

The Christmas Eagle

Weekly Newsletter of St. John's
December 26, 2021

From our Pastor:

Merry Christmas. We're just getting started. Today is the second day of Christmas, a 12-day season lasting til January 6. Please say it again and again: "Merry Christmas! Christ the Savior, is born." Thank you for every expression of Christmas love and encouragement you've shared with me and our household.

We are especially blessed with good staff members here at St. John's. Sarah and Deania keep the office running smoothly; Sandy leads our excellent preschool staff and students with devotion; Dave and Becky make the building a welcoming and clean tool in God's hand; Pastor Fortkamp visits and preaches with incomparable Christian love. We are blessed.

In the coming year our Call Committee will prayerfully seek God's will for our staffing needs. What would the Lord have us do in order to serve members and reach out further to our community with the Gospel? We don't know that answer yet. Please pray that we (the Call Committee and the whole church family) will be prudent and bold in faith.

Today I'm glad we can finally host one of our seminary students as guest preacher. Pandemic restrictions prevented that for a long time. Jaron shared his sermon with me, and I'm glad to know that today he's proclaiming to you the truth that God's Word grows the Church, especially in times of suffering. He first titled the sermon "Once Upon A Time" in a very creative way, but altered it to "**The Word Increased and The Church Grew.**" We printed the

bulletin before that change. I like the new one even more, and I appreciate how Jaron is helping us see that – like in the martyrdom of Stephen – the Word of God increases and the Church grows, even when seemingly bad things happen.



Last Sunday many of our Sr. Youth members gathered in our house. While the picture here shows the fun time of

decorating their own cookies, the far more blessed time was spent reading and discussing God's Word in the Matthew chapter 1 Christmas Gospel. I believe one of the greatest responsibilities of the Church is to prepare these youth for future faithfulness to God in the face of trouble for such faithfulness. We discussed how Joseph was a blessing to Mary and Jesus as they faced difficulty. Thanks be to God – the Word increases and grows the Church for and through the coming generation.

I hope to see you in Service on New Year's Eve and Day, as we turn the calendar page in the name of the Lord. Until then, Merry Christmas!

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Pastor Fortkamp". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

2022 Offering Envelopes

Stop in the gym to pick up your envelopes today. There is a sign-up sheet if you wish to start using them, and don't currently have a number.

Door Offering

Our Concordia Seminary Adopted student, Jaron Melin, will be speaking for our service on Dec. 26. We will be taking up a door offering for Jaron on that day. Please make the checks out to St. John's, and write Jaron's name in the memo line. Thank you!

LIFE QUOTE From Lutherans for Life

"Where are your eyes today? ... Gaze at the baby Jesus in the manger—born into humanity for you. Watch as Jesus teaches, heals, comforts, and calls lost people to Himself. Fix your eyes on Him as He hangs on that cross for you. And look joyfully at Him as He meets you after the resurrection—loving you, forgiving you, and sending you out into His world to share His love with others ... Let's fix our eyes on Jesus!"

Dr. Kari Vo, Lutheran Hour Ministries – A Life Quote from Lutherans For Life • lutheransforlife.org

Your Response to the Gospel
Our Attendance Last Week

Sunday, December 12..... 414
Adult Sunday School Class 60

Our Offerings Last Week

General Fund, Dec. 19 \$5,898.64
Online General Fund \$2,657.83
Total Gen. Fund Offering \$8,556.47
Building Fund \$1,560.00

The Next Food Distribution

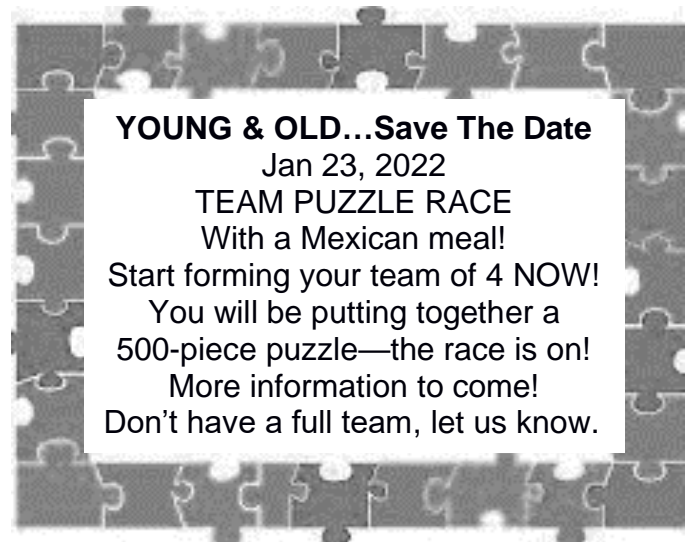
Tues., Dec. 28th from 3:00 – 4:00 p.m.

January Donations

Kleenex, paper towels, small liquid laundry soap, and wet wipes.

Thank You!

The Braille Center volunteers would like to extend a heartfelt THANK YOU for the generous response to the 5th Sunday Door Offering in October. With the \$1,402 collected, necessary supplies will be purchased: paper, cover stock, spirals for binding, envelopes, & cartons for packing. We appreciate your support to help keep us in operation. We are also so grateful to the Mueller family, who named St. John's Braille Center as recipients of memorials in honor of their loved one, Earl.



