



St. Paul News

The Newsletter of
St. Paul Lutheran Church
Ida Grove, Iowa

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January

2023

New Beginnings...New Creation

By Pastor Neil Wehmas

The year of 2023 has arrived. What was 2022 like for you? Like every year, it was likely a year with its share of ups and downs. For some the year is tougher than it is for others. However, no one ever experiences a year absent of bad or a absent of good. Even if it is sometime tough to notice the good.

With a new year, we often feel like it is an opportunity to start over. For this reason, many of us use this as an opportunity to set our "New Year's Resolutions". We promise ourselves that we will exercise more. We will eat better. We will do better at saving money. We will be a little kinder and more patient. We will read our Bible and/or pray more.

However, when that year comes round to an end, how do those resolutions look? Did you remain faithful to your goal? Did you flounder? Sometimes, we are amazed at how we struggle to even make it through January before our goals fall to pieces. Makes one wonder, "Why make resolutions at all? I know I'm just going to give up anyways."

On January 8th, our congregation will begin again the "Tree of Life" series of sermons and Bible studies. The first week will focus upon the baptism of Jesus. This is quite appropriate for a few reasons. 1) January 8th is the Sunday of the church year that we do in fact, focus upon the Baptism of Jesus. 2) Just before Christmas, our confirmation students will have finished the lessons on Baptism. 3) Possibly seven different teenagers will be baptized.

Baptism is indeed a wondrous gift. It is a gift that our God designated for the young and old alike. The situation is the same for all. We are led to the font. We bear the burden of our sins. More than we can count. The pastor says, "I baptize you in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen." In the water and the word, you are given a new beginning, you are a new creation. Your sins are forgiven, the burden has been stripped from you and given unto Jesus.

However, we often make a mistake about our baptism. We assume that our baptism was a one time event. However, as one reads through the scriptures, they see that baptism is often talked about in the present voice. "Whoever believes and IS baptized will be saved..." (Mark 16:16). Notice it doesn't say "was baptized", but "is baptized". While there are passages that speak of our baptism in the past voice, it often uses the present tense. The reason being that baptism is an ongoing event.

Every night we go to bed. We examine our day, and look at it in light of God's commandments. How do we do? Remember that we break God's law not just in what we say or do, but also what we think. We realize our days don't look so good, do they. Day after day, our sins compile, what hope do we have?

Martin Luther in his Small Catechism encourages Christians to start end each day with the sign of the cross and the words "In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen." This is done in remembrance of one's baptism. Our baptism is our new beginning and our new creation. Remembering that we are a baptized child every night is a reminder that those failures through the day have been forgiven in Christ. You are still His beloved child.

You awake in the morning to a new day, Luther again encourages the sign of the cross and the words of our baptism to start the day. A reminder that our God is with us throughout our day, and indeed he forgives us for every failure.

Baptism is such a wondrous gift indeed. Since the summer of 2020, I have been sending out baptism birthday cards to our 6th-12th graders. That they would remember the date they were baptized into God's family. Hopefully, they would learn to cherish this wondrous gift.

Throughout the years, the months, the days, and the hours, we break God's law in thought, word, and deed. Throughout those same years, months, days, and hours, his grace and forgiveness is lavished upon us. When in doubt, he gives us this dear gift of baptism. That when the devil shoves your sins into your face, you can simply say: "I am baptized." Indeed you are a new creation by the death and resurrection of Jesus, gifted in the waters of baptism. Let us rejoice in this gift. In Jesus' name. Amen.

NOTE: If you or someone you know has never been baptized, contact myself or Pastor Salcido, and it would be our humble pleasure to play part in you receiving this treasured gift.

CHURCH NEWS

MEMBERSHIP CHANGES

Funerals; Steven Andresen, Burdelle Knudsen, LaDonna Lalone
Transfer: Amy Bennett to Faith Lutheran Church, Sioux City, IA;
Gregg & Janet Goodenow to Immanuel, Spirit Lake, IA
Marriage: Kyler and Makenna (Thomas) Lewis
Baptism: Emmie Mae Brookbank

SATURDAY WORSHIP TIME CHANGE Beginning on **Saturday, January 7th on Saturday Worship time will be 5:00 PM** during the Winter months.

NEW MEMBER CLASS will begin on **Sunday, January 8th from 6:00-7:30PM**. If you are interested please let Pastor Neil know at pastorwehmas@gmail.com or let the church office know.

