January 2023

GOOD NEWS

From Christ Lutheran Church

Christ Lutheran Church
4801 E. 6th St.
Sioux Falls, SD 57110
Phone: 605-338-3769
Web: christsiouxfalls.org
Member: Issues, Etc., 300
Pastor: Matthew Nix

FROM THE PASTOR

James 1:17 Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights with whom there is no variation or shadow due to change. More than 15 hymns from our hymnal use this text as part of their foundation. As a pastor I could sing a dozen more.

This past year I have seen many good gifts that our God has blessed us with. Some of those good gifts are the new people that have joined us. Many have become members, some have not. Regardless each of you has aided in the fellowship of God's holy people here at Christ Lutheran. These new souls have gathered with the many that have been here for some time. Together they have encouraged gathering in fellowship and in worship. The extra voices raise our response in both word and song. All the people that gather have increased our Sunday school to the point the upper-level class needed to move because they no longer fit in their old classroom.

This past year our Lenten dinner attendance increased. We added Advent dinners that gathered even more around food and fellowship prior to our worship services. (On a side note, I would ask that the drinks, coffee, juice … be left out of the sanctuary (and cell phones not be used during worship)). Over the last couple of years, we have had more people volunteering to help in a variety of ways (I need to become more skilled at organizing these good gifts).

Last year when I filled out the statistical reports for Synod I was flagged because the percentages of new members and worship attendance was above what they thought was normal (I am counting on being flagged again this year). This is a good gift.

The generosity of all of you is another good gift. Our treasurer has not had to worry about what bills he could pay on time and what ones needed to be pushed as far as possible. Not only did we not have to worry about paying the mortgage. It now seems feasible to pay it off early. On a personal note, your Christmas gift to me was more than generous on your behalf, Thank You.

Along with the good gifts we have been blessed with the perfect gift of Jesus the one that was laid in the manger and nailed to the cross. The fact that our God came down from heaven above to be among His creation. The reason He came was to pay for everyone of our sins perfectly. Not only did he come, die, raise, and ascend. He gave us the perfect gifts of His Word, Baptism and the Lord's supper.

I thank God for all of these good and perfect gifts that He has blessed you and me with here at Christ Lutheran.

I thank you for all the good gifts that you have shared with us here at Christ Lutheran.

I look forward to seeing the many good gifts that we will share in this new year.

In Christ, Pastor Nix

Voters Meeting, Jan 15, 2023 after Divine Service

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JANUARY BIRTHDAYS

05 Grant Holtz
05 Simion Meyer
06 Dane Digatono
09 Jaenine Na Kirindo
09 Oliver Ruguruza
10 Michael Grooms
10 Paul Schilf
11 Terry Englemann
18 Vickie Britson
19 Addie Wetzel
20 James Reynolds
26 Samuel Counts
26 Kirk Meyer
26 Jake Wehking

INSTALLATION OF CHURCH OFFICERS

Installation of Church Officers will be held Sunday, January 08, 2023. The officers are:

President: Michael Grooms
Secretary: Carl Deardoff
Finance Secretary: Pastor Phil Andreasen,
Assistants: Luther Brack & Dustin Preheim
Treasurer: Marty Johnson
Elders: Paul Schilf, & Kirk Meyer, Les Britson
Trustees: Andrew Brack, Steve Counts, & Jonathan Fick

Life Quotes

January 1 "[Jesus] will care for you until you stand before His throne. Trust Him. Seek Him. Serve Him. Love Him. He's your King. He suffered and died for you. He rose for you. He only has words of love and promise to speak to you. So, when all is equal for you on your deathbed, you can rejoice and say, 'Come quickly, my King,' because He has given you the promise, 'You will be with me in paradise.'" *Rev. Peter Sulzle, St. John Evangelical Lutheran Church, Redwood Falls, Minnesota – A Life Quote from Lutherans For Life • lutheransforlife.org*

January 8 "When an abortion is performed, we proclaim that we know better than God. We disregard His wisdom, for He taught us that we should never kill innocent human beings. We proclaim that we do not want or need a gift from God. And in doing so, we seek to make ourselves more powerful than God. We seek to make ourselves God." *Archbishop Samuel Aquila – A Life Quote from Lutherans For Life • lutheransforlife.org*

