



ST. JOHN'S EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH

8948 N 1900TH AVE, GENESEO IL

815-989-2025

www.stjohnsgeneseo.org

February, 2026

From the Pastor:

“Pascal’s Wager: Something to Think About, Correctly”

Have you ever heard of Blaise Pascal or heard of Pascal’s Wager? Pascal (1623-1662) was a French thinker famous for contributions to mathematics (Pascal’s Triangle, probability), physics (pressure, vacuum, hydraulics), and even inventing early calculators (Pascaline). Due to his contributions, he had a unit of pressure named after him, the *pascal*.¹ He was also a Christian, writing both philosophy and theology. And that leads us to his wager.

Pascal proposed that there are one of two truths in the universe and then one of two ways to live in relation to those truths.

- The Truths: Either God exists, or God doesn’t exist.
- The ways to live: You can live as if God exists, or you can live as if God doesn’t exist.

Pascal then gave the following conclusions²:

- If God doesn’t exist, and you live as though He doesn’t exist, you have no losses.
- If God doesn’t exist, and you live as though He does, you have no losses.
- If God does exist, and you live as though He doesn’t, you have infinite loss.
- If God does exist, and you live as though He does, you have infinite gain.

Pascal’s point, his wager, is that if you live as if God exists, whether He actually does or does not, you lose nothing and, should He exist, you gain eternal life. On the other hand, if you live as if God does not exist, best case scenario is there is no real loss, but should He exist, you lose in this life and in eternity. There is certainly some wisdom in this thinking so, no wonder, Pascal’s Wager, in some form or another, has been used by both apologists and evangelists to get people to at least think start thinking about deeper, religious truths, living of one’s life if there is a Judgment, and how one might fare under such a Judgment. However, there are weaknesses in his wager that limits its value.

What are these weaknesses? Let’s consider a few of the most obvious. First, while Pascal was a Christian, his wager is stated very much in terms of deism (a generic deity) and agnosticism (really can’t know anything, so just take a bet/wager). In fact, this concern was expressed by the religiously orthodox from the beginning. While his intent was to get people to think about eternity and to get open sinners to reconsider remaining in their sins, which are not wrong, they also are *not* the equivalent of saving faith.

The “god” of his wager is not specifically the Holy Trinity, but could be any deity. Yet simply believing in a god, even just *one* god, is not enough. “You believe that God is one; you do well. Even the demons believe—and shudder!” (James 2:19). And certainly not every “god” out there gave His Son as the atoning sacrifice to save all who believe in Him. “And there is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved.” (Acts 4:12). And that takes us to a second weakness.

Works do not save. They *cannot* save for sin contaminates our best works. So “living as if God exists” must mean more than simply “straightening out one’s life and starting to do the right things.” While faith without

¹ One pascal (Pa) is equivalent to a force of one newton (N) applied to an area of 1m².

² Different sources represent these conclusions slightly differently, sometimes using “believe” instead of “living as if God exists,” etc. but the basic gist is the same.

works is dead, so works without faith cannot please God. But faith assumes repentance over sin, which is more than just stopping large or manifest sins. True repentance understands that sins deserve and will bring death and hell, and so it recognizes the need, not for self-improvement, but for God's forgiveness. And that's where faith comes in, that is, faith not in "god," *but in Jesus as Savior*. He has paid for the sins that condemn us. In Him, there is forgiveness and eternal life. Certainly repentance will be enacted in a new life of turning from sin towards Christ and holiness. But it is only this faith in Jesus that can produce works that God judges to be good. Only by faith in Jesus can a person "live as though God exists."

A third weakness is the denial, or at least downplaying of the losses that believers suffer "in this life." "If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me." (Matthew 16:24) Those who follow Jesus in a non-Christian society may suffer very greatly in this life, as the long list of Christian martyrs and confessors prove. Also, while there are temporal benefits to many of the virtues, at the same time, living as a Christian is one of self-denial in this life. We kill that which we call sinful desires and walk with an eye to our heavenly home and so often make this life less pleasant, at least at the immediate moment. If God does not exist, we have likely suffered loss in this life, though it is only temporary. However, if God does exist, not only do we have infinite eternal gain, let's not forget that those who are persecuted for Jesus's sake are *blessed*, looking forward to a great reward in heaven (see Matthew 5:10,11).