THANK-YOU to all who gave us gifts and cards for Christmas. Your thoughtfulness and generosity is greatly appreciated. Pastor and Sue Salcido

FROM THE ELDERS *Jeff Rasmussen, Jeff Gilbert, Brent Harm, Aaron Hoffman, Terry Lovett, Keith Krager*
St. Paul Lutheran Church Elders are here for you and interested in your input or concerns.

Jeff Rasmussen 371-2600 jeffr@godbensen.com **Jeff Gilbert 371-2608** jeff.b.gilbert@hotmail.com
Aaron Hoffman 364-5166 aaronjen@netllc.net **Brent Harm 712-210-4135** harm1477@gmail.com
Terry Lovett 300-6062 tmlovett@frontiernet.net **Keith Krager 712-830-9008** keith.krager@gmail.com



USHERS NEEDED for our worship services. There are various ways of helping as an usher. We have started using the plates again during our worship services. For that and helping direct people to the communion table especially are needed. If you are interested, please contact Elders Jeff Rasmussen or Brent Harm. Let them know which service, Saturday or Sunday, you would be willing to help with or you can sign up on the sign-up sheet in the Narthex. Another brief training session will be offered if a sufficient number of people indicate an interest.

FROM THE BOARD OF HUMAN CARE *David Petersen*

PARISH NURSE January is National Glaucoma awareness month. The following information is from the website: <https://www.cdc.gov/visionhealth/resources/features/glaucoma-awareness>.

Half of people with glaucoma don't know they have it. Get a healthy start this year by learning about glaucoma and taking steps to reduce your risk of vision loss!

Glaucoma is a group of diseases that damage the eye's optic nerve and can result in vision loss and even blindness. About 3 million Americans have glaucoma. It is the second leading cause of blindness worldwide. Open-angle glaucoma, the most common form, results in increased eye pressure. There are often no early symptoms, which is why 50% of people with glaucoma don't know they have the disease. There is no cure (yet) for glaucoma, but if it's caught early, you can preserve your vision and prevent vision loss. Taking action to preserve your vision health is key.

Anyone can get glaucoma, but certain groups are at higher risk. These groups include African Americans over age 40, all people over age 60, people with a family history of glaucoma, and people who have diabetes. African Americans are 6 to 8 times more likely to get glaucoma than whites. People with diabetes are 2 times more likely to get glaucoma than people without diabetes. Healthy habits can help you avoid vision loss from glaucoma.

There are many steps you can take to help protect your eyes and lower your risk of vision loss from glaucoma.

If you are in a high-risk group, get a comprehensive dilated eye exam to catch glaucoma early and start treatment. Prescription eye drops can stop glaucoma from progressing. Your eye care specialist will recommend how often to return for follow-up exams. Medicare covers a glaucoma test once a year for people in high-risk groups.

Even if you are not in a high-risk group, getting a comprehensive dilated eye exam by the age of 40 can help catch glaucoma and other eye diseases early.

Open-angle glaucoma does not have symptoms and is hereditary, so talk to your family members about their vision health to help protect your eyes—and theirs. Maintaining a healthy weight, controlling your blood pressure, being physically active, and avoiding smoking will help you avoid vision loss from glaucoma. These healthy behaviors will also help prevent type 2 diabetes and other chronic conditions.

Suzanne Salcido RN, FCN

LIFE QUOTE



lutheransforlife.org

“When someone struggles with the overwhelming guilt of a past sin, like abortion, repentance and reconciliation are the only source of relief. There is hope! ‘If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness’ (1 John 1:9). Through all our days, the Lord never leaves us nor forsakes us. He is a patient God, waiting and wanting all to come to repentance and be saved.” *Deaconess Pamela Buhler and Deaconess Chrissie Gillet, Word of Hope – A Life Quote from Lutherans For Life •*

COMMUNITY BASKET Donations for January: Baking items: flour, cane sugar, cake mixes, baking soda/powder, brown sugar. Place your donation in the shopping cart in the Narthex. All items are appreciated as well, as they can always use donations. The Community Basket is open on Thursdays (except 3rd Thursday), from 2:30-5:30PM. The mobile food pantry will be at the United Methodist church, Ida Grove on **January 19th, from 4:30-5:30PM.**

FROM THE BOARD OF STEWARDSHIP & MISSIONS Brad Zobel & Deb Clausen



STEWARDSHIP CORNER The new year brings with it new resolve, but so often that resolve fades before the first week is ended. The apostle Paul advised the Corinthians, “Last year you were the first not only to give but also to have the desire to do so. Now finish the work, so that your eager willingness to do it may be matched by your completion of it, according to your means” (2 Corinthians 8:10,11). By ourselves, we grow tired or get bored or just plain lazy. Let us ask the Lord to give us the desire to

give generously, to serve joyfully, and to expend our time eagerly in response to what God has given to us and done for us.

