



# Acts of Faith

Faith Evangelical Lutheran Church  
The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod  
Kewanee, Illinois



February 2024

Volume 24 Issue 2

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**Significance of The Transfiguration:** This month the church will celebrate the festival of the Transfiguration of our Lord. Once again the altar is decorated in white. We remember that day when Jesus Christ was transfigured, His form was changed, into a glorious heavenly state while standing on a mountain. This is a turning point in Jesus' ministry and for the church year. It marks the end of the Epiphany season and the start of Lent. Epiphany started with Christ's baptism when God announced to the world that, "This is my beloved Son." Jesus hence begins His public ministry by preaching, teaching, and healing.



Now Christ stands on a mountain with Moses and Elijah, two figures from Israel's past representing the law and prophets. Paul says in Romans, "Here Moses, from the Law, and Elijah, from the prophets, bearing witness to God's righteousness in Christ." Both men had suffered unmercifully at the hands of God's chosen people while faithfully doing God's will, as Christ was about to experience Himself.

This was a brilliant manifestation of our Savior's glory as the Son of God in an human body. His face shone like the sun, and His clothes became radiant white. Once again the voice from Heaven declares, "This is my beloved Son." God Himself certifies the Savior's deity and authority of His word. Peter, James and John bear witness that their earthly teacher is truly the very Son of God, and Mark 12:27 tells us they saw that their God is not God of the dead, but of the living. We too will someday live with Him in His glory. Life in heavenly glory is the reality that all of God's people have to look forward to. This is God's promise.

Afterward, Christ begins the journey to Jerusalem to finish the task God has assigned to Him, a path that will take Him to the cross, there to die for the sins of the world. Jesus came to save sinners. This is God's mercy in action for us. His glory, that our Lord displayed at His Transfiguration, will return after He has completed His earthly redeeming mission. He will return to His heavenly Father on the day of His Ascension.

The church now moves from Epiphany and enters the season of Lent. Lent is a time for subdued reflection and repentance as we put on the penitential purple paraments. The "Hymn of Praise" is omitted from the liturgy. The word "Alleluia" is usually omitted as well.

Christ's transfiguration points us ahead to our own resurrection, a hope for eternal life beyond the grave, and that this glory only comes through the cross of Jesus. This hope of glory will see us through the bewilderment, sorrows, and troubles of this life.

**Family Fun Night:** Concordia Lutheran Academy of Geneseo is holding a family fun night with an euchre tournament on February 16th from 6-9:00pm. A lasagna dinner will be provided along with movies and crafts for the children. Free will donations are accepted. Proceeds go to support the school and students. Contact Concordia for more details (309)944-3993.



**Small Church Summit** is scheduled for February 3rd at Faith Lutheran in Lincoln IL. Registration is desired, and let Pastor Weber know if you are interested in going. Small Church Summit provides churches of any size a free opportunity to gather with folks from other small CID and SID churches, to share encouragement and plans, learn together, and hone in on priorities for your church.

Worship Schedule  
 9:00 AM, Sunday Worship Service  
 Adult Bible Class, 10:15 A.M.

*February's Calendar*

- Feb. 03 CID Small Church Summit Lincoln, IL
  - Feb. 04 5th Sunday after the Epiphany with Holy Communion**  
Mite box collection
  - Feb. 11 Transfiguration of our Lord with Holy Communion**
  - Feb. 14 Ash Wed./Lent Begins  
Valentine's Day
  - Feb. 15 **Ash Wednesday Service 6:00 pm with Holy communion**  
Elders and Council Mtg. 7:00 pm
  - Feb. 16 CLA Family Fun Night 6-9pm
  - Feb. 18 First Sunday in Lent with Holy communion**
  - Feb. 19 President's Day observance
  - Feb. 25 Second Sunday in Lent with Holy communion**
- Pastor will be out of the area from Feb. 5 thru 9th.



