

ST. JOHN'S NEWSLETTER

ST. JOHN'S EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH

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BUILT ON CHRIST OUR CORNERSTONE

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“Lent: A (Necessary!) Sobering Time”

Many drunk people believe that they can take on the world (this phenomenon is known as liquid courage). In their state of inebriation they believe that they have become the strongest, smartest, smoothest-talking, best-dancing, and best-looking individual God ever put on the face of the earth (real “legends in their own minds”). But such moments of magnificence are short-lived and their foolishness is made quite obvious by the “purging of the system” which follows.

Alcohol itself wasn't the problem here as it is a fine gift from God which “gladdens the heart of men”¹ when used responsibly in moderation. No, alcohol was not the problem; it was simply the item abused. It is the sinner who abused God's gift that is the problem.

As we prepare to enter Lent, it is important to see that we sinners are good at abusing so many of God's good gifts. We abuse alcohol by drunkenness, food by gluttony, sex by adultery, fornication, and pornography, work and school by letting them take us away from His Word, and money by withholding it from the church or by blowing improper amounts on entertainment. The list of how we abuse God's gifts is as at least as long as the list of His gifts, which includes everything for the support and needs of our body and soul. Actually, the list is *longer* because there almost always is more than one way to abuse a God from God. And as the mirror of God's Law shows us the various ways we abuse His gifts, we come to recognize that such is truly *an abuse of God's grace*, that is, His undeserved love for us.

God's grace is the source that all of His other gifts flow from. It is the gift of His Son, our Savior Jesus, who lived, died, and rose for us as our Savior. It is the gift of forgiveness of our sins and the giving of the Holy Spirit, granting us new life even now that will last forever in heaven. What a great gift the Father's grace is; truly the greatest! Yet we abuse it; acting as if we're “drunk” on His grace. We act as if we're filled with some form of “spiritual liquid courage” that makes us believe that we can just do as we want, that we can choose to ignore Him, stay away from gathering with His church around His Word and Sacraments, and follow sinful paths by abusing His many gifts to us.

A person who is drunk on alcohol looks very impressive to his or herself, but to everybody else they look like a fool. They are a laughing stock at best, but are often offensive and even dangerous. On a far greater scale, one who is “drunk” on God's grace thinks that they look just fine to God and the world but, in reality, they are neither.

They are offensive to their fellow Christians, for sin is offensive to holy people. They give a *detrimental* witness of Christ to others, “The name of God is blasphemed among the Gentiles because of you.”² And by their sins they may even lead others into sin, especially the youth (including their own), forgetting “Temptations

¹ See Psalm 104:15

² Romans 2:24, *The Holy Bible, English Standard Version (ESV)*

to sin are sure to come, but woe to the one through whom they come! It would be better for him if a millstone were hung around his neck and he were cast into the sea than that he should cause one of these little ones to sin.”³ And as for God? To such a person He asks, “How can I pardon you?”⁴ For He cannot pardon the one who will not repent. Yet, as the drunkard is wont to do, they say to the church and, ultimately, even to God, “I don’t have the problem, you do, with your judging, intolerant attitude!”

Drunkards must sober up, not just after the binge, but for good. So too, Christians who have become drunk on God’s grace, treating freedom from sin’s condemnation as freedom to keep on sinning, must sober up. They need to hear what the book of Hebrews says to them, “For if we go on sinning deliberately after receiving the knowledge of the truth, there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins, but a fearful expectation of judgment, and a fury of fire that will consume the adversaries.”⁵ Rather sobering words. Could God be any clearer?

Fellow believers, *all of us* are capable of abusing God’s grace. If you are currently in such a situation, come and see me. Confess your sin and receive Christ’s full, free, and freeing forgiveness. For through His forgiveness, He gives to you His Holy Spirit to strengthen you in your struggle against the sin which is trying to rule you and lead you to destruction. But even if at this time there is no manifest sin in your life, remember St. Paul’s urgent warning, “Let anyone who thinks that he stands take heed lest he fall,”⁶ for truly, “Pride goes before destruction, and a haughty spirit before a fall.”⁷ After all, “None is righteous, no, not one.”⁸ And that clearly includes each of us.