Other things could be said, but I think these address the main points of criticism of Pascal's Wager. But why bring this up in the first place? As I mentioned, there are those who use it in their witnessing to others. Perhaps you have even used something like it yourselves. It's not that there is no value, but if we are to use something like this let's at least be sure we know and understand its weaknesses so that we can compensate accordingly. But most of all, it's necessary to recognize that when using Pascal's Wager or something like it, *there is no evangelism actually being done*, at least yet. It might be useful for *pre-evangelism*, to get a person thinking so to speak, but a person cannot think themselves into faith. Being converted requires the Gospel, the *Evangel*. Hence *evangelism* requires sharing the Gospel of Christ, not merely some God talk and encouragement to make some changes to their lives.

So as you speak with others, witnessing of Jesus to them, confessing Christ to them, whether you use Pascal's Wager, or any other "get'em to think" tool, always be sure to bring God's Word of Law and Gospel. For it is only through the Word that the Holy Spirit works true repentance over sin and true faith in Jesus as Savior. Anything else, whatever it's value may be as a support tool, will fail if the Word is not spoken and the Gospel is not shared. God help us to boldly share His Word!

Sincerely in Christ our Lord,

Pastor Nerud

Apologetics: Evolutionary Myths of Conventional Science³

One of the most influential ideas over the history of the world is that billions of years of nothing created everything! Remarkably, this idea continues to dominate society, and in particular the academic mindset within conventional science. Yet we should remain steadfast in our knowledge that such conjecture is only a myth: "an unfounded or false notion."^a

Evolutionary concepts were around in one form or another as far back as ancient Greece. But Charles Darwin refined the myth to account for the origin and diversification of all forms of life on Earth, earning him most of the credit for the theory of evolution. In his 1859 book *On the Origin of Species by Means of Natural Selection*, Darwin envisioned that species were relatively plastic and could transform from one kind into another through a process he called natural selection.^b He argued that nature preserved species that were favored to endure different environmental pressures and reproduce. In effect, he replaced the God of creation with "Mother Nature." When an organism couldn't adapt to new conditions, it went extinct and was replaced by another version that was better suited.

³ Various Authors. 2025. [Evolutionary Myths of Conventional Science](https://www.icr.org/article/15444/). *Acts & Facts*. 54 (5), 4. <https://www.icr.org/article/15444/>

However, the way this process actually works is vague and undefined. What is environmental pressure? What decides which organisms are better suited? And how does nature select without intelligence?

These questions ultimately depend on the early formation of molecules and living cells. But none of them could be answered by Darwin or his theory. Furthermore, he realized that the fossil record didn't support evolution either, but he still believed we'd find all the missing links between organisms in the future. Today, 166 years later, the missing links are still missing.

Regardless, Darwin duped the scientific community into believing his myth. To do so, he had to embrace the paradigm of deep time that James Hutton put forth in the late eighteenth century.^c Darwin needed vast amounts of time for small changes to accumulate into big changes. For example, he proposed that notable differences in finch beaks provided supporting evidence, claiming their beaks evolved slowly through natural selection. Since then, intensive studies have revealed that Galápagos finch beaks undergo minute changes within the same bird, in the same generation, in response to seasonal differences in the availability and size of seeds in their diets.^d The variation in these finches was, ironically, part of the basis of Darwin's theory of evolution.^e

Moreover, in the evolutionary zeal to find missing links, conventional scientists have created hoaxes and made mistakes, including Piltdown Man and the more recent half-bird, half-dinosaur *Archaeoraptor liaoningensis*.^{f,g} In reality, there are few, if any, undisputed transitional fossils.^h Instead, many fossils are discovered as complete creatures in their order of burial by the Flood. Scientist Michael Denton summarized this dilemma by stating,

Whatever view one wishes to take of the evidence of paleontology, it does not provide convincing grounds for believing that the phenomenon of life conforms to a continuous pattern. The gaps have not been explained away.ⁱ

That is, not without introducing another unsolved mystery of punctuated equilibrium.^j Collectively, the lack of evidence for the origin of life, the evolution of life, and transitional fossil life remains an insurmountable problem for conventional scientists.

