

Grace Lutheran Church

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Pastor Ken Scheck II
Ms. Cindy Olson, Minister of Music
December 23, 2018
Fourth Sunday of Advent

The Magnifying Life

Mary sings, “My soul magnifies the Lord” (Luke 1:46). The word that is often translated “soul” can also be translated as “self” or “life.” My self, the particularities of my being, magnify the Lord, she sings. My life, she says, has become like a magnifying glass with which you can see up close the details of God. This is true. God has chosen Mary because her life is like a telescope through which we can look to encounter the divine.

Mary is poor. Mary is female. Mary is young. Mary is powerless by worldly standards. Mary is found to be pregnant outside of marriage, an unacceptable state in her community, and spends several months of her pregnancy with Elizabeth and Zechariah, away from her home. Mary is lowly and vulnerable. We might not expect that God would choose someone so seemingly unremarkable to manifest God’s work. Yet the particularities of Mary’s specific life and soul and self are a magnifying glass with which we can better see God’s activity in the world.

If you think that your own daily life is unremarkable, think again. You were created singularly by God. Adopted into the family of Christ through baptism, you are uniquely claimed and named to live out God’s call for you in the world. As with Mary, the particularities of your identity, challenges, gifts, and strengths also work like a magnifying glass, showing up close the liberating presence of God. Your day-to-day life indeed magnifies the Lord! In what particularities of your life and the lives of people around you do you notice God at work? In what elements of your relationships, community, work, recreation, or spiritual practice do you encounter the divine? Let us each take note, and then sing with Mary, “My soul does indeed magnify the Lord.”

From sundaysandseasons.com.

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BEFORE WORSHIP

Please fill out our Participation Card and place it in the offering plate every Sunday. This card helps the ministry of both the Congregational Care and Community Outreach Committees. Sometimes there are additional questions on the back of the card, so don’t forget to check both sides of the card.

Fourth Sunday of Advent

December 23, 2018

The season of Advent is a time of preparation for the expected Messiah, who came in an unexpected way, as the baby Jesus. The color of the season is blue (like the night sky), representing the Christ who is called Dayspring (source of day).

Holy Silence is observed as we enter to worship.

Pre- Service Music

Welcome/Worship Instructions

Arise in body or spirit.

Gathering Hymn

The Angel Gabriel from Heaven Came

ELW 265 (red book)

The CELEBRATION OF LIGHT ON THE ADVENT WREATH - Angels' Candle

- P** From the one who is and who was and who is to come, the Almighty God: grace, light and peace be with you all.
- C** **And also with you.**
- A** Wrapped in Winter's darkness, many circles of Christmas lights point the way to the birthplace of Emmanuel.
- C** **Those circles of light that shine everywhere are holy symbols of unity more brilliant than any galaxy.**
- P** For when we are one with each other,
- C** **then Emmanuel is among us.**
- A** Let us treasure beyond all gifts and all riches the sacred circle of unity that is always the mystic manger for the birth of God-among-us.
- C** **In the busy days of Christmas, let us not break the circle of communion that was Jesus' great wish for us disciples.**

The RESPONSIVE LITANY of PRAISE

- P** Sing to the Lord a new song.
C Sing to the Lord, all the earth.
- A** Sing to the Lord and bless God’s name.
C Proclaim the Good News of God’s salvation from day to day.
- P** Let us come before God’s presence with thanksgiving,
C and raise a loud shout with psalms.
- A** For the Lord is a great God,
C and a great king above all gods.
- P** Declare God’s glory among the nations,
C and God’s wonders among all people.
- A** Shout with joy to the Lord, all you lands.
C Lift up your voice, rejoice and sing.
- P** Sing to the Lord a new song,
C for God has done marvelous things.

Prayer of the Day

- A** Let us pray, Stir up your power, Lord Christ, and come with your abundant grace and might.
C Free us from the sin that binds us, that we may receive you in joy and serve you always, for you live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.
Amen

Sit

First Reading

Micah 5:2-5a

The prophet Micah, having pronounced judgment upon Judah, speaks of a future shepherd-king who, like David, will come from the small town of Bethlehem. (Ephrathah refers to the area around Bethlehem.) This king will restore Israel and bring peace. New Testament writers understood this passage to be referring to Jesus.

