

East St. Olaf Lutheran Church

6200 County Road 3 SW – Byron, MN

December 3: Second Sunday of Advent

Holy Communion

Pastor Paul Thompson

Organist: Pat Nelson

INTRODUCTION: *John calls people to repent, to clear the decks, to completely reorder their lives so that nothing gets in the way of the Lord's coming. The reading from Isaiah gives the context for this radical call: the assurance of forgiveness that encourages us to repent; the promise that the coming one will be gentle with the little ones. Isaiah calls us all to be heralds with John, to lift up our voices fearlessly and say, "See, your God is coming!" We say it to one another in worship, in order to say it with our lives in a world in need of justice and peace.*

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

ADVENT CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

Trusting in the word of life given in baptism, we are gathered in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

As we await the fullness of Christ's coming, let us acknowledge our sins and failures before God.

Silence for personal reflection

Our indifference to your coming,

We confess to you, O Lord.

Our desire to control time and seasons,

We confess to you, O Lord.

Our failure to be alert to signs of your presence in our midst,

We confess to you, O Lord.

Our lack of concern for those who come after us,

We confess to you, O Lord.

Our injustices toward people you came to save,

We confess to you, O Lord.

In the mercy of Almighty God, I declare to you that God has forgiven your sins, and gives you the grace to know joy in the Savior's coming. **Amen.**

GATHERING SONG *Rejoice, Rejoice, Believers* (ELW 244)

GREETING (ELW p. 184)

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

And also with you.

ADVENT RESPONSORIES 2

Blessed is he who comes as King,
who comes in the name of the Lord!

**Glory to God in the Highest,
and peace to His people on earth!**

I will hear what the Lord has to say,

A voice that speaks for peace.

Peace for all people of good will,

And those who turn to Him in their hearts.

His help is near to all who fear him,

And His glory will live in our land.

The Lord is God, and he has given us light.

The Lord is our God, and we will give Him thanks.

Blessed is he who comes as king, who comes in the name of the Lord.

Glory to God in the highest, and peace to His people on earth.

We praise you, O God, for this circle of light that counts the days of preparation for the coming of Christ. As we light the second Candle on this wreath, light within us the fire of your Spirit, that we may be a shining light in the Darkness for all people.

LIGHT ONE CANDLE (VERSE 2)

Light two candles to watch for Messiah,

Let the light banish darkness.

He shall feed his flock like a shepherd,

Gently lead them homeward.

PRAYER OF THE DAY (ELW p. 188)

Let us pray.

Stir up our hearts, Lord God, to prepare the way of your only Son. By his coming strengthen us to serve you with purified lives; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

FIRST READING: Isaiah 40:1-11

In grand, flowing, poetic lines, the prophet announces that the exile of God's people in Babylon is over. God will deliver Israel and will care for her as a shepherd cares for the sheep. This word can be trusted, because the only enduring reality in life is the word of God.

A reading from Isaiah, chapter 40:

¹Comfort, O comfort my people, says your God.

²Speak tenderly to Jerusalem,

and cry to her that she has served her term,

that her penalty is paid,

that she has received from the LORD's hand

double for all her sins.

³A voice cries out: "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.

⁵Then the glory of the LORD shall be revealed,

and all people shall see it together,

for the mouth of the LORD has spoken."

⁶A voice says, "Cry out!" And I said, "What shall I cry?"

All people are grass, their constancy is like the flower of the field.

⁷The grass withers, the flower fades,

when the breath of the LORD blows upon 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 tidings; lift up your voice with strength,

O Jerusalem, herald of good tidings, lift it up, do not fear; say to the cities of Judah, "Here is your God!"

¹⁰See, the Lord GOD comes with might, and his arm rules for him; his reward is with him, and his recompense before him.

¹¹He will feed his flock like a shepherd; he will gather the lambs in his arms, and carry them in his bosom, and gently lead the mother sheep.

Word of God, word of Life. **Thanks be to God.**

PSALM: Psalm 85:1-2, 8-13

¹You have been gracious to your land, O LORD; you have restored the good fortune of Jacob.

²You have forgiven the iniquity of your people and blotted out all their sins.

⁸I will listen to what the LORD God is saying; for you speak peace to your faithful people and to those who turn their hearts to you.

