

ST. JOHN'S NEWSLETTER

ST. JOHN'S EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH

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BUILT ON CHRIST OUR CORNERSTONE

- Vol. 126, No. 2

“Attributes of the Christian Church...It is *the only Place Salvation is Found*”

Extra ecclesiam salus nulla is a Latin phrase that means “outside the church there is no salvation.” These words are attributed to St. Cyprian, the bishop of Carthage c. 248-58 AD. Is this statement correct? Can it be understood rightly?

Historically, there have been and still are those who would see their own particular church body as the church of which Cyprian spoke, but this cannot be correct. For wherever enough of the true Gospel is proclaimed some will hear it and be both brought to and preserved in faith. Again, wherever Baptism is administered according to Christ’s command, even if the church body denies *the benefits* Baptism gives, there are those who are still being given the new birth of water and the Spirit (John 3:5).¹ Consequently, there is no one earthly denomination that can claim to be *the Church* in the sense that there is no salvation outside of it.

However, it is one thing to state that no single denomination has the monopoly on salvation, but it is quite another to say that there is salvation outside of the Christian Church. The first, as must mentioned is true, but the second could not be more false, even outright demonic.²

For consider one of the attributes of the Church we have previously discussed, that it is *invisible*. It is invisible *because it is faith in Christ*, which is invisible to our eyes, that makes a person a member of the Church as it apprehends Christ and His salvation. So either a person is a member of the Church (having faith) and so is saved, or is not a member of the Church (is an unbeliever, whether flagrant or a hypocrite) and so is eternally condemned. There simply is no middle ground.

Of course, this is “Christianity 101.” Thus when the Church is spoken of in this way, that every believer in Christ is a member of the one Church and so is saved, most of us have no problem. However, for a person to be in *the Church*, outside of which there is no salvation, they need to have faith. But, and this is where the rubber hits the road, that saving faith is created, nurtured, and strengthened by the Holy Spirit only through the new birth of Baptism, the Word and preaching, through Confession and Absolution, through the eating and drinking of Jesus’ saving body and blood in the Lord’s Supper, and through the Word-filled hymns and liturgy that build us up as we gather in the fellowship of believers to sing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs³ and pray with and for one another,⁴ etc. In other words, the faith which makes us members of *the Church* must be kept alive and growing *by gathering in a local, visible congregation where these things take place as the Holy Spirit works through them!*

Sadly, there are many who fail to do such, but still consider themselves Christians.⁵ But is this true? Right from the start they are in open disobedience against the Third Commandment, which requires us to “not despise preaching

¹ The point here is denying the blessings of baptism such as forgiveness of sins, new life in the Holy Spirit, and eternal salvation, turning baptism into a work of man, but not denying the Trinity in whose name we are baptized (which is no baptism at all!). Of course, when a church denies the blessings of baptism, the majority of people will not treasure it, receiving neither comfort nor strength from it, so the false teaching is very dangerous to true faith.

² Satan is, of course, the Father of Lies.

³ Ephesians 5:19; Colossians 3:16.

⁴ Cf. Acts 2:42.

⁵ Here we are not speaking of those who *cannot* join in public worship, such as our homebound members. There is a difference between being physically unable to attend worship (and so joyfully receiving the pastor when he brings the Lord’s Supper) and choosing not to come, giving excuses. God knows the heart and will judge accordingly.

and His Word, but hold it sacred and gladly hear and learn it.”⁶ They fall short in keeping the Second Commandment for we are to call upon the Lord in prayer, praise and thanksgiving,⁷ something that is certainly done within the congregational worship *which they are avoiding*. And the First Commandment? Well, if they cannot even show up to receive God’s gifts and respond with thanksgiving, praise, and an offering to support the Gospel ministry then they, by such, show that they have an idol, another god.⁸

Whether they have thought about it this much or not, such a person is in open disobedience, “neglecting to meet together” (Hebrews 10:25) in public worship, and so are in reality despising God, Christ, the Holy Spirit, the Word and Sacraments, divine worship, and even the members of the congregation as they are failing to encourage them in their faith since they cannot even be bothered to show up to worship. That is not the way of believers, but unbelievers. We need to accept that, whatever a person may be earthly speaking, however how hard-working, honest, noble, etc. they might be, no matter how appropriate such things are for a Christian, the mere works *do not make a person a Christian*. Sadly, such an unwillingness to be present in the Church near them (the local congregation), most likely reveals their actual lack of presence in *the* Christian Church, since faith and the Holy Spirit will not long remain in such a person’s heart.

