



St. John's
Lutheran Church
& School

January 2020 Eagle Newsletter



Isaiah 55:10-11 ESV

“For as the rain and the snow come down from heaven and do not return there but to water the earth, making it bring forth and sprout, giving seed to the sower and bread to the eater, ¹¹so shall my word be that goes out from my mouth; it shall not return to me empty, but it shall accomplish that which I purpose, and shall succeed in the thing for which I sent it.”

From the Pastor: Each month we will be reading a chapter of the Bible together in our official meetings at St. John's. The congregation is also invited to join in the readings in your own personal devotions. The aim of this practice is to get back to the basics of Scripture, and hear its words in context and in larger chunks than the typical verse or two proof passages.

As you read, simply listen and reflect, without any other commentary. At the end of the month in my Eagle newsletter article, I will offer up a brief reflection of my own.

Reflections on Galatians 6

Paul wraps up his letter to the Galatians with an appeal to live together in Christian unity. The way to accomplish this life together is to bear one another's burdens. The first verse of this chapter indicates that the burdens that Christians should bear are the sins that Christians commit. To bear one another's burdens is to forgive one another, just as we pray in the Lord's Prayer.

Christians have a special way of sharing a burden with respect to their pastor. "Let the one who is taught the word share all good things with the one who teaches," Paul writes (6:6). A Christian minister does not charge a fee for his ministry; there is no tuition bill for Bible class. It's ironic that the free gift is neglected by so many. Perhaps our consumerist mindset in America has fooled us into thinking that anything that's worth anything must cost something.

Yet, the economy of God's kingdom is unlike the economies of the world—it runs on gifts freely given.

The final greetings in verses 11-18 stand out because of the way that Paul introduces them. He draws attention to the "large letters" he writes with his own hand (v 11). In the ancient world, before word processors and personal letters, people would often employ a secretary or *amanuensis*, who would write what the author dictated. This could range from word-for-word dictation to more free copying, where the amanuensis would help shape the ideas of the author.

Regardless of the level of freedom Paul's secretary had, Paul's "signature" in these last verses show that Paul approved of the words that had preceded this final section.

The last significant point of Paul's letter to the Galatians is the second last verse. "From now on let no one cause me trouble, for I bear on my body the marks of Jesus" (v 17). The word for "marks" is the Greek word *stigmata*. No one is entirely sure what Paul means with this word. Some people think that it's literal marks of crucifixion like what Jesus showed to Thomas, which Paul miraculously received. Others think that perhaps Paul is talking about an affliction to his eyes (which necessitated writing with "large letters").

For our purposes, though, the stigmata should remind us of our Lord Jesus, who suffered in the body, died, and rose in the body so that He might redeem us—including our bodies. And this means that no one can cause us any more trouble.

Pastor Ehrhard



*From the
Pastor's
Desk*

2020 Stewardship Fellowship Meal

Sunday, February 2nd Immediately Following the
9:30AM Service



In celebration of the gifts God has given his people at St. John's, we are gathering for lunch on Sunday, February 2nd immediately following the 9:30AM service (only one service that day) in the gym. Look for more details in the bulletin in the forthcoming weeks. Preliminarily, Youth Group will be selling subs for consumption during the presentation and PTL will be hosting coffee, drinks, and pastries. If you are reading this, you are invited!

Voters Meeting: We will have a voters meeting on Sunday January 19th at 9:15AM in the Fellowship Room (between Services). Coffee Hour will also occur in the Fellowship Room at the same time.

LCMS March for Life, Chicago: Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod January Life Events give Lutherans the opportunity to stand up for life. On January 11th from 1PM to 3PM beginning at the Daley Plaza, 50 W Washington Street, Chicago, a rally will be held to protect the unborn.

