

Our Response of Faith — December 4, 2011

Attendance: 16

Unified Budget	\$220.00
“Sheep & Shepherds” Payments.....	\$ 48.00
Christmas Bag Donation.....	\$ 5.00
CLC Mission Development Fund.....	\$ 50.00
Total.....	\$323.00

Our Response of Faith — December 11, 2011

Attendance: 18

Unified Budget	\$360.00
Total.....	\$360.00



Faith Evangelical Lutheran Church

26 North State Street
New Ulm, Minnesota 56073



A member congregation of the
Church of the Lutheran Confession -- CLC

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***“For God So Loved the
World”***

DECEMBER 18, 2011 – CHILDREN’S CHRISTMAS SERVICE

Today’s Participants:

- Group 1** – Anna Bode, Devyn Haala, Rylee Haala, Rebecca Heinze, Cade Libby, Madeline Libby, Kaytlyn Romberg
- Group 2** – Ellsie Frauendienst, Aydan Winkelman, Sophie Gustafson, Isaac Lendt, Jaxon Libby, Nathan Rathman, Zachary Riederer
- Group 3** – Carmen Lendt, Abbie Riederer, Alyssa Romberg, Harely Christensen, Hunter Christensen
- Group 4** – Emma Frauendienst, Isaac Frauendienst, Kyle Nason, Paige Romberg, Quinton Stoll, Tyrah Stoll

Pastor: Opening Prayer

Congregational Hymn: "Come Your Hearts and Voices Raising"

*(1) Come, your hearts and voices raising,
Christ the Lord with gladness praising;
Loudly sing His love amazing,
Worthy folk of Christendom.*

*(2) Sin and death may well be groaning,
Satan now may well be moaning;
We, our full salvation owning,
Cast our every care away.*

*(3) See how God, for us providing,
Gave His Son and life abiding;
He our weary steps is guiding
From earth's woe to heavenly joy.*

*(4) Christ, from heaven to us descending
And in love our race befriending,
In our need His help extending,
Saved us from the wily Foe.*

*(5) Jacob's Star in all its splendor
Beams with comfort sweet and tender,
Forcing Satan to surrender,
Breaking all the powers of hell.*

*(6) Gracious Child, we pray Thee, hear us,
From Thy lowly manger cheer us,
Gently lead us and be near us
Till we join the angelic choir.*

Introduction & Invitation to Worship

Pastor: Welcome to everyone this morning in the name of our Savior, Jesus Christ, who has come into this world to bring forgiveness and salvation to sinners!

Let us begin our worship service this morning in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

Congregation (sings): Amen.

Pastor: Simply stated, who is God – what is God like? Well, there are many ways to describe God and to describe what He is like, any number of these descriptions being accurate on any number of different levels. However, if we were asked to pick only one word to describe God and to describe what He is like, what would that word be? If given the task of describing God with only one word, what word would potentially describe who God is and what He is

the Nats are happy, they shower good fortune; but if they are upset, oh oh, as they can cause untold misery. The result is that the Nats have to be appeased with constant offerings. However, being 'exalted' spirits natural man can communicate with them only through mediums -- the Natgadows or Natwives. The Natkanar, which tourists are encouraged to attend, is an hour and a half long ritual honoring these spirits and it dates back to 400AD and originates from ancient Bagan. An altar is set up with statues of all Nats and numerous offerings are laid before them. The musicians play specific tunes for specific Nats and the Natgadows start the dance. It gradually builds tempo and escalates into a frenzy ending with the Natgadows going into a trance. At this time the people believe that the spirit that is being honored has possessed the Natgadow. The people then offer more offerings and put forth their requests to which the possessed Natgadow responds. Tourists are told "Watching a Natkanar can be a soul shaking experience." Sad and a commentary on how important it is to reach out with the Gospel not only in the cities but into the countryside. Pray for our little sister synod that there may be with them this reaching out. <> From Pastor Del Maas of Holy Cross Lutheran of Phoenix, AZ: On Sunday, December 11, Pastor Michael Gurath confirmed 25 adults in the Christian faith at Holy Cross Lutheran Church of Emmaus Milimani, Kenya. Two new signs for their church and school were also recently dedicated. You can go to Pastor Gurath's blog to see pictures, videos, and other updates at <http://emmausmilimanimission.tumblr.com/> Pastor Gurath is scheduled to have arrived back in Phoenix, AZ on Thursday, December 15.