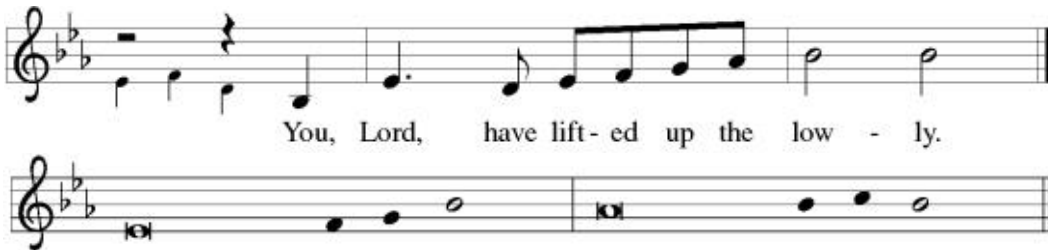
📖 A reading from **Micah**:

²But you, O Bethlehem of Ephrathah, who are one of the little clans of Judah, from you shall come forth for me one who is to rule in Israel, whose origin is from of old, from ancient days.

³Therefore he shall give them up until the time when she who is in labor has brought forth; then the rest of his kindred shall return to the people of Israel. ⁴And he shall stand and feed his flock in the strength of the LORD, in the majesty of the name of the LORD his God. And they shall live secure, for now he shall be great to the ends of the earth; ^{5a}and he shall be the one of peace.

📖 Lord God, your Word is a lamp to our feet,

🎵 **we give you thanks and praise.**



Psalm – Luke 1:46b-55

^{46b}My soul proclaims the greatness | of the Lord,

⁴⁷my spirit rejoices in | God my Savior,

⁴⁸**for you, Lord, have looked with favor on your | lowly servant.**

From this day all generations will | call me blessed:

⁴⁹you, the Almighty, have done great | things for me
and holy | is your name.

⁵⁰**You have mercy on | those who fear you,
from generation to | generation.** 🎵

⁵¹You have shown strength | with your arm
and scattered the proud in | their conceit,

⁵²**casting down the mighty | from their thrones
and lifting | up the lowly.**

⁵³You have filled the hungry | with good things
and sent the rich | away empty.

⁵⁴**You have come to the aid of your | servant Israel,
to remember the prom- | ise of mercy,**

⁵⁵the promise made | to our forbears,
to Abraham and his chil- | dren forever. 🎵

Second Reading

Hebrews 10:5-10

The author of Hebrews uses the image of religious sacrifice to convey the significance of Christ's coming. Through obedient acceptance of God's will, Christ allows his own body to become the greatest sacrifice of all, one through which we are made a holy people.

□ A reading from **Hebrews:**

⁵Consequently, when Christ came into the world, he said,

“Sacrifices and offerings you have not desired, but a body you have prepared for me; ⁶in burnt offerings and sin offerings you have taken no pleasure. ⁷Then I said, ‘See, God, I have come to do your will, O God’ (in the scroll of the book it is written of me).” ⁸When he said above, “You have neither desired nor taken pleasure in sacrifices and offerings and burnt offerings and sin offerings” (these are offered according to the law), ⁹then he added, “See, I have come to do your will.” He abolishes the first in order to establish the second. ¹⁰And it is by God's will that we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.

□ Lord God, your Word is a lamp to our feet,

☑ **we give you thanks and praise.**

Arise in body or spirit

Gospel Acclamation



Gospel Reading

Luke 1:39-45 [46-55]

We are presented with Elizabeth, John's mother, and Mary, the mother of Jesus, two women filled with the Holy Spirit and with faith. In Elizabeth's inspired greeting and Mary's song of praise we hear of a saving God who remembers, scatters, lifts up, and fulfills all things.

