

CHRISTMAS PREPARATIONS

Mary was preparing for her wedding (But God had something bigger in mind)

The Divine Service

GOD SENDS AN ANGEL TO PREPARE MARY

The Lighting of the Advent Wreath

Invocation

L: In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

C: Amen.

Opening Prayer

L: God of our creation and re-creation, you who are constantly at work to shape us in the wholeness of Christ, you know the hardness of our hearts, that part of our being that rigidly resists your shaping touch. You know how we like to make our own plans and our resistance to your signs and changes. May your Holy Spirit soften our hardness and rigidity this day; help us to become pliable in your hands. Work in us, as you did in Mary long ago, the gift to say:

C: **We are the servants of the Lord; let it be to us according to your word. Amen.**

Call to Worship

“Sing of Mary, Pure and Lowly”

[WOV 634]
(tune LSB 445)

Sing of Mary, pure and lowly, virgin mother wise and mild.
Sing of God’s own son most holy, who became her little child.
Fairest child of fairest mother, God the Lord who came to earth,
Word made flesh, our very brother, takes our nature by his birth.

Sing of Jesus, son of Mary, in the home at Nazareth.
Toil and labor cannot weary love enduring unto death.
Constant was the love he gave her, though he went forth from her side,
Forth to preach and heal, and suffer, till on Calvary he died.

Glory be to God the Father; glory be to God the Son;
Glory be to God the Spirit; glory to the Three in One.
From the heart of blessed Mary, from all saints the song ascends,
And the Church the stain re-echoes unto earth’s remotest ends.

Text: Roland F. Palmer, 1891-1985, Music: Skinner Chavez-Melo, 1944-1992
Music © 1985 Estate of Skinner Chavez-Melo

Savior of the Nations Come – TO MARY

L: Centuries ago there was a young maid living in the small town of Nazareth. She was engaged to a man named Joseph. Wedding plans were underway – and the entire village was getting excited. Suddenly one day an angel named Gabriel came to Mary and said:

C: **“Greetings, O favored one, the Lord is with you!”**

L: Mary was greatly troubled by the angel, and tried to discern what sort of greeting this might be, so the angel said to her:

C: **“Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus. He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. The Lord God will give to him the throne of his father David, and he will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be not end.”**

L: This troubled Mary. She felt as though it would upset all of her plans – and disappoint all of her family and friends. So she said to the angel:

C: **“How will this be, since I am a virgin?”**

L: The angel said to her, “The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. The holy one to be born will be called the Son of God.” And then, the angel gave her a sign to help her to adjust to God’s plan:

C: **“And behold, your relative Elizabeth in her old age has also conceived a son, and this is the sixth month with her who was called barren. For nothing is impossible with God.”**

L: As Mary then prepared to go visit Elizabeth and see with her own eyes what God was doing, she said:

C: **“I am the Lord’s servant. May it be done to me according to your word.”**

L: Of course, this was all a part of God’s bigger plan from ancient times, for, through the prophet Isaiah he had promised:

C: **Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel.**

L: Mary, and all her family and friends, were preparing for a simple wedding in a small, backwoods town,

C: **But God had something bigger in mind.**

Prayer of Preparation

L: Lord Jesus, during this season of Advent, we are very busy making plans.

C: We have shopping to do and gifts to wrap. We have places to be, homes to decorate and greetings to send.

L: But you always have something bigger in mind for us – freedom from sin, a life filled with peace and joy, and eternity with you.

C: Prepare our hearts this day – through your Word and Spirit – to welcome your bigger plan for us.

L: As we go about preparing to celebrate your birth, keep reminding us that you are the reason for this season.

C: And that we are all a part of your bigger plan. In your name we pray. Amen.

The Peace

Solo

“Who Would Send a Baby”

M. K. Beall

Scripture Reading

Isaiah 7:10-17

“The Lord himself will give you a sign.”