Finally, it is true that *the* Church consists of all believers in Christ and that there are such in any church (denomination, congregation, etc.) *where enough of the true Gospel is present in their preaching and if Baptism is administered rightly*. This is why we have more hope for a person who regularly attends worship at an erring church than one who is a “member” at an orthodox (right teaching) church, but seldom or never shows up (their name is in the book, but their body is *not* in a pew).

Yet, to stop there would be an error as more must be said. We must remember that if a person is a true Christian in such churches, it is *despite* the errors they teach, not because of them. Every error has a detrimental effect, presenting a danger to both a person’s faith and the life which true faith brings forth.⁹ All false teaching, no matter how trivial (in our mind), is of the devil and will be used by him to attack the faith that is present, to undermine it in some way. So even as we acknowledge that there are believers in other churches because the Spirit is still working through the Gospel that is present, we also heed our Savior’s warning and avoid false teachers and their doctrine to protect our faith from Satan’s deadly deceptions.¹⁰ For it is that faith alone that makes us a member of *the* Church; the Church outside of which there truly is no salvation. So we pray:

Preserve Your Word, O Savior,
To us this latter day,
And let Your kingdom flourish;
Enlarge Your Church, we pray.
O keep our faith from failing;
Keep hope’s bright star aglow.
Let nothing from truth turn us
While living here below.¹¹

In the name of the Lord of the Christian Church, *inside of which there is full salvation*,
Pastor Nerud

APOLOGETICS: BABIES are BORN READY to LEARN¹²

How do we learn? The answer is as simple as it is profound: “No surprise, no learning: this basic rule now seems to have been validated in all kinds of organisms—including young children.” So says leading French cognitive neuroscientist Stanislas Dehaene in his intriguing new book, *How We Learn: The New Science of Education and the Brain*.^a In other words, someone learns when you introduce something that is new, different, unexpected. When I say

⁶ Luther’s Small Catechism.

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ The reasons can be as different as “Sunday’s my only day to sleep in” to “I am mad at (some of) those people,” or numerous other possibilities that might be (and, sadly, have been) said. Ultimately in such cases the idol is “the self,” a person’s own sinful attitude which is not in agreement with God’s Word and Law.

⁹ And remember, the error may well seem “holy,” such as the external lives which are seen in works-righteous churches. Not every error is blatantly evil. The devil can be very subtle as well.

¹⁰ Matthew 7:15-27; Romans 16:17-18; Titus 3:10; 2 John 10-11. See also John 8:31; 1 Peter 2:2.

¹¹ “Preserve Your Word, O Savior,” *Lutheran Service Book* (LSB) 658:1.

¹² by Lucien Tuinstra; Posted on homepage: 21 November 2022; <https://creation.com/born-ready?>

that $1 + 1 = 2$, you'll have learned nothing. But if I assert that $2 + 2 = 5$, you will learn that my arithmetic is hopeless, and you will question my education!

Learning has many benefits. Schooling can take place in various contexts, and at an early age it contributes to better outcomes years later. These improvements are in many areas—"from lower crime rates to higher IQs and incomes to better health", says Dehaene (p. 141 of his book). However, learning starts at an even earlier age than some might think.

Amazing learning skills

Did you know that, "Right at birth, babies can tell the difference between most vowels and consonants in every language in the world"? (p. 65). In addition to this, "babies already prefer listening to their native language rather than to a foreign one—a truly extraordinary finding which implies that language learning starts *in utero* [in the womb]" (p. 64). In fact, rather than starting off as a *tabula rasa* (blank slate), a baby's brain is ready to investigate and interact with the world, like a "true Sherlock Holmes in diapers" (p. 61).

Reading bedtime stories to children every evening strengthens their brain circuits for language and enables them at a later age "to understand texts and formulate complex thoughts" (p. 142). As a father of a 2-year-old daughter, I certainly resonate with this.

Also, while learning another language as an adult is by no means easy, for young children it is automatic, provided they are spoken to. The ability to master sounds of a foreign language is already much less at 12 months compared to just a few months. Long-term fluency in an extra language also requires that the child be in situations where she must use that language to communicate, the earlier the better—and continue through puberty otherwise it is readily forgotten. The 'window' for grammar learning starts closing around puberty.

