



Acts of Faith

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



January 2024

Volume 24 Issue 1

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“But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for his own possession, that you may proclaim the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light.” 1 Peter 2:9

With a new year we will find that we need to make some more choices. Some may be easy such as what will we have for dinner, what new TV show will we watch, or what shall I wear today. Others may be really tough; which college shall I attend, should I change jobs, or what medical option is best for a loved one. When we do select something we exclude all the other choices.

God, on the other hand, chooses and includes everyone, all the time. He loves us so much He paid with His Son’s life the price for our sins enabling us to be reconciled to Him. We are God’s treasured possession, a chosen people, a holy priesthood as the verse above states. We joined God’s family at our baptism.

Thanks be to God that in His mercy He has made us holy in the death and resurrection of His Son, who covers us with His garments of salvation and His robes of righteousness. Our only hope to be with the Father must go through the cross. It is a hope that reaches beyond the grave. Jesus has conquered the grave for us and gives us a way for eternal life.

Life in the new year will continue to bring more difficulties and troubles. But do not despair. We have hope and can rejoice in this hope. We are assured that no matter what happens to us in this life, Jesus has prepared a place in His Heaven for us to join Him.

It is this sure hope that strengthens us to do His service here on earth. As a member of His priesthood we are dedicated to His service. Not like the Old Testament priests who offer up sacrifices for our sins, that was completed by Christ on the cross to atone for the sins of the whole world. We are to offer up sacrifices in service to our Lord. These are our prayers and praises to God. When we sing our hymns, pray for others, proclaim our faith, and witness our Christian lives to the world, we are active in His priesthood. Knowing we are chosen by God, we should be confident and eager to share this truth about His forgiveness and reconciliation with others.

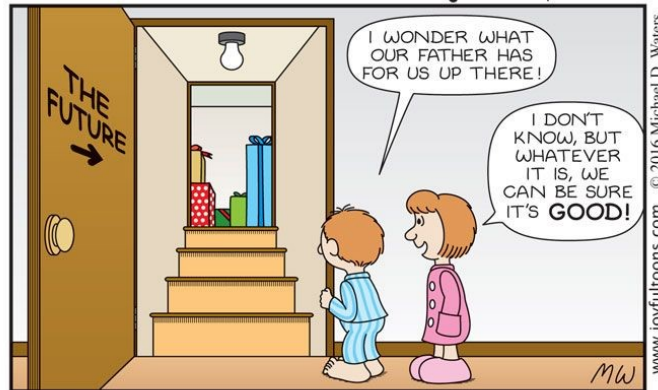
Thank you, God, for choosing me, adopting me into your family, loving me, and using me to share Your good news with others. Amen



Have A Blessed New Year!

“What no eye has seen, nor ear heard, nor the heart of man imagined, what God has prepared for those who love him”
1 Corinthians 2:9

GOOD THINGS IN STORE A Joyful 'toon by Mike Waters



How abundant are the good things that you have stored up for those who fear you, that you bestow in the sight of all, on those who take refuge in you.
— PSALM 31:19 NIV

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January's Calendar

- Jan. 01 New Year Celebration
- Jan. 06 Epiphany
- Jan. 07 Baptism of Our Lord with Holy Communion**
Mite box collection
- Jan. 11 WOF meeting 10:00 AM
- Jan. 13 Remove decorations 9:00 AM
- Jan. 14 Second Sunday after Epiphany with Holy Communion**
Voters Assembly 10:00AM
- Jan. 15 Martin Luther King Jr. Day Observance
- Jan. 21 Third Sunday after Epiphany with Holy Communion**
- Jan. 28 Third Sunday after Epiphany with 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. 07 | Leah Weber | White |
| Jan. 14 | Sharon Larson | Green |
| Jan. 21 | Marilyn Sturtevant | Green |
| Jan. 28 | Kari Tavares | Green |

Elders List:

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

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, Betty Godke, and Wayne Becker

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 Ukraine and Israel that peace may come to their lands.

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 | Ted & Marilyn Sturtevant |
| Mike & Paula Leezer | Sue Cervantez |
| Carol & Jim Cook | Sandy Heinrich |
| Jeri Bye | |

Special thanks to Sue for placing and tending to these plants.