At ICR, we understand that nature could never create life or transform one creature into another. All organisms are created with forethought and intention to self-adjust in order to adapt to their respective environments. And thus, organisms are the agents of control. As a collection of physical laws, nature is certainly not a living force and is therefore void of any creative capacity. For these and many other reasons, we recognize Jesus Christ as the Creator and Sustainer of life. "All things were created through Him, and for Him" ([Colossians 1:16](#)).

References

- a. Merriam-Webster, s.v. "myth." Accessed July 29, 2025. <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/myth>.
- b. Darwin, C. 1859. *On the Origin of Species*. London: John Murray.
- c. James Hutton proposed deep time after a 1788 visit to the east coast of Scotland. See Clarey, T. 2023. [Siccar Point, the Shrine of Deep Time](#). *Acts & Facts*. 52 (3): 21–22.
- d. Burrows, L. [For Darwin's Finches, Beak Shape Goes Beyond Evolution](#). Harvard John A. Paulson School of Engineering and Applied Sciences. Posted on seas.harvard.edu/news November 12, 2021.
- e. [18.1C: The Galapagos Finches and Natural Selection. Introductory and General Biology](#). General Biology (Boundless). LibreTexts. Posted on bio.libretexts.org.
- f. Sloan, C. P. 1999. Feathers for *T. rex*? *National Geographic*. 196 (5): 98–107.
- g. Simons, L. W. 2000. *Archaeoraptor* Fossil Trail. *National Geographic*. 198 (4): 128–132.
- h. Morris, J. D. and F. J. Sherwin. 2010. [The Fossil Record: Unearthing Nature's History of Life](#). Dallas, TX: Institute for Creation Research.
- i. Denton, M. 1986. *Evolution: A Theory in Crisis*. Bethesda, MD: Adler & Adler Publishers, 194.
- j. Gould, S. J. and N. Eldridge. 1977. Punctuated Equilibria: The Tempo and Mode of Evolution Reconsidered. *Paleobiology*. 3 (2): 115–151.

Why we do what we do in worship⁴

Notes on the Liturgy #10 — Alleluia Verse and other responses

“Alleluia” means “praise the LORD.” It is an expression of joy that emphasizes victory in Christ. For this reason, it is common not to sing it during Lent, and to perhaps substitute a different verse in its place. This is a voluntary devotion to highlight the passion of our Lord. Notice in the different Divine Services of LSB, the Alleluia is combined with other words of Scripture. In LSB Setting 1 (p. 156), we sing the words of the disciples in John 6:68 “Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal Life.” In Setting 4 (pg. 205), we sing John’s summation about Jesus’ miracles recorded in Jn 20:31, “These things are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God.” There are other verses taken from Scripture that may be used in accordance with a particular season or Sunday of the Church year as well.

The Alleluia Verse originally served the mundane purpose of being “traveling music” in the early church as the procession of the Gospel took place. But while the original purpose may not be necessary any more (though it would have such a use if one uses a Gospel procession), it works to thrust our attention forward to the hearing of Jesus’ words and deeds in the Gospel Reading. Thus, the Alleluia Verse is a tool to focus on and exalt the Gospel reading as well as adore the Lord of the Gospel Himself. This is an important point. The liturgy has been formed by the church through the centuries. It is the culmination of the work of great theologians with whom the Lord has blessed His Church. Lutherans have retained a liturgical form not because they love minutiae and tradition, but because the liturgy continues to point us beyond ourselves to the cross and the Gospel. The liturgy has been kept for the love of the Gospel.

The Gradual, between the Old Testament/First Reading and the Epistle/Second Reading comes from the Latin word *gradus*, meaning “step.” Like the Alleluia verse, its original use was likely having music during times of movement, which is no longer needed. However, it serves as a response to the Old Testament Reading and, being a proper, it changes with the church seasons, helping to highlight the particular season God’s people are currently celebrating.

