



# Acts of Faith

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



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Volume 23 Issue 1

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***In Him was life and the life was the light of men. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it. John 1:4-5***

Epiphany means a sudden or great revealing or manifestation. Light is the preeminent symbol of the church's Epiphany season in the church calendar. The Epiphany Gospel readings throughout the season shed more light upon whom this Jesus is, revealing His identity and power week by week. Much like the seasons of Christmas and Easter, the season of Epiphany is sparked by a specific feast day that influences the rest of the season. Jesus is the King of the Jews. This is revealed in a way most miraculous, a star of the heavens leading gentile Magi from the East to show up at Jesus' door with extravagant gifts fit for a king, the King of the Jews. On the Feast of Epiphany (January 6th), we observe the Magi visiting Jesus and bringing Him the gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh, and marks the ending of the Christmas celebration.

Next the Gospels tell about when Jesus is baptized in the Jordan by John. He is mightier than John. He will baptize with the Holy Spirit. At His baptism, the heavens were opened and the Spirit descends on Jesus. The Father's voice proclaims Jesus as His beloved Son, with whom the Father is well pleased. The heavens are here opened to you, in the waters of Holy Baptism, because the Holy Triune God opens Himself to you in the baptized Body of Christ Jesus.

The Epiphany season begins with white paraments for both Epiphany Day and the Baptism of Our Lord. The paraments turn to green beginning with the Second Sunday after the Epiphany and continuing through the Sixth Sunday after the Epiphany. The season of Epiphany ends with the Transfiguration of Our Lord, at which point the paraments change back to white. Epiphany uses green as its color, for life and growth and the spreading of the Gospel throughout the world. Epiphany continues until just before Lent. Regardless of the season's length, the final Sunday in Epiphany is always the Transfiguration. We then move on to Ash Wednesday and Lent.

All of this gathering light reaches a climactic moment in Jesus' Transfiguration. Epiphany beckons us to come to the light of Jesus Christ. John 3:19 says, "*Light has come into the world, but people loved darkness instead of light because their deeds were evil.*" Be assured if Jesus is the glow in your eyes, others will see His light and be touched by the same joy and peace.

Pray: "Lord Jesus Christ, you come to the world and surprise us with your presence. Help us to look for you in our lives so that we can see where you are calling us. Amen"



*"For God, who said, "Let light shine out of darkness," has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ."*

2 Corinthians 4:6

Happy  
New Year  
2023

2023

## *January's Calendar*

- Jan. 01**    **1st Sunday after Christmas with Holy Communion**  
New Year's Day  
Mite box collection
- Jan. 06    Epiphany
- Jan. 07    Un-decorate the church 9:00 AM  
Small Church Summit, 10 AM-2:00 PM
- Jan. 08**    **Baptism of our Lord with Holy Communion**  
Voters Assembly 10:00AM
- Jan. 12    WOF meeting 10:00 AM
- Jan. 15**    **Second Sunday after Epiphany with Holy Communion**
- Jan. 16    Martin Luther King Jr. Day Observance
- Jan. 22**    **Third Sunday after Epiphany with Holy communion**
- Jan. 29**    **Fourth Sunday after Epiphany No Holy communion**

There will be no Elders or Council meeting in January.

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

### *Altar Guild Schedule*

Jan. 01	Kari Tavares	White
Jan. 08	Mary Hahn	White
Jan. 15	Marilyn Sturtevant	Green
Jan. 22	Leah Weber	Green
Jan. 29	Sharon Larson	Green

### Elders List:

Wayne Becker: 309-853-8783  
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: Wayne Becker  
4th Sunday: Kevin Hull  
5th Sunday: Jim Cook

**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, and John J. Hernandez.

**Friends:** Jeff Bowman, Sue Copeland, Ron Pettit, Lacey Hammons, Jim Tudder, Hudson McCook, Eugene Fronk, 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 that peace may come to this land.

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



**Christmas poinsettias:** Thank you for the beautiful flowers that adorned our chancel this Christmas.

Mary & Gary Hahn	Debra Fronk
Kari Tavares	Ron & Sharon Larson
Sara Nimrick	Mike & Paula Leezer
Carol & Jim Cook	Ted & Marilyn Sturtevant
Sue Cervantez	

Thanks to Tim Becker for providing the bows and window garlands.



**Prayer Requests:** Have someone or something that you would like Pastor Weber to include in either his personal prayers or in our public Prayer of the Church on Sunday morning, please fill out a prayer request, place in an envelope, and leave it in the office or hand it to Pastor.



