**4th Sunday of Advent**

Dec. 18, 2011

Sunday Schedule: Holy Eucharist Rite II: 9:30 am



**St John’s Episcopal Church**

141 South Smalley St., Shawano, WI

<http://www.shawanoepiscopal.org>

The Rt. Rev. Russell Jacobus, Bishop

The Rev. Mary S. Trainor, Vicar

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4th Sunday of Advent, Dec. 18, 2011

The Ministry of the Word

**Lighting of the Advent Candles**

Processional Hymn (Come Thou Long Expected Jesus)……...#66

*Almighty God, to you all hearts are open, all desires known, and from you no secrets are hid: Cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love you, and worthily magnify your holy Name; through Christ our Lord. Amen.*

***Lord Have Mercy……………………………………………………# S96***

Opening Collect……………………………. bulletin insert

Old Testament Reading……………………. bulletin insert

Psalm………………………………………. bulletin insert

New Testament Reading…………………… bulletin insert

**Gradual Hymn (7th verse before, reading,8th verse after)…...#56** Gospel Reading (all stand)…………………. bulletin insert

Sermon Time: Children’s Christmas Pageant

*The service continues in the Book of Common Prayer*

*Nicene Creed........................................................................p. 358*

Prayers of the People……………… …………. p. 388 (Form IV)

**Those in need of our Prayers**: For healing:*Dan, Bruce, Adeline, Dorothy, Charlie, William, Diane, Susan, Dolores, Nora*

Confession and Absolution of Sin………………….............p. 360

The Peace and Commissioning of those who serve during worship

Offertory Hymn (Before Thy Throne O God)…………………. **#574**

Doxology: Praise God from whom all blessings flow……… **#380, v3**

The Great Thanksgiving

Eucharistic Prayer……Form C: *p. 369*

Sanctus -“Holy, Holy, Holy”………………………………….. **# S130**

Agnus Dei - “Jesus, Lamb of God”**……………………..............#S164**

Post Communion Hymn: (Breathe on Me)…………………….. **# 508**

Concluding Prayer:……………………………………..p. 366

*Almighty and everliving God, we thank you for feeding us with the spiritual food of the most precious Body and Blood of your Son our Savior Jesus Christ; and for assuring us in these holy mysteries that we are living members of the Body of your Son, and heirs of your eternal kingdom. And now, Father, send us out to do the work you have given us to do,*

*to love and serve you as faithful witnesses of Christ our Lord.*

*To him, to you, and to the Holy Spirit, be honor and glory, now and for ever. Amen.*

The Blessing

Recessional Hymn (Blest Be The King) verses 1-3 only…………**# 74**

**Visitors:**

St. John’s is a welcoming congregation. We follow the traditional Episcopal worship liturgy, and if you are unfamiliar with it you are in for a blessed delight today! Feel free ask questions of anyone around you. This bulletin page numbers refer to pages in the Book of Common Prayer (Black with a cross on the cover). Hymns come from the Red Hymnal, but also from the “supplementary hymnal” (white notebook). The weekly scripture readings are found on an insert in your Service Bulletin. We usually sit for instruction, kneel or stand for prayer and stand for when we praise God in music. At the time of Holy Eucharist, everyone is invited to come forward. If you are baptized, then you are welcome to receive Communion. If you are not baptized or choose not to receive, cross your arms over your chest when the priest gets to you and you will receive a blessing. Restrooms are located in the Parish Hall, which is located through the door at the right of the Altar. One restroom is handicap accessible.

**Today:**

Many thanks to all those who made this year’s **Children’s Pageant** such a success: first all the children, then the adult and teen leaders (Linda Myers, Wendy Hafner, Katelyn and Amanda Onesti, Meghan Kebenein)

All are invited to help out today in the **decorating of the church** for Christmas. Gather in the Hall during coffee hour, and pitch in to the hanging of the greens and wreaths, decorating of the tree, etc.

**Bishop Committee Meeting today**, Dec. 18: They will meet in the chapel, immediately after the service today for 30 minutes.

***If you wish to remember a loved one with flowers at Christmas time, please put your donation in an envelope, with names of those you want to remember. The names will be listed in the Christmas bulletins.***

**Those serving next week at the Christmas Eve service: Dec. 24**, Chalice Bearer: John Myers, Altar Guild: Kay Stezenski, Reader: Art Freiberg, Prayers: Linda Myers, Greeters: Ron and Kay Stezenski, Coffee, No Coffee today, Torch Bearers: Julie Feriancek, Joe Kebenein, Thurifer: Meghan Kebenein. **Those serving on Christmas morning: Dec. 25,** Chalice Bearer, John Myers, Altar Guild Kay Stezenski, Reader, Sue Sazama, Prayers, Linda Myers, Greeter, Ron & Kay Stezenski, No coffee after service this morning.