Finally, here is a brief word on the other responses to the Scripture readings. The phrase “Thanks be to God.” was used by early Christians to gain entrance into houses of worship. During periods of persecution the doorkeeper would accept this phrase and allow a person into the assembly. By God’s grace, we here do not need such a password, but it still has a very important use in the liturgy. After a reading, the pastor says, “This is the Word of the Lord,” indicating that what was just heard is nothing less than God Himself speaking. Therefore, since God’s people long to hear His voice, they rightly respond, “Thanks be to God” after hearing Him speak to them. The responses “Glory to you, O Lord” and “Praise to you, O Christ,” used before and after the Gospel Reading, highlight the fact that we are not simply reading a religious book, not even a really good one, but that the God of the Bible is present with us in and through the Scripture readings and, truly, through the whole Divine Service of Word and Sacrament.

OFFICE INFORMATIONS



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 website

⁴ These notes were originally written in 2001 by Pastor David Oberdieck and have been edited both on the site listed and furthermore by Pastor Nerud. The entire original series of articles may be found at <http://steadfastlutherans.org/liturgy>.

LENTEN SEASON

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 and 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 are 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 a part of the 40 days of Lent.

In just a few weeks we will enter the season of Lent. Our thoughts will turn to the overwhelming love of our God who gave His only Son to redeem man and restore for all eternity, the perfect relationship with all who believe Jesus as their Savior.

Mid-week services will begin February 18th with Ash Wednesday and continue each week until Easter. A display “**REFLECTIONS OF THE PASSION OF OUR SAVIOR**” will be presented in the Narthex reminding us through scripture and visuals the path Jesus took that last week before His crucifixion, death and resurrection. We invite you to take time walking this path in our weekly worship and through this display.

A DOLLAR FOR MISSIONS



Immanuel Lutheran Student Center in Macomb was dedicated in 1969, but some of the equipment in the kitchen of the apartment for the live-in student who takes care of the student center (the sexton) has not been replaced since then. DFM funds would be used to replace the original kitchen equipment. **Amount to be funded: \$11,000**

Project: Replace original kitchen equipment in the sexton's apartment at Immanuel Lutheran Student Center, Macomb

NEW!! Dollar for Missions Online Giving

New this year, you can now support Dollars for Mission through online giving. Many people no longer carry cash but still want to support the Central Illinois District’s mission work. One-time and recurring donations are now available online at <https://www.aplos.com/aws/give/LCMSCentralIllinoisDistrict/D4M>. **All new recurring gifts will be matched by a special one-time gift, up to \$20,000.**

MITE BITES

LWML CID Mission Grant #5 – Just for Moms - \$3,544

Almost 4 out of 10 women who receive services from Pregnancy Resources in Moline, IL have no faith background or are of non-Christian faith. Along with this, of professing Christian clients, 48 are at risk for abortion.

Pregnancy Resources “Just for Moms” bags help provide a new mom with a holistic wellness approach that considers a person’s physical, mental, emotional, social, and spiritual aspects. Each bag offers a Lutherans for Life devotional for mothers, a journal to track emotional needs, post-natal vitamins, and more help to prepare her for the birth and delivery of her baby.

How can I help? Pray that God uses the materials distributed by Pregnancy Resources to bring lost souls to Christ. Support this grant by donating to your church’s LWML group mite fund.

PRAYER GROUP (CHAIN)



All are invited to participate by either requesting prayers or praying for others. Prayer requests are sent to Pastor who then sends them out by email to those praying members. This is a blessing for all.

EVANGELISM/STEWARDSHIP BOARD

Paula Chapa – 2nd year, Karen Rasmussen – 1st year, Kindra Thompson – 1st year

Backpack Blessings

Geneseo's Backpack Blessings Organization is feeding 80-90 students in the Geneseo School District this year. That means that there are that many students that will go home at the end of every school week to a "food insecure" home at no fault of the child.

Backpack Blessings fill a gallon bag with 6-8 items of kid friendly food for each child that normally may go through the weekend/break with access to very little food. It is discreetly put in their backpacks before the end of a school week or a holiday break.