Immigrants to a different-language country, if under four years old on arrival, end up with a barely detectable accent in that country's language. But the likelihood of an accent, and how pronounced it is, increases massively if they migrated during adolescence or later (pp. 107–108). Further, being raised in a bilingual context gives people "better abilities for language processing and for acquiring a third or fourth language" (p. 142).

Dehaene also notes that "a child's vocabulary at three to four years old directly depends on the amount of child-directed speech they received during their first years. Passive exposure does not suffice: active one-to-one interactions are essential" (p. 142). That might seem obvious, but unfortunately ideas like 'children should be seen, not heard' can be applied so as to discourage such interaction—even in Christian circles. Our daughter carefully studies our mouths as she says, "Again!" when we sing to her or recite Scripture.

Evolutionary history?

How did it come about, that children right at birth are equipped for language—any language in fact? Apparently, or so Stanislas Dehaene claims, "the nascent brain already possesses considerable knowledge inherited from its long evolutionary history" (p. 53). You see, allegedly, "We are the heirs of an unfathomable wisdom. Through Darwinian trial and error, our genome has internalized the knowledge of the generations that have preceded us" (p. 25). It is remarkable how evolution gets credit for many things. However, knowledge (i.e. information) is not a tangible thing, a property of matter. Even though information is stored on matter, it is a non-material entity, and all observations confirm that it only ever originates from an intelligent source. Is evolution intelligent, with the sense to store information for future purposes? Does it have foresight? Clearly not, as evolutionists themselves often insist.

Dehaene further says this applies to more than just language: "parity, negative numbers, fractions ... all these concepts are demonstrably grounded in the representation of quantities that we inherit from evolution" (p. 131).

Discredited from within

While acknowledging Dehaene's standing in the field of human cognition, this sort of evolutionary handwaving is unworthy of such an accomplished scientist. Consider that at the moment of conception, the brain does not actually exist. This means that this "considerable knowledge" (e.g. the ability to quickly learn language) is already in the nascent (i.e. embryonic, or incipient) human brain, and is somehow transferred there via the genome (the DNA information inherited from the parents). It is reasonable to believe that the omniscient Creator wisely programmed the information for this ability into the first human couple, ready to be passed on via the genome to all their descendants. Evolutionists, however, believe it is the result of an accumulation of genetic accidents, filtered by natural selection.

The father of modern linguistics, Noam Chomsky—a self-professed atheist/agnostic—said that the process by which the human mind achieved its present state of complexity is "a total mystery". He further wrote:

It is perfectly safe to attribute this development to 'natural selection', so long as we realize that there is no substance to this assertion, that it amounts to nothing more than a belief that there is some naturalistic explanation for these phenomena.^b

God speaks, and God hears

Of course, the origin of the amazing human mind is only a mystery to those who reject God's majesty. We are made in His image and ready for fellowship with Him and other people—which must entail communication.

The inbuilt human capability to start learning language *before birth*^c underlines the value and personhood of the unborn. It also renders the homage to evolutionary history completely useless.

References and notes

- a. Dehaene, S., *How We Learn: The New Science of Education and the Brain*, Penguin Random House, UK, p. 205, 28 Jan 2020. Dehaene has won several prestigious scientific awards.
- b. Chomsky, N., *Language and Mind*, Cambridge University Press, p. 9, 1968.
- c. See also University of Kansas, Language development starts in the womb; sciencedaily.com, 18 Jul 2017.

A LOOK at the LUTHERAN CONFESSIONS

In Article XXII, Both Kinds in the Sacrament, we clearly confessed that all people who come to the Lord's Supper worthily are to receive both the body and blood of Christ. Now in Article XXIII, The Marriage of Priests, we confess that priests (pastors) should be allowed to marry if they choose since it is a gift of God to be received in thanksgiving. The real issue here is that the Church has no authority to command what He has not commanded, nor forbid what He has not forbidden. The Scripture, being God's Word, is the sole authority for what is commanded and forbidden within the Church.

Augsburg Confession Article XXIII: The Marriage of Priests, 1-13¹³

Complaints about unchaste priests are common. Platina¹⁴ writes that it is for this reason that Pope Pius is reported to have said that although there are reasons why marriage was taken away from priests, there are far more important reasons why it should be given back. Since our priests wanted to avoid these open scandals, they married wives and taught that it is lawful for them to enter marriage. First, because Paul says, "Because of the temptation to sexual immorality, each man should have his own wife" and "It is better to marry than to be aflame with passion" (1 Corinthians 7:2, 9b).

