



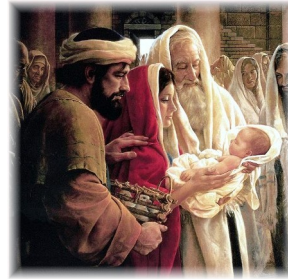
This Sunday: First Sunday of Christmas

Dear sisters and brothers in Christ,

A blessed Merry Christmas and Joyful New Year through our Lord Jesus Christ!

Hard to believe, isn't it, that this is the last Sunday of 2013? It is a good time to reflect upon "endings." And next week, on "beginnings."

This brief greeting should not be about me, but it would be naive and insensitive not to take this opportunity to say something about my time with you. I begin with a reflection on Sunday's Old Testament reading.



The prophet Isaiah reminds us to regularly take time to reflect upon God's blessings in our lives. "I will recount the gracious deeds of the Lord," Isaiah says, "because of all that the Lord has done for us." The end of the year is an especially beneficial time to do this. I'm sure 2013 did not unfold entirely as you expected last year at this time. People dear to you no doubt passed away. You may have had an unexpected illness, loss of employment, fracture in a friendship or within your family, or something in your possession was lost or destroyed.... I am only scratching the surface of some of the untimely and unanticipated negative things that might have happened for your in 2013.

"Unexpected" does not always mean "bad." If we try, we can think of many wonderful surprises for which we could never have planned. Perhaps you were healed of something that was very painful. You may have added new friends or family to your circles. In our family we couldn't have foreseen a dear young lady in our son, Trygve's life, or the good fortune Peter enjoyed as the result of his work with the Auburn Athletic Department--it's not often your sons have the opportunity to have their school's football team go to two National Championships in their college career. Or, also for Peter, to have had the opportunity to be a guest in George Soros' house in August, where he met actor Rob Lowe and singers Nora Jones and Lady Gaga. What an unexpected surprise indeed! These are not life-altering blessings, but certainly gifts from a gracious Lord.

Most importantly, however, is to praise and thank God for his ever-present love and forgiveness for us, his children. As 2013 ends I invite you to "recount the gracious deeds of the Lord for all that the Lord has done for us." As I recount the Lord's blessings, I feel a great sense of personal fulfillment for the work we have done together to glorify God and bless people in Cross Plains and beyond. I am deeply grateful for the work he has done within our congregation at St. Martin's this past year. You are truly beloved people in our lives, and we have treasured the privilege of having been your pastoral family these past many years.

Peace be with you and may the New Year be filled with gracious deeds from the Lord.

Pastor Rick, Katherine, Trygve and Peter Lund

Farewell Potluck for Pastor Rick & Family



On Sunday, January 5 we will have an old fashion Lutheran potluck following the New Rhythm Worship. Please plan to join us, bringing a dish to pass. This will be a celebration of the past 4+ years with Pastor Rick and his family.

2013 Contributions

All contributions for 2013 must be received by December 31, 2013 in order to be credited to your 2013 Giving Statement. There is a drop box outside the church office door you are welcome to use after business hours.



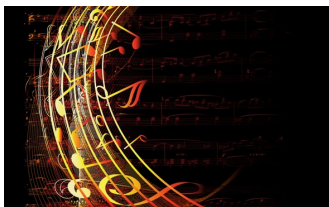
Janet Holtz Memorial

The new white paraments adorning the Sanctuary for the first time were commissioned from memorial contributions given in remembrance of Janet Holtz, who died on June 16, 2013. Jan and her husband, Bob, joined St. Martin's Lutheran Church in 1961. Bob served as President of the Congregation in 1973 when the present church building was constructed.

The artist who made the paraments is Jeannette Paulson, a member of First Lutheran Church in Duluth, MN. Jeanette is a "one woman operation" whose business is called "Adorn this House." For more information, check out Jeanette's website, "www.adornthishouse.com."



New St. Martin's Music Group



Would you like to be part of an informal music group at St. Martin's that meets to play music, sing, engage in fellowship, and possibly perform free shows at local nursing homes? If so please consider being part of this new group that is forming at church. All skill levels, ages and musical interests are welcome, although at least some of the music will be aimed at songs of interest to

nursing home residents. Meeting time and frequency will be determined based on

the availability of the people that join the group. Please call Jeff Postle at 798-1620 for more info or to sign up.

2014 Offering Envelopes

Please pick up your 2014 Offering Envelopes in the church sanctuary. This saves our church a significant amount in postage. We appreciate you picking them up when you are here. Please wait to use these envelopes until January 1, 2014.



Thank you!

Sign Up for the Mission Trip



We still have room for people on the Mission Trip to Moore, Oklahoma on June 28 - July 6. In May 2013 an F5 Tornado plundered through this area leaving devastation. This trip will be a life changing experience for all. Please sign up on the sheet on the bulletin board. Please contact Tim Knipfer at timmyk65@yahoo.com with any questions.

Church Calendar for December 29 - January 4

Sunday, December 29

8:30 a. Traditional Blend Worship
No GIFT today
10:15 a. New Rhythm Worship

Monday, December 30

No School-Winter Break
7:00 p. Soul Purpose S

Tuesday, December 31

No School-Winter Break
6:30 a. Men's Bible Study

Wednesday, January 1

Happy New Year!
No School-Winter Break
No Confirmation

Thursday, January 2

9:00 a. 4K Kids Arrive
11:30 a. 4K Kids Depart
6:00 p. New Rhythm Band Practice S
6:30 p. Sr. High Youth Group YR

Friday, January 3

9:00 a. 4K Kids Arrive
11:30 a. 4K Kids Depart

Saturday, January 4

9:00 a. Overeaters Anonymous



S—Sanctuary; L—Library; B—Building; _MR—Music Room; FH—Fellowship Hall; CR—Choir Room; OS—Off Site; N—Nursery; PG—Prayer Garden; GLC—Gunderson Life Center; YR—Youth Room

Worship Participants for Sunday, December 29



Presiding Minister Pastor Rick Lund

Accompanist & Musicians (8:30) Mary Vassalotti (10:15) New Rhythm Band

Song Leaders (8:30) Anne Marie Vassalotti (10:15) New Rhythm Band

Lectors (8:30) Cathy Kittle (10:15) Jen Niesen

Communion Assistants (8:30) Cathy Kittle (10:15) Jen Niesen, Ann Houck & Cheryl Hartung

Ushers (8:30) Steve Schunk & Kim Johnson (10:15) open

Acolytes (8:30) Sean Frye (10:15) Henry Hartung
Jr. Usher (10:15) Kevin Houck
Nursery Haley Osborne
Counting Team 1
Altar Guild (8:30) Deb Archer
(10:15) Deb Archer
AV (8:30) Phil Fish (10:15) Jeff Postle
Coffee Karen Seibel

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Pastor Rick Lund

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