January 15 "Christians are to love their neighbors, including the unborn … (Proverbs 24:11, 29:8-9) … This means we can and ought to pray for the unborn, for women who have the choice of preserving or ending the life of their unborn child, for women who have had abortions and who need forgiveness in Christ—freely given through faith, for abortion doctors who are directly responsible for killing these children, and for our governing officials." *Pastor David Thompson, St. Timothy Lutheran Church, Lombard, Illinois – A Life Quote from Lutherans For Life • lutheransforlife.org*

January 22 "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 • lutheransforlife.org*

January 29 "Pre-born babies are patients who deserve the rights and protections applicable to children and adults." *Dr. William Lile, Pensacola, Florida – A Life Quote from Lutherans For Life • lutheransforlife.org*



CHRIST LUTHERAN CHURCH
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MEMBER: ISSUES ETC 300
PASTOR: MATTHEW NIX

Lutheran Doctrine: Christ-Centered, Cross-Focused

Your Past Does Not Define Your Future

New Year's is a celebration of the past and the future. We take stock of the past with thanksgiving and sometimes even relief (that it's over), and we look to the future in hope and anticipation, and perhaps with some worry, for what it holds.

The point is that New Year's celebrations remind us of who we are as opposed to who we would like to be, what we have done in comparison to what we want to do. It reminds us of our accomplishments, but mostly it reminds us of our failures. What we've lost. Who we've lost.

New Year's is our own version of Charles Dickens' classic, *A Christmas Carol*. And we all play Scrooge. We are visited by the ghosts of our pasts, presents and futures.

St. Paul writes: "The point is this: whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows bountifully will also reap bountifully. Each one must give as he has decided in his heart, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver. And God is able to make all grace abound to you, so that having all sufficiency in all things at all times, you may abound in every good work. As it is written, 'He has distributed freely, he has given to the poor; his righteousness endures forever.' He who supplies seed to the sower and bread for food will supply and multiply your seed for sowing and increase the harvest of your righteousness. You will be enriched in every way for all your generosity, which through us will produce thanksgiving to God" (2 Cor. 9:6–15).

St. Paul tells us that the Lord will both supply and increase what we need to give to the church for its work in the world. He tells us that this work God does in us will enrich and bless us in every way, and through this, will produce thanksgiving to God. With this in mind, here is some practical advice to help you take stock of your giving in years past and change what needs to be adjusted, improved, or done away with altogether.

First, attend the Divine Service to receive God's gifts of forgiveness, life and salvation. If you've not been faithful in attending worship to hear the preaching of God's Word, to receive forgiveness and feast on the rich food of our Lord's body and blood for the eternal benefit of your body and soul, then repent and come to receive the gifts God freely gives. God doesn't want your money. He wants you — all of you (Matt. 22:20–22).

Second, pray for the Lord's help. Your right as a Christian is to speak with your Father, the King of all creation, freely through His Son, our Lord, Jesus Christ. Go to the throne of grace and ask for strength and wisdom to follow His bidding faithfully (John 15:1–16).

Third, consider what the church is and what the church does. The church is a place of mercy. It inhales the mercy of the Father by the death, resurrection and ascension of His Son through the preaching of the Gospel and the Sacraments. It exhales this mercy in love toward neighbors. You are a member of the church, of God's family. Thus, you are not only a recipient of God's mercy, but a bearer of that mercy for the life of the world. You spread that mercy through the generous giving of your income to support the work of the church in the world, as the Israelites did in the Old Testament (Lev. 27:1–34).

Fourth, take stock of your current giving in light of the New Testament's teaching on supporting the work of the church. Are you giving of your first fruits, taking it out of your paycheck first, or does God get what's left over? Are you giving voluntarily and cheerfully? Are you giving proportionally and generously? The Old Testament required a tithe, or ten percent. The New Testament gives freedom to be generous, to give more for the Church's work. Are you relying on God's promise to provide and increase what you need to do His work? If your answer is no to any of these, repent. If God gave you His only Son, will He not provide for you all things, even physical things? Trust Him, His Word, and heed it.