Second, Christ says, "Not everyone can receive this saying" (Matthew 19:11), where He teaches that not everyone is able to lead a single life. God created human beings for procreation (Genesis 1:28). It is not within a person's power, without God giving a unique gift, to change this creation. For it is clear, as many have confessed, that no good, honest, chaste life, no Christian, sincere, upright conduct has resulted from the attempt to lead a single life.¹⁵ Instead, a horrible, fearful unrest and torment of conscience has been felt by many until the end. Therefore, those who are not able to lead a single life ought to marry. No human law, no vow, can destroy God's commandment and ordinance. For these reasons the priests teach that it is lawful for them to marry wives.

It is clear that in the Ancient Church priests were married men. For Paul says, "An overseer must be the husband of one wife" (1 Timothy 3:2). Four hundred years ago in Germany, for the first time, priests were violently forced to lead a single life.¹⁶ They offered such resistance that when the Archbishop of Mainz was about to publish the pope's decree about celibacy, he was almost killed in a riot by enraged priests.¹⁷ This matter was handled so harshly that not only was marriage forbidden in the future, but existing marriages were torn apart, contrary to all laws, both divine and human. This was even contrary to canon law itself, as made by not only popes, but also by the most celebrated synods.¹⁸

¹³ From *Concordia: The Lutheran Confessions*, Paul McCain, Ed. CPH, 2006. Due to the length of this Article, it is being broken into smaller sections.

¹⁴ Bartholomeo Platina. Italian humanist (AD 1421-81). Wrote *Lives of the Popes*.

¹⁵ This is a valuable thought to be considered today when so many young adults are being strongly encouraged to delay marriage. Not only will this likely limit the amount of time for having children (there is a time range as we know, especially for women), but it also regularly leads to unchastity and fornication as marriage is postponed, but not sexual activity. But even if sexual actions are postponed, the "flames of passion" (1 Cor. 7:9) burn, leaving many a sincere Christian young adult both uncomfortable and with a guilty conscience, both of which could be helped by entering God's institution of holy matrimony.

¹⁶ Originally, priests were not permitted to marry a second time; then they could not marry after their priestly vows; and eventually they had to refrain from marital relations all together. However, it was not until the *end of the eleventh century* that the requirement of celibacy was generally enforced by Pope Gregory VII. At that time most priests in Germany were still married.

¹⁷ Siegfried of Mainz at synods in Erfurt and Mainz in 1075.

¹⁸ The Council of Nicaea in 325, from which the Nicene Creed gets its name, refused to require celibacy in an absolute sense by not requiring those who were already married to dissolve their marriage or abstain from conjugal relations when they became priests. Even this shows that the erring idea towards marriage was entering as there should be no restriction on a man being married after becoming a priest. But the point here is that in the Middle Ages the rules had become worse still, which is the way error always works.

“For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sake he became poor, so that you by his poverty might become rich” (2 Corinthians 8:9). ‘A Dollar for Missions’ is a project hosted by Evangelism/Stewardship Bds. A short video of explanation was shown on January 8th. For those who did not see this, you may go to cidlcms.org. and watch this 5-minute video (Click on the Ministry tab and down to Dollar for Missions). We pray you will see how easily you can make a huge impact and be a part of getting the Gospel message out to others around the world. Each person is invited to give just one small dollar every week. Look for the clear church container setting by the Offering plates. Soon a list of mission recipients will be available. These will be published on a regular basis. You will be able to see your dollars at work.



A Dollar for Missions

CHRISTIAN LIVING

Jesus came to change lives. He takes sinners such as you and gives to you *love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control.* (Galatians 5:22-23) He changes you. You are His. *You were bought at a price.* (1 Corinthians 6:20) Use this change in your life to share your Savior with others.



Don't Replace "And" with "Or"

We've all heard that stewardship means giving to the church of our time, talents, and treasure. This alliterative trinity helps us see that giving is not just about money but about our whole lives.

God gives us everything we have and enjoy, as Luther's Small Catechism explains in the First Article of the Apostle's Creed. First, we each confess that God "has given me my body and soul, eyes, ears, and all my members, my reason and all my senses" (SC II). Then, we confess that He gives us material things.

The time, talents, and treasure trinity places before our eyes the fact that we are to give something of all three of these things toward the mission of the church in thanksgiving for what God has provided. For everything we have, and indeed, everything we are, comes from God's fatherly, divine goodness and mercy.

