

St. Stephen Lutheran Church of the East Bay & Central Valley

(A Congregation of the Church of the Lutheran Confession)

www.ststephenclc.org

**Worshiping Every Sunday in the East Bay at 9 a.m. at
Grace Lutheran Church
1836 B St., Hayward, CA 94541-3140**

Worshiping in the Central Valley at 2 p.m. - 1st & 3rd Sundays
of the Month

Atria Senior Living - Bayside Landing - 1st Floor Activity
Room

3318 Brookside Rd., Stockton, CA 95219

Pastor: Steven Karp

21290 Birch St. - Hayward, CA 94541-1538

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Organist: Elizabeth Karp

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The Third Sunday of Advent – 11 December 2016

Liturgy — Page 5 in The Lutheran Hymnal

**HYMNS: 63 On Jordan's Bank The Baptist's Cry (stand for 5)
69 Arise, Sons Of The Kingdom (1-3 & 4-6)**

272 When All The World Was Cursed

Sermon Text: Matthew 11,2-10

Sermon Theme: Don't Stumble Over Jesus

1. Wrongs Ideas About Jesus
2. Correct Ideas About Jesus
3. Don't Stumble Over Jesus

INTROIT: Rejoice in the Lord always: and again I say, Rejoice. Let your moderation be known unto all men: the Lord is at hand. Be careful for nothing: but in everything, by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known unto God. Lord, You have been favorable unto Your land: You have brought back the captivity of Jacob. **Glory be to the Father ...**

COLLECT: O Lord God, heavenly Father, You gave Your Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, to become Man and to come into the world that He might destroy the works of the devil, deliver us poor offenders from sin and death, and give us everlasting life: We beseech You so to rule and govern our hearts by Your Holy Spirit that we may seek no other refuge than His Word, and thus avoid the sin to which we are by nature inclined, in order that we may always be found among the faithful followers of Your Son, Jesus Christ, and that by faith in Him obtain eternal salvation; through Your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, Who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, ever the One true God, world without end. **Amen.**

Old Testament

Malachi 3,1-6

“Behold, I am going to send My messenger, and he will clear the way before Me. And the LORD, Whom you

seek, will suddenly come to His Temple; and the messenger of the covenant, in whom you delight, behold, He is coming,” says the LORD of Hosts. ² “But who can endure the Day of His Coming? And who can stand when He



appears? For He is like a refiner's fire and like fullers' soap. ³ He will sit as a smelter and purifier of silver, and He will purify the sons of Levi and refine them like gold and silver, so that they may present to the LORD offerings in

righteousness. ⁴ Then the offering of Judah and Jerusalem will be pleasing to the LORD as in the days of old and as in former years.

⁵ “Then I will draw near to you for judgment; and I will be a swift witness against the sorcerers and against the adulterers and against those who swear falsely, and against those who oppress the wage earner in his wages, the widow and the orphan, and those who turn aside the alien and do not fear Me,” says the LORD of Hosts. ⁶ “For I, the LORD, do not change; therefore you, O sons of Jacob, are not consumed.”

Epistle

1 Corinthians 4,1-5

Let a man regard us in this manner, as servants of Christ, and as stewards of the mysteries of God. ² In this case, moreover, it is required of stewards that they be found trustworthy. ³ But to me it is a very small thing that I should be examined by you, or by any human court; in fact, I do not even examine myself. ⁴ I am conscious of nothing

against myself, yet I am not by this acquitted; but the One Who examines me is the Lord. ⁵ Therefore do not go on passing judgment before the time, but wait until the Lord comes Who will both bring to light the things that are hidden in the darkness and disclose the motives of men's hearts; and then each man's praise will come to him from God.

GRADUAL

Rejoice in the Lord always,

And again I will say, rejoice!

O LORD, You showed Your favor to Your land;

You restored the captivity of Jacob.

You forgave the iniquity of Your people;

You covered all their sin.

Restore us, O God of our salvation,

And cause Your indignation toward us to cease.