So, don't let your past define your future. Rather, commit for the year a generous proportion of your income, which is God's gift to you for this body and life.

– LCMS Stewardship Ministry: lcms.org/stewardship

CHRIST LUTHERAN CHURCH
TREASURER'S REPORT

December 30, 2022

	10/2022	11/2022	12/2022
Deposits:	$ 23,728.23	$ 31,689.58	$ 45,385.86
Disbursements:	$ 11,971.99	$ 12,687.76	$-14,383.48
,			
Deposit Breakdown:			
General Fund:	$ 23,448.23	$ 26,290.99	$ 38,580.80
Designated Funds:	$ 280.00	$ 5,398.59	$ 6,805.06
Monthly Budget Requirement:	$ 16,096.00	$12,876.80	$ 12,876.80
Mortgage Balance as of 12/30			$234,617.39



IN OUR PRAYERS

Mildred Corey, at home
Helen Kriz, Bethany Lutheran Home, Brandon
Lisa Johnson, health issues/wellness
Susan Powell, at home
Mildred Peters at Lyon Specialty Center in Rock Rapids, IA
Leslie & Constance Bartlett at home
Elva Clauson at home

TO JORDAN CAME THE CHRIST, OUR LORD (406/407)

Appointed for The Baptism of Our Lord Lutheran Service Book | study by Todd A. Peperkorn

Introduction

As Luther sat down to write the preface for the Small Catechism, he reflected on what he found as he visited Evangelical (now called Lutheran) parishes throughout Germany. This is what he wrote:

> The deplorable, miserable condition that I discovered recently when I, too, was a visitor, has forced and urged me to prepare this catechism, or Christian doctrine, in this small, plain, simple form. Mercy! Dear God, what great misery I beheld! The common person, especially in the villages, has no knowledge whatever of Christian doctrine. And unfortunately, many pastors are completely unable and unqualified to teach. ‹This is so much so, that one is ashamed to speak of it. Yet, everyone says that they are Christians, have been baptized, and receive the holy Sacraments, even though they cannot even recite the Lord's Prayer or the Creed or the Ten Commandments. They live like dumb brutes and irrational hogs. Now that the Gospel has come, they have nicely learned to abuse all freedom like experts. (Concordia: The Lutheran Confessions, 2nd ed. [CPH, 2006], 313)

As a result of this, Luther wrote his catechisms. He also wrote a series of hymns on the six chief parts. Our hymn for today, "To Jordan Came the Christ, Our Lord," is one of these hymns.

- Who is Luther chiefly criticizing in his introduction above?
- Why did Luther employ music?
- What do we use music to learn today?

Continues on page 5

Continuation of To Jordan Cane the Christ, Our Lord from page 4

Exploring the Scriptures

There are two chief texts that Luther uses as the basis for this hymn. Read Matt. 3:13–17. In the Matthew account, Jesus speaks about His Baptism as a fulfillment of all righteousness. Matthew uses the word "immediately" to describe the Spirit descending upon Jesus like a dove.

- What does it mean "to fulfill all righteousness"?
- Why does Matthew emphasize the relationship between Jesus' Baptism and the coming of the Spirit with the word "immediately"?

Read Matt. 28:16–20. Jesus is just about to ascend into heaven to sit at the right hand of the Father. The disciples have seen Him rise from the dead, but even now, some doubt. Jesus then says to them, literally, "having gone, make disciples of all the nations by baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and by teaching them to keep/guard everything that I have commanded to you, and behold, I am with you all the days, to the end of the age."

- What are the two parts to making disciples according to Jesus?
- What is the relationship between Baptism and Jesus being with us to the end of the age?

Exploring the Hymn

Background

This hymn was written around 1540/1541 by Martin Luther, and is the sixth and final of his "Catechism Hymns," centered on the six chief parts of the Small Catechism. Luther's hymns were particularly didactic (teaching-oriented), as he saw himself first and foremost as a teacher and preacher of the faith. His hymns often read like mini-sermons, with the ebb and flow of Law and Gospel prevalent throughout. This hymn is no exception.

