



**St John's**  
Lutheran Church  
& School

## January 2021 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, <sup>11</sup>so 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: Holy Peace, a Glad New Year

Jesus, guard and guide Thy members,  
 Fill them with Thy boundless grace,  
 Hear their prayers in ev'ry place.  
 Fan to flame faith's glowing embers;  
 Grant all Christians, far and near,  
 Holy peace, a glad new year!  
 Joy, O joy, beyond all gladness,  
 Christ has done away with sadness!  
 Hence, all sorrow and repining,  
 For the Sun of Grace is shining!  
*O Rejoice, Ye Christians, Loudly (LSB 897, st. 4)*

Most of us will not shed a tear at the turn of the new year. 2020 has brought unprecedented challenges. But as cross-bearers, we know that there is never a year without challenges. Christians, though, have perpetual hope because the resurrection of Jesus means all “sorrow and repining” is only for a short time and that God promises to deliver us from evil. Otherwise, Jesus wouldn’t have included that petition in His Prayer.

We look ahead to 2021 as a year illuminated with the Sun of Grace. The world has some good news for us: a COVID-19 vaccine is available and most of us will be able to get it by the summer. We anticipate the mitigations we’ve all learned to live with will begin to disappear and we’re looking to return to worship without restrictions sometime in 2021.

This doesn’t mean that we won’t have any lasting changes. In fact, our return to regular will be an excellent time to assess where we stand as a congregation, to consider how we might boldly step into the future (not only in a post-COVID-19 world, but in an increasingly post-Christian world).

In the opening months of 2021, we will begin to think about where we go from here. The congregation’s officers will be the first to take up this question, but it will need buy-in from the entire congregation. Our guide will not be our own thoughts about what the church should be, but God’s Word. As we return to normal in 2021, we may find that we need to challenge the idea of what’s normal. This will be difficult, but being a cross-bearer isn’t supposed to be easy.

While we are all hoping for some good news in 2021, we know that the Good News carries us through sadness and brings joy beyond all gladness. Happy new year.

In Christ,  
 under the cross,  
 Pastor Ehrhard



*From the  
 Pastor's  
 Desk*

**Ladies Book Club:** In January the Ladies Book Club will be reading The Two Family House by Lynda Cohen Loigman. It is the story of two sister-in-laws who live with their families in a single home. One snowy day they make a split-second decision which changes their lives forever. In the book we watch them change and grow over twenty years as they deal with the consequences of their secret.

The Book Club meets via Zoom on the last Tuesday of the month at 7:30PM. Contact Betty Carey if you would like to be included.



**Voters Meeting:** We will have a voters meeting on Sunday, January 24<sup>th</sup> at 9:15AM in the sanctuary (between Services).

**LCMS March for Life, Chicago:** Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod January Life Events give Lutherans the opportunity to stand up for life. On January 23<sup>rd</sup> in Chicago, a rally will be held to protect the unborn. See here for additional information: <https://www.lcms.org/life-ministry/march-for-life>

**From the Principal:** St. John's will return from Christmas break on Monday, January 4<sup>th</sup>. We will continue remote instruction until Tuesday, January 19<sup>th</sup>. St. John's teachers have done an extraordinary job in continuing to provide a quality Christian education through these trying times. I am thankful for their professionalism and willingness to adapt their instructional practices. A few notes regarding remote learning are below.

- Remote instruction requires the teachers to work extremely hard. Many of the teachers work well into the night planning high quality instructional activities.
- All of the teachers have conducted on-line parent forums. The purpose of the forums is to check in with parents to determine if any adjustments need to be made. I have sat in on several of these parents and am proud to inform you that our parents are very thankful for St. John's teachers and all that they are doing.
- Remote instruction also requires many of our parents to adapt their schedules. We could not continue school without the cooperation of our parents, grandparents, and guardians.