*Altar Guild Schedule*

Feb. 04	Leah Weber	Green
Feb. 11	Sharon Larson	White
Feb. 15	Marilyn Sturtevant	Black
Feb. 18	Kari Tavares	Purple
Feb. 25	Leah Weber	Purple

**Elders List:**

Gary Hahn	309-854-2203
Kevin Hull:	309-852-0801
Ron Larson:	309-853-5111
Ted Sturtevant:	309-853-8203

**USHER'S LIST**

- 1st Sunday: Ted Sturtevant
- 2nd Sunday: Nick Phillips
- 3rd Sunday: Gary Hahn
- 4th Sunday: Kevin Hull
- 5th Sunday: Jim Cook

Don't forget to direct **Thrivent Choice Dollars®** - Grant funding from Thrivent Financial through its Thrivent Choice® program can help support Faith Lutheran. Don't let Choice Dollars expire. Beginning January 1, 2024 eligible Thrivent Financial members who have Choice Dollars available are asked to direct them to Faith Lutheran – Kewanee. Call 800-847-4836 and say "Thrivent Choice" after the prompt. This must be done by the end of March!



**Those For Whom We Pray:** Please include the following in your thoughts and daily prayers.

**Our Faith family:** Allison Leezer, Cari Bridgewater, Nancy Tudder, JoAnne Behnke, Peggy Faber, Vanda Hallock, Wayne Becker, and Kevin Hull

**Friends:** Lacey Hammons, Jim Tudder, Rev. Burnell Eckardt, and all military personnel and first responders.

**CID:** Our campus, prison, deaf, and Hispanic missions in the District need your prayers and support.

**Inactive Members:** Pray the Holy Spirit bring them to the understanding of their need to be in regular worship in church on Sunday, and that we as their brothers and sisters in Christ would reach out to them.

**Our World:** Citizens of and those in Ukraine and Israel that peace may come to their land.

*Lord have mercy, Christ have mercy, Lord have mercy*



**2023 Contribution Statements:** Your 2023 contributions statements are available in a basket in the Narthex area in sealed envelopes. Please pick yours up to save the church postage expense.

**Portals of Prayer:** January-March editions are now available in various sizes in the Narthex. Please pick up a copy for home or one to give to a friend.



### Baptism Dates

Sharon Larson	1/09
Ashley Phillips	1/02
Kaitlyn Johnson	1/31
Casidy Blume	1/10
Theo Tavares	1/18



### Wedding Anniversaries

Karen & Milton Stapel 2/29

Leah Weber	2/01	Paula Leezer	2/16
James Nuding	2/17	Mark Helmkamp	2/17
Milton Stapel	2/02	Sue Cervantez	2/18
Cal Breedlove	2/05	Kari Tavares	2/21
Melissa Newman	2/06	Claudia Croegaert	2/23
Tara Hewitt	2/10	Nick Phillips	2/25
Cari Bridgewater	2/11	Melissa Carper	2/26
Nancy Tudder	2/12	June Hull	2/27
Rebecca Ault	2/13	Marvin Newman	2/27

**Women of Faith:** The Women of Faith will not be meeting in February.

February's Mission Grant supports the Disaster Response Team of Trinity Lutheran Church in Tyler, Texas. They are called to serve, have a presence on the ground, and assist with cleanup. While providing help, they listen to the victims and share the love of Jesus and bring hope, encouragement, and healing through God's Word and prayer. This grant will allow repair and replacement of necessary equipment so the team can continue to be Christ's hands and feet, and share God's love to people affected by disasters. Thank you for your mites and for your prayers.



### Coming soon!!!

**Lent begins for Faith Lutheran on February 15  
with a Thursday Ash Service at 6:30 p.m.**

**There will be NO weekday evening services in Lent at Faith.  
Concordia-Geneseo will have services on Wednesdays at 7:00 pm.**



**Kewanee Food Pantry:** A total of 144 pounds of food was collected and \$110 was donated to the Kewanee Food Pantry from Faith's Advent 2023 Operation Thankful. Also, nine cases (12 /case) of pancake syrup was purchased with Thrivent's contribution to our project. Thank you to everyone who donated to this outreach ministry.

