

THE WITNESS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

HOME DEVOTIONS - Week #24



Monday - Revelation 6 The seals opened by the Lamb reveal, through horses, the sin-caused afflictions and calamities (warfare, famine, death, natural catastrophes) that will plague mankind until the end of time. All of this is but a prelude to the Final Catastrophe from which the godless world shall not escape (v.15-17). Lord have mercy on us!

Tuesday - Revelation 7 As with the other visions in Revelations, the use of numbers is symbolic. Here the 144,000 sealed from all the tribes of Israel (v. 4) represent the uncountable, but perfectly complete multitude of believers who one day will stand before the throne and the Lamb in heaven. All whose robes are washed white in the holy blood of the Lamb will spend eternity glorifying, praising, and serving their Savior. Think of it and rejoice!

Wednesday - Revelation 8 As you read these next chapters, remind yourself that Revelation is a symbolic picture of human history and eternity. Trumpets were used to herald or announce the coming of someone or something - sometimes even divine judgments (Remember Mt. Sinai). Here they announced further plagues upon the earth - physical and spiritual.

Thursday - Revelation 9 The sixth trumpet announces the "fallen star" who has the "key to the bottomless pit" (hell itself) and the dense smoke out of which come deadly locusts. The seventh trumpet announces a horde of murderous horsemen. What stunning pictures of the destruction wreaked by Satan and his horde of false prophets.

Friday - Revelation 10 John sees a mighty angel carrying a little book. He is instructed to eat the book, which proves sweet to the taste and bitter to the stomach. What a striking picture of the Word and its effects on the soul - Law and Gospel, curse and blessing, judgment and salvation. Read, mark, learn and inwardly digest the Word!

Saturday - Revelation 11 In the midst of apostasy and godlessness, the Church shall never perish. God sends His faithful witnesses to proclaim His Word and even though their message is rejected by men and they are persecuted, yet the Word bears fruit - giving life and victory to Christ's faithful. Only eternity will reveal the fruits of the Church's labor!

Peace Thru Christ Lutheran Church is a confessional Lutheran Church.

If you are interested in learning more, please call Pastor Bernthal at 608-233-2244 or e-mail him at mbern@juno.com More Information and Audio Sermons at middletonlutheran.org

Peace Thru Christ

Lutheran Church and School

Pastor: Mark H. Bernthal • Teacher: Miss Claire Abbas
Organist: Mr. Jarrod Lentz

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Third Sunday in Advent • December 13, 2015

Pre-service Preparation: Ps. 98

THE ORDER OF SERVICE

Worship Supplement, p. 12

Opening Hymn:	341
Before Sermon:	367
Offering Hymn:	69 (1 & 6)
After Prayers:	344
Closing Hymn:	72 (3-4)
Antiphon	Ps. 24 Pg. 25 W.S.

Scripture Readings:

Revelation 4:1-5:6

What a beautiful, symbolical picture of heaven---the rainbow, symbolizing God's gracious promises which He always keeps; the 24 Elders, symbolizing the Church of all ages, believers who rule with Christ; lightning and thunder, symbolizing God's power and authority; the sea of glass, symbolizing peace and tranquility; the 4 living creatures, symbolizing the

earth and its inhabitants. What praise, glory and honor is given to God. But who alone is worthy and has the authority to unseal and open the scroll of history? Only the Lamb!

4 After these things I looked, and behold, a door standing open in heaven. And the first voice which I heard was like a trumpet speaking with me, saying, "Come up here, and I will show you things which must take place after this." 2 Immediately I was in the Spirit; and behold, a throne set in heaven, and One sat on the throne. 3 And He who sat there was like a jasper and a sardius stone in appearance; and there was a rainbow around the throne, in appearance like an emerald. 4 Around the throne were twenty-four thrones, and on the thrones I saw twenty-four elders sitting, clothed in white robes; and they had crowns of gold on their heads. 5 And from the throne proceeded lightnings, thunderings, and voices. Seven lamps of fire were burning before the throne, which are the seven Spirits of God. 6 Before the throne there was a sea of glass, like crystal. And in the midst of the throne, and around the throne, were four living creatures full of eyes in front and in back. 7 The first living creature was like a lion, the second living creature like a calf, the third living creature had a face like a man, and the fourth living creature was like a flying eagle. 8 The four living creatures, each having six wings, were full of eyes around and within. And they do not rest day or night, saying: "Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, Who was and is and is to come!" 9 Whenever the living creatures give glory and honor and thanks to Him who sits on the throne, who lives forever and ever, 10 the twenty-four elders fall down before Him who sits on the throne and worship Him who lives forever and ever, and cast their crowns before the throne, saying: 11 "You are worthy, O Lord, To receive glory and honor and power; For You created all things, And by Your will they exist and were created."