Let us pray that God will use this Lententide as a time of spiritual sobering for us. That He would lead us to see how we abuse His gift of grace by abusing His many gifts to us and so lead us *to hate* such abuse as the damning sin it is. In addition, let us pray that He would turn us even more to Jesus in faith so that we receive the forgiveness which He purchased with His blood on the cross, and so receive His Spirit more and more to keep working in us a new life that does not abuse His grace as a spiritual drunkard, but honors it with true spiritual sobriety. And let us be sure that we pray this *in confidence*, for such a prayer is truly well-pleasing to Him! In service to the God of grace, the Father of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ,
Pastor Nerud

Apologetics Article

The Genesis Flood for kids: Noah’s Ark⁹

Genesis chapters 6–8 are all about God sending a worldwide Flood to destroy very wicked people. Almost all people and vertebrate land animals were wiped out. The only surviving ones were on a huge boat, Noah’s Ark (Genesis 7:22–23). What made the Ark so special and able to protect its passengers from a year-long Flood?

The Ark was huge!

God told Noah to make the Ark 300 cubits long, 50 cubits wide, and 30 cubits high (Genesis 6:15). A cubit is an ancient unit of length. It is the length of a man’s forearm from the elbow to the middle finger’s tip (see Activity). ‘Cubit’ comes from *cubitum*, Latin for ‘elbow’.

Different people have different forearm lengths. Mine is 48 cm (19 inches). A typical cubit was 46 cm (18 inches), but large ones measured 53 cm (21 inches). Considering the smaller cubit of 46 cm, the Ark would have been 138 m × 23 m × 14 m (450 ft × 75 ft × 45 ft), so the volume would have been about 44,400 m³ (1.57 million cubic feet). That is massive!

For comparison, you might see semi-trailer (or tractor-trailer) trucks (lorries) on the road. Sometimes they haul animals. Each can carry 300 full-grown sheep—55 kg (120-pounds) each. But the Ark could carry as much as 340 semi-trailers, over 100,000 sheep-sized animals.

Fitting all the animals

³ Luke 17:1-2, ESV.

⁴ Jeremiah 5:7, ESV.

⁵ Hebrews 10:26-27, ESV.

⁶ 1 Corinthians 10:12, ESV.

⁷ Proverbs 16:18, ESV.

⁸ Romans 3:10, ESV.

⁹ By Jonathan Sarfati; <https://creation.com/noahs-ark-cfk>. While this article was written with kids in mind, I think it is helpful for “kids” of all ages, giving a better Biblical understanding of the Flood and the Ark to adults as well.

The Ark's purpose was to save the humans and animals. God told Noah to take on board one male and one female of each kind of land animal and bird, plus enough food for them (Genesis 6:19–21). A few of the animals, the 'clean' ones, had seven pairs each (Genesis 7:2). Noah didn't need to fetch them; God made the animals come to Noah (Genesis 6:20).

Even though the Ark was massive, could it really hold all the animals? Actually, it didn't need to. Sea and river creatures didn't need rescuing! The only animal passengers were those that breathed through nostrils. That means animals with backbones, called vertebrates. This excluded insects that instead breathe through holes in their sides.

Many insects and other small non-vertebrate creatures would have survived outside. How? The Flood would have torn up bushes and forests. Some branches and leaves would form natural rafts that could stay afloat. Very small creatures could survive on these rafts.

God specified animals in kinds, not 'species'. God created kinds with lots of genetic variation so that they could produce many different varieties. For example, Noah didn't need to take poodles, dachshunds, spaniels, collies, coyotes, or jackals. Instead, he probably took one pair of a dog kind, which probably looked a lot like wolves. Also, there was no need for separate horses, donkeys, and zebras—just one pair of a horse kind. Probably only about 16,000 animals at most, much less than the 100,000 sheep-sized animals that the Ark could carry. Also, most animals are much *smaller* than sheep, including most rodents, shrews, rabbits, birds, and lizards. Only about a tenth of all animal kinds were much larger than sheep. So there was plenty of room for storing food and water for the occupants for many months.