**Voter's Assembly News:** Voters met on January 21st to adopt the 2024 Annual Budget, and elect 2024 officers. The treasurer reported the end of year General fund balance was \$46,950.74 and the Designated fund balance was \$19,139.57 for a total of \$66,090.31. The mortgage balance is \$136,751.22. 2023 income exceeded yearly expenses by \$4351.21 due to some generous contributions to the Dedicated Fund. General fund contributions trailed their budgetary amount by \$400. The insurance covered all expenses except our \$1000 deductible from the nearly \$19,000 of storm damages.

Elders reported membership changes in 2023 included five baptisms and one transfer-in, and one member released. Currently, Faith has 109 confirmed members and 151 baptized members with an average Sunday attendance of 22. There were no member deaths in 2023. Voters approved the membership for Elliot, Miles, Cora, and Emma Tavares by baptism, and Jeri Bye by transfer during the second half of the year.

Pastor has retired from the Army Reserves. He led a Bible study on "Everyone His Witness" in September, and continues with calls on shut-ins and those hospitalized. He is in the second year of a two year youth confirmation instruction class with two young ladies. He conducted two Sunday services at the International Church of Seoul, South Korea this past summer while visiting his daughter.

Ted reported we are again looking for a new cleaning person. Elevator repair was completed, but state inspection remains to be scheduled. Building damage from April's storm was completed. Damage from a vehicle colliding with concrete block column of the West overhang will be scheduled in Spring. He recognized Joe Cervantez for volunteering to help with the yard mowing last summer. Oktoberfest dinner and food pantry collection were very successful.

The 2024 budget was presented and approved. 2024 Officers elected were Chairman: Bill Croegaert, Vice-Chair: Gary Hahn, Treasurer: Sue Cervantez, Secretary: Kari Tavares, Trustee: Ted Sturtevant, Elders: Gary Hahn, Ron Larson, Kevin Hull, and Ted Sturtevant.

**Caring for My Neighbor:** If any of the Ten Commandments might tempt us to think that keeping the Law is easy, it would be the Fifth Commandment. After all, how hard is it to get through life without murdering somebody? The vast majority of people can handle that!

But Jesus famously blows up this notion by pointing out that the command, "you shall not murder," goes much deeper - down to the heart. "You have heard that it was said to those of old, "You shall not murder; and whoever murders will be liable to judgment." But I say to you that everyone who is angry with his brother will be liable to judgment; whoever insults his brother will be liable to the council; and whoever says, "You fool!" will be liable to the hell of fire." (Matt. 5:21-22)

Hatred and disdain come from the same sort of crookedness of heart as murder. With both murder and hatred, you look down on another person and think them of little worth. In the Small Catechism, Luther also points out that every "do not" in the commandments also includes a "do this:" "We should fear and love God so that we do not hurt or harm our neighbor in his body but help and support him in every physical need" (SC, Fifth Commandment).

We are not called merely to avoid evil; we must also do positive good. So when Jesus drew near to us and became our neighbor by taking up our humanity, He came not only to avoid harming us, but He came to positively help us, bless us and serve us.

We are now called to show the love to our neighbors that Christ showed to us. Your neighbor is yet another gift that God has given you that requires your stewardship. We are called to show mercy, to be kind, to love and serve our neighbor. One aspect of this stewardship is financial: our neighbors need us to support the church's work so that they can hear the Gospel and come to faith. Our neighbors need the church's alms and mercy work. Our neighbors need our faithful service in all we do in the name of Christ.

**Q: Why are women not allowed to become ministers in The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod?**

**A:** The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod believes those Scripture passages which say women should not "teach" or "have authority" in the church (see, for example, 1 Cor. 11 and 14; 1 Tim. 2) mean that women ought not hold the authoritative teaching office in the church — that is, the office of pastor.

Women are allowed to hold other offices in the church, as long as these offices do not involve the carrying out of the distinctive functions of the pastoral office. This would include Elders or Congregational chairman positions.