5 And I saw in the right hand of Him who sat on the throne a scroll written inside and on the back, sealed with seven seals. 2 Then I saw a strong angel proclaiming with a loud voice, "Who is worthy to open the scroll and to loose its seals?" 3 And no one in heaven or on the earth or under the earth was able to open the scroll, or to look at it. 4 So I wept much, because no one was found worthy to open and read the scroll, or to look at it. 5 But one of the elders said to me, "Do

Peace Thru Christ Lutheran Church & School • Announcements

Christmas list, this would fit. The saint/sinner struggles of the characters' daily lives are also ours. Copies are available from Ruth Bernthal. Payment, check or cash, at delivery.

A newly produced recording of choral music, sung by Tour Choirs of Immanuel Lutheran College, is scheduled to be available the week of December 14. It is a 2-CD set, featuring pieces sung by various choirs from 1991 to 2015. The first CD primarily reflects the themes of Advent and Christmas, the second the themes of Lent and Easter. The cost per 2-CD set is \$16 (or two sets for \$30). The sets will be available through the ILC Bookhouse or at the Christmas concert (December 18 at Messiah, Eau Claire). Congregations may request to receive the CDs on consignment through the Bookhouse (clcbookhouse@ilc.edu).

FROM THE CLC PRESIDENT:

Budget shortfall: You will soon receive the monthly financial update from the Bd. of Trustees. Offerings for the past several months have been at historic lows, resulting in a serious deficit. Please pass along the

information to your flocks. It is also an opportunity to remind one another of how truly wealthy we are, especially in the treasures of forgiveness and peace, but in material things too; and that, along with our prayers, praise, and hymns, our offerings are a means the Lord provides us to express our joy in the Word-made-flesh and our confidence in His continued provision of daily bread. We have received so much, both materially and spiritually! May faith respond in generous gratitude. "For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, so that you through his poverty might become rich" (2 Cor. 8:9).

2016 Mission Helper Trip to India

– Applications are currently being accepted until January 8th, 2016. More information and an online application can be found at: www.mht.lutheranmissions.org/2016-india Also, bulletin inserts, posters, and other resources can be downloaded at: <http://mht.lutheranmissions.org/resources>

CANDIDATES FOR IMMANUEL

PROFESSOR CALL: The Board of Regents for Immanuel Lutheran High School, College, and Seminary invites “all pastors, professors, male teachers, and voting members of member congregations of the Church of the Lutheran Confession” (CLC Constitution) to nominate an individual or individuals to fill the vacancy which will be created on the Immanuel faculty by the retirement of Professor John Pfeiffer at the end of the 2015-16 academic year. The individual would teach at the high school (potentially), college, and seminary levels with an emphasis on courses in Hebrew (college) and Old Testament theology (seminary) and also in other theological disciplines. With the duties including teaching God’s Word to adult males, the person is to be a male (1 Tim. 2:12). The position would, God-willing, commence with the 2016-17 academic year. Those submitting nominations are encouraged to include information regarding their nominee’s educational background and teaching and/or professional experience, also

indicating how the person might help our school in supervising extracurricular activities or serving in administrative positions. Please send your nominations postmarked or e-mailed no later than January 20, 2016, to: Mr. Craig Ryan, Secretary; ILC Board of Regents; 499 Country Lane; Fulda, MN 56131 (email: cryan@page1printers.com).

ILC CHRISTMAS CONCERT: The 2015 ILC Christmas Concert is scheduled for this Friday, at 7:30 p.m. at Messiah Lutheran Church in Eau Claire. The Commissioning of CLC Foreign Missionary Peter Evensen will take place at 4:00 pm this Friday, (a few hours prior to the ILC Christmas Concert) at Messiah Lutheran Church, Eau Claire, WI.

CHRISTMAS GIFTS - Looking for a Christmas gift which reminds us of God’s gift in Christ? Deborah Ude’s book, *Steeple in the Distance* is still available. The historical setting presents Lutheran fiction with a spine, the spine of the cross. Consider it for a gift of encouragement to a family member, friend, or perhaps, as a witness for a co-worker. Especially if you have an avid reader on your

not weep. Behold, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, has prevailed to open the scroll and to loose its seven seals.” 6 And I looked, and behold, in the midst of the throne and of the four living creatures, and in the midst of the elders, stood a Lamb as though it had been slain, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God sent out into all the earth.

The Sermon: read/listen to sermons at www.middletonlutheran.org

THE WITNESS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

Sermon Text: **Revelation 5:7-14**

Sermon Theme:

As we prepare our hearts for the coming of Christ we

SING A NEW SONG IN PRAISE OF THE LAMB!

I. He ALONE is Worthy!

II. He ALONE was Slain.

III. He ALONE Redeemed us.

IV: He ALONE made us Kings and Priests to reign with Him.

