

Peace Evangelical Lutheran Church

325 E. Warwick Dr. ~ Alma, Michigan ~ 48801

463-5754 ~ www.peacealma.org

Email: contact@peacealma.org

Rev. Thomas C. Messer, Pastor

Home: 463-3093 ~ Cell: (989) 388-2037

Email: pastor@peacealma.org



Gaudete

Third Sunday in Advent

14 December Anno † Domini 2008

Welcome

Welcome to the Lord's House this morning for Divine Service. Rejoice, for the Lord comes to you here in this place to give you His gifts of forgiveness, life, and salvation through His precious means of grace – His Holy Word and Sacraments. We pray the Lord's richest blessings upon you as you receive these Divine gifts. Please take the time to fill out the **Record of Fellowship form** that is in the pew. If you are visiting with us this morning, we want you to know that we are overjoyed that you are here. Please make your visit known to us by introducing yourself to us after the Service and by signing the guest book that is in the hallway on the left as you leave the sanctuary. The Lord be with us in Divine Service this morning!

Holy Communion Practice

- The Lord's Supper is celebrated at this congregation in the confession and glad confidence that, as He says, our Lord gives into our mouths not only bread and wine, but His very Body and Blood to eat and to drink for the forgiveness of sins and to strengthen our union with Him and with one another. In preparation for receiving this blessed Sacrament, you may refer to Martin Luther's "Christian Questions with Their Answers" found on pages 329-330 in *LSB*.
- Communicants at this altar are to be in full confessional fellowship with the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod. Any who are not yet instructed, in doubt, or who hold a confession differing from that of this congregation and the LCMS are asked, out of love and Christian responsibility, to refrain from partaking with us this morning. If you have any questions regarding Holy Communion, you are invited and encouraged to speak with the pastor before or after the Service.
- See Matt. 26:26-29; Mark 14:22-25; Luke 22:14-20; 1 Cor. 11:17-34.

Our Mission Statement

The mission of Peace Lutheran Church is to welcome all people into the fellowship of God's love by proclaiming the forgiveness of sins through Jesus Christ and to nurture our members with God's Holy Word and Sacraments.



"Now when John heard in prison about the deeds of the Christ, he sent word by his disciples and said to him, 'Are you the one who is to come, or shall we look for another?'" (Matt. 11:2-3)

Gaudete

Third Sunday in Advent
14 December Anno † Domini 2008



LSB DIVINE SERVICE 3, PAGE 184

The Service of Preparation

(Upon entering the nave, silence should be observed to allow all the opportunity to prayerfully prepare for the presence of the Lord and the reception of His gifts)

Preparatory Prayers

Lord, I love the habitation of Your house and the place where Your glory dwells. In the multitude of Your tender mercies prepare my heart that I may enter Your house to worship and confess Your holy name; through Jesus Christ, my God and Lord. Amen.

O Lord, my creator, redeemer, and comforter, as I come to worship You in spirit and in truth, I humbly pray that You would open my heart to the preaching of Your Word so that I may repent of my sins, believe in Jesus Christ as my Savior, and grow in grace and holiness. Hear me for the sake of His name. Amen.

The Prelude and Ringing of the Bells

(The congregation stands at the Ringing of the Bells and faces the processional cross. It is customary to continue facing the cross as it is processed in, and to bow your head and make the sign of the cross in reverence and admiration to the Lord as it passes your pew. The same applies for the recessional as Service concludes.)

The Processional Hymn: 347 "Comfort, Comfort Ye My People"

The Confession and Absolution (pp. 184-185)

From Martin Luther's Sermon for the Third Sunday in Advent Matthew 11:2-10

For this reason Paul calls the law a law unto death, saying, "And the commandment, which was unto life, this I found to be unto death," Rom. 7, 10; and a power of sin. I Cor. 15. 56: "And the power of sin is the law," and in 2 Cor. 3, 6 he says, "For the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life." All this means, if the law and human nature be brought into a right relation, the one to the other, then will sin and a troubled conscience first become manifest. Man, then, sees how desperately wicked his heart is, how great his sins are, even as to things he formerly considered good works and no sin. He now is compelled to confess that by and of himself he is a child of perdition, a child of God's wrath and of hell. Then there is only fear and trembling, all self-conceit vanishes, while fear and despair fill his heart. Thus man is crushed and put to naught, and truly humbled.

