



The Prairie Land Lutheran Parish Messenger

December 2017



Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
God's work. Our hands.

Friends in Christ:

As we begin a new church year with the season of Advent, I thought it would be interesting to try something new. We're going to spend a little time thinking about some of the objects and traditions we use in worship, where they come from and what they mean. At this time of year, where else to start but with candles?

The light of candles used in worship reminds us of the light of Christ. Jesus is the light of the world (John 8:12). The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it (John 1:5). The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light (Isaiah 9:2)!

Some candles have a more specific purpose. The four candles on the Advent wreath count down the weeks until Christmas. The Christ candle, at the center of the Advent wreath, announces that Christmas is here. The big paschal ("Easter") candle reminds us of the resurrection.

But all candles, no matter what else their purpose, remind us of the light of Christ. **We see the light and we know that Jesus is present.** (Jesus is present anyway, of course, but the light helps us to remember.) But how did it get to be that way?

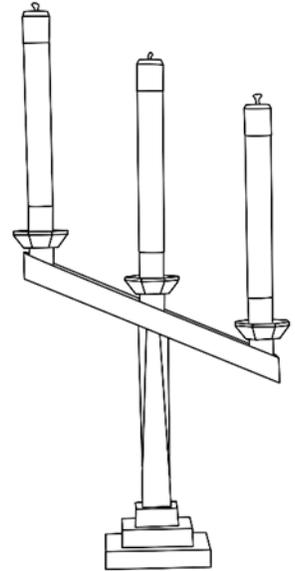
Like a lot of things in the church, candles were introduced for purely practical reasons. They were simply a source of light, so that you could see what you were doing. You normally would have used the very best-quality candles you could afford for worship—and again, this was practical, because the best-quality candles gave the best light.

Nowadays, candles are almost completely unnecessary as a light source. (If the power goes out, we have flashlights!) There is really no reason, theologically speaking, why an electric light bulb could not symbolize the light of Christ!

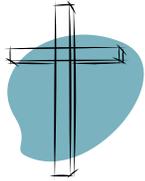
But we still use candles, in part because it has become a tradition (and that's all the reason you really need). And in part, I think, because candles are still very beautiful. There is something cheerful and hopeful about a tiny dancing flame that modern "flameless" candles can't quite match.

In our context, you see this most obviously at our candlelight services on Christmas Eve. Sunday morning services happened around 9 or 10 in the morning, when even in the winter it was light outside. But in northern climates, the days are short in December and so Christmas Eve services are almost always held after dark. So you needed more candles on Christmas Eve than on regular Sundays. But the short days and long nights also make for a rather dreary time of year. So a candlelight service served a double purpose: in addition to providing extra light, the candles cheered people up!

It is easy to remember that Jesus is with us in the midst of the joy of summer, the bounty of the fall harvest, or the new life of spring. But the cold and obscurity of winter can make Jesus' presence hard for us to see and feel. A little bit of "unnecessary" beauty in this season reminds that Jesus is with us even in this time. **Jesus is bringing hope and joy and life, even more than we need, on this day and every day.**



Pastor Sarah Taylor



Vital Statistics

Lake Hanska

Oct 22nd 31 \$304.00
 Oct 29th 25 \$1,120.00
 Noisy Offering \$24.36
 Nov 5th at LaSalle \$330.00
 Nov 12th 33 \$1,275.00

La Salle

Oct 22nd at Lake Hanska
 Oct 29th at Lake Hanska
 Nov 5th 27 \$1,493.00
 Nov 12th at Lake Hanska
 Nov 19th 42 \$677.00

Zion

Oct 22nd 39 \$1,740.00
 Oct 29th 30 \$928.00
 Noisy Offering \$97.60
 Nov 5th 40 \$900.00
 Loose - food shelf \$44.00
 Nov 12th 27 \$860.00

December Sunday Worship Schedule

9:00a.m. Worship at LaSalle December 3rd and 17th

9:00a.m. Worship at Lake Hanska December 10th

10:30a.m. Worship at Zion

Sunday Dec. 31 - Joint worship 10:00a.m. at LaSalle

Prairie Land Lutheran Parish Annual Meeting

Thursday December 7, 2017

7:00p.m.

at Lake Hanska Church



Sunday School

9:15a.m.-10:15a.m. at Zion Church

* The first and third Sundays of the month *



Children's Christmas Programs

Sunday December 17, 2017

at Zion Church during worship

Christmas Eve Worship Sunday December 24th

5:30p.m. LaSalle Church

7:30p.m. Zion Church

10:00p.m. Lake Hanska Church



No Worship Sunday Morning

Funerals in the PLLP

Ardyce Reinhart - Wednesday Oct 25, 2017

at Zion Church



Rest In Peace



Prairie Land Lutheran Parish Women of the ELCA

LaSalle W-ELCA

Altar Guild: Donna Schultz
and Pam Mikkelson

Friday December 8th

LaSalle W-ELCA Holiday
Potluck Dinner at Noon - Men
of the church are invited to
attend!

Lake Hanska W-ELCA

Altar Guild: Pam Kjelshus
and Jane Ahlness

Dec 6th at 12:30p.m.

Christmas dinner - Men and
Women invited

Zion W-ELCA

Altar Guild: Sonja Smesmo

Communion: Alica Helling
and Annette Larson

Flowers: Dorcas



Baptism in the PLLP

Teagan Joy Miller baptized Sunday November 19, 2017 at Zion Lutheran Church

Parents: Todd and Lisa Miller **Big brothers/Honorary Sponsors:** Jaden and Thayne Miller

Sponsors: Kelsey Miller, Bryan and Katie Lux

Annual Meetings are in January!!

Start gathering your information so you can drop it off at the Parish Office
or email to Jill at pllpsecretary@gmail.com

Thank you!!

Share God's Love. This Year, Give Gifts That Change Lives!

Support Lutheran World Relief and Give a Gift for Christmas

Farmers, Fair Trade and You! **Give Lutheran World Relief Gifts or Donate!**

Go to: LWR.ORG then go to **Donate** and you have a choice to
donate money or shop the **LWR Gift Catalog**

God's Global Barnyard

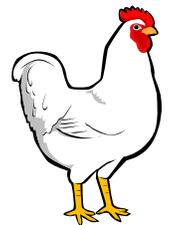
An animal can make a world of difference for a family in need.

Animals provide food to eat,
fertilizer to grow crops and offspring to sell on the market.

Check out the new gifts for 2017

To provide an animal or gift to a family in need go to:

www.ELCA.org/goodgifts



Prairie Land Lutheran Parish
PO Box 65
Hanska, MN 56041

Non- Profit Organization
Permit 7
Hanska, MN 56041

Address Service Requested

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December Sunday Worship Schedule

9:00a.m. Worship at LaSalle December 3rd and 17th

9:00a.m. Worship at Lake Hanska December 10th

10:30a.m. Worship at Zion

Joint worship 10:00a.m. at LaSalle Sunday Dec. 31

**Christmas Eve Worship
Sunday December 24th**

5:30p.m. LaSalle Church

7:30p.m. Zion Church

10:00p.m. Lake Hanska Church



Come join us in Celebrating Jesus Birth!

Prairie Land Lutheran Parish
Parsonage Office
213 Summit Avenue
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Hanska, MN 56041