7 Then He came and took the scroll out of the right hand of Him who sat on the throne. 8 Now when He had taken the scroll, the four living creatures and the twenty-four elders fell down before the Lamb, each having a harp, and golden bowls full of incense, which are the prayers of the saints. 9 And they sang a new song, saying: “You are worthy to take the scroll, And to open its seals; For You were slain, And have redeemed us to God by Your blood Out of every tribe and tongue and people and nation, 10 And have made us kings and priests to our God; And we shall reign on the earth.” 11 Then I looked, and I heard the voice of many angels around the throne, the living creatures, and the elders; and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands, 12 saying with a loud voice: “Worthy is the Lamb who was slain To receive power and riches and wisdom, And strength and honor and glory and blessing!” 13 And every creature which is in heaven and on the earth and under the earth and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, I heard saying: “Blessing and honor and glory and

power Be to Him who sits on the throne, And to the Lamb, forever and ever!"

14 Then the four living creatures said, "Amen!" And the twenty-four elders fell down and worshiped Him who lives forever and ever.

Peace Thru Christ Lutheran Church & School • Announcements

PEACE THRU CHRIST LUTHERAN WELCOMES YOU! We praise God that you are with us this morning worshipping our Savior, the Lamb of God. May you also join us in singing a song of praise to the Lamb. We are eager to share this Word of salvation with you. Speak to Pastor Bernthal if there is any way we can serve you. Please come again and please sign our guest book.

This Week:

Today 9:00 a.m. S.S.:
Announcement of Jesus' Birth

Bible Class: Spending Time
in Luther's Catechism: Third
Article—Visible & Invisible
Church • 11:15 a.m. Choir/
Christmas Practice

Monday 7:00 p.m. B.O.C.E.

Tuesday 10:30 a.m. Bible Class
at Artisan • 6:30 p.m. Hannah's
Christmas Gathering

Wednesday 10:45 a.m. Bible
Class at Heritage • 7:00 p.m.
Advent III—Pastor Bernthal

Friday 7:30 p.m. ILC Christmas
Concert

Next Sunday 9:00 a.m. S.S./
Bible Class • 10:00 a.m. Family
Worship • 11:15 a.m. Choir/
Christmas Practice

LAST WEEK: Worship 46 S.S. 4
B.C. 20 Advent II 37

CLC NEWS: Pastor Walter
Schaller of Mount Zion Lutheran,
Madison Heights MI, has
announced his intent to retire
from the public ministry but
plans to serve the congregation
until the Spirit provides a new
shepherd. The congregation
has called Pastor Mark Weis
of Church of the Lutheran
Confession, North Port FL.

EVANGELISM MEETING:
has been changed from Dec.
20th to Dec. 27th after church.

IN YOUR MAILBOX: December
Calendar & Newsletter
Christmas Letter from Pastor

NEEDED--USHERS:
Any male communicant member
who is not presently serving as
an usher but who would like to
help serve in 2016, please see
Pastor Bernthal before the New
Year's list is typed out. Please do
so by New Year's Eve. Thank you!

Peace Thru Christ Lutheran Church & School • Announcements

OFFERINGS 12/6 & 9
for Unified Budget: \$3,309

We thank God for His gracious
moving of the hearts of His
people to give so generously
this past week. November was
a very low month in offerings.
We were some \$4,000 short of
budget at the end of November.
"Praise God from whom all
blessings flow!"

IN SERVICE TO OUR LORD:

Cleaners this week:
Church---Birkholz/Heberlein
School---Abbas/Schaefer
Counters today: Ruth Bernthal &
Rachel Schaser

MID-WEEK ADVENT: Our last
mid-week Advent service will
be held this Wednesday at 7:00
p.m. Last week 37 came to hear
about Jesus, the Root of Jesse.
Dec. 16th O Key of David
(Pastor Bernthal)

DUANE'S DOWNSIZING: One last
week to choose a wooden carved
piece from Duane or a kneeling
chair that can be of help to
persons with back problems that
may be alleviated by keeping the
back straight, not slumped. They
are available to anyone who
would like to take them. They
can be seen in the fellowship
hall.

NOMINATIONS FOR ILC

PRESIDENT:

The Board of Regents invites
nominations for the office of
President of Immanuel Lutheran
College. The current term of
Professor Steve Sippert expires
June 30, 2016. All pastors,
professors, male teachers, and
voting members of the CLC are
entitled to nominate a man
from the faculty of Immanuel
Lutheran College to serve a
two-year term beginning July
1, 2016. Nominations must be
written or e-mailed no later
than midnight January 5, 2016
to: Mr. Craig Ryan; 499 Country
Lane; Fulda, MN 56131; cryan@
page1printers.com.

HANNAH'S HELPING HANDS:

The ladies will be enjoying
a night out to celebrate a
Christmas Gathering this Tuesday
at 6:30 p.m.

WANTED:

Any new phone numbers, new
addresses, or e-mail addresses
for our 2016 church directory.
Please give them to pastor
before the New Year. Thanks!

CHRISTMAS CAROLING:

Next Sunday at 5:30 p.m. We
will go to Artisan, Heritage and
Duane Riggert. Please meet
around 5:25.