⁹Truly, your salvation is very near to those who fear you, that your glory may dwell in our land.

¹⁰Steadfast love and faithfulness have met together; righteousness and peace have kissed each other.

¹¹Faithfulness shall spring up from the earth, and righteousness shall look down from heaven.

¹²The LORD will indeed grant prosperity, and our land will yield its increase.

¹³Righteousness shall go before the LORD and shall prepare for God a pathway.

SECOND READING: 2 Peter 3:8-15a

This short letter deals with pressing concerns regarding the final advent of Jesus, especially concerns that could arise over its apparent delay. The author of the letter calls on Christians to anticipate the promised coming of the Lord through conduct dedicated to God.

A reading from 2nd Peter, chapter 3:

⁸Do not ignore this one fact, beloved, that with the Lord one day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years are like one day. ⁹The Lord is not slow about his promise, as some think of slowness, but is patient with you, not wanting any to perish, but all to come to repentance. ¹⁰But the day of the Lord will come like a thief, and then the heavens will pass away with a loud noise, and the elements will be dissolved with fire, and the earth and everything that is done on it will be disclosed.

¹¹Since all these things are to be dissolved in this way, what sort of persons ought you to be in leading lives of holiness and godliness, ¹²waiting for and hastening the coming of the day of God, because of which the heavens will be set ablaze and dissolved, and the elements will melt with fire? ¹³But, in accordance with his promise, we wait for new heavens and a new earth, where righteousness is at home.

¹⁴Therefore, beloved, while you are waiting for these things, strive to be found by him at peace, without spot or blemish; ^{15a}and regard the patience of our Lord as salvation. Word of God, word of Life. **Thanks be to God.**

GOSPEL: Mark 1:1-8

The Gospel of Mark does not begin with a story of Jesus' birth but with the voice of one crying out in the wilderness: Prepare the way of the Lord.

The holy gospel according to Mark.

Glory to you, O Lord.

¹The beginning of the good news of Jesus Christ, the Son of God.

²As it is written in the prophet Isaiah,

“See, I am sending my messenger ahead of you,
who will prepare your way;

³the voice of one crying out in the wilderness:

‘Prepare the way of the Lord,
make his paths straight,’ ”

⁴John the baptizer appeared in the wilderness, proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. ⁵And people from the whole Judean countryside and all the people of Jerusalem were going out to him, and were baptized by him in

the river Jordan, confessing their sins. ⁶Now John was clothed with camel's hair, with a leather belt around his waist, and he ate locusts and wild honey. ⁷He proclaimed, "The one who is more powerful than I is coming after me; I am not worthy to stoop down and untie the thong of his sandals. ⁸I have baptized you with water; but he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit." The gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

SERMON

HYMN OF THE DAY

On Jordan's Bank the Baptist's Cry (ELW 249)

CREED (ELW p. 189)

**I believe in God, the Father almighty,
creator of heaven and earth.**

**I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord,
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried;
he descended to the dead.**

**On the third day he rose again; he ascended into heaven,
he is seated at the right hand of the Father,
and he will come to judge the living and the dead.**

**I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic church,
the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting.**

Amen.

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

With hope and expectation, we offer our prayers for the church, the world, and all who await God's day of restoration.

... Merciful God,
receive our prayer.

Listen to these and all our prayers, O God of hosts, and restore us with your great and everlasting mercy.

Amen.

OFFERING PRAYER

Let us pray...

The eyes of all wait upon you, and you open your hand in blessing. From all that you have given us, receive these gifts, signs of our thanksgiving and praise. Fill us with good things at your table that we may come to the help of all in need; through Jesus Christ our redeemer. Amen.

DIALOGUE (ELW p. 190)

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

PREFACE

HOLY, HOLY, HOLY (ELW p. 190)

Holy, holy, holy Lord,

God of pow'r and might,

heaven and earth are full of your glory, full of your glory.

Hosanna, hosanna, hosanna in the highest.

Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.

Hosanna, hosanna, hosanna in the highest.

THANKSGIVING AT THE TABLE (ELW p. 190)

Holy One, ...the mystery of faith:

Christ has died.

Christ is risen.

Christ will come again.

With this bread ... his coming.

