called the Butterball hotline with a question about whether or not a turkey that had been in her freezer for ten years was still safe to eat. The response was that it was, but that it probably wouldn't taste so good. "That's what I thought," she replied. "I'll give it to the church." In all seriousness, don't we often short change God? *But [you] say, In what way have we defiled You?' By saying, 'The table of the Lord is contemptible.' And when you offer the blind as a sacrifice, Is it not evil? And when you offer the lame and sick, Is it not evil? Offer it then to your governor Would he be pleased with you? Would he accept you favorably?" Says the Lord of hosts.* (Malachi 1:7-8) What a shameful thing when we "rob God" (Malachi 3) and keep the best of God's possessions under our management for ourselves.
- c. **Regularly** - When the apostle Paul was gathering offerings for famine relief he told the Corinthians, *On the first day of the week let each of you lay something aside, storing up as he may prosper, that there be no collection when I come.* (1 Corinthians 16:2) How many forget about giving when they cannot make it to church on Sunday? An easy solution is to double the offering the following week, or set money aside each week so that it is there, or to give a monthly offering.
- d. **Proportionally** - We give as God has blessed us. Note how in the above passage Paul uses the phrase, "as he prospers." Everyone can give regardless of economic status. In the Old Testament the Lord set up a system in which each Israelite was required to give 10% off the top of their earnings or crops. That mandate was abolished when fulfilled the Law for us. However, the principle remains. Martin Luther thought that 10% would be a good figure for New Testament Christians. Every January we know how much we earned before and have an idea of what we're going to earn the following year. Why not challenge ourselves to give 10% and see what happens? We shouldn't be restricted by that figure and can give even more. We can give less. But whatever the figure, we should find a proportion and set it aside for the Lord. There are times when extraordinary needs do arise and we dig even deeper for God's Kingdom. The question arises, "Should this figure come before or after taxes?" Believers have been taxed since the days of King Saul, but God's principle of first fruits was not altered when taxes were introduced.
- e. **With confidence** - Too often we look at our possessions as a pie. We take a slice for offerings, food, shelter etc, and think that's all there ever will be. God can simply give you more pie. He will not penalize you for putting Him first. In fact, it is just the opposite. He will bless us even more *Bring all the tithes into the storehouse, That there may be food in My house, And try Me now in this," Says the Lord of hosts, "If I will not open for you the windows of heaven And pour out for you such blessing That there will not be room enough to receive it.* (Malachi 3:10) We don't give in order to get more from God, but with the knowledge that blessings come from following His will.

- f. **Other principles** - Elsewhere in Scripture we find that giving should be done cheerfully (2 Corinthians. 9:7), sacrificially (2 Samuel 24:24), liberally (Romans 12:8), liberally (Romans 12:8), thankfully (2 Corinthians 10:12), courageously (Matthew 6:25ff), out of love for others (1 John 3:17), as an expression of our fellowship (2 Corinthians 8:4), and as important part of our worship (Psalm 96).

God's love never changes. God's plan for us never changes. God's promises never fail. May we find and strive for His will in every aspect of our lives. To God alone the Glory. (Note: A good portion of these thoughts came from an essay by Pastor Jim Albrecht from several years ago. It is available and worthwhile read. Please ask a councilman if you would like a copy.)

As our congregation prepares a budget for 2018, there would be a great benefit to know what to expect for offerings so a realistic plan can be put forward. To this end the council is asking that each family prayerfully consider and plan according to God's principles what they will be giving in the next year. We are asking that you use this form to write down how much you anticipate to contribute to the Luther Memorial General Fund and to the CLC General Fund and then put it in the black box by the mailboxes. This is completely anonymous. This is between you and the Lord. Study/Forms are in the corner of the mailboxes.

-With prayers and encouragement in Christ,
Your Church Council

Looking Forward to Next Sunday!

"Looking Forward to Next Sunday" Devotions - As we look ahead to the Sunday after Christmas, we look to the "New Thing" that the LORD brings about through Jesus. This may not seem like a new thing to us, because we have heard it before. As we often desire to hold on to old things and rejoice in them, Lord help us to rejoice in the New Thing which You've done for us in Christ.

Old Testament Reading: Isaiah 43:16-20 (21-28) The LORD reminds us of His mercy in the past, through reminders of the Old Testament Exodus. The LORD showed His power through water, both when He separated the Red Sea and when He provided for His people in the desert. Through these things God reminds us about His greatest example of mercy - forgiving our sins. This is both protection and provision for our lives. (Hymn #90:1-3, 7-8 TLH)

Psalms 150:1-6 Psalm of praise. For His works of power in creation and acts, and what the LORD has done. The creation is a reason to praise the LORD. (Psalm 19). A wonderful reading for after Christmas and tie it to Isaiah with His power over our enemies. The God of Israel (Jehovah) is God (Elohim). He is the Creator and the Redeemer. (Hymn #87 TLH)

Gospel Reading: John 6:41-51 Jesus is the bread of LIFE. The people couldn't understand this. Jesus has come down from heaven. Who is Jesus? No one has seen the Father except Jesus who has come down from heaven. (cf. Phil. 2:14) We are like these Jews who know Jesus well. Familiarity with Jesus breeds contempt. Want something different? God is bringing a New Thing, but it isn't new. (Hymn #97 TLH)

Epistle Reading: Colossians 1:15-18 Paul summarizes what and how this new thing was completed for us. Jesus was not just a baby, but True God and "the visible expression of the invisible God." He was born to die and rise again. The empty cross and tomb give Christmas meaning. (Hymn #77:1-3, 7-8, 15)