☐ The Holy Gospel, according to **Luke.**

☑ **Glory to you, O Lord.**

³⁹In those days Mary set out and went with haste to a Judean town in the hill country, ⁴⁰where she entered the house of Zechariah and greeted Elizabeth. ⁴¹When Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the child leaped in her womb. And Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit ⁴²and exclaimed with a loud cry, “Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb. ⁴³And why has

this happened to me, that the mother of my Lord comes to me? ⁴⁴For as soon as I heard the sound of your greeting, the child in my womb leaped for joy. ⁴⁵And blessed is she who believed that there would be a fulfillment of what was spoken to her by the Lord.” [

⁴⁶And Mary said, “My soul magnifies the Lord, ⁴⁷and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior, ⁴⁸for he has looked with favor on the lowliness of his servant. Surely, from now on all generations will call me blessed; ⁴⁹for the Mighty One has done great things for me, and holy is his name. ⁵⁰His mercy is for those who fear him from generation to generation. ⁵¹He has shown strength with his arm; he has scattered the proud in the thoughts of their hearts. ⁵²He has brought down the powerful from their thrones and lifted up the lowly; ⁵³he has filled the hungry with good things and sent the rich away empty. ⁵⁴He has helped his servant Israel, in remembrance of his mercy, ⁵⁵according to the promise he made to our ancestors, to Abraham and to his descendants forever.”

☐ The Gospel of the Lord.

☑ Praise to you, O Christ.

Sit

Children’s Time

All children [including infants] and youth who desire to come forward for the children’s sermon are welcomed and encouraged to do so. Parents/caregivers are welcome to accompany their child during the children’s message. There may be a time of dance and celebration that is offered.

Message

Silence for reflection

Hymn of the Day

Canticle of the Turning

ELW 723

Kneel or sit as able.

Prayers

☐ As we await the coming of Christ, we pray in hope for the church, the world, and all of creation.

A brief silence.

☐ Faithful Lord, you keep your promises. Move your church to sing like Mary and rejoice like Elizabeth. Teach us to sing of your faithfulness all our days. Embolden your church to take up the cross against the powers of oppression and death and guide the faith of our bishops and congregations and all the servants of your church, including *Bishops Elizabeth and Craig, Assistants Chrysanne, David and Roseanne; our synod companion churches, Sudanese Christ Lutheran Church in Wyoming, Prairieville Bible Church, Delton; Minister of Music Cindy and Pastor Ken.* We lift our hearts to you,

☑ Come, Lord Jesus.

A Ancient of Days, with joy you danced over the waters and birthed creation. Give us joy in caring for the soil beneath us, the water around us, and the sky above us. We lift our hearts to you,

C **Come, Lord Jesus.**

A Prince of peace, your sacrifice gives abundant life to all. Raise up leaders in every nation whose goals are health and well-being for all people and creation. Grant them wisdom and compassion to serve as you would have them serve. Protect the lives of those who serve in the military, including *Zack Green (Mikolajczyks), Parker Stancil (Freedlunds), Alexis and Dylan Kelmer, Austin and Aaron Endsley (Burdicks), Cody and Myrina Crawford (Clements), and Kayla and Lance Champaco (Pohls)*. We lift our hearts to you,

C **Come, Lord Jesus.**

A Good Shepherd, you feed your flock. Fill the hungry with good things. Lift up the lowly. Accompany the refugee. Comfort the lonely. Heal the sick. Send us in haste to surround them with your love. We pray especially for *Dan Anderson, Dave Bolton, Ray Chadwick Sr., Ray Chadwick Jr, Ellie Clark, Vicky Dame, Dee DeField, Angie Drozd, Wendy Eifler, Colleen Endsley, Opal Gillons, Wes Gillons, Karl Golnek, Belladonna Green, Charlene Hall, Delmer Hansen, Larry Hansen, Mary Jane Hayner, Tim Lowe, Steve Lydy, family of Chad Miller, Elsie Merrow, Valeria Poholski, Kathy Rann, Kailie Triick, George Ulrich Jr., Sue Walker, Sven Zethelius the homeless enduring the cold winter, the pageant participants, and a safe journey for Justin*. We lift our hearts to you,

C **Come, Lord Jesus.**

A Love Incarnate, you are with us at the manger, on the cross, and on the resurrection road. Walk with all who live with depression, grief, or heartache in this season. We lift our hearts to you,

C **Come, Lord Jesus.**

A Be attentive, gracious God, to the individual petitions we lift to you in loud voice or in the silence of our hearts.

Here other intercessions may be offered.

A We lift our hearts to you,

C **Come, Lord Jesus.**

A Ever-living God, you are Alpha and Omega. We thank you for all who sing now in the heavenly choir, especially those dear to us. Join our voices with theirs in praise of the Christ child. We lift our hearts to you,

C **Come, Lord Jesus.**

P Confident that the Holy Spirit intercedes for us, we bring to you these prayers and those unspoken, in the name of Christ, our Savior and Lord.