Our Evangelism/Stewardship Board is asking St. John's members to donate to this wonderful and much needed organization. Help feed our kids this year by making a donation to:

Kingswood Church
302 N. State St.
Geneseo, IL 61254

Write in check memo: Backpack Blessings
Or

Volunteer to pack bags for the kids with food on the last Saturday of every month at Kingswood Church.

Call 309-944-4278 if you have any questions.

We made a \$250 donation from St. John's at Christmas.

(Kingwood used to be the Methodist Church on State Street.)

St. John's Honor Students High School:

Robert Wolfe
Katrina Nerud
Nicole Werling
Gannon Marckese

Middle School:

Matthew Werling
Alexander Wolfe

Lenton Dinners

February 25th
March 4th
March 11th
March 18th
March 25th

Easter Sunday is April 5th after service

Sign-up sheet is on the table in Narthex by coat room. Please sign up as soon as you can as Lent is early this year. More about Easter Sunday is coming.

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 direct and guide all students in understanding God's love and mercy in Jesus Christ. May parents diligently teach their children of Jesus.

Youth – pray the Holy Spirit provide means to work with our youth to encouraging their faithful walk with Jesus. 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:

Linda Aper
Paula Chapa
Joyce DeFauw
John Erdman
Betty Firch
Marcia Helke

Jessica Johnson
Rosalie Jorgensen
Linda Lundquist
Mary Jayne Nash
Aaron Raschke
Drew Schillinger

Dave Schmidt
Carolyn Werner
Carolyn Wildermuth
Denise Winchell
Marilyn Woods

Jon/Anita Clausing (missionaries in Kenya)
Paul Werner (brother of Dan Werner)
Loyall Talarico (niece of Mary Jo Gehn)
Ellen Bauer (grandmother of Joel Werling)
Ann Behrendt (daughter of Carolyn Wildermuth)

Marty Cavato (cousin of Mary Jo Gehn)
Jodi Martins (daughter of Gary/Darla Johns)
Justin Rittenhouse (grandson of John/Nancy Wickwire)
Joline Parrish (sister of Gayla Kroll)
Cindy Davenport (cousin of Terri Hock)

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:

Luke Thompson (son of John/Kindra Thompson)
Karl Flynn (son of Mr/Mrs Paul Flynn)
Casey Powers Jr. (step son of Lisa Powers)
Brittany Lenni (daughter of Gabe Loenser)
Rylie Hallendorff (grand-daughter of Carolyn & Dan Werner)
Chase Werling (nephew of Joel Werling)

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

FEBRUARY BIRTHDAYS

7 Brennan Lambin
8 Robert Erdman
16 Sean Helke
16 Caleb Nash

19 Lisa Allison
23 Carmen Sette
25 Joel Jorgensen
25 Joseph Schillinger

26 Carolyn Werner



FEBRUARY ANNIVERSARIES

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



HANDEL'S "MESSIAH"

The Augustana Oratorio Society will present Handel's "Messiah" Sunday, February 22nd @ 3:00 p.m. in Centennial Hall. For tickets or additional information, contact tickets@augustana.edu or 309-794-7306.

One of our shut-ins told me of the new tv documentary “*The First Christmas*,” hosted by Kevin Costner. Her advice for her granddaughter had been that the great-grandchildren not be allowed to watch it. She was right. In it, Herod was accurately depicted as darkly evil, and kids shouldn’t experience the depth of his twistedness yet.

While kids should be shielded from strong images of evil -- please protect them, mom and dad by carefully filtering what they watch -- adults ought to admit just how horrible the human mind and heart can be. Then lament and repent daily.

Jesus entered into a culture and creation infected with sin, to be the world’s Savior. To give us unlimited joy. Life in the midst of a State which has allowed physician-assisted suicide. Help in the midst of suffering. Deep peace. Forgiveness of sin. Confidence in the face of the grave. Light in the darkness. Hope in the midst of Herods.

“The Light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.” (John 1:5)

Christ the King reigns, no matter what the Herods of the world try to do. Rejoice.