Vicar’s Message for Dec. 18

**“Here am I”**

Today’s Gospel reading captures the visit by the angel Gabriel to Mary, telling her that she is called to be the mother of Jesus, the Messiah; she will be the Godbearer. Here was Mary, a young girl engaged to be married (but not married yet), who was probably just going about her chores on an ordinary day and wow – this happens! Think about how you would have reacted had you been visited in this way? Not only would you have been in shock and disbelief, but you would have probably needed time to decide -- time to consult with your family, friends, priest, and financial advisor and time to just think about the implications of this big news. Isn’t that the way we do things nowadays? Yes. Is that what Mary did? No, she said, “***Here am I, the servant of the Lord; let it be with me according to your word***.” (Luke 1: 30)

Ok, so what does this have to do with us today? Plenty. It turns out that God has plans for us too (see Jeremiah 29:11), and God has chosen you for special work here on earth too (see Colossians 3:12; 1 Peter 2:9). Each of us is important to God, each of us has a mission from God and a purpose. In some cases, this maybe just little everyday things – being available to help open a door for someone who is struggling. In other cases, this maybe something bigger like becoming the chairperson of a particular ministry of the church or going on a short-term mission trip or helping a needy family. Just like Mary, we are to be open to where we can serve God. Just like Mary, we are to trust that God will be right next to us helping us as we serve. Just like Mary, we are to answer yes to God. In our lives as Christians, we go forward in faith. Paul said in our Romans 16:25 reading from today, “***God who is able to strengthen you***.” As you look forward to Christmas and 2012, pray for increased trust in God.

Gratefully yours,

*Pastor Mary+*

***Announcements***

BIBLE STUDY ON WEDNESDAY AT 11:00 in the Hall. [*We will be taking a break after the Dec. 21st. Bible Study class until, Jan. 18.]*

WORSHIP SERVICE AT NOON ON WEDNESDAY: Holy Eucharist begins at 12:00 noon in the Chapel. Take the time out of your day! Brown bag lunch follows.

UPCOMING ST. JOHN’S EVENTS:

**Wed. Dec. 21st:** at 9 A.M. we will be polishing brass and silver in preparation for Christmas, 11:00 AM Bible Study; 12:00 Holy Eucharist

**Dec. 21**: Christmas caroling, Birch Hill at 6pm.

**Dec. 18**: Children’s Pageant – during Mass

**Dec. 24**: 4:30 PM Christmas Carol singing in the Church; 5:00 PM Christmas Eve Holy Eucharist service (with special music)

**Dec. 25**: 9:30 AM Christmas Day service (with special music)

**January 22**: 10:45 AM – Explorer’s Class begins (for all who are interested in growing in their faith and/or being confirmed or received into the church; sign up sheet in Hall on bulletin board)

**January 29**: Annual Meeting and Potluck Lunch

**February 21**: Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper

**February 22**: Ash Wednesday services at 6:30 AM and 12 noon

BRING FOOD TO CHURCH for FOOD PANTRY: Place items in the basket at the back of the church, and they will be delivered this week. Bring items for the personal care pantry ministry as well; place these items in the baskets in the Hall (e.g., shampoo, lotions).

Pastor Mary will be available for appointments on Wed., Dec. 21, here at St. Johns. Contact her via phone or email if you would like an apt.

**The month of January signup** sheet for serving in various ministries is posted in the Hall: you are free to make any changes. If you cannot make your particular day, just try and get a replacement. There are extra copies for you to take home on the table in the hall.

The December calendar for Church activities is available on the bulletin board.

Cycle of Prayer for this Sunday: All Baptized, Confirmed and Received this past year.

St John’s Ministries

Vicar- Pastor Mary Trainor, 715 252-4816

Secretary- Kay Stezenski

Organist – Ted Myers

Bishop’s Committee:Senior Warden--Ron Stezenski; Jr. Warden-John Myers; Marlene Brown; Wendy Hafner; Luke Onesti; Bernie Spolar; Treasurer- Sue Sazama; Clerk - Esther Schutt

Ministry Chairs:

Altar Guild- Marlene Brown

Acolytes- Ron Stezenski

Buildings and Grounds- John Myers, Luke Onesti

Casserole Crusade – Mary Freiberg

Flowers- Wendy Hafner

Kitchen-LuAnn Zander-

Music Advisor – Linda Myers

Newcomers – Marlene Brown

Outreach – Kristi Onesti

Prayer Chain – Marlene Brown

Prayer Shawl- Kay Stezenski

Special Events – Wendy Hafner, Marlene Brown

Stewardship-John Myers

Sunday School--Wendy Hafner

Sunshine: Greeting Cards- Bernie Spolar

WANT TO VOLUNTEER FOR A MINISTRY?: Get involved. See any of the coordinators of the ministries listed above, sign up on the clipboard in Hall, or see Pastor Mary or Ron.