



St. John's
Lutheran Church
& School

January 2023 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:

Generosity in a New Year

By God's grace and due to the generosity of St. John's members, family, and friends, we were able to pay off our mortgage at the end of 2022. Thanks be to God! Eliminating debt was one of my main organizational goals when I arrived at St. John's nearly four years ago. But it was only possible because of your generosity along with dedicated leadership and fiscal responsibility, as well as some unexpected blessings.

Because of this, our offering envelopes have changed for 2023. There are four categories on your offering envelopes: Church at Home; Missions; Building Repairs; Special Projects.

Church at Home. This is for unrestricted gifts to be used in our general fund. This is the default category, and if you do not designate your gift in any way, it is added to the general fund. These unrestricted gifts are used for the ongoing operational expenses of St. John's Lutheran Church and School.

Missions. Contributions to Missions will be forwarded to the Northern Illinois District for use on the regional and national levels.

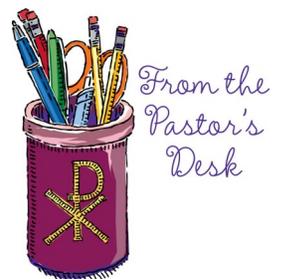
Building Repairs. Contributions to Building Repairs will be held in a deferred maintenance fund to cover large, unexpected expenses.

Special Projects. We will occasionally make an appeal for contributions toward special projects. These projects will generally have a fixed cost, and you may designate your gift by writing a note on your offering envelope.

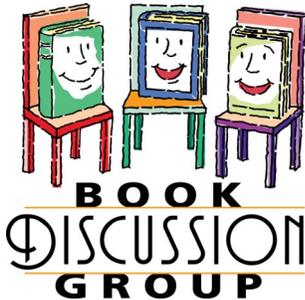
These categories will also be available on our online giving page. You may make a one-time or recurring gift through our online Vanco giving portal.

There are also additional opportunities for generosity, which arise from time to time. Thank you for your support of St. John's!

In Christ,
under the cross,
Pastor Ehrhard



Ladies Book Club: In January The Ladies Book Club will be reading Tied Up In Knotts: My Dad and Me by Karen Knotts. This biography, written by Don Knotts' daughter, recounts his life as a son, soldier, actor, husband, father, and friend. The Ladies Book Club continues to meet via ZOOM on the last Tuesday of the month at 7:30PM. Contact Betty Carey if you would like to join us.



Voters Meeting: We will have a voters meeting on Sunday, January 22nd at 10:15AM. There will be no Family Bible Hour on January 22nd.



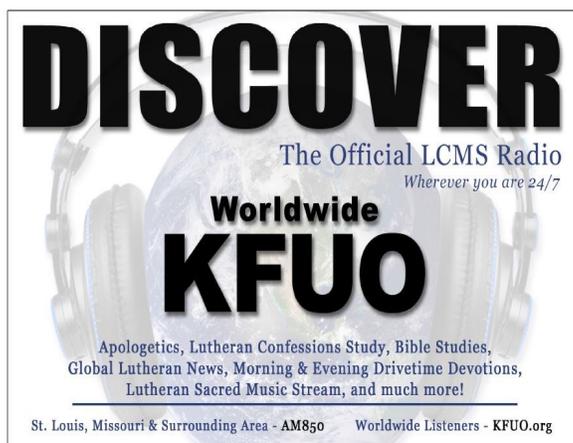
From the Music Department: There were three inspiring Christmas Eve and Christmas Day Celebrations over December 24th-25th. Thank you to those who gave their musical talents: the Chancel Bell Choir - Laura, Pastor Erhard, Barb, Meg, Don, Karen, Cheryl and Gretel for ringing, Julie Smallfield and Kristine Osladil for a wonderful organ and violin duet on "Away in a Manger", and Gretel Erhard for two flute duets on "Still Still Still" and "Now Sing We Now Rejoice".

Earlier in the month the school children presented a Christmas message in two programs directed by Katrina Jurica and help from the day school teachers. The students presented their message in scripture readings, spoken word, and songs.

Pastor Erhard presented four Advent mid-week services on four canticles in scripture and our hymn book: the Nunc Dimittis, the Magnificat, the Benedictus, and the Gloria in Excelsis.

Some of the arrangements were familiar melodies and some were from other settings that we don't always use in worship. One other note to add, Lutheran Service Book also has several hymn adaptations for these canticles other than the liturgy settings.





Lutheran Radio Station Worldwide KFUO

Find and Listen at kfuo.org and follow us at [Facebook.com/KFUOradio](https://www.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.





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-ed 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/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.



PHOTO: LCMS COMMUNICATIONS/SERIK M. LUNSFORD



January Birthdays

January 1st
Nancy Caldwell

January 2nd
Renee Burden, Jennifer Friend & Lisa Menser

January 6th
Benjamin Benson & David Fasshauer

January 8th
Barbara Gallo & JP Schmidt

January 9th
Debbie Callaghan & Theodore Penn

January 10th
Elaine Fink

January 13th
Edward Custer

January 14th
Thomas Costello, Kaiya Flores-Williams & Ayden Yates

January 15th
Khloe McLemore

January 16
William Ackerman

January 19th
Marilyn Haunoonian

January 22nd
Cynthia Garcia

January 23rd
Jerry Quest & Bob Spike

January 27th
Brynn Yerkes

January 28th
Donna DeMilio

January 29th
Colton Runge

January 30th
Shayne Yates

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).