Come, Lord Jesus.

Holy God, ...peace on earth.

Come, Holy Spirit.

All ... and forever.

Amen.

LORD'S PRAYER (ELW p. 191)

**Our Father, who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come,
thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.**

**Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our
trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us;
and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory,
forever and ever. Amen.**

DISTRIBUTION HYMN *Beautiful Savior* (ELW 838)

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

BLESSING (ELW p. 192)

Almighty God, Father, † Son, and Holy Spirit, bless you now
and forever.

Amen.

SENDING SONG

***Comfort, Comfort Now My People* (ELW 256)**

DISMISSAL

Go in peace. Christ is Coming!

Thanks be to God.

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WELCOME! WE'RE GLAD YOU'RE VISITING:



If you're visiting, please sign our guestbook (in narthex).
Worship times rotate monthly between East & West St. Olaf.

DECEMBER WORSHIP TIMES

BOTH CHURCHES have communion on 1st & 4th Sundays

WEST 9:00 am worship / West coffee at 10am

BOTH: JAM 10:00 – Practice program today & 10th
at EAST, with EAST program the 10th, then WEST
program the 17th (*then NO JAM classes until Jan. 7th*)

EAST 11:00 am worship / East coffee after church



THANK YOU TO THOSE SERVING US

Note: Anyone interested may join Altar Guild

Altar Guild: Dec. - Meghan Ohman

Deacon: Dec. - Jane Williams

TODAY'S HIGHLIGHTED ANNOUNCEMENTS

BEAUTIFYING OUR SANCTUARY FOR CHRISTMAS!



*If you'd like to donate a poinsettia, we will recognize it in the Christmas Eve bulletin. **Please inform one of the following people by Wed., Dec. 12 (specify who the plant is from and whom it's in memory-of).***

WEST: Sheryl Wohlers (365-8816 or 259-5974)

EAST or WEST: Email Gina at eastwest@kmtel.com and certainity@kmtel.com . You may also call the church office (365-8222).

GRACIOUS GIVING: "All Things Cozy!" December

Drive for Women's Shelter: The Giving Tree will be going up today. The ornaments will list items needed by women and children who are seeking safety and shelter (ages/sizes for items will be on the ornament as well). *Many times people arrive at the shelter with nothing. Please consider supporting this mission and filling a need.* Pajamas, socks, basic items, etc., are needed every day to help those in crisis find comfort. *This mission starts today, and goes to the end of December. Thank you.*

EAST MEMBERS: If there are any members who are ill or in need of a card from the congregation, please contact Jane Williams at (507) 271-2272.

EAST CONTRIBUTIONS:

(11/12 and 19, 2023) Reimbursement \$3,827.35, Current \$3,145.

(11/26/2023) Current \$455, In Memory of Verla Holtan \$20 Undesignated.

HAPPENING TODAY & THIS WEEK

Deadline for bulletin information – Wednesdays by 7:30 pm.

Submit any newsletter info by the 20th of each month.

| | | |
|-------------------|----------|---|
| TODAY | 9:00 am | West Worship/ <u>Communion</u> |
| | 10:00 am | JAM both @ <u>EAST</u> (practice prog.) |
| | 10:00 am | <u>NO West coffee</u> – as chapel is setup for the Advent by Candlelight event |
| | 11:00 am | East Worship/ <u>Communion</u> <i>East coffee always after church</i> |
| | 5:00 pm | WEST Advent by Candlelight Reception with punch & table viewing (service at 6pm, followed by the meal in the chapel). |
| Monday | 9am-Noon | Pastor at office |
| Tuesday | 10:00 am | East quilting/sack lunch |
| Wednesday | 7:00 pm | BOTH – Confirmation at West |
| Thursday | 9am-Noon | Pastor at office |
| Friday | ----- | Pastor's day-off |
| Saturday | 10:00 am | <u>East Women's POTLUCK at church – All women invited</u> |
| Sun. 12/10 | 9:00 am | West Worship |
| | 10:00 am | <i>West coffee</i> |
| | 10:00 am | JAM both @ <u>EAST</u> (practice prog.) |
| | 11:00 am | <u>EAST CHRISTMAS PROGRAM</u> <i><u>with Jesus Birthday cake and soup lunch after the East program!</u></i> |