The Ark was stable

To protect those on board, the Ark had to withstand the fast winds and huge waves of the Flood. Wind is most dangerous: catching a mast or sails can turn a ship over, but the Ark had neither. Rather, it had a low profile, so even 390 km/hr (210-knot) winds—three times as strong as a hurricane—would have tipped it only slightly (3°).

Waves hitting the side ('breaching') is the biggest danger. However, the Ark avoided most breaching by its great length. So the waves turned the Ark to be aligned with waves' direction. The Ark was also very wide compared to its height, making it hard to tip over. Design engineers using computers and scale models have shown how stable the Ark was. It could withstand waves 150 m (500 ft) high!

For comparison, one of the deadliest natural disasters in history was the Indian Ocean Earthquake of 26 December 2004. This underwater quake caused enormous waves called tsunamis to crash into coastal areas, killing about 228,000 people. At the coast these waves were exceptionally large—30 m (100 ft) high. However, even such huge waves were far too small to topple the Ark. Also, tsunamis are large only over shallow water, just before they crash onto the shore. They are hardly noticeable in deep water where the Ark mostly floated. God told Noah to coat both the interior and exterior of the Ark with pitch. This is a sticky black substance, often made by boiling charcoal with tree resin. Pitch waterproofed the Ark. It also would have protected it from damage when objects crashed into it.

We are not told precisely how Noah built the Ark strong enough, but we know that ancient Greeks and Chinese built and sailed wooden ships about the same size.

Taking care of animals

How would Noah and his family have taken care of thousands of animals? We can get some idea from the way farmers around the world house animals during cold winters. They don't need to feed animals one at a time. Instead, there are troughs for both water and food, which are poured in from storage tanks.

What about waste products? Farmers sometimes use very deep clean straw to soak up the stuff. It doesn't smell that bad—until it's cleaned out after winter! Another method is a central gutter. Still another idea I've seen in sheep stations is slatted floors, where the animals walk safely but the stuff falls away. So Noah had plenty of simple and 'low maintenance' methods available.

What about enormous dinosaurs?

How could Noah have fitted huge dinosaurs on the Ark? First, even the biggest animals started off small. Dinosaurs hatched from eggs that were football-sized or smaller. Scientists have studied growth rings in the bones of huge dinosaurs. They found that dinosaurs went through a big 'growth spurt'. God probably brought young dinosaurs to Noah a year before their growth spurt started. E.g., take the 25-tonne Apatosaurus. Aged

only 4, it was only about 1 ton. After a year on the Ark, it was not much bigger. But soon after it left the Ark, it grew very fast—5½ tons each year!

God's protection

Note this key point of the Flood account: ‘God remembered Noah ...’ doesn’t mean He had previously forgotten them. Instead, the expression means God began to act on their behalf again. Throughout the Flood, the Ark passengers had God’s protection. The rest of chapter 8 tells how God removed the floodwaters from the earth, making it safe for everyone to leave the Ark.

A Look at the Lutheran Confessions

Last month, we began reading Article XXVII, Monastic Vows, and there we saw that, at least during the Medieval period, many were put under vows who should not have been, such as because they were too young, ignorant of their own capabilities to keep the vows, or were put there by their family for financial purposes. Even more, monastic vows were seen as meriting (i.e. earning) forgiveness, equal to the Sacrament of Holy Baptism, and were considered the highest form of Christian life. Sadly, while the words are less obvious or offensive, this view is still the official position in the Roman Catholic Church as can be seen in their catechism.¹⁰ This month, we expand upon the false teaching of meriting grace through monasticism and show the difference between the origin of monasteries and what they had become by the time of the Reformation. Augsburg Confession Article XXVII: Monastic Vows, 13-17¹¹

So they made people believe that the profession of monasticism was far better than Baptism, and that the monastic life was more meritorious than that of rulers, pastors, and others, who serve in their calling according to God’s commands, without any man-made services.¹² None of these things can be denied. This is all found in their own books about monasticism.¹³

How did all this come about in monasteries? At one time they were schools of theology and other branches of learning, producing pastors and bishops for the benefit of the Church. Now it is another thing. It is needless to go over what everyone knows. Before, they came together for the sake of learning, now they claim that monasticism is a lifestyle instituted to merit grace and righteousness. They even preach that it is a state of perfection! They put monasticism far above all other kinds of life ordained by God. We have mentioned all these things without hateful exaggeration so that our teachers’ doctrine on monasticism may be better understood.¹⁴



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.