St. John's has also conducted two fundraisers during this holiday season. The fundraisers aim is to reduce the financial support from the church. Proceeds from the Giving Tuesday event are dedicated to provide funding for St. John's fine arts programs. Proceeds from the Cookie Walk are dedicated to the Agape Tuition Scholarship Fund. Thank you to all who supported these fundraisers!

Lastly, I thank you for your continued support for the ministry of St. John's Lutheran School. Because of your continued support, we have the opportunity to serve 130 students and their families. St. John's is so blessed to have so many praying for and financially contributing to our ministry.

Principal Green

**Remote Worship Important Announcement:** We will continue to stream worship services in 2021. **However**, we will **NOT** be sending weekly emails. To be notified of the remote services, subscribe to the St. John's YouTube channel and click the bell for notifications. <https://www.youtube.com/user/StJohnsChicagoLCMS/videos>



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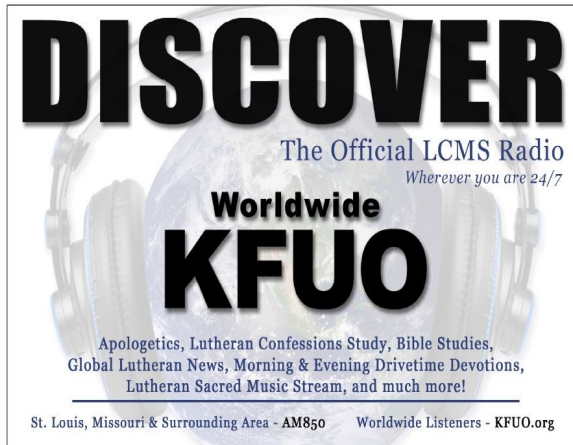




**Many, many thanks to our 1998  
St. John's professional baker alumni  
**Katie Hartmann.****

**She baked and packaged 123 boxes  
of cookies. All proceeds were  
donated to our  
*St. John's Agape Tuition Assistance  
Program.***





## Lutheran Radio Station Worldwide KFUEO

Find and Listen at [kfueo.org](http://kfueo.org) and follow us at [Facebook.com/KFUEOradio](https://Facebook.com/KFUEOradio).

**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 KFUEO 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!

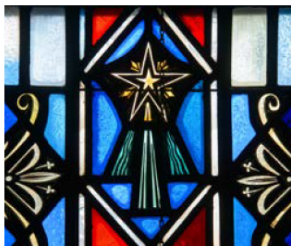
When a skeptic questions us about our faith, or when we ourselves have questions about what we believe, how do we answer them? Learn how to address modern-day issues and tough arguments levied against faith, *and* how to engage these conversations with intelligence and grace. Join us and discover how 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*
- 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/ERIK 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](https://lcms.org/prayforus) or call 888-843-5267 to request a copy.

THE LUTHERAN CHURCH  
MISSOURI SYNOD

PHOTOS: LCMS COMMUNICATIONS/ERIK M. LUNSFORD

# January

January 1<sup>st</sup>

Nancy Caldwell, Bobby Lively,

January 2<sup>nd</sup>

Renee Burden, Jennifer Friend, John Karnatz, Lisa Menser

January 3<sup>rd</sup>

Karen Axtmann, Myranda Ortega

January 6<sup>th</sup>

Benjamin Benson, David Fasshauer

January 8<sup>th</sup>

Barbara Gallo

January 9<sup>th</sup>

Debbie Callaghan

January 10<sup>th</sup>

Elaine Fink, Treesa Penland

January 14<sup>th</sup>

Thomas Costello

January 16<sup>th</sup>

William Ackerman

January 19<sup>th</sup>

Marilyn Havnoonian

January 22<sup>nd</sup>

Cynthia Garcia

January 23<sup>rd</sup>

Jerry Quest, Bob Spike

January 24<sup>th</sup>

Andrew Klein

January 28<sup>th</sup>

Donna DeMilio, Dianne Stryker

January 31<sup>st</sup>

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).

