Zion & St. James Lutheran Churches of Martin County, Minnesota



Pastor John Henry

Fourth Sunday in Advent



December 24, 2023

Regarding Membership and the Holy Communion:

We believe that, in the Holy Communion, the bread is truly Christ's Body and the wine is truly His Blood, given to us to eat and drink for the forgiveness of sins. As we receive this gift individually, we profess that we are truly one body in Christ—that we are united in one faith and teaching (doctrine). Ordinarily, full participation in this Holy Communion is reserved for those who are members in good standing of the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod. *Any visitors or guests who desire to partake of the Body and Blood of Christ are asked to please speak with the Pastor or an Elder before the service.*

Were we traveling with Joseph and Mary, we'd be nearing Bethlehem now — a relief, especially for the one great with child.

So we ponder the solemnity and wonder of this day.

Welcome to worship.

Opening Hymn

Savior of the Nations, Come

332

Invocation, Confession & Absolution

- \blacksquare In the name of the Father and of the + Son and of the Holy Spirit.
- C Amen.
- If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.
- But if we confess our sins, God, who is faithful and just, will forgive our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness.
- **P** Let us then confess our sins to God our Father.
- Most merciful God, we confess that we are by nature sinful and unclean. We have sinned against You in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done and by what we have left undone. We have not loved You with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. We justly deserve Your present and eternal punishment. For the sake of Your Son, Jesus Christ, have mercy on us. Forgive us, renew us, and lead us, so that we may delight in Your will and walk in Your ways to the glory of Your holy name. Amen.
- ...I forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the T Son and of the Holy Spirit.
- C Amen.

Entrance Psalm

Isaiah 45:8



⁸ "Shower, O heavens, from above, and let the clouds rain down | righteousness;* let the earth open, that salvation and righteousness | may bear fruit; 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.

Kyrie

sung; repeated five times. LSB pg. 204

...let us pray to the Lord:

Lord, have mercy! Christ, have mercy! Lord, have mercy!

Salutation and Collect of the Day

- The Lord be with you.
- And with your spirit.
- P Let us pray.

Stir up Your power, O Lord, and come and help us by Your might, that the sins which weigh us down may be quickly lifted by Your grace and mercy; for You live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C Amen.

First Lesson Isaiah 61:1-4

¹The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me, because the LORD has anointed me to bring good news to the poor; he has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to those who are bound; ²to proclaim the year of the LORD's favor, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all who mourn; ³to grant to those who mourn in Zion to give them a beautiful headdress instead of ashes, the oil of gladness instead of mourning, the garment of praise instead of a faint spirit;

that they may be called oaks of righteousness, the planting of the LORD, that he may be glorified.

⁴They shall build up the ancient ruins; they shall raise up the former devastations; they shall repair the ruined cities, the devastations of many generations.

- **P** This is the Word of the Lord.
- C Thanks be to God.



Second Lesson

2 Corinthians 4:7–18

⁷But we have this treasure in jars of clay, to show that the surpassing power belongs to God and not to us. ⁸We are afflicted in every way, but not crushed; perplexed, but not driven to despair; ⁹persecuted, but not forsaken; struck down, but not destroyed; ¹⁰always carrying in the body the death of Jesus, so that the life of Jesus may also be manifested in our bodies. ¹¹For we who live are always being given over to death for Jesus' sake, so that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our mortal flesh. ¹²So death is at work in us, but life in you.

¹³Since we have the same spirit of faith according to what has been written, "I believed, and so I spoke," we also believe, and so we also speak, ¹⁴knowing that he who raised the Lord Jesus will raise us also with Jesus and bring us with you into his presence. ¹⁵For it is all for your sake, so that as grace extends to more and more people it may increase thanksgiving, to the glory of God.

¹⁶So we do not lose heart. Though our outer nature is wasting away, our inner nature is being renewed day by day. ¹⁷For this slight momentary affliction is preparing for us an eternal weight of glory beyond all comparison, ¹⁸as we look not to the things that are seen but to the things that are unseen. For the things that are seen are transient, but the things that are unseen are eternal.

P This is the Word of the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

Alleluia & Verse LSB pg. 205

Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia. These things are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God. Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.

Holy Gospel Matthew 11:1–15

The Holy Gospel according to St. Matthew, the eleventh chapter.

Glory to You, O Lord.

¹When Jesus had finished instructing his twelve disciples, he went on from there to teach and preach in their cities.

²Now when 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. ¹²From the days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of heaven has suffered violence, and the violent take it by force. ¹³For all the Prophets and the Law prophesied until John, ¹⁴and if you are willing to accept it, he is Elijah who is to come. ¹⁵He who has ears to hear, let him hear.