¹⁰ E.g. see paragraphs 914-916 in *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, where those who follow the so-called “Evangelical Counsels” (an error mentioned last month) and take monastic vows are said to have a “life consecrated to God,” “follow Christ more nearly,” and have a “more intimate’ consecration,” that is, in comparison to others who have not taken such vows. According to Scripture, we are all consecrated in our **Baptism** to be priests of God, declared perfectly holy through faith in Christ, and therefore empowered to live out our Baptismal consecration within our various vocations where God places us.

¹¹ From *Concordia: The Lutheran Confessions*, Paul McCain, Ed. CPH, 2006. Due to the length of this Article, it is being broken into smaller sections.

¹² Various vocations, in the family and community are commanded by God, as are the vocations of pastor and hearer in the church. Monasticism has no such command, it often fails to love the neighbor by separation from them and, worst of all, seeks to earn a holiness that can only be given through faith in *the* Holy One, Jesus Christ. See Part III of *Luther’s Small Catechism*, Table of Duties, for God’s commands to us in our various callings in life.

¹³ E.g. the great medieval scholastic theologian, Thomas Aquinas, taught such. His works have a great influence in Roman Catholic theology to this very day as he has been given the title “The Angelic Doctor.”

¹⁴ Next month, the Confession will take up the issue of the vow of chastity and what we teach on it.

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 part of the 40 days of Lent.

Special services for the season of Lent are:

- Shrove Tuesday Prayer Service (February 13th) @ Concordia Lutheran Church beginning at 9 am in their Fellowship Hall. After the service a light breakfast will be served by their LWML.
- Ash Wednesday service (February 14th) @ St. John's – 7 pm
- Midweek Lenten service (February 21st) @ St. John's – 7 pm. Light supper served 5:15-6:30 pm
- Midweek Lenten service (February 28th) @ St. John's – 7 pm. Light supper served 5:15-6:30 pm

SHROVE TUESDAY PRAYER SERVICE

Concordia's LWML would like to invite your church family to the Prayer service and breakfast on Feb. 13th @ 9 am at Concordia. Pastor Mueller will lead this service in the fellowship hall. ALL men and women are invited to join together as we prepare our hearts for Lent.



LENTEN "HOME-COOKIN" SUPPERS

Everyone is invited to enjoy a light supper before each Wednesday night Lenten Service. Suppers will be served from 5:15 – 6:30 pm. LWML will be serving the first supper on February 21st. Additional groups or families are needed to prepare and serve a supper on the following weeks: Feb. 28th, March 6th, 13th, and 20th. A sign-up sheet is located on the table next to the coat room.



THANK YOU

I wish to thank everyone who prayed for me, sent me cards and 'well wishes', and visited me after my stroke. I am adjusting to my new home at Hammond Henry Long-Term Care and continue to get stronger each day. Our God is so very good! I am truly blessed with the love and care of family, friends and church family.

May God bless each of you, Your sister in Christ, Joyce DeFauw

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 church website the following day.
- **All newsletter articles need to be into the office no later than the 15th of each month.**
- **Bulletin announcements must be to Terri by Wednesday morning each week.**





A DOLLAR FOR MISSIONS UPDATE

Help hold up a prophet's hands, as it were, with contributions to the current Dollar for Missions project. It will provide funding for mileage reimbursements to facilitate Pastor David Dunlop's weekly trips from Clinton to Lincoln for prison ministry. The goal for this project is \$1,800. For more information, see <https://youtu.be/q5TVKAhLZk0>

CHRISTIAN LIVING *Caring for My Neighbor*

If any of the Ten Commandments might tempt us to think that keeping the Law is easy, it would be the Fifth Commandment. After all, how hard is it to get through life without murdering somebody? The vast majority of people can handle that!