Ladies Book Club: The Ladies Book Club will be meeting on Tuesday, January 28th at 7PM in the St. John's Conference Room. We will be discussing our November book Killers of the Flowers Moon by David Grann, our December book Chicago: A Novel by David Mamet, and our January book Sleeping Murder by Agatha Christie. The last book is a murder mystery involving a young married couple just moving into their new home in England. Please join us for an evening of good refreshments and good conversation.



And They Were Fed

Thanksgiving at St. John's Recap

Thanksgiving Day 2019 saw St. John's gymnasium full of people enjoying a Thanksgiving Dinner they may not have had otherwise. Sponsored by the Join Hands Food Pantry, approximately 350 people were served a free dinner which consisted of: turkey and gravy, ham, mashed potatoes, sweet potatoes, dressing, green beans, corn, carrots and cranberries. They were given all they could eat and more. Dessert included choice of apple, pecan, strawberry pies and of course pumpkin pie with whipped cream on top. Individually packaged Eli's cheesecake was also offered along with ice cream to compliment any dessert.

Donations of food came from many places. One couple, who helped with Wednesday's preparations, was so impressed by the offer of a free dinner that they went home and made over 800 pierogies for the Thanksgiving Dinner. The local Jewel donated 100 individually packaged meals for people known to be homebound. They donated turkeys and hams plus other foods. Ideal Bakery donated all the breads and dinner rolls. The Chicago Food Depository was and is a big donor of foods as well as Eli's Cheesecake Factory for both Thanksgiving and the weekly food pantry.

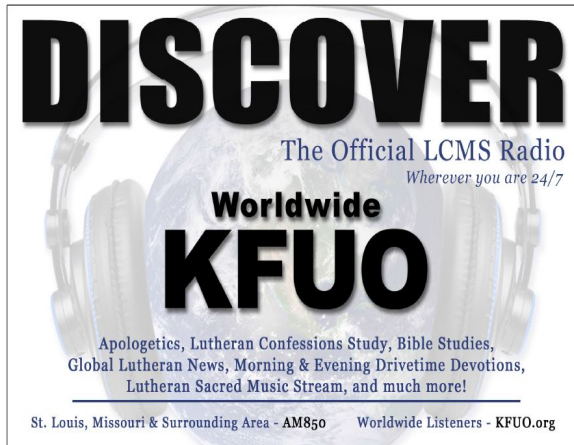
How does one prepare a dinner for an unknown amount of people, thinking it may be a couple of hundred at least. Well, approximately 43 turkeys, 18 hams and 200 pounds of sweet potatoes were prepared. Much of the cooking and preparations were done Wednesday by volunteers organized into work areas by an experienced corporate chef. At least 350 people were served, and still there were leftovers. At 4PM closing time, all the leftovers were offered to the people and workers who remained.

The organizers of the Thanksgiving Dinner, St. John's member Rick Paulsen along with Carol Sheenan, say the volunteers came from everywhere. Many of them are helpers at the food pantry, but others are from different backgrounds, different neighborhoods, different churches and ethnicities. Music was rendered by a piano player who sang Christmas carols and a guitar player who also sang. Rick said it was wonderful to see how everyone pitched in, offered their assistance and worked together calmly and cheerfully. He again and again expressed his appreciation and wants to thank everyone for making the free Thanksgiving Dinner a success. He also extended a hearty thank you to St. John's seventh graders who set up the gym with tables and chairs.

Only one thing missing -- St. John's members. If you're home for the holiday and no one is coming for dinner, St. John's is the place for Thanksgiving -- a place to share making the preparations -- a place to be part of a giving, helping group -- a place to gather with others for a delicious meal. Yes, some were homeless, but many were people like my husband and I who had no one to share Thanksgiving Day or meal with. So, every year when our children are with their in-laws for Thanksgiving Day, Lord willing we will be at St. John's to help and share a meal. As the saying goes ... When you give of yourself, you receive back much more than you gave. Why not give it a try.