- Do we still need didactic (teaching) hymns like this today? Why or why not?
- What are the chief doctrines about Baptism that need to be taught today? Why?

Text

Stanza 1 of the hymn paints the picture of our Lord at the Jordan River, and echoes the language of the Scriptures that talk about Baptism as a washing (Titus 3:5), death in Christ (Rom. 6:3–4), and new life (2 Cor. 5:17).

- Why does it please the Father for Jesus to come and be baptized?
- What is the connection between Jesus' death and Baptism in this stanza?

In stanza 2 Luther talks about Baptism as a token. He ties Baptism to faith and His Word. Remember again Luther's words from the Small Catechism: "What is Baptism? Baptism is not just plain water, but it is the water included in God's command and combined with God's word" (LSB, 325).

- Why is it so important to understand that Baptism is combined with God's Word?

He then talks about the Holy Spirit giving us kinship in Baptism (st. 2). The Holy Spirit makes us family through the token of Holy Baptism!

- Why does Luther call Baptism a "token"? Is this another way of saying "symbol," or does it mean something else?
- What does it mean to be a part of the family of God? How does that change your relationship with God?

Notice in stanza 4 how Luther moves from Jesus standing in the water to us standing in the water. Jesus stands in the water and extends His grace.

- What are the words in this stanza that describe what God does to us and for us?

Stanza 6 is a stern warning against despising Baptism. In some respects it seems out of place, but it shows the consequences for throwing away God's grace.

- To whom is this stanza written?
- How does this continue to teach us about the gifts of Holy Baptism?
- What role does faith play in Holy Baptism?

Making the Connection

This hymn is not merely teaching about something that God does. It actually preaches to us what God has done in Christ through Holy Baptism. As we go through each of the stanzas of this hymn, notice the emphasis on how God views us because we are in Christ. Luther was a master of proclaiming Jesus' death and resurrection, and how that great work of God is actually delivered to His people.

- As you look through the text of this hymn again, pick out all of the verbs that describe God's action toward us or how God looks at us in Christ. What is the most powerful image for you?

Continuation of To Jordan Cane the Christ, Our Lord from page 5

- What are the words Luther uses to describe what we either receive or what we are to do by faith in His Word?

In Closing

- Sing or read together LSB 406/407.

Prayer

Father in heaven, at the Baptism of Jesus in the Jordan River You proclaimed Him Your beloved Son and anointed Him with the Holy Spirit. Make all who are baptized in His name faithful in their calling as Your children and inheritors with Him of everlasting life; through the same Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen (Collect for the Baptism of Our Lord).