But Jesus famously blows up this notion by pointing out that the command, "you shall not murder," goes much deeper — down to the heart.



You have heard that it was said to those of old, "You shall not murder; and whoever murders will be liable to judgment." But I say to you that everyone who is angry with his brother will be liable to judgment; whoever insults his brother will be liable to the council; and whoever says, "You fool!" will be liable to the hell of fire. (Matt. 5:21–22)

Hatred and disdain come from the same sort of crookedness of heart as murder. With both murder and hatred, you look down on another person and think them of little worth.

In the Small Catechism, Luther also points out that every "do not" in the commandments also includes a "do this:" "We should fear and love God so that we do not hurt or harm our neighbor in his body but *help and support him in every physical need*" (SC, Fifth Commandment, emphasis added).

We are not called merely to avoid evil; we must also do positive good.

So when Jesus drew near to us and became our neighbor by taking up our humanity, He came not only to avoid harming us, but He came to positively help us, bless us and serve us.

We are now called to show the love to our neighbors that Christ showed to us. Your neighbor is yet another gift that God has given you that requires your stewardship. We are called to show mercy, to be kind, to love and serve our neighbor. One aspect of this stewardship is financial: our neighbors need us to support the church's work so that they can hear the Gospel and come to faith. Our neighbors need the church's alms and mercy work. Our neighbors need our faithful service in all we do in the name of Christ.

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

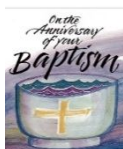
FEBRUARY ANNIVERSARIES

12 Brent/Laura Anderson (2011) - 13 yrs
15 Alex/Lindsey Gustafson (2014) - 10 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

PRAYER GROUP (CHAIN)



All are invited to participate either by becoming an email prayer warrior or asking for prayers. Prayer warriors receive requested prayers from the Pastor via email which then can be used as they pray throughout the day. Those desiring prayers can make a request to the Pastor.

This is a blessing to those requesting prayers and those praying for our brothers/sisters in need of prayers.

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

Betty Firch

Aaron Raschke

Carolyn

Paula Chapa

Arlyn Helke

Drew Schillinger

Wildermuth

Jim Dahl

Lynne Johnson

Marilyn Woods

Joyce DeFauw

Jessica Johnson

Anthony/Sami Sedotto (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)

Mike Erdman (nephew of Bob Erdman)

Bruce & Debbie Bley (sister/brother-in-law of Cathy Schillinger)

Shandel Loenser (wife of Gabe Loenser)

Laurie Sanford (sister of Jan Dahl)

Paul Werner (brother of Dan Werner)

Jim DeFauw (son of Joyce DeFauw)

Scott Wilson (great nephew of Darla Johns)

Ron Powell (friend of Brad Gehn)

(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/son-in-law of Linda Aper)

Luke/Nicole Thompson (son/daughter-in-law of John/Kindra Thompson)

Karl Flynn (son of Mr/Mrs Paul Flynn)

Casey Powers Jr. (step son of Lisa Powers)

Brittany Loenser (daughter of Gabe Loenser)

Rylie Hallendorff (grand-daughter of Carolyn & Dan Werner)



NEWS YOU CAN USE! January 2024

After the layover by the Magi, Herod had murder on his mind, and had power in his arsenal. All Jesus had on earth was a carpenter and a mom – and these were enough to thwart the king’s plan for removing his competition.

Now when they had departed, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream and said, “Rise, take the child and his mother, and flee to Egypt, and remain there until I tell you, for Herod is about to search for the child, to destroy him.” And he rose and took the child and his mother by night and departed to Egypt and remained there until the death of Herod. (Matthew 2:13-15a).