C **Amen.**

Offering of Gifts and Music

Everyone at worship is encouraged to fill out a Participation card and place it in the offering plate every Sunday morning.

Arise in body or spirit.

Let the Vineyards

Let the vine - yards be fruit - ful, Lord, fill to the brim our
cup of bless - ing. Gath - er a har - vest from the seeds that were sown,
that we may be fed, we may be fed with the bread of life.
Gath - er the hopes and the dreams of all; u - nite them with the
prayers we of - fer now. Grace our ta - ble with your pres - ence,
and give us a fore - taste of the feast to come.

Offering Prayer

Ⓐ Let us pray . . . God of abundance, we bring before you the precious fruits of your creation, and with them our very lives.

Ⓑ Teach us patience and hope as we care for all those in need until the coming of your Son, our Savior and Lord.

Amen

Sharing the Peace of God

P The peace of Christ be with you always.

C And also with you.

(We share the peace of Christ with one another.)

Great Thanksgiving



P The Lord be with you. **C** And al - so with you.



P Lift up your hearts. **C** We lift them to the Lord.



P Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.



C It is right to give our thanks and praise.

P It is indeed right and salutary that we should at all times and in all places offer thanks and praise to you, O Lord, holy Father, almighty and everliving God. You comforted your people with the promise of the Redeemer, through whom you will also make all things new in the day when he comes again to judge the world in righteousness. And so, with the Church on earth and the hosts of heaven, we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord,
 Lord God of pow'r and might, heav-en and earth are
 full of your glo - ry. Ho - san - na in the high - est.
 Bless - ed, bless - ed is he who comes in the name of the
 Lord. Ho - san - na in the high - est.

Eucharistic Prayer

- ☐ Holy God, the Beginning and the End, our Salvation and our Hope, we praise you for creating a world of order and beauty.
- ☑ **When we brought on chaos, cruelty and despair, you sent the prophets to proclaim your justice and mercy. At this end of the ages your Son Jesus came to bring us your love and to heal all the suffering world.**
- ☐ In the night in which he was betrayed, our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks; broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying: Take and eat; this is my body, given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me.

Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it for all to drink, saying: This cup is the new covenant in my blood, shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin. Do this for the remembrance of me. Remembering, therefore, his life, death, and resurrection, we await Christ's coming again in righteousness and peace.

☞ **Send your Spirit on us and on this bread and wine we share.**

☞ Strengthen our faith, increase our hope, and bring to birth the justice and joy of your Son.

☞ **Through Christ all glory and honor is yours, Almighty Father, with the Holy Spirit, in your holy Church, both now and forever. Amen**

Lord's Prayer

☞ Lord, remember us in your kingdom and teach us to pray:

☞ **Our Father in heaven, holy be your name. Your kingdom come, your will be done on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us. Save us from the time of trial and deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours now and forever.**

Amen.

Invitation to Communion

☞ Come to the table of grace.

☞ **Thanks be to God.**

Sit

Communion at Grace

All who are present are invited to receive Holy Communion. This sacrament is a gift to all who come with open hands and open hearts to the presence of Jesus.

✠ **Bread** is served by the Pastor. **Wine** is served from a *common cup* by the Assisting Minister.

✠ If you need gluten free bread, please let the Pastor know when you come forward.

✠ If you prefer wine from the *pouring chalice* in an **individual cup**, take an empty cup from the tray and have it filled by the Worship Assistant. Return the individual chalice/cup to the basket provided.

✠ **Grape Juice** is provided in the pre-filled cups in the center of the serving tray.

✠ A **Verbal Blessing** may be given by the Pastor, if you do not wish to commune.

✠ If you wish **communion brought to you** in the pew, please notify the usher.

☩ Lamb of God, you take a - way the sin of the world;
 have mer-cy on us, have mer-cy on us, have mer - cy.
 Lamb of God, you take a - way the sin of the world;
 have mer-cy on us, have mer-cy on us, have mer - cy.
 Lamb of God, you take a - way the sin of the world; grant us peace.