COMING UP AT EAST & WEST

| | | |
|-----------------------|----------|---|
| Dec. 11 (Mon.) | >>>> | <u>JOINT Council Meeting @ WEST</u> 6:00 pm – Individual meetings 7:00 pm – Joint meeting begins |
| Dec. 12 (Tue.) | 10:00 am | East quilting/sack lunch |
| Dec. 13 (Wed.) | 10:30 am | West WELCA Christmas Luncheon & WELCA program – <i>Men are welcome too!</i> |
| Dec. 14 (Thu.) | 9am-Noon | Pastor at office |

Dec. 15 (Fri.) ----- Pastor's day-off
 Dec. 16 (Sat.) >>>> *DEADLINE to submit info for the next newsletter*

Dec. 17 (Sun.) 9:00 am **WEST CHRISTMAS PROGRAM**
 10:00 am *coffee & Jesus Birthday cake for all, after the West Christmas program!*
 ----- NO classes for JAM today
 11:00 am East Worship_
East coffee always after church

Dec. 18 (Mon.) 9am-Noon Pastor at office
 Dec. 19 (Tue.) 10:00 am East quilting/sack lunch
 Dec. 20 (Wed.) 7:00 pm BOTH – Confirmation at West
 Dec. 21 (Thu.) 9am-Noon Pastor at office
 ----- **NEWSLETTER DAY at Office**
(9:10-print, 9:25-fold, 9:40-collate)

Dec. 22 (Fri.) ----- Pastor's day-off

[Gina on vacation from Dec. 23 thru Jan. 1]

Dec. 24 (Sun.) **CHRISTMAS EVE - No morning services, so NO JAM classes either.**
 4:00 pm **WEST Candlelight Service with Communion**
 6:00 pm **EAST Candlelight Service with Communion**

Dec. 25 (Mon.) ----- **Office Closed – Merry Christmas!**
 Dec. 26 (Tue.) ----- NO quilting at East
 Dec. 27 (Wed.) ----- NO CLASS for Confirmation
 Dec. 28 (Thu.) 9am-Noon Pastor at office
 Dec. 29 (Fri.) ----- Pastor's day-off
 Dec. 31 (Sun.) **Services led by lay-persons – Pastor Paul off**
 9:00 am West Worship: Lay-led service
 10:00 am NO JAM classes - holiday
West coffee
 11:00 am East Worship: Lay-led service_
East coffee always after church

Prayers & contact information on back...

TO REMEMBER IN PRAYER

East Prayers: Scott Kittleson (*son-in-law of Paul Jordan*), Cody Hegna, Alan Hovey, Jean (*Sandy Dahle's daughter*), Dawn Hugelback, Debra Moekel (*daughter of Audrey Carlson*), Keith Roeder (*son-in-law of Paul Jordan*), Dalton Mansfield (*-serving in our military*), John (*cousin of Pat Nelson*), Bill Fritts, Sylvia Torstenson, Heidi Guenius (*cousin of Becky Brakke*), and John Heydt (*brother of Pat Nelson*).

CHURCH CONTACT INFORMATION

PASTOR Paul Thompson: (*Please call before driving to office*)

Cell Phone: 507-273-8504 **Email:** pthomp821@gmail.com

Office hours: Monday and Thursday

9:00 am-Noon... OR by appointment (*Day off-work is Friday*)

SECRETARY Gina Moser: (*Please call before driving to office*)

Office Phone: 507-365-8222 **Cell Phone:** 507-951-4964

Emails: eastwest@kmtel.com AND certainty@kmtel.com

Send all emails for Gina to both of her email addresses.

Office Hours: Tues. & Thursdays 10:00 am-Noon

OUR WEBSITES: eaststolaf.org OR weststolaf.org

JANITORIAL SERVICE: Becky Wilbourne 507-923-5845

COUNCIL CONTACT INFORMATION:

President, Bruce Peterson: 507-254-1822

Gary Kearns: 507-206-3158 or 507- 254-5285

Bryan DeCook: 507-208-1590

EAST: VISITS FOR OUR MEMBERS

If you know of anyone who may like a call or visit from Pastor Paul or from another member, please contact an East deacon: Jane Williams: 507-271-2272.