Inasmuch as all this is caused only by the law, St. Paul truly says, that it is a law unto death and a letter that killeth, and that through the commandment sin becomes exceedingly sinful, Rom. 7,13, provoking God's wrath. For the law gives and helps us in no way whatever; it only demands and drives and shows us our misery and depravity.

The other word of God is neither law nor commandments, and demands nothing of us. But when that has been done by the first word, namely the law, and has worked deep despair and wretchedness in our hearts, then God comes and offers us His blessed and life-giving word and promises; He pledges and obligates Himself to grant grace and help in order to deliver us from misery, not only to pardon all our sins, but even to blot them out, and in addition to this, to create in us love and delight in keeping his law.

Now, the word Gospel is of Greek origin and signifies in German *Froliche Botschaft*, that is glad tidings, because it proclaims the blessed doctrine of life eternal by divine promise, and offers grace and forgiveness of sin. Therefore, works do not belong to the Gospel, as it is not a law; only faith belongs to it, as it is altogether a promise and an offer of divine grace. Whosoever now believes the Gospel will receive grace and the Holy Spirit. This will cause the heart to rejoice and find delight in God, and will enable the believer to keep the law cheerfully, without expecting reward, without fear of punishment, without seeking compensation, as the heart is perfectly satisfied with God's grace, by which the law has been fulfilled.

The Meaning of Gaudete

The third Sunday in Advent is traditionally known as Gaudete, which is the first Latin word of the Historic Introit assigned to this Sunday. Gaudete means "rejoice" (Gaudete in Domino semper = Rejoice in the Lord always).

The Service of the Sacrament

(Please read the statement regarding Holy Communion on the back of the bulletin)

The Preface and Proper Preface (p. 194)

The Sanctus (p. 195)

The Lord's Prayer (p. 196)

The Words of Our Lord (p. 197)

The Pax Domini (p. 197)

The Agnus Dei (p. 198)

Communicants are invited to pray the following:

Before receiving the Sacrament:

Dear Savior, at Your gracious invitation I come to Your table to eat and drink Your holy body and blood. Let me find favor in Your eyes to receive this holy Sacrament in faith for the salvation of my soul and to the glory of Your holy name; for You live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

Thanksgiving after receiving the Sacrament:

Almighty and everlasting God, I thank and praise You for feeding me the life-giving body and blood of Your beloved Son, Jesus Christ. Send Your Holy Spirit that, having with my mouth received the holy Sacrament, I may by faith obtain and eternally enjoy Your divine grace, the forgiveness of sins, unity with Christ, and life eternal; through Jesus Christ, my Lord. Amen.

Distribution Hymns

633 "At the Lamb's High Feast We Sing"

515 "Rejoice, Rejoice, Believers"

345 "Hark! A Thrilling Voice Is Sounding"

941 "We Praise You and Acknowledge You, O God"

The Nunc Dimittis (pp. 199-200)

The Thanksgiving and Post-Communion Collect (pp. 200-201)

The Salutation and Benedicamus (pp. 201-202)

The Benediction (p. 202)

The Recessional Hymn: 803 "Joyful, Joyful We Adore Thee"

The Postlude

Soli Deo Gloria!

The Service of the Word

The Introit

Ps. 85:1-2, 6, 8; antiphon: Phil. 4:4-5



Rejoice in the Lord | always;*
again I will | say, Rejoice.

Let your reasonableness be known to | everyone.*

The Lord | is at hand.

Lord, you were favorable | to your land;*
you restored the fortunes of | Jacob.

**You forgave the iniquity of your | people;*
you covered | all their sin.**

Will you not revive | us again,*
that your people may re- | joice in you?

Let me hear what God the | Lord will speak,*

**for he will speak peace to his people, to his saints; but let
them not turn back to | folly.**

Glory be to the Father and | to the Son*

and to the Holy | Spirit;

as it was in the be- | ginning,*

is now, and will be forever. | Amen.

