



# Acts of Faith

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



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**“God chose what is low and despised in the world, even things that are not, to bring to nothing things that are,”** 1 Cor. 1:28

Our children generously gave us new smart phones for Christmas. They thought that was just what we needed. They were probably correct. Mary’s phone cover was cracked, and my phone was older than the number of years the phone store salesman had been employed so its operating system could not be upgraded. But, the phones both still made and received telephone calls. It pleased our children to know their parents now had the best and newest phones available. Many people today want to follow a God that is the newest, makes them feel happy, and wants the best for them.

For the most part, today’s prevailing culture with its societal norms is not buying what our Evangelical church has to offer. Compounding the problem is that some other churches, in trying to attract more members, have abandoned what they ought to be offering and instead have resorted to new gimmicks and entertainment. These new and often larger churches are considered by many as current thinking and very relevant. Here the world is not even hearing the genuine Christian gospel. That is not how God wants it. The genuine Christian message, namely, the message of the cross and Christ crucified comes across to the worldly as foolish wisdom. Truth is Jesus Christ is all that matters.

St. Paul faced the same situation back in the first century. People were rejecting the gospel because it seemed so weak and foolish. Paul received some concerning news about the ungodly practices that the Corinthian Church had adopted. Paul was distressed by their fall into wanton behavior, which caused him to write a chastening and corrective letter, exhorting the believers there to stop engaging in such ungodly practices, and giving instruction on right thinking and godly living.

Reading the passage above may sound like God doesn’t desire our happiness or success, but more probably our suffering and pain. Suffering and death came into the world because of man’s sin. God did not intend it to be here. God’s ways are not our ways (Isaiah 55:8-9), and His choices often defy human expectations. Despised means things that are scorned and not worth considering. What is lowly and despised by the world are the things that bring humble Christian citizens peace and life.

God tells us these things will bring true happiness because, through them, our lives are focused on Jesus, the cross, and eternal life. God’s Word, with no exceptions, corrections, or changes, is the thing on which true faith will be based. Our eternal salvation is guaranteed through faith in the Savior found in His Word. The cross may look weak and may sound foolish, but this is God acting to rescue us from our sins to fit us for every service to which we are called. We cannot save ourselves or add anything to it. We rely solely on His all-sufficient grace and the promise of His Word. Success in God’s kingdom is not measured by worldly standards but by faithfulness and obedience to His calling.

Heavenly Father, I pray that I may develop an attitude of heart that trusts in You wholly, and looks to Jesus, day by day. Help me and people that are insignificant in the eyes of the proud, and use us for Your greater glory. Use me and help me to walk humbly before You all the days of my life. This I ask in Jesus’ name, Amen

Pastor Weber will be attending a DOXOLOGY Classic Gathering from February 17-20th in Middleton, WI. This training seminar is designed to improve LCMS pastors’ spiritual health and ministry effectiveness. This is the first in the three retreat series for 2025. There will be expert presentations on stewardship and spiritual care for the confused souls. It is an excellent way to decompress and reevaluate his ministry priorities. The cost of this program for advance study and renewal was approved in the 2025 congregational budget.

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

### *February's Calendar*

- Feb. 02 **Presentation of our Lord with Holy Communion**  
Mite box collection
  - Feb. 09 **5th Sunday after the Epiphany with Holy Communion**
  - Feb. 14 St. Valentine's Day
  - Feb. 16 **6th Sunday after the Epiphany with Holy communion**  
R.I. Circuit Forum 2:00 PM E. Moline
  - Feb. 17 President's Day observance  
17-20th Doxology Gathering Middleton, WI
  - Feb. 22 CID Small Church Summit Pekin, IL
  - Feb. 23 **7th Sunday after the Epiphany with Holy communion**
- Pastor will be out of the area from Feb. 17th-20th.  
No Elders/Council Meetings this month



### *Altar Guild Schedule*

Feb. 02	Leah Weber	White
Feb. 09	Marilyn Sturtevant	Green
Feb. 16	Kari Tavares	Green
Feb. 23	Carol Cook	Green

### **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

**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, Bonnie Nuding, Nancy Gillespie, Betty Godke and Vanda Hallock.

**Friends:** Lacey Hammons, Jim Tudder, Steve Faber, Art Rosencarter, 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 these lands. Seek comfort for the people in Los Angeles area devastated by the wildfires.



**2024 Contribution Statements:** Your 2024 contribution statements are available in a holder 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.

**Small Church Summit** will offer a program on February 22, 2025 at Trinity Lutheran Church, 700 S. 4th Street, Pekin, IL (61554-4504). CID Evangelism Executive Ken Schurb will be the plenary speaker before lunch. Registration is desired, so 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 CID churches to share encouragement and plans, learn together, and hone in on priorities for your church. March 1 is the inclement weather date if needed.