O, Little Town of Bethlehem

ELW 279

Angels from the Realms of Glory

ELW 275

In the Bleak Midwinter

ELW 294

Prayer after Communion

- A** God of promise, you give food to those who hunger and justice to those who are oppressed.
- ☩** As you have nourished us in this meal, send us to proclaim the coming of your righteous reign; through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

Congregational announcements

Arise in body or spirit

Blessing

☞ God grant you harmony as you live with one another in accordance with Jesus Christ, as we live in the blessing of almighty God, Father, + Son and Holy Spirit, now and always.

☞ **Amen.**

*All children and youth, as well as the young at heart and playful spirits, are invited to come forward to make music and dance during the Sending Hymn. Please choose one instrument to play or one scarf to use for waving and dancing. **In the weeks to come this will end and be replaced during Children's Time.***

Sending Song

Joy to The World

ELW 267

Dismissal

☞ The night is far gone, the day is near. Go in peace. Serve the Lord.

☞ **Thanks be to God.**

Postlude

Week at a Glance

Sunday, December 23

Monday, December 24

Friday, December 28

Worship Services at 8 am and 10:45 am

OFFICE CLOSED

Christmas Eve Candlelight Service 7:00 pm

Office open 9 - 4

Today's Worship Leaders

	8:00 am	10:45 am
Assisting Minister	Randy Teegardin	Traci Wales
Cantor	Jack Vos	Pastor Ken
Lector	Carol Vos	Hope Peck
Communion Server	Brenda Teegardin	Sandy Mosteller
Acolyte/Crucifer	Volunteer	Emma Peck
Usher	Kay Marsh & Dave Neeb	Gary Golnek & Sandy Mosteller
Greeter/Coffee Hr.	Volunteer	Doug & Diane Neeb
Children's Church		Traci & Kali Wales
Table Guild	Lisa Golnek	
Bread Maker	Laura Scheck	

Next Sunday's Worship Leaders, December 30, 2018

	10:00 am
Assisting Minister	Mark Anton
Reader 1 & 5	Linda Melcher
Reader 2 & 6	Gwen Hansen
Reader 3 & 7	Victoria Steadman
Reader 4 & 8	Sandy Mosteller
Reader 9	Pastor Ken
Communion Server	Volunteer
Acolyte/Crucifer	Lance Ogden
Usher	Joe Longcor & Gwen Hansen
Greeter/Coffee Hr.	Volunteer
Children's Church	Eve Wright
Table Guild	Deb Wilke
Bread Maker	Jeanette Markwart

Stewardship Information

Worshippers last week: 104 Weekly Giving: \$2,584.00 Budget Amount: \$4,576.53

Adult Forum will meet today at 9:30 and will study the Sign of the Times. Next week the Adult Forum will not meet. *Come on December 30th at 9:30 for a hymn sing. **Merry Christmas!*** The Adult Forum will gather in two weeks on January 6, 2019.

Christmas Eve Worship service begins at 7:00 pm. Tomorrow our preservice music begins at 6:30. Our talented musicians will bless us with a variety of music to celebrate the birth of Christ Jesus. There will be vocal, instrument and group ensembles sharing their praise to God. Come early, so you do not miss out.

Giving Tree continues to accept items until next Sunday. Articles such as mittens, scarves, hats, socks, shoes and cleaning supplies, such as paper towels, ammonia, bathroom spray cleaners, etc. Just bring in what cleaning supply you like to use, and it will be appreciated.

Mutual Ministry is here for you. If there is a ministry concern, please contact Kristi Winick. Kristi is our member of the Mutual Ministry Committee that is highlighted this week and can be reached by a phone call or a text message 269.953.6638. Each week there will be a featured different member to contact.

Join us next Sunday at 10:00 am for worship. *We have a special Lesson and Carols worship service.* **There will be a preservice Hymn Sing next Sunday beginning at 9:30.**

Email Prayer Chain: The Congregational Care Committee is starting an email prayer chain beginning in January. Participants would be notified by email and would commit to praying for those in need as requests are received. If interested in being a part of this prayer chain, please contact Jane Secor at secorje@gmail.com.

HVAC is being replaced at a cost of \$8,600.00. If you can find it in your heart to make an end of the year contribution toward this cost, it would be greatly appreciated.

Offering Envelopes - Don't forget to pick yours up from your mailboxes!

Start bringing your **candle votive** for Epiphany on January 6, 2019. **You may start bringing them next week.**