Rejoice in the Lord | always;*
again I will | say, Rejoice.

Let your reasonableness be known to | everyone.*

The Lord | is at hand.

The Kyrie (p. 186)

The Gloria in Excelsis is omitted during Advent

The Salutation and Collect of the Day (p. 189)

Lord Jesus Christ, we implore You to hear our prayers and to lighten the darkness of our hearts by Your gracious visitation; for You live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

The Old Testament Reading

Isaiah 40:1-11

¹Comfort, comfort my people, says your God. ²Speak tenderly to Jerusalem, and cry to her that her warfare is ended, that her iniquity is

pardoned, that she has received from the Lord's hand double for all her sins.

³A voice cries: "In the wilderness prepare the way of the Lord; make straight in the desert a highway for our God. ⁴Every valley shall be lifted up, and every mountain and hill be made low; the uneven ground shall become level, and the rough places a plain. ⁵And the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together, for the mouth of the Lord has spoken."

⁶A voice says, "Cry!" And I said, "What shall I cry? All flesh is grass, and all its beauty is like the flower of the field. ⁷The grass withers, the flower fades when the breath of the Lord blows on it; surely the people are grass. ⁸The grass withers, the flower fades, but the word of our God will stand forever.

⁹Get you up to a high mountain, O Zion, herald of good news; lift up your voice with strength, O Jerusalem, herald of good news; lift it up, fear not; say to the cities of Judah, "Behold your God!"

¹⁰Behold, the Lord God comes with might, and his arm rules for him; behold, his reward is with him, and his recompense before him. ¹¹He will tend his flock like a shepherd; he will gather the lambs in his arms; he will carry them in his bosom, and gently lead those that are with young.

The Gradual

Ps. 80:1-2

You who are enthroned upon the cherubim, shine forth.*

Stir up your might and come to save us!

Give ear, O Shepherd of Israel,*

you who lead Joseph like a flock!

The Epistle

1 Corinthians 4:1-5

¹This is how one should regard us, as servants of Christ and stewards of the mysteries of God. ²Moreover, it is required of stewards that they be found trustworthy. ³But with me it is a very small thing that I should be judged by you or by any human court. In fact, I do not even judge myself. ⁴I am not aware of anything against myself, but I am not thereby acquitted. It is the Lord who judges me. ⁵Therefore do not pronounce judgment before the time, before the Lord comes, who will bring to light the things now hidden in darkness and will disclose the purposes of the heart. Then each one will receive his commendation from God.

The Alleluia and Verse



Al-le - lu - ia. Al-le - lu - ia. Al-le - lu - ia.

Verse (choir): Stir up your | might, [O Lord],
and come to | save us.*



Al-le - lu - ia. Al-le - lu - ia. Al-le - lu - ia.

The Holy Gospel

Matthew 11:2-11

²When John heard in prison about the deeds of the Christ, he sent word by his disciples ³and said to him, "Are you the one who is to come, or shall we look for another?" ⁴And Jesus answered them, "Go and tell John what you hear and see: ⁵the blind receive their sight and the lame walk, lepers are cleansed and the deaf hear, and the dead are raised up, and the poor have good news preached to them. ⁶And blessed is the one who is not offended by me."

⁷As they went away, Jesus began to speak to the crowds concerning John: "What did you go out into the wilderness to see? A reed shaken by the wind? ⁸What then did you go out to see? A man dressed in soft clothing? Behold, those who wear soft clothing are in kings' houses. ⁹What then did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, I tell you, and more than a prophet. ¹⁰This is he of whom it is written, "Behold, I send my messenger before your face, who will prepare your way before you."

¹¹Truly, I say to you, among those born of women there has arisen no one greater than John the Baptist. Yet the one who is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he."

The Nicene Creed (p. 191)

Hymn of the Day: 344 "On Jordan's Bank the Baptist's Cry" (*Choir—stz. 3*)

The Sermon

The Offertory (pp. 192-193)

The Offering is gathered for the Lord's work (p. 193)

The Prayer of the Church (p. 193)

P Wrap us in Your steadfast love,

G and grant us Your salvation.