

# Acts of Faith

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

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## ***The Year of the Lord***

Will 2008 be the year? Is this the year we've all been waiting for? Will this be the year that your dreams finally come true? It's hard to say, isn't it? Many will try to make predictions as to what this year holds for us. The housing market, the economy, and the Presidential election are a few of the things that will get a lot of attention. The war in Iraq will undoubtedly also be mentioned regularly. What about in *your* life? Will this be the year for \_\_\_\_\_? (fill in the blank)

Jesus boldly announced "*the year of the Lord's favor*" one Sabbath day long ago. After He said this, the Scriptures tell us that the eyes of everyone were fastened on Him. That's a good posture to take as we begin any New Year. As we fix our eyes on Jesus we can face the New Year with confidence. We may not know the details, and we may be reluctant to make predictions. But, we can be confident of God's presence as we submit our lives to His will and participate as citizens of His Kingdom.

St. James gave a warning to people who thought that they were in control of the future. He said, "*Now listen, you who say, 'Today or tomorrow we will go to this or that city, spend a year there, carry on business and make money'*" (James 4:13). "Now listen!" he says. James, under the power of the Holy Spirit, tries to get our attention on a very important matter. What the future holds isn't under our direct control. To pretend that it is, and to assert that it's going to be is, simply put—boasting and bragging. James calls such boasting "Evil." Imagine that!

James wouldn't do very well speaking like this in most of the circles in which we find ourselves today. He may call it "evil" but we call it something far less negative. In fact, we're part of a culture that sees what James calls "evil" as just the opposite.

Those who conceitedly "boast and brag" seem to be the very people who are held in the highest honor, get the promotions, and make it to the top. Those who

have a track record of saying and doing exactly what James condemns, are sought after by corporations and even nations. What should we say as we look into the future? James puts our planning into perspective and under God's authority where it rightly belongs. He instructs us to submit all that we do to God's mighty right hand. It is God who gives the increase. Under His watchful eye, and with the guidelines He gives us in Scripture, we move forward and say, "*If it is the Lord's will, we will live and do this or that*" (James 4:15).

As we know, some people couldn't care less if what they do is "the Lord's will." They're going to do it anyway! This is dangerous. "*The Lord's will*" effects all of our lives. To approach everything we do and every decision we make with the perspective, "*if it is the Lord's will,*" makes us examine our actions in light of God's Holy Word. God makes it clear that we're to love Him and serve Him in everything we do. That *is* His will!

We're still living in the time that Jesus boldly announced as "*the year of the Lord's favor.*" He wants to bless us with the freedom God intended as He looks upon us with "favor." He wants to direct our paths and lead us in all our ways. This may very well be the year we've all been waiting for as we face the year fixing our eyes on Jesus, and his will for us.

God's Blessings to you in the New Year,  
Pastor Fischer

**Women of Faith**

Women of Faith will meet Tuesday, Jan. 15th, at 1:00 PM. Yvonne Wegener will be the hostess. Marilyn Sturtevant will lead devotions. The program will be a book report on Katherina Von Bora (wife of Martin Luther) by Vary Fischer. All women of the congregation are invited to attend. (Fellows, Women of Faith would even love to see *you* there!)

**Sanctity of Human Life Sunday**

We will observe Sanctity of Human Life Sunday on January 20th, at the week of the 35th anniversary of the Roe vs. Wade decision legalizing abortion. The controversy and the problem remain after all these years. We need to examine the issue from a Biblical perspective and see how the Gospel of Jesus Christ helps to define both the problem and the solution.

*"For you created my inmost being; you knit me together in my mother's womb."* Psalm 139:13.

