

# Peace Evangelical Lutheran Church

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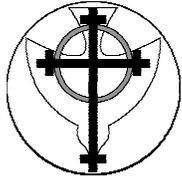
Email: contact@peacealma.org

Church Office Hours: Monday-Friday 9am-1pm

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# Life Sunday

Third Sunday after Epiphany  
22 January Anno ✠ Domini 2012

## 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.

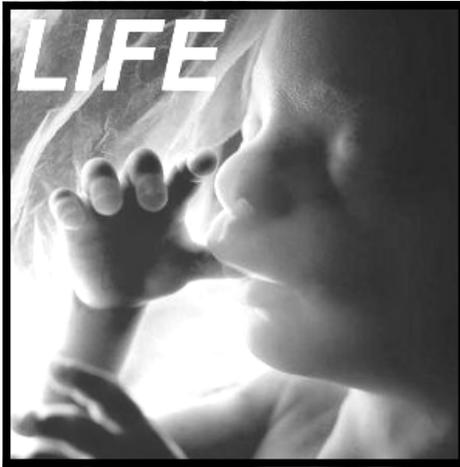


*“Do not murder; do not commit adultery; do not corrupt boys; do not fornicate; do not steal; do not practice magic; do not go in for sorcery; do not murder a child by abortion or kill a newborn infant.”*

*—The Didache (1st Century)*

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## 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:** 729 "I Am Trusting Thee, Lord Jesus"

**The Confession and Absolution** (pp. 184-185)

# “Why God?”

By Rev. Dr. James I. Lamb, Executive Director of *Lutherans for Life*

The question came up in a Bible study I led on the value of human life. "Why does God allow abortion to continue?" I had heard it before. I had asked it before. There is no answer. We do not know. We are not in a position to counsel God. (Romans 11:34)

What do we know?

We know God gives and sustains life. We know He is not the author of evil and that sin and death came from Satan's lies and mankind's disobedience. We know He sent His Son to redeem life from sin and evil. We know He wants all to be saved through faith in Jesus Christ. We know He commands us not to murder, and that He abhors injustice especially when it involves the weak and vulnerable.

We also know that God works through means. He works through His Word and Sacraments to call people dead in sin and make them alive in Christ. He makes those not His people to be His people, and He works through His people to spread His Word and accomplish His will on earth.

Why does abortion continue? I wonder if there is some insight in this verse, "If my people who are called by my name humble themselves, and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and heal their land" (2 Chronicles 7:14).

Now I know this verse can be, and has been, misused. It is not saying, "If the people of this country would just shape up then maybe God would stop some of the horrible things that go on." The verse isn't about the people of this country. It's about people called by His name. This verse is not about shaping up but about "shaping down." It's about God's people humbling themselves before Him, seeking His "face," His merciful presence. It's a good Lenten verse for it speaks of confession and absolution.

Is there a need for such confession and absolution by God's people when it comes to the sanctity of human life? Yes. There are those "called by His name" who openly promote the slaughter of abortion. There are those "called by His name" who see abortion's evil, but fail to call it so. There are those "called by His name" who have been entrusted with the most powerful and positive message for life on the planet and fail to apply it to these issues of life and death.

Think what might happen if we, who are "called by His name," would boldly and lovingly proclaim His truth about life, if we would call sins against life "sins," if we would let sinners against life hear the Gospel of Jesus Christ spoken directly to their broken hearts, if we would point people who are suffering to our God who suffered and is still at work in suffering. I believe God would be at work in His people. I believe God would be at work through His people. And maybe, when it comes to the sanctity of human life, there would be healing in our land.

So I would suggest the question on our lips not be, "Why does God allow abortions?" but "Why do we?"

## 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

555 "Salvation unto Us Has Come"

737 "Rejoice, My Heart, Be Glad and Sing"

**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:** 578 "Thy Strong Word"

**The Postlude**

*Soli Deo Gloria!*

## The Service of the Word

### The Introit

*Ps. 139:13-18*



For you formed my | inward parts;\*

you knitted me together in my | mother's womb.

**I praise you, for I am fearfully and wonder- | fully made.\***

**Wonderful are your works; my soul knows it | very well.**

My frame was not hid- | den from you,\*

when I was being made in secret, intricately woven in the  
depths | of the earth.