- **Other CLC News:** Delwyn Maas of Holy Cross Lutheran Church in Phoenix has returned the call to serve at Rock of Ages Lutheran Church in Grand Rapids, MI. <> Due to its new dual-parish arrangement with Morning Star Lutheran in Fairchild, WI, the following two changes for Peace with God congregation in Onalaska, WI are in place: 1) Worship time is Sundays at 1:30 pm. 2) Worship location, beginning Sunday, December 18th, is the LaCrosse Area Builders Association Building, 816 2nd Avenue South (Hwy. 35), # 800, Onalaska, WI 54650.

- **Christmas Bags:** Today's Christmas service participants are invited to take a Christmas bag of goodies following this morning's service.
- **Annual Elections:** By unanimous vote, the following were elected to church offices: President - Marcus Raasch; Vice President - Tom Ubl; Secretary - Gordon Schmidt; Treasurer - John Vorwerk.
- **December Church Council Meeting Minutes:** The December 11, 2011 meeting of Faith's Church Council opened with prayer. Four men were present, plus Pastor Libby. The minutes of the November 2011 Church Council meeting were read and approved. John Vorwerk gave the treasurer's report showing a November opening balance of \$22,259.30 and a November closing balance of \$21,506.91. Snow removal was discussed - while John will be to do the bulk of church snow removal duties with his plow, there will be a portion the plow will not reach. Those arriving to church early on Sundays are asked to help keep the vicinity of the church entrance clear of snow. The parsonage is still empty. Some improvements to the parsonage master-bedroom will be pursued. Because an organist may not always be available to play at Faith for Sunday services, the council discussed the possibility of using a CD recording to provide music for our services in the potential absence of an organist. Pastor Libby plans to produce a 2010-2011 combined church yearbook shortly after the new year. The meeting closed with the New Testament benediction.
- **"Sheep & Shepherds" Copies Available:** For those who recently ordered copies of Pastor Dale Redlin's devotional, "Sheep & Shepherds", those copies can be picked up from the table at the back of the sanctuary.
- **Project Kinship Update:** December 2011 CLC Project Kinship updates can be found on the table at the back of the sanctuary.
- **CLC Foreign Mission News:** The following comes from CLC foreign missionary, Pastor David Koenig: *While we work in Myanmar we find out the devil's work going on also. Of course there is Buddhism rampant throughout the country. The Myanmar union consists of 7 divisions populated by Burmese in the majority, while the seven states are where the tribes are found. Chin state is where our people are. Among the rural Burmese there is still to be found the Nat worship. The Nats are the very temperamental spirits, which govern supposedly everyday lives of Myanmar people. If*

like more fully than any other? What about the word "Love"? Yes, when reading the Scriptures, I think it is safe to say that finally the characteristic ascribed to God above all others is love. This is what we hear in John's first epistle, where the apostle was inspired to write very simply, "God is love."

Let us read together responsively some of these words of 1 John 4. Here we read:

(1 John 4:7-17, 19)

Pastor: *Beloved, let us love one another, for love is of God; and everyone who loves is born of God and knows God.*

Congregation: *He who does not love does not know God, for God is love.*

Pastor: *In this the love of God was manifested toward us, that God has sent His only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through Him.*

Congregation: *In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins.*

Pastor: *Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another.*

Congregation: *No one has seen God at any time. If we love one another, God abides in us, and His love has been perfected in us.*

Pastor: *By this we know that we abide in Him, and He in us, because He has given us of His Spirit.*

Congregation: *And we have seen and testify that the Father has sent the Son as Savior of the world.*

Pastor: *Whoever confesses that Jesus is the Son of God, God abides in him, and he in God.*

Congregation: *And we have known and believed the love that God has for us. God is love, and he who abides in love abides in God, and God in him.*

All: *We love Him because He first loved us.*

Pastor: Yes, God is love – but whom does God love? How is it that God demonstrates His love toward those who are His beloved? These are the very things we just read about in our responsive reading from the epistle of 1st John. Also, in the Gospel of John we hear a very concise statement regarding God’s love, this being probably the most well-known verse of the whole Bible. Of course, we refer to John 3:16, a passage sometimes referred to as the whole gospel message of the Bible “in a nutshell”.

Recitation (Groups 1 & 2): *For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. (John 3:16)*

Hymn: "God Loves Me Dearly"

(Groups 1 & 2)

*(1) God loves me dearly, grants me salvation
God loves me dearly, loves even me.*

REFRAIN

*Therefore I'll say again: God loves me dearly,
God loves me dearly, loves even me.*

*(2) He sent forth Jesus, my dear Redeemer;
He sent forth Jesus and set me free.*

REFRAIN

Congregation:

*(3) Jesus, my Savior, Himself did offer;
Jesus my Savior, paid all I owed.*

REFRAIN

Pastor: As we have mentioned, the almighty, holy God of the universe is above all a God of love. As we just heard, relayed to us through the words of John 3:16, God’s love is demonstrated toward the people of this world. As we also just heard, God has demonstrated His love toward the people of this world by sending His Son to be the Savior of this world, so that everyone who believes in Jesus through His Word will have salvation and eternal life. We now turn to the New Testament Gospel of Luke, chapter 1, to hear again how it was that God would send His Son into this world – that is (in addition to being true God), as a true human being, born of the virgin Mary.