- Pastor Mike Burdick St. John’s Lutheran Church, Effingham

Pray For Our Central Illinois District Missions, supported by your church’s Mission Dollars to the District.

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

Invest at 3.75% for 11 Months & Help Finance Churches and Schools!

The Central Illinois District Church Extension Fund (CID-CEF) Board of Trustees has extended the opportunity to invest in our special 11-month investment at 3.75%. This is a high interest rate for this length of term and won’t be around much longer, so please take advantage of this opportunity to assist our churches and schools in financing the expansion of their ministries while you receive the added blessing of a great interest rate!

Current Dollar For Mission Project

Project: Replace original kitchen equipment in the sexton's apartment at Immanuel Lutheran Student Center, Macomb

*Immanuel Lutheran Student Center in Macomb was dedicated in 1969, but some kitchen equipment in the apartment for the live-in student who cares for the student center (the sexton) has not been replaced since then. DFM funds would be used to replace the original kitchen equipment. **Amount to be funded: \$11,000.00***

Dollars for Mission Online – New this year, you can now support Dollars for Mission through online giving. Many people no longer carry cash but still want to support the Central Illinois District’s mission work. One-time and recurring donations are now available online at <https://www.aplos.com/aws/give/LCMSCentralIllinoisDistrict/D4M> or by using the QR code.

All new recurring gifts will be matched by a special one-time gift, up to \$20,000.

2026 Youth Bible Bowl

Date: March 2026 (working on March 21-22)

Location: Camp CILCA

Topic: "The Gospel According to St. Matthew"



The Gospel according to St. Matthew summarizes what we need to know to receive salvation from sin, the devil, and death. The Gospel of St. Matthew records the most important teachings of Jesus and the key events in Jesus' life. Plan to study "the Gospel according to St. Matthew" with youth (junior and senior high [grades 6-12]) as thoroughly as you can, to prepare them to answer questions in your Circuit and at the District Bible Bowl in the spring, and (most importantly) so that by God's grace and the power of the Holy Spirit they grow in their faith that Jesus truly is the Son of God and our Savior.

Contact Rev Mark Eddy (zionlcms@juno.com) for additional information.

The Small Church Summit for Winter, 2026, will feature a presentation by SID President Heath Curtis titled "The Small Town Lutheran Church." Sectionals will be on "Shepherding our Strays," technology in small churches, and safety standards.

St. Paul Lutheran Church, 1076 E Chatham Street, Lexington

Feb.21 or (if weather is bad) Feb. 28

Sign-in will be at 9:30 a.m., opening devotion will commence at 10:00, and closing prayer will be at 2:30 p.m. Register by February 13th, 2026, at <https://forms.gle/eujwE5hmRC48wF7MA>

If you think your church is small, YOU are invited. And everyone is welcome!

THE LUTHERAN LEGAL LEAGUE

Grace and peace to you in the name of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

The Lutheran Legal League, a Registered Service Organization of the Lutheran Church–Missouri Synod, exists to serve congregations, church workers, and members by connecting them with attorneys who are themselves active, worshiping Lutherans. These attorneys understand our shared confession, our polity, and the unique pastoral and congregational realities that arise when legal questions touch the life of the Church.

I write to you with thanksgiving for your congregation and with a humble request for your partnership in a ministry that serves Christ's Church.

Over the years, the Lord has quietly used this ministry to bring help and peace in moments of uncertainty and strain, when legal concerns became intertwined with pastoral, emotional, and spiritual burdens. This work is not accomplished by programs or structures, but through the faithful use of the gifts God has placed within His people.

For that reason, I ask that you would prayerfully consider whether there are licensed attorneys among the members of your congregation, and that you would encourage them to learn about and consider membership in the Lutheran Legal League. Membership is free and simply requires that an attorney be licensed, actively worshiping in an LCMS congregation, and recommended by their pastor. There is no obligation to take on matters, no referral fees, and no expectation beyond a willingness to be a resource when needs arise. The Lutheran Legal League is not a law firm and not a referral service. It exists solely as a ministry of connection and service within Christ's Church.