The problem with this alliterative trinity comes when we replace one little word with another little word — when we replace the word and with the word or. It is always written with the 'and', but when we read it, we read it with the 'or'. Thus, this quite helpful trinity — which extolls that everything that we have and are is a gift from God, to be given back in service of His church — turns into a trinity that we can pick and choose from when we serve God. The giving of our time, talents and treasure turns into the giving of our time, talents, or treasure.

Then the question arises: Can we give of our time and talents instead of our treasure? Or perhaps it is the other way around: Can we give of our treasure and not of our time and talents? But these are the wrong questions. The right question is: Can we give of our time and talents in addition to our treasure? Yes, indeed, we are called to give of all three. The things that God gives us are not to be pitted against one another. Rather, they are given to us, and we are to press them all into God's service for benefit of His church and our neighbors in need.

Thus, we give all three. We give our treasure in the form of a generous, first-fruits proportion of our income. We give of our time in generosity for the benefit of Christ's holy church. We give of our talents in the same manner. Since God gave us all these things, we are called to give generously of all these things in faith toward Him and in fervent love to our neighbors.

For God has provided all these things for us. Out of His fatherly, divine goodness and mercy, He gives us each time, talents, AND treasure as a means to bless those around us. We serve our neighbors with these things, blessing them with the blessings with which God has blessed us. We give of our time, talents, and treasure to our families, our society, our church, and our local congregations.

And we do this because we know that we are not our own. Rather, we belong to God. We have been bought with a price: the holy, precious blood, and innocent suffering and death of our Lord Jesus Christ. He gave everything — His time, His talents, and His treasure — to have us as His own and to live under Him in His kingdom and serve Him in everlasting righteousness, innocence, and blessedness. We have these things as gifts and blessings from God.

Let us then press them all into service for the sake of His love — time, talents, and treasure together.

LENT

The word *lent* has its origin in the same root as one of the German words for “spring” *Lenz*. As nature awakens from the death of winter, so the Christian finds newness of life in Christ, rising from sin’s death.

During the 40 days of Lent, God’s baptized people cleanse their hearts through the discipline of Lent: repentance, prayer, fasting almsgiving. Lent is a time in which God’s people prepare with joy for the paschal feast (Easter). It is a time in which God renews His people’s zeal in faith and life. It is a time in which we pray that we may be given the fulness of grace that belongs to the children of God.

Ash Wednesday may fall as early as February 6 or as late as March 10. The dates for Lent depend on the date of Easter. Ash Wednesday is always 46 days before Easter.

As for custom, Lent begins with Ash Wednesday when ashes maybe placed on the forehead to symbolize repentance. The color for this service is black or purple. The color for the rest of Lent is purple. The hymns and services of Lent do not include the joyful word, “Alleluia.” Sundays are not part of the 40 days of Lent.

The
Season
of
Lent



Ash Wednesday is February 22. A simple meal will be available for all the congregation to join in beginning at 5:15 pm – 6:30 pm, followed by worship at 7 pm. This schedule will be followed throughout the Lenten season’s following 5 weeks. No meals are served during Holy Week. An Easter Breakfast will allow us to join together after Easter morning service and celebrate the resurrection of our Savior. The congregation members will be asked to sign up to help with each of these meals. Watch the bulletins for more information. Free-will donations will be gathered at these meals and the Easter Breakfast. These donations will be given to Christ the King Lutheran Church (Cristo Rey).

FEBRUARY Birthdays

7 Brennan Lambin
8 Robert Erdman
16 Sean Helke
16 Caleb Nash
19 Lisa Allison



23 Kristin Mosher
23 Carmen Sette
25 Sarah Hock
25 Joel Jorgensen
25 Joseph Schillinger

26 Carolyn Werner

FEBRUARY Anniversaries

12 Brent/Laura Anderson (2011) - 12 yrs
15 Alex/Lindsey Gustafson (2014) - 9 yrs



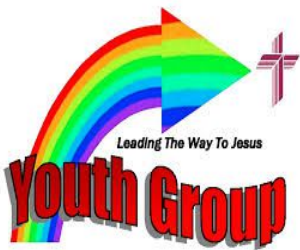
FEBRUARY Baptisms

6 Teresa Hock
7 Kelly Helg
7 Mary Jayne Nash
8 Carson Mitchell



13 Laura Anderson
13 Sara Yerkey
18 Nicole Magerkurth
25 Lauren Curry

25 Emily Marckese
26 Kyra Nash
00 Cathy Schillinger



Our youth are meeting each month on the third Sunday. They are also involved in activities planned within the circuit. All middle school and high school youth are encouraged to come. This is a great way to grow in your faith.