**January Calendar**

- Jan. 01 The Circumcision of Our Lord
- Jan. 03 Evangelism Committee, 6:30 PM
- Jan. 06 **The Epiphany of Our Lord**  
Voters' Meeting, 10:30 AM
- Jan. 09 Adult Bible Class, 5:45 PM  
Midweek Worship, 7:00 PM
- Jan. 13 **1st Sunday after the Epiphany**  
**The Baptism of Our Lord**  
Women of Faith, 1:00 PM
- Jan. 15 Adult Bible Class, 5:45 PM  
Midweek Worship, 7:00 PM
- Jan. 20 **2nd Sun. after the Epiphany**  
**Sanctity of Human Life Sunday**  
Circuit Pastors' Mtg., Geneseo, 9 AM
- Jan. 21 Adult Bible Class, 5:45 PM  
Midweek Worship, 7:00 PM
- Jan. 27 **3rd Sun. after the Epiphany**  
Elder's Meeting, 10:00 AM
- Jan. 30 Adult Bible Class, 5:45 PM  
Midweek Worship, 7:00 PM

**Looking Ahead...**

The season of Lent begins early this year. Ash Wednesday is February 6<sup>th</sup>. Make plans now to attend the midweek Lenten services at 7:00 PM. Plan also to attend the fellowship suppers which will precede the services at 5:45 PM.

**Thank You!**

Thank you to all the members of Faith for your cards, gifts, and well-wishes during the Christmas season. Your kindness is greatly appreciated.

*Pastor & Vary Fischer*

**Simply Giving**

*Simply Giving* is a convenient way for you to make your contributions to our Lord. Have your contributions deducted from your checking or savings account regularly by Electronic Funds Transfer (EFT). Contact Nancy Tudder or Pastor Fischer for details.

**Voters' Meeting**

The next Voters' Assembly of Faith Lutheran Church is scheduled for January 6<sup>th</sup>, following the service. New business will include the election of officers for 2008, and approval of the 2008 budget. Old business includes approval of Wedding Guidelines for our congregations.

**2008 Flower Chart**

The 2008 Flower chart will soon be available. Don't forget to reserve your Sundays to provide Altar Flowers.

## *Can a Christian be a Good Scientist?*

By Pastor Robert Hein

Good Shepherd Lutheran Church, West Bend, Wisconsin

Can a Christian who accepts the Bible as literal truth also be a good scientist? Many secular scientists insist that is not possible. Christians receive insults to their scientific intelligence all the time. Consider this statement from Jude Dougherty, dean of the School of Philosophy at the Catholic University of America, "I don't think anyone who is at least minimally scientifically literate doubts that the theory of evolution is correct." The conclusion? If you don't accept the theory of evolution as scientific fact, you are not worthy to be called a scientist.

And so Christians studying and preparing for careers in the scientific world often feel the pressure to compromise or reject what the Bible teaches in order to gain acceptance from the scientific community. But is that really necessary? Can a Bible-believing Christian also be a good scientist? It depends on which kind of science you are talking about. It is useful to make a distinction between "operational science" and "origins science." Operational science is based on the laws of physics, chemistry, biology, etc. that God established when He created the world. The discoveries and applications of observational science are based on the scientific method of observation and experimentation.

We use observational science to understand how a computer works, how to send a spaceship to the moon and back, how plants and animals reproduce after their kind, how medicines fight disease, and how gravity affects our world. While Christians humbly admit there is still much we do not understand of how God governs this universe, we really have no conflict with the findings of operational science. In fact, we expect the world to follow the rules of operational science since an orderly God established them in the beginning, and keeps them in working order to this very day. We do recognize however that present findings can be proven wrong, and replaced with new scientific discoveries.

Bible-believing Christians also believe in miracles. Miracles, by definition, usurp the laws of operational science. For example, operational science teaches us that people can't walk on water and dead people don't rise to life again. Christians don't deny these laws of operational science; we simply believe that our supernatural God who established those laws also has the authority to intervene in human history to usurp them.

Some of the greatest scientific discoveries and advances were made by scientists who also accepted the biblical account of creation. Consider Isaac Newton who co-discovered calculus, formulated the laws of motion and gravity, calculated planetary orbits, and invented the reflecting telescope. Consider Johannes Kepler who discovered the three laws of planetary motion, or James Maxwell who discovered the four fundamental equations that light and all forms of electromagnetic radiation obey. A belief in the evolutionary claims of origins science was not required for any of these great scientists to advance their work.