*(4) He rules the world with truth and grace and makes the nations
prove
The glories of His righteousness
And wonders of His love, and wonders of His love,
And wonders, wonders of His love.*



+ + +

Announcements

- **Next Sunday** — Christmas Day Worship: Grace-Sleepy Eye worship services begin at 9 a.m. Worship here at Faith begins at 10:45 a.m.
- **Thank You:** Thank you to all of our children and adults who worked hard to bring the wonderful Christmas message of the Savior during this morning’s service.

Offering — Prayer — Lord' Prayer

Congregational Hymn: "Silent Night! Holy Night!"

- (1) *Silent night! Holy night! All is calm, all is bright,
Round yon virgin, mother and Child
Holy Infant, so tender and mild,
Sleep in heavenly peace, sleep in heavenly peace*
- (2) *Silent night! Holy night! Shepherds quake at the sight;
Glories stream from heaven afar
Heav'nly hosts sing, Alleluia,
Christ, the Savior, is born! Christ, the Savior, is born!*
- (3) *Silent night! Holy night! Son of God, love's pure light
Radiant beams from Thy holy face,
With the dawn of redeeming grace,
Jesus, Lord, at Thy birth, Jesus, Lord, at Thy birth.*

Benediction

Congregational Hymn (Recessional): "Joy to the World, the Lord is Come"

- (1) *Joy to the world, the Lord is come! Let earth receive her King!
Let ev'ry heart prepare Him room
And heav'n and nature sing, and heav'n and nature sing,
And heav'n, and heav'n and nature sing.*
- (2) *Joy to the earth, the Savior reigns! Let men their songs employ,
While fields and floods, rocks, hills and plains
Repeat the sounding joy, repeat the sounding joy,
Repeat, repeat the sounding joy.*
- (3) *No more let sins and sorrows grow nor thorns infest the ground;
He comes to make His blessings flow
Far as the curse is found, far as the curse is found,
Far as, far as the curse is found.*

Recitation (Group 2 & 3): *And having come in, the angel said to her, "Rejoice, highly favored one, the Lord is with you; blessed are you among women!"*

Recitation (Sophie): *But when she saw him, she was troubled at his saying, and considered what manner of greeting this was.*

Recitation (Carmen): *Then the angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bring forth a Son, and shall call His name JESUS.*

Recitation (Abbie): *He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Highest; and the Lord God will give Him the throne of His father David. "And He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of His kingdom there will be no end."*

Recitation (Alyssa): *Then Mary said to the angel, "How can this be, since I do not know a man?" And the angel answered and said to her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Highest will overshadow you; therefore, also, that Holy One who is to be born will be called the Son of God." (Luke 1:28-35)*

Congregational Hymn: "What Child Is This"

(1) *What child is this who, laid to rest,
On Mary's lap is sleeping?
Whom angels greet with anthems sweet
While shepherds watch are keeping?
This, this is Christ the King,
Whom shepherds guard and angels sing.
Haste, haste to bring Him laud,
The babe, the Son of Mary!*

(2) *Why lies He in such mean estate
Where oxen now are feeding?
Good Christians, fear; for sinners here
The silent Word is pleading.
Nails, spear shall pierce Him through
The cross He'll bear for me, for you.
Hail, hail the Word made flesh,
The babe, the Son of Mary!*

(3) *So bring Him incense, gold and myrrh;
Come, peasant, king, to own Him.
The King of kings salvation brings;
Let loving hearts enthrone Him.*

*Raise, raise the song on high;
The virgin sings her lullaby.
Joy, joy, for Christ is born,
The babe, the Son of Mary!*

Pastor: From Old Testament times, God had revealed specific details concerning His plan of love in sending forth His Son, Jesus, into this world. From Old Testament times God said His Son would be born of a virgin woman. God also said that from an earthly standpoint Jesus would come from the ancestral line of King David of the Jews. God also revealed through Old Testament prophecy that Jesus would be born in Bethlehem. In the following portion of Luke 2, we here how these prophecies were fulfilled.