**Your eyes saw my unformed substance; in your book were written,  
every | one of them,\***

**the days that were formed for me, when as yet there were | none  
of them.**

How precious to me are your thoughts, | O God!\*

How vast is the | sum of them!

**If I would count them, they are more | than the sand,\***

**I awake, and I am still | with you.**

**Glorify 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.**

For you formed my | inward parts;\*

you knitted me together in my | mother's womb.

**The Kyrie** (p. 186)

**The Gloria in Excelsis** (pp. 187-189)

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

Gracious Lord, Who has chosen us in Jesus to be Your special people, increase our faith and trust in Your love and power as we face the trials and temptations of this present life; through the same Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

**The Old Testament Reading**

*Deuteronomy 30:11-20*

<sup>11</sup>"For this commandment that I command you today is not too hard for you, neither is it far off. <sup>12</sup>It is not in heaven, that you should say,

‘Who will ascend to heaven for us and bring it to us, that we may hear it and do it?’ <sup>13</sup>Neither is it beyond the sea, that you should say, ‘Who will go over the sea for us and bring it to us, that we may hear it and do it?’ <sup>14</sup>But the word is very near you. It is in your mouth and in your heart, so that you can do it.

<sup>15</sup>“See, I have set before you today life and good, death and evil. <sup>16</sup>If you obey the commandments of the LORD your God that I command you today, by loving the LORD your God, by walking in his ways, and by keeping his commandments and his statutes and his rules, then you shall live and multiply, and the LORD your God will bless you in the land that you are entering to take possession of it. <sup>17</sup>But if your heart turns away, and you will not hear, but are drawn away to worship other gods and serve them, <sup>18</sup>I declare to you today, that you shall surely perish. You shall not live long in the land that you are going over the Jordan to enter and possess. <sup>19</sup>I call heaven and earth to witness against you today, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and curse. Therefore choose life, that you and your offspring may live, <sup>20</sup>loving the LORD your God, obeying his voice and holding fast to him, for he is your life and length of days, that you may dwell in the land that the LORD swore to your fathers, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, to give them.”

### **The Gradual**

*Ps. 117; 96:8*

Praise the LORD, all nations! Extol Him, all peoples.

For great is His steadfast love toward us, and the faithfulness of the LORD endures forever.

**Ascribe to the LORD the glory due His name;**

**Bring an offering and come into His courts!**

### **The Epistle**

*1 Peter 2:9-12*

<sup>9</sup>But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for his own possession, that you may proclaim the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light. <sup>10</sup>Once you were not a people, but now you are God’s people; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy.

<sup>11</sup>Beloved, I urge you as sojourners and exiles to abstain from the passions of the flesh, which wage war against your soul. <sup>12</sup>Keep your conduct among the Gentiles honorable, so that when they speak against you as evildoers, they may see your good deeds and glorify God on the day of visitation.

### **The Triple Alleluia** (p. 190 - Top)

*The Triple Alleluia is **sung twice**. In between, the Choir sings the Verse of the Day:*

*“Let the little children come to Me;*

*do not hinder them, for to such belongs the kingdom of God”*

### **The Holy Gospel**

*John 15:9-17*

<sup>9</sup>As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you. Abide in my love. <sup>10</sup>If you keep my commandments, you will abide in my love, just as I have kept my Father's commandments and abide in his love. <sup>11</sup>These things I have spoken to you, that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be full.

<sup>12</sup>This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you. <sup>13</sup>Greater love has no one than this, that someone lay down his life for his friends. <sup>14</sup>You are my friends if you do what I command you. <sup>15</sup>No longer do I call you servants, for the servant does not know what his master is doing; but I have called you friends, for all that I have heard from my Father I have made known to you. <sup>16</sup>You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit and that your fruit should abide, so that whatever you ask the Father in my name, he may give it to you. <sup>17</sup>These things I command you, so that you will love one another.

### **The Nicene Creed** (p. 191)

### **The Hymn of the Day:** 750 “If Thou But Trust in God to Guide Thee”

### **The Sermon**

### **The Offertory** (pp. 192-193)

### **The Offering**

*“Eternal Spirit of the Living Christ” (Choir)*

*(If you have not done so already, please sign and share the Fellowship folders in the pews to assist us in keeping accurate attendance records. Thank you.)*

### **The Prayer of the Church** (p. 193)

**P** Lord, in Your mercy,

**C** hear our prayer.