Men and women, married or single, who trust and follow the Word of God have much greater power than a raging king. In this new year, trust and follow the Word of God in your congregation and in your home. The culture will continue to rage and rebel. You will stand safe, even if the Herod-of-the-day temporarily has his way. God’s will shall be accomplished. Rejoice, believers!

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

Announcing 2024 Central Illinois District Youth Bible Bowl: “The Gospel according to St. John.” In the best way you know how, study the Gospel according to St. John with your young people so they get to know better the only true God, and Jesus Christ. The CID Bible Bowl is being planned for a Sunday afternoon in April, at Camp CILCA. Circuit Bible Bowls may be held in March. The CID Youth Bible Bowl is an opportunity for young people in Senior and Junior High School (grades 6-12) to study a portion of God’s word each year, and meet with other young people of their circuit and the District. If you would like more information you may contact Pastor Mark Eddy at Zion Lutheran Church, Taylor Ridge, Illinois (zionlcms@juno.com) or 309-795-1063.

**Small Church Summit
Innovating Again**

The next SCS meeting in CID will be held from 10:00 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. on Saturday, Feb. 3, 2024 (or, if weather is bad that day, on Feb. 10) at Faith, Lincoln.

The program will emphasize conversation between participants. Experience has shown that folks from our small churches not only thrive on the Good News of the crucified and risen Lord Jesus Christ; they also love sharing ideas for engaging in the church's mission with people from other small LCMS churches.

The day's activities will be designed to highlight discussion. In the morning, people will introduce themselves and briefly tell the group about something their church has done in the last five years. Later in the morning, SID President Timothy Scharr will make a presentation on reaching out to inactive members.

The afternoon will feature time for small group discussion. The topics will include:

- Bible Study in the Small Church, Congregational Partnerships, and Stewardship of Spiritual Gifts

Three other topics will also be offered, six in all. The other three topics on a particular afternoon will be based on what participants said in the morning. Each participant will be able to join in a total of four different discussions from among the six topics. Discussions will run for 25 minutes each.

Register at <https://forms.gle/5eEQYVGgAwMdtj4v6> **The deadline for registration is January 22nd, 2024.**

Illinois March for Life: Wednesday, April 17, 2024, this event had been set for about a month earlier, but plans have changed. As last year, Trinity Lutheran Church in downtown Springfield (across the street from the state capitol building) will host a Matins service in the morning, before the rally and march, and a light lunch will be provided at a nominal cost. Precise times are being determined. This year, parking will be available to you downtown at the State House Inn, a block north of the capitol and near Trinity. However, please make plans now to carpool whenever possible.

The 1974 Walkout: Why, and Why Does it Matter? This study, very similar to one offered last fall at Christ, Normal, will unfold over a series of four evenings, January 10, 17, 24, and 31, at 6:00 p.m. at Trinity Lutheran Church's Parish Center, 515 South MacArthur, Springfield, IL, 62704-1744. (An evening prayer service will precede these classes at 5:30.) Dr. Ken Schurb of the CID office will teach. Participants will be able to purchase copies of the book *Rediscovering the Issues Surrounding the 1974 Concordia Seminary Walkout. Assimilation (Incorporation) of New Church Members* This study covers biblical material on the church and being members of the body of Christ as well as practical suggestions for how to incorporate new members into your congregation.

CHRISTMAS GREETINGS

Do you remember Emily, the young lady who worked with our Youth during her internship as a DCE? Well, Emily sent some lovely Christmas cards giving us a glimpse into her life for the past three years. She is married (4 years already) and currently living in Norfolk, Nebraska. Check out her cards on the bulletin board between the mailboxes.

And it is my prayer that your love may abound more and more, with knowledge and all discernment, so that you may approve what is excellent, and so be pure and blameless for the day of Christ, filled with the fruit of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ, to the glory and praise of God.