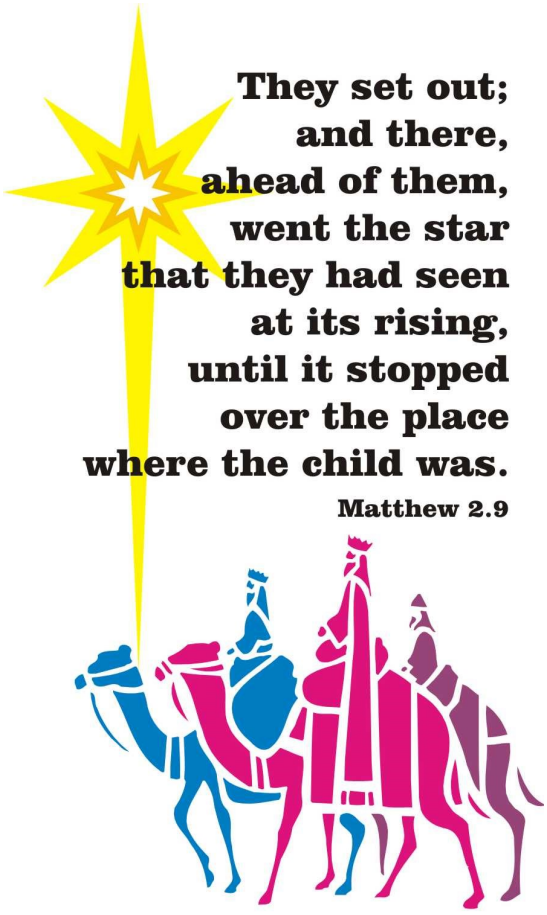
O Morning Star, How Fair and Bright

(*Wie Schön Leuchtet der Morgenstern*), the "Queen of Chorales" of the Lutheran Church, which Philip Nicolai published in 1599. Philip Nicolai (1556-1608) was known far beyond the several parishes which he served in the course of his ministry, not only for his poetry and music, but also for his homiletical oratory and polemical defense of the pure doctrine of the true visible church from both Papists and Calvinists.

Although his final call took him to St. Katherine's Church in Hamburg in 1601, Nicolai published both *O Morning Star, How Fair and Bright* and *Wake, Awake, For Night Is Flying* (called the "King of Chorales") in Frankfurt-am-Main in the appendix to his *Joyful Vision of Eternal Life* (*Freuden-Spiegel des Ewigen Lebens*). He was then serving as pastor of Unna in Westphalia, although a Spanish invasion obliged him to flee the town in December of 1598 and prevented his return until April of the ensuing year. It was quite early, however, in his ministry in Unna that Nicolai composed these hymns in the context of a plague which was carrying away some thirty of his townsmen each day and in the end took some 1400 lives in a period of seven months.

The primary biblical basis of *O Morning Star, How Fair and Bright* is, as Nicolai himself states, Psalm 45, which provides the response of the gradual on the Feast of the Transfiguration. References, however, to other passages abound, and the concluding verses of Holy Scripture are clearly of special significance. For the descriptions of our Lord in the final stanza of the hymn as "the end and the beginning" and "first and last" both derive from verse 13 of Revelation 22. There Christ tells His apostle John: "I am Alpha and Omega, the Beginning and the End, the First and the Last." Already, however, the designation of Christ as the Morning Star is featured in the first line and so the traditional title of the hymn arises from verse 16 of the final chapter of the Apocalypse. There the Lord Jesus calls Himself "the bright and morning star".

– Prof. Douglas McC. L. Judisch ✠



KIDS IN THE DIVINE SERVICE

P: LET US PRAY TO THE LORD



What is the "Prayer of the Church"?

The Prayer of the Church, or the "general prayer" as it's sometimes called, is the part in the service where the pastor leads us through a series of petitions, or prayers, with responses from the congregation. For example, after each petition the pastor may say: "Let us pray to the Lord," and the congregation may respond with "Lord, have mercy." See if you can find the Prayer of the Church in your hymnal. Try to find the other response that the pastor and congregation might say.



Why do we do this in the Divine Service?

Do you know anyone who needs praying for? Wouldn't you like to have the rest of the congregation praying for that person too? During the Prayer of the Church, we pray for all of the people of our congregation, particularly those who are sick and shut-in. We also pray for our missionaries, for our government, for all believers and many others. No wonder it's called the Prayer of the Church!



Parents: Before the Divine Service, remind your children to pay close attention to the words of the prayers. Encourage them to join in the responses with the rest of the congregation. Try using these responses in your prayers at home.

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UPCOMING

2023

- Jan 06, Epiphany Divine Service 7pm
- Jan 15 Special Voters' Meeting—Budget
- Feb 22 Ash Wednesday Divine Service, 7pm
- Mar 01, 08, 15, 22, 29 Midweek Lenten service, 7pm (Dinner prior)
- Mar 12 Daylight Savings Time Begins, 2am
- Mar 12 Voters Meeting
- Apr 06 Maundy Thursday Divine Service, 7pm
- Apr 07 Good Friday Tenebrae Service, 7pm
- Apr 09 Easter Sunrise Matins Service, 7am
- Apr 09 Easter Breakfast, 8am
- Apr 09 Easter Festival Divine Service, 9:30am
- May 14 Mothers' Day Breakfast
- May 18 Ascension Day Divine Service 7pm
- June 11 Voters Meeting
- July 23-27 VBS
- Sept 10 Voters Meeting
- Nov 05 Daylight Saving Time Ends, 2am
- Nov 23 Thanksgiving Day Divine Service, 9:30 am
- Dec 06, 13, 20 Advent Services, 7pm
- Dec 20 Children's Christmas Service 7pm
- December 24 Christmas Eve service, 5pm
- December 25 Christmas Day Service 9:30 am
- No New Year's Eve/Day Service



They set out; and there, ahead of them, went the star that they had seen at its rising, until it stopped over the place where the child was.