Call Committee

We will meet on Monday, January 10th at 7:00 p.m. in the Trinity Room. Members of the committee are:

- Jeff Weis
- Dave Worman
- Todd Martin
- Sandy Wieneke
- Holly Bray
- Ray Hartman
- Dan Jansen
- Sandy Bernhardt

Christmas Takedown

Will be on Saturday, Jan. 8th at 9:00 a.m. We ask that anyone interested to PLEASE help us out. Thanks, Howard Janis.



Special Services

December 26 w/HC & January 2
We will hold ONE Sunday Service at
9:00 a.m.

New Year's Eve w/HC
6:30 p.m.

New Year's Day w/HC
9:00 a.m.

Sign-Up is NOT Needed

Prayer List

Lorraine Haake, Rick Keller, John Holland, Ruth Holland, Katie Buzek, Linda Nolan, Beverly Koester, Zach Fritcher, Kay Woodland, Chad Nelson, Doris Hammer, Gloria Fortkamp, Cassie Power, Mike McWhortor, Evelyn Shumaker, David Tieffel, & Roberta Jenkins.

Members of the Armed Forces, including Ryan Budde, Nathan Vail, Gabriel Walker, Bryce Ikemire, and all first responders of our community and nation.

Welcome home, Dylan Koester!

Stewardship Thought

Acts 7:54–55 “Now when they heard these things they were enraged, and they ground their teeth at him. But he, full of the Holy Spirit, gazed into heaven and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing at the right hand of God.” The world will always rage against Christ and His Christians. From St. Stephen’s Day down to ours the Church has faced persecution. But let them rage. We have peace with God through His Son, who took up our flesh and saved us. This gives us confidence to live the lives God has called us to live without fear.

Golden Eagles

The Golden Eagles will be meeting at noon, Thursday, December 30 in the Fellowship Hall

We Are Blessed.

I want to extend a special thank you to all of the musicians in our worship services. The choirs, ringers, band members, soloists, organists – and the audio/visual techs who support behind the scenes – bring glory to God and the Good News to worshipers. Thank you all. – Pastor Burdick

Ramsey Plus

“Financial Peace University”



Scan this QR and you can take advantage of our congregation’s membership in “Ramsey Plus.” It can bless your household tremendously. And are you interested in an IN-PERSON class of “Financial Peace University”? Complete the small insert in the bulletin this week to let the Stewardship Board know.

Classes start SOON!

Extra! Extra! Read All About It

Lydia Guild has extra pecans.
If you would like to purchase some,
please contact
Marilyn (217-821-0508),
Trevia (217-343-3300),
or
Kathy Burdick (309-255-8343)

Know what you believe and why!

Join Pastor Burdick for the Adult Catechism Bible Study series, at 7:00 p.m. Tuesdays, beginning January 4. Interested in joining our congregation? This is the class for learning what LCMS Lutherans believe, teach, and confess. **Join us!**

A signup sheet is on the main bulletin board in the Atrium hallway.

CALENDAR-----December 26, 2021 – January 2, 2022

Sunday	26	9:00 a.m.	Worship Service w/HC Traditional Service Jaron Melin Will Be Preaching Door Offering will be taken for Jaron.
		10:00 a.m.	Worship Service/Mediacom Channel 81
<i>No Preschool...Christmas Break</i>			
Monday	27		
Tuesday	28	3:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.	Food Pantry Distribution
Wednesday	29	1:00 p.m.	Office Staff Devotions & Meeting
Thursday	30	12 Noon	Golden Eagles
Friday	31		New Year's Eve The Office Will Be Closed All Day
		6:30 p.m.	Worship Service w/HC Pastor Koschmann will be speaking
Saturday	1		New Year's Day
		9:00 a.m.	Worship Service w/HC Pastor Koschmann will be speaking
Sunday	2	9:00 a.m.	Worship Service Installation of Officers
		10:00 a.m.	Worship Service/Mediacom Channel 81

Birthdays This Week

- 12/26 Clifford Traub, Gene Koebele,
Mitchell Haller, & Shannon Stuemke
12/27 Douglas Jackson, Dylan Kuhns, &
Jessica Budde
12/28 Dannie Braun & Finley VanBlaricum
12/29 Andrew Knight, Angela Heuerman,
Clayton Gregory, Phillip Kight,
Tyler Devall, & Zachary Pruemer
01/01 Carla Fox

Men of St. John's

Join us for breakfast & Bible Study on
"The Parable of the Tenants" (Matthew 21)
At Niemerg's Restaurant
Sat., Jan. 8 at 8:00 a.m.
Questions?
Call
Gayland Bourland at 217-343-4366.

Anniversaries This Week

- 12/27/61 Topper & Sarah Woelfer
12/27/75 Rev. Earl & Liz Brown
12/28/19 Jonathan & Sherrie Stremming
12/29/73 Daniel & Sarah Riordan
12/30/66 Chuck & Lori Mayberry
12/31/12 Troy & Lindsay Van Blaricum

60th Wedding Anniversary

Congratulations to
Topper & Sarah Woelfer,
who will be celebrating their 60th wedding
anniversary on Mon., Dec. 27th.
God's Blessings on you both.