Philippians 1:9-11

Camp CILCA's Pancake Breakfast

Saturday, March 2, 2024



pancakes, sausage, & fruit



10am-1pm



free (thank you for the support)



Dining Hall
4124 Camp CILCA Road
Cantrall, IL 62625



Camp CILCA's Woodcutters' Retreat

February 23-24, 2024



Clear fallen trees



Bible Study



Donation \$25
to cover food

more
information:



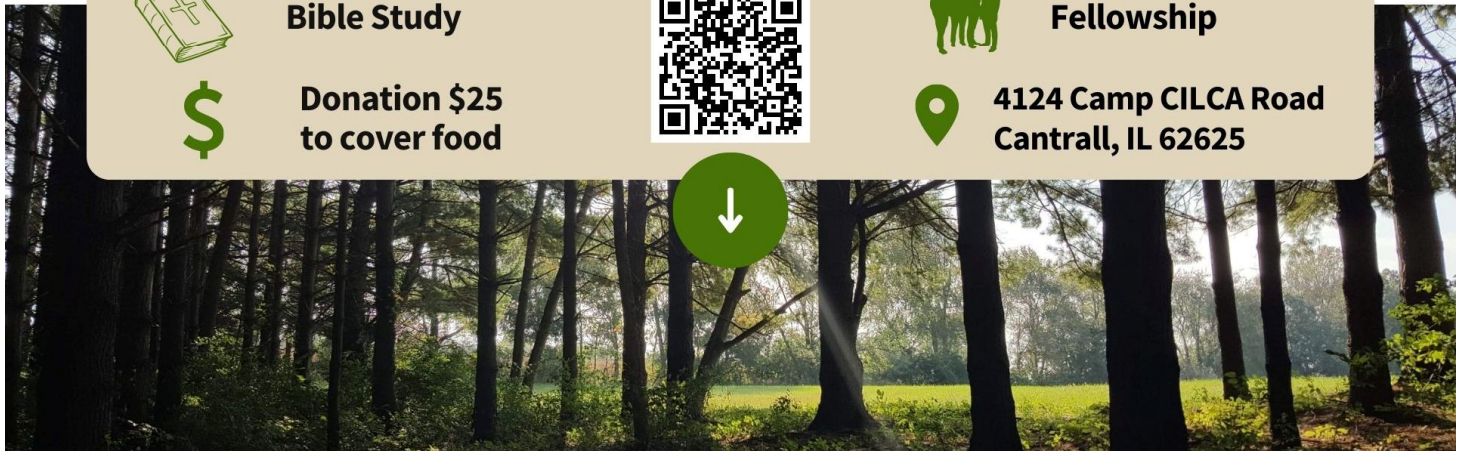
Cut firewood



Fellowship



4124 Camp CILCA Road
Cantrall, IL 62625





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

February 2024

| Sun | Mon | Tue | Wed | Thu | Fri | Sat |
|---|-------------------------------|--------------------|---|-----------------------------------|--|-----|
| | | | | 1 Men's Bible Study 6:30 pm | 2 | 3 |
| 4 SS/Adult/Youth Bible Study 8:45am Worship/Comm 10 am Elders' 11:30 am | 5 <i>Pastor's Day Off</i> | 6 | 7 Confirmation 5 pm | 8 | 9 | 10 |
| 11 SS/Adult/Youth Bible Study 8:45am Worship 10 am | 12 <i>Pastor's Day Off</i> | 13 Council 6 pm | 14 Confirmation 5 pm Ash Wednesday Worship/Comm 7 pm | 15 | 16 | 17 |
| 18 SS/Adult/Youth Bible Study 8:45am Worship/Comm 10 am Youth 11:30 am | 19 <i>Pastor's Day Off</i> | 20 LWML 1:00 pm | 21 Confirmation 5 pm Supper 5:15 pm Lenten Service 7 pm | 22 SS Teachers 6:30 pm | 23 | 24 |
| 25 SS/Adult/Youth Bible Study 8:45am Worship 10 am | 26 <i>Pastor's Day Off</i> | 27 | 28 Confirmation 5 pm Supper 5:15 pm Lenten Service 7 pm | 29 | <i>A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; just as I have loved you, you also are to love one another. John 13:34</i> | |



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

Ash Wednesday – February 14 – 7 pm

Lenten Midweek services – February 21 & 28 – 7 pm