**BIRTHDAYS**

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

**Baptism Dates**

JoAnn Behnke	2/28
Addyson Hicks	2/28

**Wedding Anniversaries**

Karen & Milton Stapel 2/29

**Women of Faith:** The Women of Faith will be meeting on Thursday, February 13, at 10:00 AM for a work day. Please bring a brown bag lunch with you.

February’s Mission Grant supports Hope Lutheran Church in South Sioux City, Nebraska. It has a full-time missionary pastor for its Siouxland Lutheran Hispanic Ministry. The funds for this grant will help purchase curriculum books for the ESL program, Spanish Bibles, catechisms, hymnals, and other resources for the Hispanic people in Siouxland. The funds will also bless the ministry as they share the Good News of Jesus and build relationships at community events and special holiday meals. Thank you for your mites and for your prayers.



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, 2025 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!



**Kewanee Food Pantry:** Thank you to everyone who donated to this outreach ministry. A total of 356 lbs. of food and \$140 was collected then taken to the pantry. This included \$250 worth of pasta and sauce purchased with the Thrivent Action team donation.



**Voter's Assembly News:** Voters met on January 12th to adopt the 2025 Annual Budget, and elect 2025 officers. The treasurer reported the end of year General fund balance was \$55,552.27 and the Designated fund balance was \$15,564.32 for a total of \$71,116.59. The mortgage balance is \$113,961.08. 2024 income exceeded yearly expenses by \$5,026.28.

Elders reported membership changes in last half of 2024 included one death. Currently, Faith has 109 confirmed members and 152 baptized members.

Pastor received a response of gratitude for the Angel Tree donation of \$125.00 stating that it made a significant difference fulfilling Zion's commitment. Pastor continues to visit the shut-ins and the 2 members currently at Courtyard Estates. Pastor plans to attend a Doxology Seminar presented in 3 sessions during 2025. Pastor will be attending the CID Convention in July with one lay delegate. He informed us that the vacancy at St. Paul's – Kewanee has been filled but the vacancy at Holy Cross in Moline is still open. Also, Pastor Umbarger of St. John's in East Moline plans to retire soon.

Ted Sturtevant thanked Joe Cervantez for all the help with mowing the grounds and also purchasing a new mower to use. The drive and parking lot were sprayed for weeds several times this past year. Two new speakers were installed in the sanctuary and seem to help with the sound system. Nick and Sandy Phillips and Kari Tavares are volunteering to clean the church monthly. A new vacuum was purchased to use. The council considered the installation of solar energy panels, but it has been decided that it would not be cost effective. Ted mentioned that the furnace that heats the fellowship hall needs maintenance. This will be taken care of next week.

The 2025 budget was presented and approved. 2025 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.

Gary Hahn was nominated and elected to sever as lay delegate to 2025 CID Convention in July.

**Q:** Catholics ask Mother Mary to intercede on their behalf with God. How should Lutherans view Mary ?

**A:** In the Gospels, we learn that Mary, this young virgin, betrothed to a carpenter named Joseph, was a descendent of King David. The angel Gabriel announced to Mary that she would conceive and bear a Son and call His name Jesus. Mary herself prophesied: "For behold, from now on, all generations will call me blessed; for He who is mighty has done great things for me" (Luke 1:48, 49). All of this means that Mary is the virgin mother foretold in Isaiah 7:14. It has thus been a pious custom ever since — and one that Lutherans can certainly embrace — for Christians to speak of Mary as "the Blessed Virgin."



As Lutherans, we remember her and thank God for her life. Mary was not only chosen by God to give birth to Jesus but to be his human mother also. We find our own faith strengthened when we ponder the way God's grace worked in her. We certainly want to imitate her joyous "yes" to the will of God and her holding tight to the words and promises she heard.

Excerpts from : *Lutheran Witness, Dec. 2017*

On February 16th there will be a R.I. Circuit Forum held at St. John's, E. Moline, beginning at 2:00 pm. A Circuit Visitor will be elected at this time. CID President Mohr will attend this meeting. The case for a CID capital campaign which will be brought before the 2025 convention will be presented. Congregational lay voting delegates and alternates are invited to attend this forum.



**St. Valentine**, an early Christian martyr for whom Valentine's Day is named, is said to have ministered to the faithful amidst the persecution of Christians in the Roman Empire. We can be confident he was killed for confessing his faith in Christ. For Americans, Valentine's Day is a day when expressions of love are encouraged with gifts such as flowers, cards, and candy. Saying 'I love you' can become mere words, but real heartfelt love, like Christ's love for us, expresses itself in actions. So, as distorted as our culture is on Valentine's Day and about love itself, love remains what God says it is. Love is ultimately the giving of oneself for another.