Join Hands Food Pantry is at St. John's Lutheran Church every Wednesday evening from 6PM to 8PM and operates with the joined hands of Jehovah, St. Bartholomew, St. Stanislaus Bishop & Martyr, and Our Lady of Victory.





Lutheran Radio Station Worldwide KFUO

Find and Listen at kfuo.org and follow us at Facebook.com/KFUORadio.

Issues, Etc.—Weekdays @ 3PM CST or ON DEMAND via Website! Christ-centered, Cross-focused talk radio.

Law and Gospel—Weekdays @ 9:30AM CST or ON DEMAND via Website! This is a program that uses the theological distinctions between Law and Gospel not only to apply the Bible but also to understand our relationship to the holy Trinity, our gracious salvation because of Jesus Christ and how to interpret reality the way God thinks.

Faith'n'Family—Weekdays @ 10AM CST or ON DEMAND via Website!

Faith'n'Family is a program that lets family's keep their Lutheran faith first as we praise God for the gift He has given us in our children, parents, grandparents, and even the in-laws! Every day, Faith'n'Family will have an expert on the show to discuss life issues such as money management, dealing with divorce, adoption, how to raise children to lead a God-centered life in a very non-Christian world, and more. And the best part of all, you can be part of the show by calling in with your questions and comments for our expert! While Faith 'N Family at KFUO is well aware of the fast-paced world of today, we want to keep the focus of raising our family and yours on what's really important—making Christ known for generations to come!

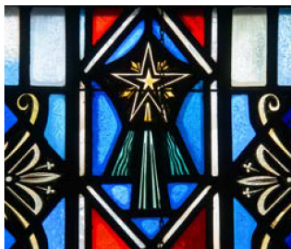
Cross Defense—Mondays @ 2pm CST or ON DEMAND via Website!

When a skeptic questions us about our faith, or when we ourselves have questions about what we believe, how do we answer them? Learn how to address modern-day issues and tough arguments levied against faith, *and* how to engage these conversations with intelligence and grace. Join us and discover how to share your faith clearly and lovingly.

Free to be Faithful — 3rd Wednesday of the Month @ 2:30PM CST or ON DEMAND via Website!

Free to be Faithful is very specific in addressing public policy matters that impact our LCMS community. It is often topical and linked to contemporary issues, such as political elections or the March for Life. The analytical program regularly has experts and observers interpreting the issues at hand and suggesting courses of action. Listen to high-caliber guests discussing in-depth knowledge of issues with host Kip Allen.





JANUARY

THE LUTHERAN CHURCH—MISSOURI SYNOD

Pray For Us Calendar

EPIPHANY — JANUARY 1-31

Epiphany is from a Greek word meaning to “reveal” or “make manifest.” The season of Epiphany is our time to focus on the revelation of who Jesus is — both true God and true man — as we remember Christ’s revelation to the Gentiles in the visit of the Wise Men.

Give thanks as you pray:

1. *That God would make us bold witnesses to the Good News of Jesus Christ in this new year and always.*

2. *For opportunities to witness to friends, family members and strangers. Please send Your Holy Spirit to give us wisdom and faithful words to use during these encounters.*

3. *For our congregations, that God would strengthen them by fostering a faithful Lutheran approach to confessing Christ to neighbors and planting daughter congregations.*

4. *That our schools would be faithful mission outposts, reaching unchurched families with the Gospel and strengthening the faith of church families.*

5. *With thanksgiving for all the Synod’s faithful church workers, that they might be re-energized daily and find great joy in their service.*

6. *That just as You made known Your Son to the Gentiles through the leading of a star, You would continue to bring the light of Your Gospel to the hearts of all people.*

7. *For new church plants and mission starts, that the Lord would help faithful congregations sprout up in every corner of the United States.*

8. *That we would be effective in reaching out to people of different ethnicities who are living in our communities. Pray that the Lord would use us*

as His instruments to make the LCMS a reflection of the Church Triumphant.