Sunday school is back to regular classes each Sunday morning. The next project is providing devotional materials for each family to use during the Lenten season. This provides a wonderful opportunity to begin family devotions which will not only strengthen each ones faith, but your family as a whole.



THANK YOU!

To our Family in Christ at St. John's Lutheran Church.

Thank you for the beautiful sympathy card for my sister's passing. The heartfelt words and message of hope both comforted us and reminded us of God's promise of life eternal for believers in Christ. My sister's faith waxed and waned during her life, but after her injury, that faith is what sustained her and brought us closer together. We are blessed in our faith & in having St. John's family in our lives. Peace, Gail & Steve Tutt

GROWING IN THE WORD OF GOD

- Sunday morning Adult Bible class – 8:45am in the Fellowship Hall. The study of the book of Colossians continues.
- Men's Bible Study – 7 pm the first Thursday of each month. The study topic is; ***How We Got the Bible***. Don't miss this opportunity to grow in God's word as well as build and strengthen relationships with other men at St. John's.
- Adult Instruction classes meet each Tuesday evening @ 7 pm



ALTAR FLOWERS

Celebrate a special occasion with flowers given for a Sunday worship service. Sign the flower chart, found on the bulletin board next to the rest rooms. **NOTE: Cost for 2 arrangements is \$30.** Put money in a yellow envelope (found by the chart). Fill in the date for the flowers along and occasion/memory and place envelope in the offering plate. Flowers will be ordered by the office and picked up for you.

PRAYER REQUESTS

Our Infrequent Attendees – pray the Holy Spirit bring them to understand their need to be in regular worship in church and we as brothers and sisters in Christ would reach out to them.

Our LWML Chapter – that God would continue to bless their work.

Sunday school – pray the Holy Spirit would direct and guide the students to a better understanding of God's love and mercy in Jesus Christ and that all parents would be diligent in bringing their children each Sunday.

Youth – pray the Holy Spirit would provide the means to work with our youth to keep them faithful to their confirmation promises. Bless and increase their numbers.

Elderly/Homebound - pray that this congregation would continually remember our Elderly and Shut-ins and minister to their special needs.

Confirmation Students – pray that they will be eager to study, learn and grow in the teachings of the Lutheran church and their faith. May they see this is the beginning of a life lived for Jesus.



REMEMBERING THOSE IN NEED!

ST. JOHN'S FAMILY—O Lord, You are the great Physician of soul and body. We pray that You would show mercy these members of St. John's:

Elizabeth Bjork

Lois Esterlein

Lynne Johnson

Marilyn Woods

Paula Chapa

Betty Firch

Jessica Johnson

Jim Dahl

Arlyn Helke

Drew Schillinger

Anthony/Sami Sedotto (Seminarian)

Andrew/Sarah Hill & family (Seminarian)

Don Eggers (son of friend of Marilyn Woods)

Jodie Martin (daughter of Gary/Darla Johns)

Jon/Anita Clausing (missionaries in Kenya)

Marilyn Potts (wife of Cal Potts, former LFC)

Rev. Justin Kane (son of Sandra Kane)

Laurie Sanford (sister of Jan Dahl)

Susan Mayden (sister of Michele Barry)

Russ Klavon (brother of Carolyn Werner)

(Please remember to call the church office if you are needing prayer. Also let us know when we can remove your name because your health has improved and you are living a regular life. We love to give thanks to God for His healing just as we send Him our requests.)

MILITARY – We pray for those serving in our military and their families:

Mandy/Richard Davila (daughter/husband of Linda Aper)

Luke/Nicole Thompson (son/wife of Joh/Kindra Thompson)

Karl Flynn (son of Mr/Mrs Paul Flynn)

Casey Powers Jr. (step son of Lisa Powers)

Zachary/Tiffany Gardner (nephew/wife of Lois Esterlein)

Brittany Loenser (daughter of Gabe Loenser)



- Please call the office or Pastor when someone is ill, hospitalized, or homebound or you desire private communion.
 - Please use this email to contact the office: churchoffice@stjohnsgeneseo.org
 - Website address – www.stjohnsgeneseo.org
 - Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/St.Johns.Geneseo/>
 - All Sunday services are ‘Live’ streamed at 10am and posted to our church website the following day.
 - **All newsletter articles need to be into the office no later than the 20th of each month.**
 - **Bulletin blurs must be to Terri by Wednesday morning each week.**
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MEMBERSHIP UPDATES

Please make these changes in your membership directory.