ALL THAT YOU ARE, HAVE, AND HOPE TO BE ARE GIFTS FROM GOD.

“Every good and perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of the heavenly lights . . . (James 1:17).

YOU ARE THE STEWARD OF THE GOOD GIFTS GOD HAS CHOSEN TO GIVE YOU.

“Each one should use whatever gift he has received to serve others, faithfully administering God grace in its various forms” (1 Peter 4:10).



MISSION CENTRAL EVENTS Mission Central – LCMS World Mission



40718 Highway E 16, Mapleton, Iowa 51034 PH: 712-882-1029

Gary.Thies@lcms.org Be sure to check the bulletin board in the hallway by upstairs Conference Room for information on Missionaries visiting Mission Central this month.

FROM THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES Clint Wellendorf, John Brinkman, Dennis Clausen, Dale Edsen

Project Updates: Education building heating and air-conditioning repair and replacement is underway.

FROM THE BOARD OF EVANGELISM / ASSIMILATION Kathy Edsen & Kristy Gilbert

COFFEE AND FELLOWSHIP ON SUNDAY MORNING Coffee & Fellowship on Sunday mornings at 10:15AM is in the Fellowship Hall. Come and join us! If you would like to help or provide, please let us know, or there is a sign up sheet in the narthex.

MAIN STREET LIVING IS A LUTHERAN TELEVISION PROGRAM that is endorsed by the Iowa West District of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod. The program receives no funding from the District, but is totally funded by viewers and congregations of the KCAU Viewing area. The program is broadcast on **KCAU, the ABC network affiliate in Sioux City on Sunday morning, starting at 10:00 AM**. The first 30 minutes are remastered episodes of the popular "This is the Life" series that was very popular in the 70's and 80's. The second half of the program is a modified Lutheran worship service that features a different Pastor each week, from the station's broadcast area.



FROM THE BOARD OF CHRISTIAN EDUCATION *Tracy Johnson & Robyn Devitt*

WEDNESDAY EARLY MORNING BIBLE CLASS meets at 7:00AM at Jimmy's



WEDNESDAY MORNING BIBLE CLASS meets from 9:30-10:30AM on Wed mornings in the Conference Room in the lower level. We are studying Luther's Small Catechism

SUNDAY ADULT BIBLE CLASS join us in the lower-level Conference Room 10:30-11:15AM. In January we will be continuing our study of **The Tree of Life**. Last Fall we covered Old Testament narratives. Now we will learn from New Testament narratives.

MIDWEEK (grades 3rd - 6th and 7th & 8th GRADE CONFIRMATION) All grades will meet Fellowship Hall for a snack, announcements and a prayer from 5:30-5:45PM. Class will be from 5:45-6:45PM.

SNACK DONATIONS there is a container in the narthex for you to donate prepackaged snacks, also string cheese. If you would like to sign up to provide homemade snacks for a certain Wednesday, see sign-up sheet. We also will accept monetary donations so we can do the shopping for you. **We also have a sign up sheet if you would like to provide snacks for a particular Wednesday (packaged or homemade) or if you would like to provide Pizza for a certain Wednesday. Another option is providing hamburger for us to make something for a meal or monetary for us to purchase items to make a light supper or pizza.**

THURSDAY EVENING BIBLE STUDY: MORE THAN BREAD BIBLE STUDY AT SUBWAY (*formerly Theology at Subway*) with Pastor Neil on Thursdays at 6:00PM

FROM THE BOARD OF YOUTH AND FAMILY LIFE *Jen Hoffman and Synda Jepsen*

LWML LADIES BIBLE STUDY FOR JANUARY

RUTH (2) will meet on January 11 meet at the church at 9:00AM to take down Christmas. Susan Miller will be BSL. We had 8 members present for our December meeting. We met on Dec. 1 and had 13 of us help put up the nativity sets and other Christmas items. Thank you to everyone who shared poinsettias with us.

LOIS (3) will meet on January 5 in the Conference Room at 1:30PM. Janice will be hostess and Judy W. will be BSL. We had 5 present for our December meeting

EUNICE (10) will meet on January 5 at the Bread Box in Battle Creek at 2:30PM. Clara will be hostess and Corliss will be BSL. We had 5 members at our December meeting.