Bible-believing Christians do not have a problem then with the findings of operational science when it comes to how our present world functions. Rather we disagree with the claims of origins science. Origins science is not based upon observation and experimentation of the present, but rather on speculation and unproven assumptions concerning the past. For example, operational science teaches that everything reproduces after its own kind. That is what we see happening today. Within a specific animal kind there is a great deal of room of variety and adaptation. However, we never observe microbes becoming monkeys or monkeys becoming men. In fact, the laws of operational science teach us this is impossible.

But proponents of origins science insist that in the distant past, things worked much differently. Back then mutations occurred on a regular basis over millions of years which continually added new genetic information to succeeding generations. We don't see it happening. We can't make it happen in a laboratory. The findings of operational science actually say it can't happen. And yet we are expected to believe that all these beneficial changes did happen over millions of years simply by random chance. Louis Pasteur developed the law of Biogenesis, which teaches that life only comes from life. No one has ever refuted this law of operational science. And yet we are expected to believe that billions of years ago, things worked differently, that life, intelligent life, could spring from non life, all on its own. Understand then that the claims of origins science are not based on sound scientific observation and experimentation, but more so upon a premise of naturalism that clouds the interpretation of the evidence we observe.

Christians don't have to put their brain in the closet to be good scientists. We do always need to keep our human reason subject to the Word of God. As God's Word teaches, "*We demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God, and we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ*" (2 Corinthians 10:5-6). However, we normally expect our world to follow the rules of operational science which God established. This will enable Christians to excel in all sorts of scientific fields such as biology, chemistry, astronomy, botany, medical research, and in the development of new scientific technology. But Christians must always reject the unproven claims of origins science when these theories contradict the clear teachings of the infallible Word of God.

From: Lutherans for Life [LifeDate](#), Winter 2007

## HAPPY BIRTHDAY

Michael Estes	1/01
JoAnn Behnke	1/04
Vary Fischer	1/07
Dawn Hull	1/14
Dylan Mallery	1/15
Marilyn Sturtevant	1/18
Pamela Helmkamp	1/21
Gary Carper	1/25
Richard Wells	1/29

## ANNIVERSARIES

Elaine and Wayne Price 1/31

### WORSHIP SCHEDULE

Sunday Worship Service, 9:00 AM  
Sunday School & Confirmation Class, 10:30 AM

Adult Bible Class, Wednesday, 5:45 PM  
Wednesday Worship Service, 7:00 PM

Rev. Robert Fischer, Pastor

309-852-2787 (Church Phone)

309-714-1181 (Cell Phone)

309-853-5394 (Home Phone)

E-mail: [pastor@faithkewanee.org](mailto:pastor@faithkewanee.org)

Web Site: [www.faithkewanee.org](http://www.faithkewanee.org)

*Wise men (and women) still seek Him!*

620 Hepner Dr.  
Kewanee IL 61443

Address Correction Requested

*"Behold I make all things new."*  
Revelation 21:5

## ***2008: Exciting Agenda for Women of Faith***

Women of Faith is a part of the LWML—Lutheran Women’s Missionary League. As such, we collect mites for missions and have access to the Bible studies and programs prepared for women nationally. We can take advantage of enriching activities like rallies and conferences, but it is not mandatory.

Our meetings consists of a small devotion, a snack, a business meeting, and a program. There are three officers: President, Vice President, Secretary/Treasurer. Volunteers (members) do devotions, hostess, and present programs. No one is forced to do any of these things if they are not comfortable with them. We all have different strengths and gifts, and we encourage each other to use them in the way we are most comfortable and to the glory of God.