Surely His salvation is near to those who fear Him,

That glory may dwell in our land.

Truth springs from the earth;

And righteousness looks down from heaven.

Hallelujah! Remember, O Lord, Your tender mercies,

For they have been ever of old. [sing: triple Hallelujah]

The Holy Gospel

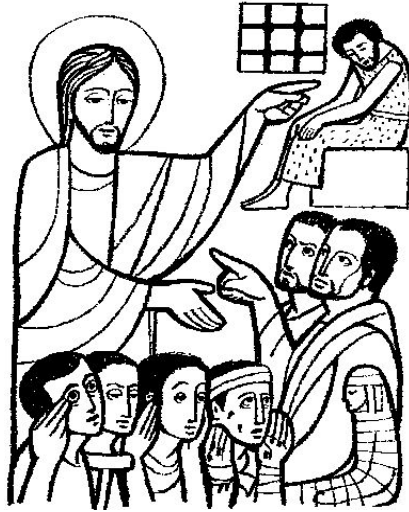
Matthew 11,2-11

Response: Glory be to Thee, O Lord!

Now when John, while imprisoned, heard of the works of Christ, he sent *word* by his disciples ³ and said to Him, “Are You the Coming One, or shall we look for someone else?” ⁴ Jesus answered and said to them, “Go and report to John what you hear and see: ⁵ *the* blind receive sight and *the* lame walk, *the* lepers are cleansed and *the*

deaf hear, *the* dead are raised up, and *the* poor have the Gospel preached to them. ⁶ And blessed is he who does not take offense at Me.”

⁷ As these men were going *away*, Jesus began to speak to the crowds about John, “What did you go out into the wilderness to see? A reed shaken by the wind? ⁸ But what did you go out to see? A man dressed in soft *clothing*? Those who wear soft *clothing* are in kings’ palaces! ⁹ But what did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, I tell you, and one who is more than a prophet. ¹⁰ This is the one about whom it is



written,

‘Behold, I send My messenger ahead of You,
Who will prepare Your way before You.’”

¹¹ Truly I say to you, among those born of women there has not arisen anyone greater than John the Baptist; yet he who is least in the Kingdom of Heaven is greater than he.”

[Scripture passages are from the *New American Standard Bible*, © The Lockman Foundation, used by permission]

Response: Praise be to Thee, O Christ!

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Lessons for 18 December — The Fourth Sunday of

Advent

Old Testament:

Isaiah 40,1-5

Epistle:

Philippians 4,4-7

The Holy Gospel: John 1,19-28

Weekly Scripture Verse: Clear the way for the LORD ... Behold, the Lord GOD will come with might. (Isaiah 40,3.10)

Today’s **Gradual** is based on selected verses from Philippians 4 and Psalm 85.

Next Service in Stockton: Sunday, 18 December, at 2 p.m.

Bible Study -Hayward - Tuesday, 13 December, at 1:30 p.m.

Stockton – Tuesday, 27 December, 1 p.m. – note time change..

ILL. In your prayers, please remember Nancy and Roy Cameron; Jean Niblett; Marlene Clappier; Sue (the Karps’ neighbor who is undergoing chemotherapy), Don Drews; Richard and Beth Hocker; Ruth Scheuermann; Pr. Doug Priestap (Florida); Pr. Steven Karp; Mary Ryan (of Eau Claire, WI); Deena; Peter.



Call News. The Rev. Michael Wilke, pastor of Gethsemane Lutheran, Saginaw, MI, has returned the Call to Zion Lutheran, Lawrenceville, GA. The Rev. Luke Bernthal, pastor of Grace Lutheran, Valentine, NE, Peace Lutheran, Mission, and St. Paul’s Lutheran, White River, SD, has accepted the Call to St. Stephen Lutheran, Mountain View, and Hayward CA. Faith Lutheran, Manchester MO, is requesting a candidate from the seminary graduating class. The Rev. Timothy Wheaton, pastor of Living Word Lutheran, Blue Springs (Kansas City area), MO, has returned the Call from Rock of Ages Lutheran, Grand Rapids, MI.

