



Wisconsin Rapids Moravian Church

310 First Avenue South 715-423-0180

www.wrmoravian.org

"Sharing Christ, Serving People"

Sunday, January 5, 2025

2nd Sunday after Christmas

PRELUDE: "Away in a Manger"

SHARING OF JOYS AND CONCERNS

CALL TO WORSHIP – Psalm 147:12-15, 20

L: Praise the Lord, O Jerusalem! Praise your God, O Zion!

C: For he strengthens the bars of your gates; he blesses your children within you.

L: He grants peace within your borders; he fills you with the finest of wheat. He sends out his command to the earth; his word runs swiftly. He has not dealt thus with any other nation; they do not know his ordinances.

C: Praise the Lord!

WELCOME & NEWS OF THE CHURCH ALIVE

(Please sign Welcome Pad)

*HYMN #309: "With Praises and Thanksgiving"

*NEW YEAR AND ANNIVERSARY LITURGY – pg. 143

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE WITH PASTORAL PRAYER

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

SCRIPTURES: Jeremiah 31:7-14

⁷For thus says the Lord: Sing aloud with gladness for Jacob, and raise shouts for the chief of the nations; proclaim, give praise, and say, "Save, O Lord, your people, the remnant of Israel." ⁸See, I am going to bring them from the land of the north, and gather them from the farthest parts of the earth, among them the blind and the lame, those with child and those in labor, together; a great company, they shall return here. ⁹With weeping they shall come, and with consolations I will lead them back, I will let them walk by brooks of water, in a straight path in which they shall not stumble; for I have become a father to Israel, and Ephraim is my firstborn.

¹⁰Hear the word of the Lord, O nations, and declare it in the coastlands far away; say, "He who scattered Israel will gather him, and will keep him as a shepherd a flock." ¹¹For the Lord has ransomed Jacob, and has redeemed him from hands too strong for him. ¹²They shall come and sing aloud on the height of Zion, and they shall be radiant over the goodness

of the Lord, over the grain, the wine, and the oil, and over the young of the flock and the herd; their life shall become like a watered garden, and they shall never languish again. ¹³Then shall the young women rejoice in the dance, and the young men and the old shall be merry. I will turn their mourning into joy, I will comfort them, and give them gladness for sorrow. ¹⁴I will give the priests their fill of fatness, and my people shall be satisfied with my bounty, says the Lord.

Ephesians 1:3-14

³Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places, ⁴just as he chose us in Christ before the foundation of the world to be holy and blameless before him in love. ⁵He destined us for adoption as his children through Jesus Christ, according to the good pleasure of his will, ⁶to the praise of his glorious grace that he freely bestowed on us in the Beloved. ⁷In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace ⁸that he lavished on us. With all wisdom and insight ⁹he has made known to us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure that he set forth in Christ, ¹⁰as a plan for the fullness of time, to gather up all things in him, things in heaven and things on earth. ¹¹In Christ we have also obtained an inheritance, having been destined according to the purpose of him who accomplishes all things according to his counsel and will, ¹²so that we, who were the first to set our hope on Christ, might live for the praise of his glory. ¹³In him you also, when you had heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and had believed in him, were marked with the seal of the promised Holy Spirit; ¹⁴this is the pledge of our inheritance toward redemption as God's own people, to the praise of his glory.

John 1:1-18

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. ²He was in the beginning with God. ³All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being ⁴in him was life, and the life was the light of all people.

⁵The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it. ⁶There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. ⁷He came as a witness to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him. ⁸He himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light. ⁹The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world. ¹⁰He was in the world, and the world came into being through him; yet the world did not know him. ¹¹He came to what was his own, and his own people did

not accept him. ¹²But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God, ¹³who were born, not of blood or of the will of the flesh or of the will of man, but of God. ¹⁴And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father's only son, full of grace and truth.

¹⁵(John testified to him and cried out, "This was he of whom I said, 'He who comes after me ranks ahead of me because he was before me.'") ¹⁶From his fullness we have all received, grace upon grace. ¹⁷The law indeed was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. ¹⁸No one has ever seen God. It is God the only Son, who is close to the Father's heart, who has made him known.