- Preston Smith Family – 417 – 12th St., Silvis, IL 61282
 - Alicia Willeford – 8107 N 19th Ave, Geneseo IL 61254
 - Elizabeth Bjork – Allure of Geneseo
 - Dawn Daebelliehn – 309-256-0343
 - Joyce DeFauw – No longer has a cell phone
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NEWS YOU CAN USE

January 2023



“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...” (Matthew 2:11).

The first record of worshipping Jesus took place in a house. The Magi bent low and acknowledged Him as God and Lord. They even brought offerings. Do you worship Him at home? Perhaps, like our family, you put away your Advent wreath this week, around which you listened to His Word for the past forty-one days. With the wreath stowed away until late this year, let’s hope you haven’t stopped holding home devotions. It’s vital to worship the Triune God in the Church, and in our homes. As I saw on the outdoor message board of one of our circuit congregations this week: “Daily devotions are more important than yearly resolutions.”

The vitality of such worship at home isn’t in your routine. It’s in His gifts, just like in your weekly worship in the Lord’s house every Sunday. He’s the great Giver. Come, let us adore Him ... every day.

A blessed Epiphany,
Pastor Mike Burdick, St. John’s Lutheran, Effingham

Pray For Our Central Illinois District Missions supported by your church’s Mission Dollars to the District. “Finally, brothers, pray for us, that the Word of the Lord may spread rapidly and be honored.”

Dear Father, we pray Thee, give us thy Word, that the Gospel may be sincerely preached throughout the world and that it may be received by faith and may work and live in us. So we pray that thy kingdom may prevail among us through the Word and the power of the Holy Spirit, that the devil’s kingdom may be overthrown and he may have no right or power over us, until finally the devil’s kingdom shall be utterly destroyed and sin, death, and hell exterminated, and that we may live forever in perfect righteousness and blessedness (from Luther’s Large Catechism).

ITEMS OF INTEREST TO SHARE

Christian Citizenship – Living as Christian Citizens in the Here and Now

In January of 2023, the Illinois General Assembly will conduct a “lame duck” session and begin its regular 2023 legislative session. Visit our District website to read current and updated information regarding your role as a Christian Citizen.

<http://www.cidlcms.org/ministry-human-care-christian-citizenship.html>

A Night of Hope: Where God, Art, and Mental Health Meet

Trinity Lutheran Church, Auburn, IL

Sunday, January 29, 2023, • 2:00 - 6:00 p.m.

High school youth and adults of any age are welcome!

Join Blake Flattley, Tanner Olson, and Heidi Goehmann for an afternoon of poetry, music, and tools for meeting our mental health with hope. This event connects people to resources that help them breach stigma, rest in God, and build strength to love themselves and those around them well, no matter the challenge. All three presenters will have merchandise available for sale and will do signings.

Cost is FREE (by God’s Grace and generous donors). Registration is open now through January 15th at www.trinityauburn.org. Please reach out to Trinity, Auburn, at tlcauburnil@gmail.com with questions.

Sponsored in part by Trinity Lutheran Church, Auburn, Central Illinois District Church Extension Fund, Camp CILCA, and Thrivent

Reimbursements for Prison Ministry Materials

Consider donating printed Gospel-centered materials to a nearby state, federal prison, or county jail. Thanks to a generous grant from central Illinois LWML, members of CID congregations or these churches can make such donations and receive at least partial reimbursement from the District. CID will reimburse up to \$200 on a donation.

For the present program’s reimbursement voucher, guidelines, and list of approved materials, please see <http://www.cidlcms.org/outreach-missions-prison.html>.

2023 CID Youth Bible Bowl

Announcing the 2023 Central Illinois District LC-MS Youth Bible Bowl: “Judges and Ruth.” In the best way, you know how to study these two biblical books about a difficult period of history for God’s people. And talk within your circuit about holding your Circuit Bible Bowl in the weeks before the District Bible Bowl scheduled for Sunday, April 16, 2023, at 3:00 p.m. at Camp CILCA.