Matthew 2.9



And having come into the house, they saw the Child with His mother Mary. And falling down, they worshiped Him. And opening their treasures, they presented gifts to Him: gold and frankincense and myrrh. (Matthew 2:11)

Mt. Calvary Lutheran Church and Lutheran Student Fellowship Center
629 9th Ave. Brookings, SD 57006
Email: mountcalvary@swiftel.net Website: mountcalvary1.org
Pastor Matt Wurm & Pastor Micah Bauer

Dear Brother in Christ,

The Lord spoke through the mouth of the prophet Isiah, saying of His beloved chosen people these words,

> **"You are my servant, I have chosen you and not cast you off; fear not, for I am with you; be not dismayed, for I am your God; I will strengthen you, I will help you, I will uphold you with my righteous right hand."** (Isaiah 41:9b-10)

A recession resulting in stagflation is upon our land and there is yet no end in sight. Gas prices may have come down, but groceries have nearly doubled in the last year. Church budgets are pinched and those who oversee them are anxious. The cost of everything is going up and church membership is declining. The LCMS is predicted to shrink in half in just a few decades to come.

Will our families go bankrupt? Will our church close and become a statistic? These and many other questions haunt the minds of faithful pastors and parishioners and are meant to drive us inward by fear toward despair. Thus, we look to the external Word and recall the words of the prophet Isaiah, **"fear not, for I am with you; be not dismayed, for I am your God; I will strengthen you, I will help you, I will uphold you with my righteous right hand."**

On Saturday, January 21, 2023, our board of Elders and Stewardship have invited Rev. Dr. Nathan Meador of the South Wisconsin District to come and present a *Philippians Conference* to pastors and laity. He, along with Rev. Heath Curtis, are coordinators for LCMS Stewardship Ministry.

I, and a few of our members, have attended his *Philippians Conference* in the past and will attest to you that participating in this presentation is one of the most uplifting and useful church conferences that you can attend—YES, a conference on Stewardship is one of the most uplifting, useful, and entertaining church meeting you can attend!

Please do consider this invitation for yourself, your board of elders and other church leaders and laity, as an invitation to drive fear far away by reception of God's promise to you, saying, **"I will help you, I will uphold you with my righteous right hand."**

Philippians Workshop: *Helping pastors & laity collaborate on stewardship*

The Philippians Workshop is based on Paul's words in Philippians Chapter 1. In that chapter, and throughout the whole book of Philippians, we see how all the leadership of the congregation is working together in the realm of stewardship: Paul, Timothy, deacons, overseers and lay "partners in the Gospel" are all mentioned within just the first three verses!

The workshop is designed to bring together pastors and congregational lay leaders. Each congregation will know best just what lay leaders should attend, but for many congregations the board of stewardship, treasurer and the church council are a good place to start. We especially delight in opening up the Scriptures for pastors and congregations who have struggled with stewardship in the past or who have been reluctant to take up an intentional stewardship focus for whatever reason.

Presenter: Rev. Dr. Nathan Meador; South Wisconsin District, Milwaukee, Wisconsin

SCHEDULE:

8:30 Registration

9:00 Matins

9:30 Stewardship Conversion—Contemplating Stewardship for the Care of the Souls

12:00 Lunch

1:00 Stewardship Culture—Assessing Culture, Confession, Repentance and New Life

2:30 Reflection on Stewardship Culture: Action Steps for the Care of Souls

4:00 *Itinerarium*

RSVP by January 16 with name, phone number, and home church to: 605-692-2678 or pastorwurm@gmail.com. Conference will also be lived streamed at www.mountcalvary1.org.