P This is the Gospel of the Lord.

C Praise to You, O Christ.

Sermon Hymn The Night Will Soon Be Ending

337

Sermon

Nicene Creed inside the back cover of the hymnal

The Prayers

Offering

Offertory for Advent

O come, Desire of nations, bind In one the hearts of all mankind; Bid Thou our sad divisions cease, And be Thyself our King of Peace. Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel Shall come to thee, O Israel!

O come, O come, Emmanuel, And ransom captive Israel, That mourns in lonely exile here Until the Son of God appear. Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel Shall come to thee, O Israel!

The Preface

- **P** The Lord be with you.
- **C** And with your spirit.
- P Lift up your hearts.
- **C** We lift them to the Lord.
- **P** Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.
- **C** It is right to give Him thanks and praise.
- P It is truly good, right, and salutary [...] evermore praising You and saying:

Sanctus LSB pg. 208

Holy, holy, holy Lord God of Sabaoth adored;
Heav'n and earth with full acclaim shout the glory of Your name.
Sing hosanna in the highest, sing hosanna to the Lord;
Truly blest is He who comes in the name of the Lord!

The Lord's Prayer inside the back cover of the hymnal

The Consecration

Pax Domini

P The peace of the Lord be with you always.

C Amen.

Agnus Dei

O Jesus Christ, true Lamb of God, You take the sin of the world away; O Jesus Christ, true Lamb of God, Have mercy on us, Lord, we pray. O Jesus Christ, true Lamb of God, You take the sin of the world away; Have mercy on us, Jesus Christ, And grant us peace, O Lord, we pray.

Communion Hymns

| Come, Thou Fount of Every Blessing | 686 |
|------------------------------------|-----|
| What Hope! An Eden Prophesied | 342 |
| Wake, Awake, for Night Is Flying | 516 |

Nunc Dimittis LSB pg. 211

O Lord, now let Your servant Depart in heav'nly peace, For I have seen the glory Of Your redeeming grace: A light to lead the Gentiles Unto Your holy hill, The glory of Your people, Your chosen Israel.

All glory to the Father, All glory to the Son, All glory to the Spirit, Forever Three in One; For as in the beginning, Is now, shall ever be, God's triune name resounding Through all eternity.

Thanksgiving & Benediction

- Let us pray... who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.
- Amen
- The Lord be with you.
- And with your spirit.
- Let us bless the Lord.
- Thanks be to God.
- 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 peace.
- C Amen.

Closing Hymn The King Shall Come When Morning Dawns 348

Acknowledgments

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Bulletins are emailed weekly. If you are not on the list and would like to be, please contact the office. Bulletins can also be found on the website silnorthrop.com or zionfraser.com. Contact the office if you have questions.

Lutheran Schools in Martin County
St James Lutheran School
Martin Luther High School, & the Calling Committee
All Schools and places of learning

St James

Baptism Birthdays: Lynn Petrowiak, Hailey Simpson,

Jameson Wolter, Joseph Crissinger

Sick & In Distress: Rochelle Franzen, Marilyn Borkenhagen, Marianne Hagen, Tom Koeritz, Sandy Kurseth, Myla Roskop

Homebound: Carl Luhmann

Zion

Baptism Birthdays: Danielle Nelson, Connie Peymann,

Brian Steuber, Evan Oberdieck Seminary Student: Peter Preus

Serving our Country: Ben Peymann, Dalton Fette, Kory Brown,

Jesse Peterson, Lili Bulfer

Sick & In Distress: Greg Wallace, Lynn Schwieger, Caleb Roiger,

Marsha Peterson

Homebound: Dale Schwieger, Lenore Wendt, Norma Patsche,

Violet Lueth, Yonsey Karasek

You can sponsor the bulletins (\$10 per congregation) or online broadcast (\$25) anytime throughout the year, in honor of a special event or giving thanks to God. Call the church office with your request.

Bulletins and Broadcast Sponsors May God continue to bless your lives together

- Paul & Cindy Wolter are sponsoring the bulletins for the month of December, giving thanks to our Lord in as they celebrate their 30th wedding anniversary on December 4th.
- Larry & Linda Becker are sponsoring the bulletins and broadcast this week in honor of their 54th wedding anniversary on December 30th.

LYF Egg fundraiser continues. Eggs will be available at SJL after most services or you can call/text Lynn Becker at 230-2700 to arrange a pick up from the farm. 100% of proceeds goes to LYF for expenses and future trips. Please keep returning cartons and leave in the SJL narthex.