The Bible Bowl provides an opportunity for our youth (6th-12th grade) to be involved in Scripture study and thus to grow in their knowledge of God’s Word and deepen their faith. Each circuit gets to send its top two teams to Springfield. For more information on holding a Bible Bowl in your circuit, please contact Pastor Mark Eddy at Zion Lutheran Church, Taylor Ridge, Illinois. (email at zionlcms@juno.com)

CPH FaithCourse

All CPH FaithCourse (Video based Bible Study) printed materials will no longer be available after February 1st. So, you are encouraged to visit CPH at <https://cphfaithcourses.com/> and print off any and all printed materials before February 1st. This would include handouts, leaders’ guides etc. The videos for these courses will remain available at CPH website via their YouTube channel. <https://www.youtube.com/c/ConcordiaPublishing/playlists>

HENRY COUNTY RIGHT TO LIFE SCHOLARSHIPS

Henry County Right to Life is announcing its 2023 scholarship contest for area high school and college students. Applications are now available to qualified students to submit an essay on the theme -

With teen suicides, how can our community guide?

Entries must reflect the general theme.

The student with the winning essay will be awarded a \$1000 scholarship which will be forwarded to their intended college in the student's name. Students may print a copy of the application and complete rules and regulations by going to the Henry County Right to Life's website at <http://henrycountyr21.wixsite.com/life>.

Scholarship applications must be received or postmarked no later than March 31, 2023.

For further information, contact Henry County Right to Life President, Peggy Emmert, at 309-231-2657

Entries should be mailed to HENRY COUNTY RIGHT TO LIFE, P.O. BOX 121, GENESEO, IL 61254.

***Note from church office: Scholarship applications and Rules/Regulations are available upon request from Terri.**

CHILI COOKS and BAKERS WANTED!

Chili Cookoff Fundraiser for St John's Food Pantry

Sunday, February 26, 2023

Set-up 4:00pm

Doors Open 5:00pm

Do you have a great chili recipe that everyone loves, or are you a baker? If so, we need you to help us raise funds for the food pantry. Just like everyone else, our costs have gone up as well.

Register to bring a pot of chili or baked goods by Jan 30 - call St. Johns, East Moline (792-0755), or email carrie.homann@gmail.com

Chili Cooks Needed

- Make a fresh, from scratch pot of chili (at least 4 qts).
- Bring chili in a crockpot with a ladle or serving spoon to St John's at 4pm on Sun., Feb 26.
- Style of chili can be traditional red, white chili, or vegetarian.
- Feel free to name your chili, decorate your table and dress the part! Have fun with this!

We will provide a table with electricity, serving gloves, cups, spoons, napkins, toppings (cheese, sour cream, oyster crackers, etc.), & beverages.

There will be a Judges Choice and People's Choice. Judges are to be determined. If you know of a chili-loving pastor or vicar, let us know! Fun prizes included!

Bakers Needed

- All baked items will be packaged for sale.
- For the immediate delight of the chili diners (corn muffins and desserts)
- Or for the purpose of a bake sale – items to be purchased and taken home
- Cookies, bars, whole pies, cupcakes, snack mixes, caramel corn, etc.

More information to come regarding this, but for now we want to know if we will have enough volunteer bakers for the event.





ST. JOHN'S LUTHERAN CHURCH
 GENESEO IL
 309-949-2516



2023

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	ELDER Aaron Raschke		1 Confirmation 5 pm	2 Elders 6 pm Men's Bible Study 7 pm	3	4
5 SS/Adult/Youth Bible Study 8:45am Worship/Comm 10 am	6 <i>Pastor's Day Off</i>	7 Adult Instruction 6:30 pm	8 Confirmation 5 pm	9	10	11
12 SS/Adult/Youth Bible Study 8:45am Worship 10 am	13 <i>Pastor's Day Off</i>	14 LWML 1 pm Council 6:00 pm	15 Confirmation 5 pm	16	17	18
19 SS/Adult/Youth Bible Study 8:45am Worship/Comm 10 am Youth Group 11:30 am	20 <i>Pastor's Day Off</i>	21 Adult Instruction 6:30 pm SS Teachers 7 pm	22 Confirmation 5 pm Supper 5:15 pm Lenten Service 7 pm ASH WEDNESDAY	23	24	25
26 SS/Adult/Youth Bible Study 8:45am Worship 10 am	27 <i>Pastor's Day Off</i>	28 Adult Instruction 6:30 pm				



ST. JOHN'S EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH
8948 N 1900 AVE
GENESEO IL 61254-8941



**Sunday school/Adult & Youth Bible Class
8:45am**

**WORSHIP SERVICES 10 am
(Holy Communion 1st & 3rd Sundays)**

Live Streaming each week on Facebook