9. *For those marching for life, whether at the National March for Life in Washington, D.C., or a pro-life event closer to home. Please pray that all those who attend might be a powerful witness to others.*

10. *For all children, that they would be brought to the saving waters of Baptism and raised in the love, nurture and admonition of the Lord.*

11. *That the Lord would help us raise our children and young people in the faith, always pointing them to the hope and salvation found only in Christ.*

12. *For college students, who are struggling with many different issues and challenges. Ask God to make them receptive to the peace and healing of the Gospel.*

13. *For the aged, that they would be godly examples to the young as they are patient in their tribulations, joyful in their hope, firm in their faith and humble in all they say and do.*

14. *That God would strengthen our hope and impact by encouraging partnerships in the Gospel that clearly confess Christ.*

15. *For the Synod’s 35 districts, that they might have the resources and wisdom to effectively reach out to their communities.*

16. *For strong districts, congregations and Recognized Service Organizations. When our Synod is strong at home, we can better reach out across the world.*

17. *For all missionaries around the world, who leave family and friends to travel to a foreign land to share the Gospel with those who have not heard. Pray that God would grant them safety, wisdom and strength.*

PHOTO: LCMS COMMUNICATIONS/SERIK M. LUNSFORD

JANUARY Pray For Us Calendar

18. *With thanksgiving for all the faithful brothers and sisters in Christ who support the work of LCMS missionaries through their prayers and gifts.*

19. *That God would raise up indigenous pastors, deaconesses and other church leaders to reach out to their own communities and share His Word.*

20. *For the Synod’s partner churches around the world, that they would continue to teach Christ’s Word in all its truth and purity.*

21. *With thanksgiving for all past missionaries. Thanks be to God, the Gospel seeds they planted continue to bear much fruit.*

22. *That God would raise up more missionaries to serve at home and abroad, according to His will.*

23. *That the Lord would open up the hearts and minds of people around the world, so that His grace-filled message can be spread far and wide.*

24. *For discernment, that we might heed God’s call to serve in His name, whether around the world or right here at home.*

25. *That God would bless mission work in urban areas and protect those He sends to work in these often-difficult situations.*

26. *For mission work in sub-urban areas, that we would not become complacent in the work God has called us to do in our own communities.*

27. *For mission work in rural areas, that congregations would be equipped to respond to the changing demographics around them.*

28. *That congregation members might be welcoming to every person the Lord brings to their church.*

29. *That God would strengthen our faith so that His Word has free course in our congregations and homes.*

30. *For all people who turn away from the loving arms of their Savior. Pray that the Holy Spirit would transform their hearts and minds.*

31. *With thanksgiving that God has called and equipped us to join in His mission to seek and save the lost. Ask God to give you courage to be His witness in your daily life.*



Congregations and individuals are invited to copy these pages for newsletters or other distribution. Download at lcms.org/prayforus or call 888-843-5267 to request a copy.

THE LUTHERAN CHURCH
MISSOURI SYNOD

PHOTOS: LCMS COMMUNICATIONS/SERIK M. LUNSFORD

Happy January Birthday

January 1st

Nancy Caldwell
Erna Morgan

January 2nd

Renee Burden
Jennifer Friend
John Karnatz
Lisa Menser

January 3rd

Karen Axtmann
Myranda Ortega

January 4th

Eric Hiller

January 6th

David Fasshauer

January 8th

Barbara Gallo
Sandra Kapusniak

January 9th

Debbie Callaghan

January 10th

Elaine Fink
Treesa Penland



January 13th

Joshua Hallerberg

January 14th

Thomas Costello

January 16th

William Ackerman

January 19th

Marilyn Havnoonian
Sue Parsons

January 22nd

Cynthia Garcia

January 23rd

James Cowie
Jerry Quest
Bob Spike

January 28th

Donna DeMilio
Dianne Stryker

January 30th

Danielle Sisto

January 31st

Jacqueline Pankonin

Stewardship Under the Cross, God's Word on How We Use His Gifts

by HR Curtis

Luther on Tithing and Stewardship

Martin Luther had much to say about being a good steward of God's gifts. Below are a series of quotations from the great Reformer about faithful, Biblical stewards.