JOHANNA(12) will meet on January 5 in the Conference Room at 6:30PM, Ann will be hostess and Marge will be BSL leader. We had 6 present for our December meeting

LOIS CIRCLE THANKS EVERYONE who baked cookies for the Cheer Plates. Thank you to Food Pride for donating the fruit. We filled 35 Cheer Plates for Golden Horizons and Willowdale residents.

GENERAL MEETING will be on Thursday, January 19 at 4:00PM, we will be having soup so come and join us for some wonderful fellowship and Nancy Schoen will share her experience this past summer of traveling to Alaska and helping with VBS at a couple different churches.

If you would like to get together for a Bible Study and none of these dates or times work for you but you would like some Bible Study material please contact Shar, Nancy or the church office and we can help. The LWML Quarterlies are in the hallway and have 3 monthly Bible Studies in them or we have other options for you to pick from as well.

Circle 8 is currently doing a Bible Study called Promised Rest by Michelle Diercks.

There are options in our church Library as well or talk to the church office if you need assistance



Proof of light



On January 6 Christians celebrate Epiphany, when the Magi came to worship baby Jesus. Epiphany, which means an appearance or manifestation, symbolizes the first recognition of the Savior by non-Jews. Because Epiphany also is a reminder that Jesus came as the light of the whole world, its symbols include light, candles and a star.

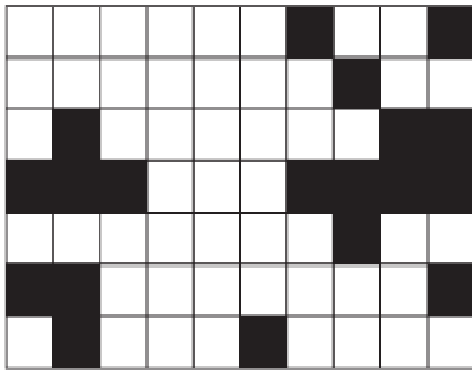
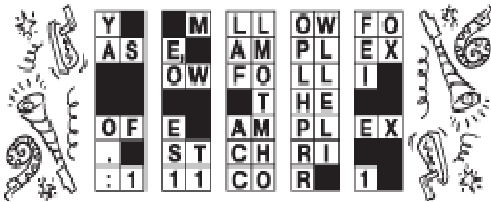
How did the wise men know — and how do we know — that Jesus is the light of the world? As preacher George Buttrick said, “It would little avail to ask how we know. That would be like asking how we know that Beethoven’s ‘Hymn to Joy’ is joyous. If a man were to say, ‘It is not joyous to me,’ he would not condemn the music; he would tell only his morbidness. There is no logic to establish an axiom, for an axiom is the basis of all logic; and the soul of Jesus has axiomatic truth. Jesus is light, and there is no proof for light except light itself.”

Another year for God

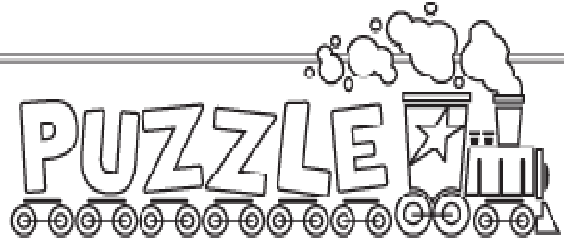
Another year is dawning; dear Father, let it be,
in working or in waiting, another year with thee....
Another year of progress, another year of praise,
another year of proving thy presence all the days.
Another year of service, of witness for thy love;
another year of training for holier work above.
Another year is dawning! Dear Father, let it be,
on earth, or else in heaven, another year for thee.

Puzzle!

Match the blocks of spaces and letters to complete an NIV Bible verse about an important commitment.



Answer: Follow my example, as I follow the example of Christ. 1 Cor. 11:1



Ordering the days

God spoke and created all that exists. He separated and ordered his creation. What did God say about all he made?

Directions: Write the correct day of creation next to each clue. Then fill in the circled letters in order below to complete Genesis 1:31, NIV.

FIRST SECOND THIRD FOURTH FIFTH SIXTH

God made wild animals and livestock.



God said, "Let there be light."



God gathered the waters under the sky into one place.



God made a vault to separate the waters and called it "sky."



God created plants and trees.



God separated the light from the darkness.



God made the water teem with living creatures.



God made the sun and moon.



God made birds fly above the earth.



God made stars.



God created mankind in his own image.



God _aw all tha_ he _ad ma_e, an_ _t was ve_y g_od.

GENESIS 1:31, NIV

Answer: sixth, first, third, second, third, first, fifth, fourth, fifth, fourth, sixth, God saw all that he had made, and it was very good.