- Have you moved? Changed your phone number? Cancelled your landline? Please contact the office with your updated contact information.
- Annual Reports will be printed soon. In order to have them ready for the Annual Voter's Meetings in January please submit your reports to the office no later than Wednesday January 3rd. Thank you!
- **2024 Contribution Envelopes** are available in the Narthex. **Please do not use until January.**
- **○** DEADLINE for January newsletter is December 26th.

THANK YOU for all the generous donations of beautiful and delicious Christmas cookies and candies. Also a big thank you for all those who volunteered to help set-up, clean-up, and work at the event.

Donations for Christmas Bags on Christmas Eve can be given to an Elder at either church or placed into the offering plate earmarked "Christmas Bags". Thank you!

SJL Special Christmas Birthday Offering. The offering at the Children's service on Christmas Eve is an opportunity to thank God for the many years He has blessed you. Consider a thank you gift of one dollar (\$1.00) for every year our Lord has graciously bestowed upon you.

Thank you to everyone who made donations! Heaven's Table Food Shelf received 141 pounds of non perishable donations and \$50 donation from the recent collection at Zion-Fraser.

We will **celebrate the Epiphany of Our Lord with a Divine Service at 6pm on Friday, January 5th at Zion**. Following the service, we will burn the Christmas greens in the Zion parking lot, and then enjoy time together in the fellowship hall. Feel free to bring your Christmas trees, wreaths, garlands, and greens (real!--no plastic!) to add to the bonfire, and also bring any leftover-but-still-fresh Christmas baked goods to share. For a free will donation to LYF, our youth would also be happy to pick up your Christmas tree and bring it to Zion for you! Contact Larissa Hagen 507-236-2780 to arrange pick-up.



Weather Related Announcements will again be available on SJL Facebook page, or on KEYC (TV, website, Facebook page). If you are interested, KEYC has an option for notifications for any organization you chose. Download the KEYC News Now app on your phone, go to Settings and choose Closings, then scroll down to St James Lutheran Church - Northrop or Zion/Fraser Lutheran - Fairmont.



Prayers are requested during the search for a new principal at MLHS. The committee is currently in the interview process with potential candidates. We pray for the committee and for the candidates. We pray that the transition will be a blessing to everyone involved and God's will be done, all to His Glory.

National Lutheran Schools Week will be celebrated at Martin Luther Jr/Sr High School, Northrop on January 21-27, 2024. The theme is "Connected" based on John 15:1-5. Early bird student enrollment discounts for the 2024-2025 school year will apply until February 1st. All students are welcome to enroll and be blessed by what Christ in the curriculum gives. Call 507-436-5249.

All families are invited to The Children's Winter Carnival sponsored by the Martin Luther Jr/Sr High School, Northrop National Honor Society and Student Council on Sunday, January 21st from 1-3 p.m. Cost is \$5/child or \$15 per family. Parents are free. There will be Games, Prizes, Bouncy House, Snacks and a Parent Lounge.

Everyone is welcome to a fascinating history presentation on the Civil War by Arn Kind at Martin Luther Jr/Sr High School, Northrop on Tuesday, January 23. (Snow date is January 25.) History will come to life through this interactive lesson. Times are 9-11:15 a.m. for grades 5-8 and noon to 2:15 p.m. for grades 9-12. The event is sponsored by the MLHS Parent/Teacher League. For more information go to www.martinlutherhs.com.

"This time of the year always fills us with cheer | But the reason we celebrate is not always clear | The cookies, the lights, the presents, the tree | The carols, the decorations, the family parties | But all of the delight and all of the fun | Does not mean a thing if we don't know God's Son | The tiny baby that was born to die | Can sometimes cause us to stop and ask why | Do we really deserve the sacrifice He made? | Are we worth the offering and the price that was paid? | In His eyes, we are, because He made us His own | And on the cross, the ultimate love was shown | So take joy in the season and spread His true love | But always remember the gift from above!" Jerrod Nelson – A Life Quote from Lutherans For Life • lutheransforlife.org



| DECEMBER | 24 | 4 th Sunday in Advent Divine Services | 8:30AM (SJ); 10:00AM (Z) |
|----------|----|--|---|
| | | Christmas Eve Children's SS Program | 4:00PM (Z) (Offerings: Day Schools) |
| | | | 7:00PM (SJ) (Offerings: Birthday Offerings) |
| | | Candlelight Joint Divine Service | 10:00PM (Z) |
| | 25 | Christmas Day Joint Divine Service | 8:30AM (SJ) |
| | 31 | 1st Sunday after Christmas Divine Services | 8:30AM (SJ); 10:00AM (Z) |
| JANUARY | 01 | NO New Years Day Service | |
| | 05 | Epiphany Joint Divine Service | 6:00PM (Z) (Bonfire to follow) |
| | 07 | 2 nd Sunday after Christmas Divine Services | 8:30AM (SJ); 10:00AM (Z) |