On Vowing to Support the Church with Tithes

Thus it is said (Prov. 3:9): "Honor the Lord with your substance." This must be understood not only of words and of the worship of the mouth or genuflection but of the deed itself.... Gal. 6:6: "Let him who is taught in the Word share all good things with him who teaches." Therefore when God wants to be honored, then He wants sacrifices to be offered, not only sacrifices of the mouth but also the reverence of the heart, yes, the deed itself. He wants us to help the ministry, and He wants everyone to contribute for the purpose of supporting the studies of the pupils and of propagating the doctrine. Then God is truly praised and glorified there. Make a vow there, and say: "I promise that I am willing to contribute something for the assistance of the churches." That is St. Jacob's vow. Therefore this example should be diligently inculcated, namely, that Jacob vows tithes, not in order that God Himself may eat or be enriched; but he gives them to the poor ministers and to those who are always the least of the brethren or disciples of Christ on earth. For all other arts are gainful and have their profits. This profession alone is in need of bountiful giving. We must live from the altar, as Paul says (1 Cor. 9:13). Accordingly, he who is godly and loves the Word of God contributes something. He who hates the doctrine along with those who teach and learn it robs and despoils.

Otherwise God has so ordained that we should live from the vows, sacrifices, and alms that are owed to us by divine right. When the godly see the poverty and need of the ministers of the church and the school, they make vows and obligate themselves to give tithes, as Jacob gave them. (LW v.5)

On Tithing to Support God's Work in the Church

Therefore this text shows that Jacob did not make such a foolish and godless vow, but that it was a vow of thanksgiving. For he says: "If I come again, etc." It is as though he were saying: "I shall now obligate myself to pay a debt, and I shall make satisfactory reparation when I return. What? I shall build a school and a church here, and I shall give a tithe of bulls and goats and fruits for its establishment and upkeep, likewise a tenth part of the milk and the butter." Of course, God does not need these things. For He does not eat bread or drink wine, as He says in Ps. 50:13: "Do I eat the flesh of bulls?" What, then, are you doing? I answer that Jacob is already righteous. Accordingly, he does not make a vow to placate God by making it; but he wants to do this to give thanks, to glorify God, in order that He may conduct him and bring him back according to the promise. Who will receive these tithes? Not the angels, not the sun, not the moon. But he will perform that extraordinary and glorious work for the purpose of preserving the ministry and founding churches and schools. . . . This is how Moses should be understood when he says (Deut. 23:21): "When you make a vow to the Lord your God, you shall not be slack to pay it." What does it mean to make a vow to God, or whom is Moses addressing when he says: "The Lord your God"? It means to give tithes to the disciples, sons, and wives of the prophets, to the poor and needy. These are the ones who are to be supported by the tithes offered to God, and through these tithes God is supported. For God says: "Whatever you give to the children of the priests and prophets through whom the doctrine is propagated you must regard as given to Me, not that I may justify you through this work, but it should be a thanksgiving and a sacrifice of praise because I have justified you and have also blessed you in temporal matters. In addition, I shall bless you even more if you give ear to, support, and cherish the poor sons of the prophets." (Luther's Works, vol. 5)

On Abraham's Stewardship

This was not the first time that Abraham gave tithes of these to the priest Melchizedek; he did so every year. Even before that victory Abraham conducted himself humbly, acknowledged Shem as a priest of the Most High, and gave him tithes, as did Lot and the other fathers who lived at that time. (LW vol. 2)... To be sure, Abraham had property; but he did not love it, since he showed that he was a manager and knew that by God's will he had been appointed a steward of his goods. (LW vol. 30).