Please join us. Please help us minister to the mission and social life of our church. Please agree to spend an afternoon each month with us so that we can be a viable group! Some of our 2008 programs will include:

- ◆ a book report on Katherina Von Bora (Martin Luther’s wife)
- ◆ a hobo soup lunch and Bible study (bring a can of soup and add it into a pot to make the soup)
- ◆ a discussion of items to purchase for the kitchen
- ◆ a discussion of wedding traditions and sharing of memorabilia
- ◆ “Friday night out with hubbies and friends” (restaurant to be announced)
- ◆ a visit from Kari Tavares to educate us on the Illinois Youth Center
- ◆ a field trip to the Kewanee Historical Museum
- ◆ “Antique Road Show” with Brock Tumbleson (returned by popular request!)
- ◆ a visit from Cathy Hermann, nurse anesthetist, to discuss anesthesia and its effects
- ◆ a Christmas Party at the new Country Morning Coffee Shop (tentative).

All women of the congregation are invited to join us. It’s a mission-minded group, but WOW do we have fun! Come share with us—you’ll be glad you did...we’ll be glad you did!!

## ***What’s In Your New Year’s Resolutions???***

Do your New Year’s resolutions include an expansion to your planned-giving program, or the *start* of a planned-giving program?

Long term planned-giving is for everyone, and we hope that Faith Lutheran Church is included in your plans. You could resolve to:

- ◆ Make a gift to honor a special event or a special person.
- ◆ Update the beneficiaries of your will, retirement funds, or life insurance to also include Faith Lutheran Church.
- ◆ Donate an appreciated asset (stocks, bonds, real estate, etc.) for maximum gift impact as well as significant tax savings.
- ◆ Establish a charitable gift annuity or trust which includes Faith Lutheran Church.

Members of our congregation who could assist you with your planned-giving decisions include: Steve Becker, Wayne Becker, and Otto Schwefel.

## *Lift High the Cross!*

Our long-awaited chancel cross finally arrived in December. It was dedicated and blessed during the December 16<sup>th</sup> worship service. The carving on the cross matches the carving on the ends of our pews. The small black-and-white pictures of the cross here really don't do it full justice. Please come and see it in-person and up-close.

Thank you to all in our congregation who were involved in designing, transporting, installing, and paying for the cross. This was a real team effort!

## *The Corrosion of Consumerism*

The church had all the appearances of success. More than two thousand people gathered weekly for worship, the music was cutting edge, the landscape was perfectly maintained, everyone loved the pastor's sermons, and the children's programs were creative and engaging.

However, the pastor suspected something was fundamentally wrong. He asked me to take a look at the church. I asked people who attended to give me their general perceptions of the church. "I love it here." "Things are great." "It's the best church I have attended." What specifically made the church so appealing? "The music rocks!" "The dramas make me laugh and cry." "The pastor's sermons are so relevant to my needs." "My teenager plays the bass in the youth band." "My children meet in rooms with jungle creatures painted on the walls." "Everything here is always high quality."

I wondered aloud what would happen if the pastor left or the worship leader resigned or the children's ministry declined in quality. Not one of them batted an eye. Without hesitation, from one after the other, the responses flowed: "I would leave." "I'll take my kids wherever I can find the best program." The members of this church and many others like it were part of a dysfunctional human system. They were "consuming" the church's products without connecting to each other in meaningful relationships or engaging the local community with the transforming power of the Gospel. The "consuming" church springs from the soil of American culture.

By focusing primarily on meeting "market" needs, the church often functions in production mode—the endless creation of the best possible programs, products, and events. While such a search for excellence is, by itself, a positive—even Biblical—pursuit, the machinery of endless production works against the development of community. Consumerism is individualism on steroids. Central to consumerism is "me;" community is "we." It is a mistake to think that the church can adopt a consumer-oriented strategy, reach people, and then convert them into lovers of community. Too many churches succumb to this "bait and switch" type of strategy. It has two inherent, fatal flaws. First, you can lure them in, but a consumer-oriented strategy will fail to transform them. Second, the consumer is never satisfied. Rather than being transformed into a life of sacrifice and service, the consumer will demand more and more of others. With God's help we can begin to move our churches from the American "me" to the Biblical "we."

By Kevin G. Ford. Excerpted from Your Church, Jan/Feb 2008