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

PRESENTATION OF TITHES AND OFFERINGS

OFFERTORY "Infant Holy, Infant Lowly"

*Offertory Response: (#190 vs. 2)

**As they offered gifts most rare at that manger rude and bare;
so may we with holy joy, pure and free from sin's alloy,
all our costliest treasures bring, Christ, to you our heav'nly King.**

*OFFERTORY PRAYER

REFLECTIVE MEMORABILIA of 2024

DRAWING AND SHARING OF WATCHWORDS

³HYMN #310 "At Your Feet, Our God and Father"

*BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE: "Jesus Single"
*Stand as able

IN OUR WORSHIP THIS MORNING

Ministers.....All who serve Jesus Christ
Pastor.....Rev. Beth Rohn-Habegger
Scripture ReaderRosemary Mooney
Keyboardist.....Karen Buchholz
POP Musicians.....John Gunn & Jill Kemp

WATCHWORD FOR THE WEEK

God has made know to us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure that he set forth in Christ. Ephesians 1:9

IN THE LIFE OF OUR CONGREGATION THIS WEEK

TODAY at 9:00 am.....Church School
10:15 am.....,.....Worship
TUESDAY at 4:30 pm.....TOPS (Take off Pounds Sensibly)
WEDNESDAY at 6:30 pm.....Confirmation Class
THURSDAY at 9:30 am.....Alanon
NEXT SUNDAY at 9:00 am.....Church School
10:15 am.....Worship

PRAYER CONCERNS

Hospitalized: Marilyn Hutter

Patty (Schoechert) Beyer, Jan Baker's daughter (Natalie), Ashley & Kolby Kelnhofer, Marie Kaszuba, Alice Lavin, Jim Laufenberg, Lorraine Abbott, Linda (Behrend) Nelson, Jaden (Patty Beyer's granddaughter), Dave Plummer, Beth Sowatzke, Aden Ward, Kurt Young, Neil

Nursing/Assisted Living Residents: Deb Maier, Laniece Haferman, Diane Klawikowski, Marilyn Hutter, Lucy Severt, Barb Scholl, Olaf & Rita Andersen, Marion Bailey

At home: Lloyd Young, Paul & Marie Knipple

Servicemen: Paul & David Eklund, Mason Fellowes, Elias Thelemann

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- Our Joyful Noise offering this month will go to G.R.A.C.E. (Greater Rapids Area Churches for Ecumenism)
- Just a reminder that a signup sheet for **Coffee Hour hosts** is located in the Social Room. Call the church office (715) 423-0180 or Kathy Plante (715) 459-1110 if you have any questions.
- **POP (Prelude, Offertory and Postlude) musicians** are needed. To schedule a date or check availability, you can call Diane Renner (715-325-5300) or just talk to her at church.
- The Board of Trustees has established a **Donation List** of items that we use around the church. You can find the list on our website or on the bulletin board in the south hallway. You are invited sign up for those items you would be willing to donate.
- Our annual Church Council will take place following worship on Sunday, January 26. Please plan to attend if you are able.

Grace upon Grace

“In our sleep, pain which we cannot forget falls drop by drop upon the heart until, in our own despair, against our will, comes wisdom, through the awful grace of God.” The Greek poet Aeschylus, who penned this line five centuries before Christ, speaks of wisdom that can rise from deep pain, even when one is too despondent to be seeking it. Centuries prior, the Hebrew people were acknowledging dreams and visions (not of one’s own doing) as sources of divine inspiration.

So too the Gospel of John evokes faith and trust in God that is beyond anyone’s circumstances, belief system, or moral code. John’s Gospel is a witness to the majesty, mystery, and remarkably transformative nature of God’s Spirit revealed in Jesus Christ. The Word brings life and light that the darkness cannot overcome. Full of grace and truth, the Word lived among us. From his fullness we have all received, grace upon grace. It is God’s infinite, eternal, yet soul-embedded grace that we see in the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. God’s grace is not depleted when darkness, even despondency, overwhelms us.

I read the line from Aeschylus recently in *An Unfinished Love Story* by Doris Kearns Goodwin. She tells of Robert F. Kennedy taking on the responsibility to inform a large gathering of African Americans that Martin Luther King Jr. had been killed that very evening. While other cities had erupted in rage and agonizing destruction, that city remained orderly. In a brief talk, Kennedy referred to the agony he carried for the similar killing of his brother, President John F. Kennedy. Agony spoke to agony.

So it is that Jesus speaks to us from the cross, especially when pain upon pain overwhelms us. The Good News to all is that God always offers grace upon grace.

Jeff Coppage, retired pastor, Winston-Salem, North Carolina

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