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 | |

Baptism Dates

| | |
|-----------------|------|
| Sharon Larson | 1/09 |
| Ashley Phillips | 1/02 |
| Kaitlyn Johnson | 1/31 |
| Maclin Talbot | 1/23 |
| Casidy Tavares | 1/10 |



Women of Faith:

The women of Faith will be meeting at 10:00 AM on January 11th for a work project, sack lunch, and regular meeting. Mary Hahn will be the hostess. The year's program will be discussed.

Lutheran Braille Workers freely supplies large print and braille materials for blind and visually impaired people around the world. The \$100,000 LWML grant, Fortifying Faith in Those with Vision Impairment, will help in developing, formatting, producing, and distributing fifty to one hundred new Scripture-based and theologically related materials to people in need around the world. Thank you for your prayers and your mites in support of this mission outreach.



Council News: Council met on December 14th to review a 2024 Budget and nominations of officers. The treasurer reported the General fund balance was \$40,927.86, and the Designated fund balance is \$18,939.57 for a total of \$59,867.43. The mortgage balance is \$138,075.90. Through November yearly expenses leads yearly income by \$7,724.98 and member contributions are \$5235 under budget needs. Church mice evidence has appeared and new traps will be set in the lower level. A proposed budget for 2024 was set at \$76,930. No nominations for officers were received.

HELP WANTED: Thank you for your help in decorating the church this past year. Saturday, January 6th, 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 2024. 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 2023 was a program sponsored by Faith congregation during Advent season to assist the Kewanee Food Pantry. On Thursday, January 4th, the items will be delivered to the pantry. Thank you to all those who donated food or cash contributions to this effort.



CID NEWS: Rev. **Burnell Eckardt**, St. Paul –Kewanee has announced his upcoming retirement. A pre-call meeting has been conducted. Holy Cross - Moline was assigned vicar **Jacob Corrigan (Danielle)** [CTSFW] working under the supervision of the Rev. **Dr. Wilfred Karsten**. Pastor Karsten has announced his upcoming retirement for mid-2024. The CID has 34 vacancies, 27 actively calling or on temporary hold.



The next 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.

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.

2023 Contribution Statements: If you would like to have your 2023 Faith contribution statement emailed, please send your request and email address to KLTavares21@yahoo.com.

Voters' Assembly on January 14th business includes:

- Adopt 2024 Budget
- Elect 2024 Officers
- Officers' 2023 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: Do I have to go to church?

A: The short answer is no. A Christian desires to go to church because here the service provides things that create and sustain faith. Christians hunger and thirsts for the gifts of righteousness, forgiveness, the Sacrament, and Holy Absolution. To demand or require worship attendance is turning God's Gospel into Law. God graciously invites us to come to Him for rest. (Matt. 11:28) "Have to go to church?" No! I want to go.

A NOTE OF



Josh Bieri Bulletin: Joshua and family sent their thanks for the congregation's donation in support of his seminary training at Ft. Wayne, IN. The card and his bulletin are posted on the office window.

The Chief Stewards of Humanity: Mom and Dad

St. Paul tells the Ephesians that the first commandment with a specific promise attached to it is, "Honor your father and mother so that it may go well with you, and you may live long in the land" (Eph. 6:2). This promise is one indication of the importance of this commandment. The other thing that highlights the special nature of this commandment is its placement within the Ten Commandments.

The Ten Commandments are clearly organized in two big categories. The first three commandments deal with our relationship with God. This category is called the First Table of the Law. The last seven commandments, the Second Table of the Law, tell us how we should relate to other people. These two tables correspond to what Jesus calls the two greatest commandments: "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind," and "You shall love your neighbor as yourself" (Matt. 22:37-39).

The order of the Second Table of the Law is also important. Murder is a greater sin than adultery, which is a greater sin than stealing, or lying, or coveting. But why is the Fourth Commandment first in the Second Table, ahead of "you shall not murder"? Is disobeying your parents really worse than murder? Or maybe we should give up on thinking these commandments are ordered?

The overall effect of this order is to get us to see our parents as a connection point between our neighbors and our God. Throughout our upbringing our father and mother stand between us and God and deliver His gifts to us: God clothes us, feeds us, protects us and teaches His Word to us through our parents.

So, parents have a very high calling from God. They are called to be stewards of the greatest gift: the gift of life. Parenting thus gives us a keen insight into all our stewardship. Parents know that they have been given a great treasure in their children, a treasure that does not belong to them, yet for which they feel a great deal of responsibility. Truth be told, every gift we have been given is like this, because everything we have — whether our own personal skills and powers or our wealth and time — is all from God. He entrusts it all to us so that we can use it all and take care of it all for His great purposes.