¹⁰Again the LORD spoke to Ahaz: ¹¹“Ask a sign of the LORD your God; let it be deep as Sheol or high as heaven.” ¹²But Ahaz said, “I will not ask, and I will not put the LORD to the test.” ¹³And he said, “Hear then, O house of David! Is it too little for you to weary men, that you weary my God also? ¹⁴Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign. Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel. ¹⁵He shall eat curds and honey when he knows how to refuse the evil and choose the good. ¹⁶For before the boy knows how to refuse the evil and choose the good, the land whose two kings you dread will be deserted. ¹⁷The LORD will bring upon you and upon your people and upon your father’s house such days as have not come since the day that Ephraim departed from Judah—the king of Assyria!”

R: This is the word of the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God.

The Introit

“Gloria”

[WOV 640]

Gloria, Gloria, in excelsis Deo! Gloria, Gloria, alleluia, alleluia!
(repeat three times)

Text: Traditional, Music: Jacques Berthier, 1923-1994
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The Rest of the Story:

Luke 1:39-48

All that Mary feared is resolved through the gracious activity of her God.

³⁹In those days Mary arose and went with haste into the hill country, to a town in Judah, ⁴⁰and she entered the house of Zechariah and greeted Elizabeth. ⁴¹And when Elizabeth heard the greeting of Mary, the baby leaped in her womb. And Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit, ⁴²and she exclaimed with a loud cry, “Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb! ⁴³And why is this granted to me that the mother of my Lord should come to me? ⁴⁴For behold, when the sound of your greeting came to my ears, the baby in my womb leaped for joy. ⁴⁵And blessed is she who believed that there would be a fulfillment of what was spoken to her from the Lord.”

⁴⁶And Mary said, “My soul magnifies the Lord, ⁴⁷ and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior, ⁴⁸ for he has looked on the humble estate of his servant. For behold, from now on all generations will call me blessed.”

Children’s Sermon

(please record your attendance)

Please list each attendee separate and check if participating in communion.

Visitors please fill out top portion with your address etc.

After the attendance is recorded for your pew, please tear off sheet and place in folder slightly higher for ease of collection. Thank you!

Hymn of the Day

“Come, Thou Precious Ransom, Come”

LSB 350

Sermon

“Joy in the Face of Pain”

Luke 1:46-48

The Apostles Creed

LSB inside back cover

Meditation and Prayer

The Great “O” Antiphons

L: O Wisdom, proceeding from the mouth of the Most High, pervading and permeating all creation, mightily ordering all things:

C: Come and teach us the way of prudence.

L: O Adonai and ruler of the house of Israel, who appeared to Moses in the burning bush and gave him the Law on Sinai:

C: Come with an outstretched arm and redeem us.

(after each petition)

L: Lord in your mercy.

C: Hear our prayer.

Hymns during Distribution

“The Advent of Our King” LSB 331

“Hark! A Thrilling Voice Is Sounding” LSB 345
(tune 706)

Post-Communion Canticle *“Surely It Is God Who Saves Me”* [tune LSB 849]

Make God’s deeds known to the peoples; tell out his exalted name.
Praise the Lord, who has done great things; all his works God’s might proclaim.
Zion, lift your voice in singing; for with you has come to dwell,
in your very midst, the great and Holy One of Israel.

Dismissal

Sending Prayer

Benediction

Sending Hymn *“Prepare the Royal Highway”* LSB 343

*You are now entering
the (your)
Mission Field*

*“The harvest is abundant, but the workers are few.
Therefore, pray to the Lord of the harvest to send YOU out into his harvest.”
(Matthew 9:37-38)*

Pick up your Advent Devotionals at the door as you leave.



Today’s flowers on the altar were given to honor and glorify our Lord
in memory of Herbert Awe and Janice Medd
by Brenda Fingers.

