

THE EAGLE

St. John's Weekly Newsletter December 21, 2025



"Let the children come to me," Jesus said. We read those words last Sunday as two infant boys were baptized. Jesus was

teaching us that, as sinners, children need salvation. Children need church. Every week. So bring them. They can't come on their own. Let them come. Even when they're noisy. It's going to be difficult, but it won't get better if you don't keep bringing them, leading them, teaching them.

To all of us who had children many years ago – and who *might* have been slightly quieter than many kids today – I make this appeal: please be patient and encouraging to all the parents and children in worship. I quipped last month during announcements that "two signs of a healthy church are crying children and singing men." By God's grace, let us be a healthy congregation.

Christmas is the celebration of the Incarnation. God became man. As a child. Jesus wiggled and cried. He later suffered, died, and rose. To save infants and adults. The whole Church. The whole world. Let the children come weekly to grow in faith and knowledge.

Merry Christmas,

P.S. Home devotions with children are made easier through *My Devotions* from Concordia Publishing. In a blessed accident, our Braille/Large-Print Center has made free copies of January's *My Devotions* available to families on the devotional table in the Atrium. Get yours today!

P.P.S Ask Kathy or me who's winning the Advent Wreath candle game today!

Sunday School Teacher

We are in need of a Kindergarten/1st Grade Sunday School Teacher. please reach out to Kiley Bohnhoff at 217-343-3520 if interested!

Office Help

Are you prayerfully considering our congregation's need to hire an Office Assistant? Please do! See the job description and application on our website.

Warm Wishes

God's greatest gift we have ever received is Jesus and the Holy Spirit creating faith in our hearts through the WORD. Another great gift is YOU, our brothers and sisters in Christ. We love you! Have a....

MERRY CHRISTMAS & A HAPPY NEW YEAR!
Pastor Gary & Gloria Fortkamp

2026 Offering Envelopes

Stop in the gym to pick up your envelopes. Your # has most likely changed. Make sure you don't use your new envelopes till 2026.

Installation of Officers and Boards

will be in all Services the weekend of January 4. Thanks to all who serve!

Upcoming Communion Practices

In this new Church Year, we will be introducing a new practice as we distribute the Lord's Supper:

- In our Christmas Day Service, we'll offer the Communion Chalice to those who prefer it. Since we have only one Chalice, we'll make it available on the lectern (left) side only. A beautiful symbol of the unity we have in Christ, we're making it available due to some inquiries about offering it. The trays of individual communion cups will be offered first. If someone prefers the Chalice, they won't take an individual cup and then pastor on the lectern side will follow with the Chalice. You are encouraged to guide the Chalice to your lips by holding the base of the cup.

Response to the Gospel **Our Attendance Last Week**

Sunday, December 14	374
Dec. 10 rd Advent Service	146
Adult Bible Class.....	25

Our Offering

Advent.....	\$1,150.00
General Fund.....	\$8,108.50
Online Offering.....	\$2,530.03
Total Gen. Fund Offering.....	\$11,788.53

What to look forward to...

Take note of some special aspects of our calendar this week:

- Christmas Eve Communion: 4:00pm, 6:30pm, 9:00pm.
- Christmas Day Communion: 9:00am.
- No Service Saturday, December 27.
- Sunday, December 28 there will be ONE Service at 9:00am. The Lord's Supper will be celebrated.

Cards

If you are needing cards, check the card cabinet in the main hallway. More cards have been added.

Mission Team

A Shumway-Faith Lutheran Mission Team is being explored for March 18-30, 2026. Looking for 10 volunteers to do painting at 4 churches in Southwestern Uganda. Individual cost for travel, meals, lodging, and transportation estimated to be \$2,800 with the team raising additional funds for materials being donated to the project. Your trip includes 2 days at a National Park to view wildlife, a school visit, and a day in Kampala city. If interested in more details, text or or call Norbert Soltwedel 217 259 2833.

LifeLight

LifeLight will be starting again on January 11th studying Proverbs. Sign up by Dec. 28th on the bulletin board.

Bible Study Resumes

The midweek Bible Study of the upcoming Sunday's Readings will resume on Wednesday, January 7, 2026 (9-10am). Join us!

Prayer List

Bernetta Marxman, Kathy Schroeder, Donna Elmore, Carol Klein, Lisa Shaw, Terry Long, Cassie Power, & Steve Rubin.

Youth Corner Upcoming Events

Cookie Walk



Saturday, Dec. 20th & Sunday, Dec. 21st.

High School Work Times:

Saturday 20th

Before Church 4:30 p.m. – 5:30 p.m.

After Church 6:30 – 7:00 p.m.

Sunday 21st

Before 8:00 a.m. Worship

7:15 a.m. – 8:00 a.m.

After 10:30 a.m. Worship

11:30 a.m. - noon

6th – 12th Grade bring 6 dozen cookies
High School Student Only sign up to work
on the bulletin board

LIFE QUOTE From Lutherans for Life

“As we celebrate the birth of our Lord, let us pray for all mothers who find themselves pregnant and afraid. Abortion is never the answer. We pray daily that the Lord will strengthen all expectant mothers who find themselves alone and seemingly without hope and that He will help them choose life. Every human being's life is a precious and beautiful miracle.” *Judie Brown, American Life League – A Life Quote from Lutherans For Life • lutheransforlife.org*

Stewardship Moment

Matthew 1:21

“She will bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins.” What our good works could never do, Jesus has done: He has saved us from our sins, paid our debt, set us free. How can we not give thanks to Him with lives of generosity and godliness? What God's Law could not do — truly motivate us to truly good works — Jesus' love has done!

CALENDAR-----Dec. 21 – Dec. 27, 2025

Sunday	21	7:15 a.m.	Cookie Walk
		8:00 a.m.	Worship w/HC
		9:15 a.m.	Christmas Program Practice/Pack Cancer Packets
		10:30 a.m.	Worship – Children’s Christmas Program
		7:00 p.m.	The FLOCK HS LYF
No Preschool			
Monday	22		Pastor Dille’s Sabbath
		1:00 p.m.	Cemetery Meeting
		5:15 p.m.	Board of Early Childhood
		5:15 p.m.	Choir Practice
Tuesday	23		
Wednesday	24		Office closes at noon
		4:00 p.m.	Worship w/HC - Bells
		6:30 p.m.	Worship w/HC - Choir
		9:00 p.m.	Worship w/HC
Thursday	25		Office Closed
		9:00 a.m.	Worship w/HC
Friday	26		Pastor Burdick’s Sabbath
			Office Closed
Saturday	27		No Service

Birthdays This Week

12/21 Rev. Gary Fortkamp,
John Mellendorf, Joyce Marxman,
Katey Devall, Leo Wyckoff
12/22 Carol Lading, Connelly Beccue
12/23 Anne Stine, Patrick Romero, Renee
Kremer
12/24 Carla Bierman, Emmeline Flach,
Gary Norris, Tommy Quance
12/26 Clifford Traub, Gene Koebele,
Mitchell Haller, Shannon Stuemke
12/27 Douglas Jackson, Dylan Kuhns,
Kathy Mueller

Anniversaries This Week

12/21/1996 Phil & Shannon Stuemke
12/21/2013 Aaron & Blair Smith
12/22/2006 Robert & Joanna Davies
12/27/1961 Topper & Sarah Woelfer
12/27/1975 Rev. Earl & Liz Brown

*Merry
Christmas*