### Birthdays

Michael Estes	1/01
JoAnn Behnke	1/04
Maclin Talbot	1/10
Sophie Cervantez	1/11
Dawn Hull	1/14
Marilyn Sturtevant	1/18
Pamela Helmkamp	1/21
Aimery Jackson	1/21

### Baptism Dates

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



### Women of Faith:

The women of Faith will be meeting at 10:00 AM on January 12th for a work project, sack lunch, and regular meeting. Mary Hahn will be the hostess. The year's program will be discussed.

In January you have the opportunity to offer your mites to support of the LWML Mission Grant, Lutheran Bible Translators, who travel to remote areas in Ethiopia and Sierra Leone to provide Bibles translated into the people's local or heart language. Robust vehicles are needed to travel on the rough, washed-out roads. This LWML grant will help purchase two vehicles to make travel easier. Thank you for your support of this Mission Grant.



**Council News:** Council met on December 15th to review a 2023 Budget and nominations of officers. The treasurer reported the General fund balance was \$47,477.53, and the Designated fund balance is \$12,850.73 for a total of \$60,328.26. The mortgage balance is \$156,793.94. Through November yearly expenses leads yearly income by \$137.60.

**HELP WANTED:** Thank you for your help in decorating the church this past year. Saturday, January 7th, at 9:00 AM is the time for Christmas decoration removal, and we will be needing volunteers' time and talents to prepare the church for 2023. In the past, we've had a great turnout which makes the task much easier. We can usually accomplish the work in less than 2 hours. Please mark your calendars and come join us.

**Operation Thankful 2022** was a program sponsored by Faith congregation during Advent season to assist the Kewanee Food Pantry. On Thursday, January 5th, the items will be delivered to the pantry. Thank you to all those who donated food or cash contributions to this effort.



**CID NEWS:** At Epiphany, we recognize that the light of Christ shines on His church. Even to small congregations, the Scripture says: "Arise, shine, for your light has come, and the glory of the Lord has risen upon you" (Isaiah 60:1). This light from our Creator and Redeemer can pierce and enlighten the thickest of sinful darkness so "nations shall come to your light, and kings to the brightness of your rising" (Is. 60:3).

The Small Church Summit will meet again almost at the very beginning of the Epiphany season, on Saturday, January 7 (or January 14 if weather is bad on the 7th) at Zion Evangelical Lutheran Church in Farmersville from 10:00 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. Churches are strongly encouraged to send not only one or two people to the Summit, but instead three or four.

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

**2022 Contribution Statements:** If you would like to have your 2022 Faith contribution statement emailed, please send your request and email address to [KLTavares21@yahoo.com](mailto:KLTavares21@yahoo.com).

**Voters' Assembly** on January 8th business includes:

- Adopt 2023 Budget
- Elect 2023 Officers
- Officers' 2022 reports of blessings and remaining challenges
- Provide ideas and thoughts for congregational action in the new year

Please plan to stay after the worship service for this important congregational activity.



**Q: What is the significance of the three gifts brought to the Christ child as mentioned in Matthew 2:11? "And going into the house, they saw the child with Mary his mother, and they fell down and worshiped him. Then, opening their treasures, they offered him gifts, gold, frankincense, and myrrh."**

A: While we do not know for sure, Biblical scholars offer the following interpretation. Gold has always been a valued precious metal reserved for kings and their objects. So gift of gold was a declaration of Christ's kingly position and later affirmed by Pontus Pilot as "King of the Jews". Incense has long been used in worship rituals by priests in the presence of God, so the gift of frankincense indicates Jesus would also serve as a high priest, a mediator to God. Myrrh, a costly spice, was often used to anoint dead bodies. This gift signifies Jesus' human mortality, and pointed to His unexpected resurrection.

### *Invite Someone to Church*

In some ways, it may seem that the days are over in which inviting people to church services can serve as a prime method for evangelistic outreach. Our Synod's re:Vitality module called "Connect to Disciple" operates on the premise that a congregation should have a variety of "low pressure" opportunities, besides church services, to which new people can be invited. So invite someone—better, perhaps, offer to bring such a friend with you to services. Introduce your friend to a few of your fellow church members, one of whom can be at the ready to follow up with a note or phone call, as well as to your pastor.

*"Commit your work to the Lord, and your plans will be established" (Proverbs 16:3)*



To Norma Emerson for the beautiful gift of her nativity set in memory of her brother, Wendell Hier. It adorns the sanctuary and is much appreciated. Thanks also to Kari and Marilyn for arranging it. What a wonderful addition to our church.