Today’s flowers on the organ were given in thanksgiving to our Lord
for many blessings on the wedding anniversary of John & Theresa Cook

**Remember to stop by the Giving Tree in the west entrance and select a card for a person who needs you to share Christ’s love this season. Please follow the directions on the table for each card selected.
Thank You!**

The Lutheran Witness – is the official periodical of The Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod. It is published 11 times a year and provides laypeople with stories and information that complement congregational life, foster personal growth in faith, and help interpret the contemporary world from a Lutheran Christian perspective. It is a wonderful publication and a voice for the Gospel in each home. Each issue includes the *Michigan In Touch* supplement at no extra cost. The subscription year is March 2020 through February 2021, at a cost of only \$11.60/year if you place your order through the church office. If you are interested, please place check (made out to St. Thomas) **before December 8th** (cash also accepted) in an envelope marked LW and put in the offering plate or give to the church office, as payment is due in the district office by the 15th.

2020 Envelopes are available in the west hallway! Please stop by the table, print your name on the list next to the envelope # you are taking home. Information for electronic giving is also available. If you have any questions, contact Linda in the church office. **Please, do not use these envelopes until 2020!**



On-line Giving - Did you forget your mission support envelope/offering? You can scan this Quick Response (QR) code, with a QR decoder on your smart phone, it will take you to our on-line giving form, where you can have your mission support offering automatically taken from your checking account, or use your credit or debit card. You can also set up recurring giving! Visit our web page for more on-line giving options.

Connecting Individuals to Jesus and to One Another Educating Minds – Growing Faith – Serving People

We are glad you are here. When you come to worship at STL, you are among friends and family. If you are curious to learn more out ministry in the community, go to www.stl-eastpointe.org, or like us on Face Book. To get your questions answered in a more personal way, contact the church office (586-772-3370) and ask for a pastor to give you a call (or just check the box in the Record of Fellowship folder).

Our Confession of Faith

As members of the Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod (LC-MS), we subscribe to the three ecumenical creeds (Apostles, Nicene and Athanasian) and the Christian faith as confessed in the Book of Concord. This includes believing that:

- Jesus Christ is both true God and true man who died for our sins and rose again to save us.
- His body/blood are truly present in communion under the form of bread/wine (see page 326).
- Communion is, among other things, an expression of doctrinal unity.
- Infant baptism is a Means of Grace through which God delivers one from sin and gives eternal salvation to all who believe (page 325 in Lutheran Service Book).

Serving in God's House

Preacher: Rev. Rick VanBriggle

Liturgist: Rev. Mark W. Hetzner

Organist: Lori Stolzenfeld

Music: Davis & Eleanor Cardamone

Sanctuary Team: Jeff Lindeman

Reader: April Surinck

Servers: Paul Jatkowski, Mike Dolan, Ben Gibson, Anthony Berkseth

Greeters: Judy Zundel, Kurt & Nancy Gutowsky

Altar Guild: Marilyn Edwards, Cheryl Phaneuf

*Weekly Worship with Communion - Sunday at 9:30 a.m.
Third Sunday of the month at Noon
Monday at 7:30 p.m.*

*Faith Hope Love Ministries throughout the week
Cross†raining for children Sunday at 10:45 a.m.*

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Watch services on Facebook – videotaping in progress during service

PRAYERS OF THE CHURCH - December 1, 2019

Our Primary Prayer focus this week is on preparing for Christ's coming:

- That we would hear his Word of peace and hope.
- That children of in our congregation and community know the story.
- That STL would share the Good News winsomely.
- That the glory of Christ might shine through the darkness of sin.

And we pray for all the people Jesus will draw into our building this month.

And we remember those at both ends of life on this earth, the unborn and newly born, and the elderly and those nearing life's end, remembering especially all pregnant mothers.

† In Our Thoughts and Prayers †

†**For Loved Ones Called Home:** For the family Myron Engel who was called home on 11/26. His funeral will be at STL at 11 am on 12/2.