When legal questions arise, often unexpectedly, it is a quiet blessing to be able to walk alongside fellow believers who share both professional skill and a common faith. Encouraging attorneys within your congregation to consider this ministry is one small but meaningful way to bear one another's burdens and to care for the body of Christ.

Attorneys who are interested may register at <https://lutheranlegalleague.org/registration>. I am also always glad to speak personally with anyone who has questions about the ministry or its purpose.

Please know of my prayers for your congregation and for your continued faithfulness in Christ. May the Lord bless you as you live together in His grace and serve Him with the gifts He has entrusted to you. In Christ's service,

The harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few. Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field. Luke 10:2

President- Rusty Huseman, Esq.

Dear Friends of Cristo Rey,

Lutheran Legacy Foundation was started by [The Clara & Spencer Werner Foundation](#). The mission of the Lutheran Legacy Foundation is to help provide for the future of Lutheranism. Lutheran Legacy Foundation seeks to nurture Christian faith and values for future generations. This foundation seeks to make endowing the future easier for individuals, churches and organizations.

Since its founding in 1953, The Clara and Spencer Werner Foundation has given more than 30 million dollars for Lutheran causes. The Werner Foundation is now a donor-advised fund inside Lutheran Legacy Foundation. The Werner Fund's primary giving emphasis is targeted at helping Lutheran churches, schools and organizations start their own endowment.

Lutheran Legacy Foundation specializes in "endowment funds," also called 'permanent funds,' because the principal (corpus) remains permanently invested while the earnings provide a stream of revenue. Lutheran Legacy Foundation seeks to incentivize churches and organizations to establish these funds by offering matching grants.

Cristo Rey has, by the Grace of God, established an endowment fund with the Lutheran Legacy Foundation in August 2025. The fund's name is the "Cristo Rey Endowment Fund" for Christ the King Lutheran Church. The purpose of this endowment fund is to support the mission, ministry, outreach, and facilities of Christ the King Lutheran Church (Cristo Rey), East Moline for as long as, by God's grace, this congregation continues to plant the Gospel's seed in the Quad Cities, or until our Lord returns.

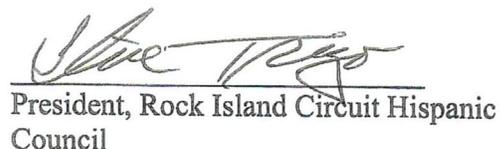
Because you are a friend of Cristo Rey and Hispanic Ministry we are asking for your help (in building the corpus (principal amount) of Cristo Rey's Endowment Fund. Lutheran Legacy will strengthen your donation with a 20% match. This matching offer is available until the fund's corpus reaches \$500,000 or the fund reaches its 10th birthday whichever comes first. It takes approximately one year from the time an endowment fund is established with Lutheran Legacy for the first payout to be received.

This link provides information on the Lutheran Legacy Foundation, Cristo Rey's Endowment Fund, making a donation and FAQs: <https://lutheranlegacyfoundation.org/fund/cristo-rey-endowment-fund/>

Carry each other's burdens, and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ. *Galatians 6:2*

Peace be with you,


Pastor, Christ The King, LCMS


President, Rock Island Circuit Hispanic Council

THANK YOU for your words of sympathy, your voice of concern, your gesture of caring and the love you offer. We sincerely appreciate everything – page of paper products, service, cemetery needs, Roselyn, Barb and all helpers for the funeral lunch, Terri for bulletins, cards, prayers, etc. The Family of Arlyn Helke -Marcia, Sean, Derek and Conner.

Note: See card on bulletin board.



ST. JOHN'S LUTHERAN CHURCH
 GENESEO IL
 815-989-2025

February 2026

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



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



BUILT ON CHRIST OUR CORNERSTONE

Pastor: Rev. Timothy Nerud

pastor@stjohnsgeneseo.org

churchoffice@stjohnsgeneseo.org

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

Worship Services - 10 am

(Holy Communion 1st & 3rd Sundays)

Ash Wednesday worship – February 18 @ 7 pm

Lenten worship – February 15 @ 7 pm

Live Streaming each week on Facebook

Let us
LOVE
One another
for love
is from
GOD

1 John 4:7

Lynnie Pinnie