Recitation (Group 3): *And it came to pass in those days that a decree went out from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be registered. This census first took place while Quirinius was governing Syria.*

Recitation (Harley): *So all went to be registered, everyone to his own city. Joseph also went up from Galilee, out of the city of Nazareth, into Judea, to the city of David, which is called Bethlehem, because he was of the house and lineage of David, to be registered with Mary, his betrothed wife, who was with child.*

Recitation (Hunter): *So it was, that while they were there, the days were completed for her to be delivered. And she brought forth her firstborn Son, and wrapped Him in swaddling cloths, and laid Him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn. (Luke 2:1-7)*

Hymn: "O Little Town of Bethlehem"

(Groups 2, 3 & 4)

*(1) O little town of Bethlehem, how still we see thee lie!
Above thy deep and dreamless sleep the silent stars go by;
Yet in the darkness shineth the everlasting light;
The hopes and fears of all the years are met in thee tonight.*

Congregation:

*(2) For Christ is born of Mary, and gathered all above,
While mortals sleep, the angels keep their watch of wond'ring love.
O morning stars, together proclaim the holy birth
And praises sing to God, the King, and peace to men on earth.*

worked for our salvation, and read with me the words of 1 John 3:1:

Congregation: *Behold what manner of love the Father has bestowed on us, that we should be called children of God! (1 John 3:1)*

Pastor: Dear Christians, be confident that because of God's love for the world in Christ, despite living within the pains and problems of this sinful world, we shall not be separated from this love of God, nor from our promised salvation. To this end, read with me the words of Romans 8:38-39:

Congregation: *For I am persuaded that neither death nor life ...*

... nor angels nor principalities nor powers

... nor things present nor things to come

... nor height nor depth

... nor any other created thing

... shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord. (Romans 8:38-39)

Hymn: "Jesus Loves Me"

(Groups 1, 2, 3 & 4)

*(1) Jesus loves me! this I know,
For the Bible tells me so.
Little ones to Him belong;
they are weak but He is strong.
REFRAIN
Yes, Jesus loves me!
Yes, Jesus loves me!
Yes, Jesus loves me!
The Bible tells me so.*

*(2) Jesus loves me! He who died
heaven's gate to open wide;
He will wash away my sin,
let His little child come in.
REFRAIN*

*(3) Jesus loves me! He will stay
close beside all the way.
He's prepared a home for me,
And someday His face I'll see.
REFRAIN*

Because of sin in this world, God could have abandoned mankind not only to the effects of sin in this world, but could have finally left mankind to the eternal punishment of body and soul in Hell, which sin merited. However, in the face of mankind's most dire need, God's love for fallen mankind forged a most amazing plan. Again, that plan would be to send His Son, Jesus, into this world at the right time in history to be the Savior of the sinners of this world. Jesus would do this by taking the place of sinful mankind. He would live the perfect life of love before God that no person has ever been able to offer on his own account. He would then offer His perfect and innocent life as the Son of God in the place of the sinners everywhere on the cross to bear God's punishment against our sins upon His own head. Finally, God's plan of love simply states that whoever believes in Jesus as the Son of God and as the Savior of this world will receive full forgiveness of sins and will receive the crown of everlasting life, living with the resurrected Lord Jesus Himself in the heavenly glories of His eternal kingdom.

Recitation (Group 4): *Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ ...*

Recitation (Paige): *For when we were still without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly.*

Recitation (Tyrah): *For scarcely for a righteous man will one die; yet perhaps for a good man someone would even dare to die.*

Recitation (Kyle): *But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.*

Recitation (Quinton): *Much more then, having now been justified by His blood, we shall be saved from wrath through Him.*

Recitation (Isaac F.): *For if when we were enemies we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son, much more, having been reconciled, we shall be saved by His life.*

Recitation (Emma): *And not only that, but we also rejoice in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received the reconciliation. (Romans 5:1, 6-11)*

Pastor: Dear Christians, in the Gospel of John, chapter 15, we are told what the ultimate expression of love is. Let us read together the words of John 15:13:

Congregation: *Greater love has no one than this, than to lay down one's life for his friends. (John 15:13)*

Pastor: Dear Christians, be amazed at the lengths to which God's love has

**(3) O holy Child of Bethlehem, descend to us, we pray;
Cast out our sin and enter in, Be born in us today.
We hear the Christmas angels the great glad tidings tell:
Oh, come to us, abide with us, our Lord Immanuel!**

Pastor: As God's plan of love for the people of this world began to unfold by the birth of His Son to Mary in Bethlehem, angels filled the sky outside the city with heavenly glory. Through these angel messengers, God began to proclaim the good news concerning the birth of the Savior by first having it announced to shepherds tending their flocks by night. At the instruction of the angels, these shepherds went to Bethlehem to see the Baby Jesus. As the shepherds made their ways following the events of that night, they could not help but spread this message of God's love for the people of this world in the coming of Jesus.