All Divine Services will have Holy Communion



Online giving is an easy and reliable method to contribute to your church while you are out of town, or if you are interested in eliminating the need to remember your envelope on Sunday morning. You can make a one time donation or save time and schedule recurring contributions. This option is available for either congregation through the website; silnorthop.com or zionfraser.com, or through the tithe.ly church app.



SJL Online Giving





Sunday morning Adult Bible Class.

- **Zion**: 8:45am, Narthex. Please join us as we study topics in The Lutheran Witness. Please bring your Lutheran Witness magazine if possible. Extra copies are available.
- **SJL:** 9:45am, Fellowship Hall. We are using the Focus on the Family video series "That the World May Know".

Friday Morning Bible Study at 8am in the Fellowship Hall at SJL.



Sundays on KSUM 1370AM - 9 am

Dec 24 The First Christmas - Dr. Paul Maier

Dec 31 The Christmas Hymn: "O Little Town Of Bethlehem" - Dr. Arthur Just



THE LUTHERAN HOUR TODAY:

Sundays on KSUM 1370AM-11 am

Lutheran Hour Speaker: Rev. Dr. Michael Zeigler

"Community and Conversation" This Christmas Eve, God wants to be found in the human community gathered in the name of Jesus and in the conversation connected with Him. (John 1:1)

| Those Serving our Lord | | | |
|------------------------|---------------------------------|----------------|--|
| | Greeters | Acolyte | |
| SJL 12-24 | Web & Dar Quade 8:30am | Hailey Simpson | |
| | Doug & Laurie Quinn 7pm | | |
| 12-25 | Keith & Mary Jo Hartmann 8:30am | | |
| 12-31 | Dave & Kris Rode 8:30am | | |
| Zion 12-24 | Joe & Amy Nelson 10am | Luke Henry | |
| | Brent & Jennie Oberdieck 4pm | | |
| | Lon & Marilyn Oelke 10pm | | |
| 12-31 | Evan & Ashlee Oberdieck 10am | Alex Pittman | |

THIS WEEK WITH OUR LORD: Dec 24 - 31, 2023 CHURCH OFFICE HOURS: Monday - Friday 8:00 AM - Noon

Office phone: 436-5289 **Pastor phone:** 219-713-1604

Email: sjlnorthrop@gmail.com Website: sjlnorthrop.com or zionfraser.com

Sunday Christmas Eve

Divine Worship
Sunday School
SS Program Practice
Zion Sunday School Program
SJL Sunday School Program
Joint Candlelight Service

(SJ) 8:30 AM, (Z) 10:00 AM
(Z) 8:45 AM
(Z) 11:15-12:15 PM
(Z) 4:00 PM
(SJ) 7:00 PM

Monday Christmas Day

Joint Christmas Day Divine Worship (SJ) 8:30 AM

Tuesday January Newsletter Deadline

Friday Epiphany Divine Service (Z) 6:00 PM

Bonfire & Epiphany Celebration

Sunday New Years Eve

Divine Worship (SJ) 8:30 AM, (Z) 10:00 AM Sunday School (Z) 8:45 AM, (SJ) 9:45 AM



| Wednesday D | ec. 13, 2023 |
|---------------|--------------|
| Jt Attendance | 314 |

| Reflecting our Stewardship – Zion | | | Dec 17, 2023 |
|-----------------------------------|------------|----------------|--------------|
| Attendance | 87 (HC 58) | Home | \$2,620.00 |
| Loose Plate | \$29.00 | Missions | \$217.00 |
| SPL | \$65.00 | Christmas Bags | \$80.00 |
| MLHS | \$50.00 | Advent II-SJLS | \$702.00 |

| Reflecting our Stewardship – St James | | | Dec 17, 2023 |
|---------------------------------------|------------|----------------|--------------|
| Attendance | 95 (HC 80) | Home | \$7,920.00 |
| Loose Plate | \$105.00 | Missions | \$610.00 |
| Online | \$2,160.67 | Tuition | \$2,743.00 |
| Christmas Bags | \$50.00 | Tuition Angel | \$50.00 |
| Memorials | \$30.00 | Advent II-SJLS | \$721.00 |