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 <u>resume</u> 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!



The 137th Tournament of Roses Parade will be held on Jan. 1, 2026. As the only Christian float in the Jan. 1 Rose Parade, the LHM float carries on a mission of providing a Gospel witness to viewers everywhere, from along the parade route in Pasadena, California, to televisions and streaming platforms worldwide.

Office Closed

The Church Office will close at Noon on December 24 and will reopen on Monday, December 29 at 8:00am. In case of emergency, please call the pastors: Pastor Burdick (309-255-5580), Pastor Dille (636-328-4216) Pastor Fortkamp (217-690-9746). Thank you!

Thank you!

Many of you express your gratitude and love to the pastors of the Church, and we thank you for it. But so many other valuable people make our congregation function beautifully, and we have to say that the office workers, custodians, Sunday School teachers, musicians, and many others are vital, too! THANK YOU.

Church Undecorating

Our Christmas decorations at Church will remain up through Epiphany (January 6), for the "12 Days of Christmas" are the days that follow Christmas. You can do the same at home. Please help us take down the church decorations on Saturday, January 10 at 9:00am. Thank you.

Worship Anew

Worship Anew is a wonderful LCMS ministry providing Lutheran church services broadcast TV and online, in sync with the season's readings. Many of our shut-ins use Worship Anew in addition to St. John's online services. Search for Worship Anew online and TV through your provider. www.worshipanew.org Of course, one thing you cannot get online is the Lord's Supper, and so our pastors visit our shut-ins every month and bring them the Sacrament.

Christmas at St. John's

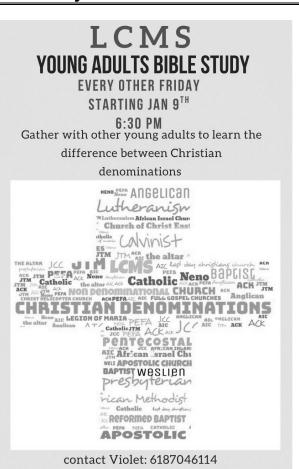
Christmas Eve Candlelight Services w/HC: 4:00pm, 6:30pm, 9:00pm

Christmas Day Service w/HC: 9:00am

First Sunday of Christmas: No Service Saturday Dec. 27 Single Service Sunday, Dec 28 9:00am

New Year's Eve Service w/HC: (Pastor Koschmann preaching) Wednesday, Dec. 31 6:30pm

Mary's Son... Our Savior



CALENDA	R		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 F	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



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