Recitation (Group 4): *Now there were in the same country shepherds living out in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. And behold, an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were greatly afraid.*

Recitation (Paige): *Then the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid, for behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy which will be to all people. For there is born to you this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord. And this will be the sign to you: You will find a Babe wrapped in swaddling cloths, lying in a manger."*

Recitation (Tyrah): *And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying: "Glory to God in the highest, And on earth peace, goodwill toward men!" So it was, when the angels had gone away from them into heaven, that the shepherds said to one another,*

Recitation (Kyle): *"Let us now go to Bethlehem and see this thing that has come to pass, which the Lord has made known to us." And they came with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the Babe lying in a manger. Now when they had seen Him, they made widely known the saying which was told them concerning this Child.*

Recitation (Quinton): *And all those who heard it marveled at those things which were told them by the shepherds. But Mary kept all these things and pondered them in her heart. Then the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things that they had heard and seen, as it was told them. (Luke 2:8-20)*

Hymn: Hymn: "Angels We Have Heard on High"

(Groups 2, 3 & 4)

*(1) Angels we have heard on high
Sweetly singing o'er the plains,
And the mountains in reply
Echoing their joyous strains.*

REFRAIN

Gloria, in excelsis Deo!

Gloria, in excelsis Deo!

Congregation:

*(2) Shepherds, why this jubilee?
Why your joyous strains prolong?
What the gladsome tidings be
Which inspire your heavenly song?*

REFRAIN

*(3) Come to Bethlehem and see
Christ Whose birth the angels sing;
Come, adore on bended knee,
Christ the Lord, the newborn King.*

REFRAIN

*(4) See Him in a manger laid,
Whom the choirs of angels praise;
Mary, Joseph, lend your aid,
While our hearts in love we raise.*

REFRAIN

Pastor: While God primarily worked through the people of Israel in Old Testament times (as they were chosen to be His special, covenant Old Testament people), and while Jesus was born of the Jews and primarily would live, work and teach within the midst of the Jewish community, Jesus was not only sent to be the Savior of the Jews. Rather, Jesus came into this world as the Christ to be the Savior of all people, because God the Father is the creator of all people and loves all people, desiring the salvation of all people – both Jews and Gentiles. Even from early on, the universal saving nature of Jesus as the Christ was symbolized by the Gentile-wisemen, who came from the east to behold Jesus and to worship Him as King. As we hear, in their travels to see the

Christ, these wisemen were guided by a special star which God had placed in the sky.

Recitation (Isaac F.): *Now after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod the king, behold, wise men from the East came to Jerusalem, saying, "Where is He who has been born King of the Jews? For we have seen His star in the East and have come to worship Him." When Herod the king heard this, he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him. (Matthew 2:1-3)*

Narrator: Herod told the wisemen to find the Christ and to tell him where He was because He also wanted to worship Him. Of course, this was a lie. Fearing Jesus would steal his throne, Herod wanted to find Jesus to kill Him. After guiding them to Jesus, God warned the wisemen not to go back to Herod:

Recitation (Emma): *When they saw the star, they rejoiced with exceedingly great joy. And when they had come into the house, they saw the young Child with Mary His mother, and fell down and worshiped Him. And when they had opened their treasures, they presented gifts to Him: gold, frankincense, and myrrh. Then, being divinely warned in a dream that they should not return to Herod, they departed for their own country another way. (Matthew 2:10-12)*

Pastor: So, we have talked quite a bit about God's love for this world of people already. We have talked about how God has demonstrated this love to the people of this world by sending His Son, Jesus, to be our Savior. The question is, "From what must we be saved?" The answer to this question: "We need to be saved from the consequences of our sins."

Yes, in the beginning sin entered the world because Satan tempted the first human beings to sin against God. Because Adam and Eve listened to Satan, themselves and each other, instead of obeying the Word of God, they were cast from the perfection of the God's original creation and were made to bear the consequences of their sinful actions. Because of sin, there would no longer be perfection and eternal life in this world. Because of sin, problems, sickness and death would now hold sway over this world. Because of sin, now all people descending from Adam and Eve in this world would also inherit this condition of broken-sinfulness. As we read in Romans, chapter 5: *Therefore, just as through one man sin entered the world, and death through sin, and thus death spread to all men, because all sinned ... (Romans 5:12)*