Handouts – Pastor Bernthal’s Acceptance Letter

Installation – Pastor Bernthal will be installed at a joint service in Mountain View on Sunday, 29 January.

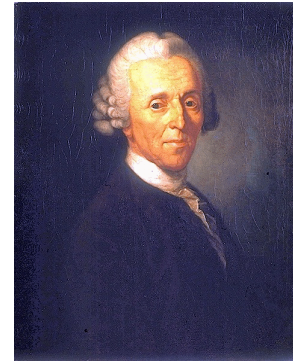
St. Lucy, Martyr (203 - 13 December 304). According to tradition, she was born to a noble Greek family in Syracuse,



Sicily, where she also died. Her mother was a Christian. Lucy made a vow of virginity and distributed her wealth to the poor. This generosity disturbed the person to whom she had been betrothed, and he denounced her to the governor of Sicily, Paschasius. This was during the Diocletian persecutions and she was sentenced to be burned at the stake; however, since the fire would not take, she was put to death by the sword,

which pierced her throat. She soon became the object of great veneration. In the Scandinavian Church 13 December is St. Lucy Day, and it is celebrated when a young girl is elected to portray Lucy; she wears a white gown with a red sash and a crown of candles on her head; she leads a procession of girls, each holding a candle. Her name derives from the Latin word, *lux*, meaning *light*. Many feel that her feast day was chosen because it is close to the shortest day of the year. She is often portrayed bearing a lamp. In southern Europe, she is supposed to bring sweets to children who have been good and lumps of coal to those who misbehaved. In Scandinavia, children who misbehaved should be especially careful since it was told that Lucy could come down the chimney and take them away. [Source: in part from *The Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church*]

Christian Fürchtegott Gellert, Lutheran Pastor and Hymn Writer (4 July 1715 - 13 December 1769). Gellert was



the son of a Lutheran pastor and was born in Hainichen in the Saxon Harz. He graduated in theological studies from the University of Leipzig and became an assistant to his father. Soon, however, he had to step down because he had a poor memory and the use of a manuscripts in the pulpit was not tolerated in the Lutheran Church of his day. In 1739, he became the tutor to

the sons of the von Lüttichau family. Two years later, he returned to the University of Leipzig and there looked after the studies of his nephew and also studied for a M.A., which he received in 1744 from the faculty of Belles Letters. In 1745 he became a lecturer in philosophy and was quite popular with his students, among whom were Goethe and Lessing. Gellert’s *Fables*, published in two volumes in 1746 and 1748, were spirited and humorous, and won him fame and universal recognition as a German classicist. In 1751 he was appointed extraordinary professor of philosophy and lectured poetry, rhetoric, and moral philosophy. He had a delicate constitution and was a hypochondriac; and it seems that the last ten years of his life were marked by increasing bouts of ill-health. He died in Leipzig. In 1757 he published *Gesitliche Oden und Lieder* (*Spiritual Songs and Lyrics*). Later, such composers as C. P. Bach, Hayden, and Beethoven set them to music. His hymn, “Jesus Lives! The Victory’s Won” is number 201 in *The Lutheran Hymnal*. Other hymns of his in modern German hymnals are: “Dies ist der tag, den Gott gemacht” (“This is the Day Which the Lord has made”), “Herr, stärke mich, dein Leiden zu bedenken” (Lord, Strengthen Me to Remember

Your Passion”), “Jesus lebt, mit ihm auch ich” (“Jesus Lives, And I With Him”), “Mein erst Gefühl sei Preis und Dank” (“Let My First Feelings Be of Praise and Thanks”). [Source: mostly from Pollack, ed., *The Handbook to the Lutheran Hymnal*].

Christmas Worship Schedule

Christmas Eve Carol Service on **24 December** at 1 p.m. in **Stockton**.

Children’s Christmas Eve Service at **Mountain View**, 24 December, at 5 p.m.

Christmas Day Carol Service on **25 December** at 9 a.m. in **Hayward**.