†**God's Healing Hand on:** Shannon Dawda, Elsie Adams, Sherry Kourlos, Renee Thelen, Carol Ferdinand, Alan Borowiak, Diane Ustick, Brenda Finger, Judi Todt (mother of Vicki Berkseth), Don Berkseth (father of Scott), Richard (brother-in-law of Roblyn Smith), Alice Schmidt (mother of Lori Stolzenfeld), Scott Spencer (friend of Cardamones), Karl Hallberg (son-in-law of Cardamones), Kimberly Ross (mother of Dayna), John Belvedere (son-in-law of Caroline Henze), Anthony Giacalone (son of friend of Deb Kujawski), Kari Inglesoll (niece of Diane Carr), Paul Odendahl (brother-in-law of Eleanor Cardamone), Joyce Burton (extended member).

†**Continued prayers for Healing & Strength for:** Sieg Gannon, Chris Huber, Cristal Morris (former preschool aide), John Lemke (friend of Monica Hetzner), Beth White, Bob LaRoche and Jan Adams (family of Elsie Adams), Alyssa Delano (granddaughter of Theresa Delano), Tiffany Crow (granddaughter of Marilyn Redmond), Denise Godfrey (sister of Deborah Kujawski), Sydney Parkin (great-granddaughter of Caroline Henze), Kathy Johnson (friend of Vicki Leberg), Claire Armstrong (granddaughter of Clyde & Carolyn Armstrong), Shirley Grassa (aunt of Deborah Kujawski), Mark Loechle (son of Pat), Elaine Dixon (friend of Linda Taggart), Luella Riske (granddaughter of Jim, Thrivent Rep.).

NEXT SUNDAY

The 2nd Sunday in Advent

December 8, 2019

Advent Carol Service

Scripture Readings: Genesis 12:1-7 / Isaiah 12:1-6
Isaiah 40:25-31; 42:1-7; 53:3-7, 10-11; 55:1-3, 6-12; Malachi 4:1-6

Upcoming Events:



(visit the web page or see the STL publication for more information)

December 4th - Midweek Advent Service - 1 pm (also 11th & 18th)

December 7th - Advent Aglow - 6 pm

December 8th - Advent Carol Service - 9:30 am

December 10th - Caroling - 6:30 pm

December 11th - Midweek Advent Service - 1 & 7 pm



Christmas Eve is on a Tuesday this year

"Carols, Candles, and Communion"

4:00 p.m. - Festival Service

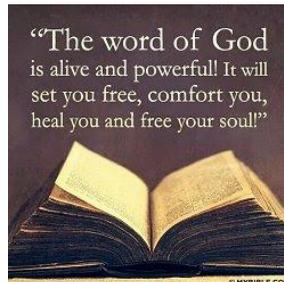
11:00 p.m. - "Unplugged" Service

Christmas Morning Communion @ 9:30 a.m.

"Includes a special message for the children"

Advent Aglow - Saturday, December 7th at 6:00 pm. Advent Aglow is an opportunity for women to set aside the hustle and bustle of holiday preparation and focus their minds and hearts on the birth of Christ. Beautiful decorations and fellowship provide a delightful atmosphere for our ladies to enjoy music, food, a message from a guest speaker, and Christmas Carols by candlelight. Registration is located in the west entrance.

New T – 1 K We have free New Testaments, free reading guides, and more. Our intent is to do more than just give away free Bibles, we wish to actually help people to read and understand the books we distribute. We currently have given out over 700 bibles, with most of them registered NT readers. We encourage you to a) keep inviting people to read with us, and b) encouraging people to invite others. If you are interested, or would like more information, you can either, get information in the back of the church or contact the office.



FIRST SUNDAY

OF

Advent

December 1, 2019

Saint Thomas Lutheran

23801 Kelly Road, Eastpointe, Michigan 48021 - 586-772-3370

www.stl-eastpointe.org

Rev. Mark W. Hetzner, Senior Pastor

Rev. Richard A. VanBriggle, Specific Ministry Pastor

Deacon Don Cooley