

ST. JOHN LUTHERAN LCMS
11400 WEST PANAMA ROAD, CRETE, NE 68333



Come to the cross and learn of God's great love for all His people. There is friendship, fellowship, and the gift of God's word of forgiveness.

ST. JOHN LUTHERAN CHURCH NEWSLETTER

VOLUME 33 ISSUE 1 JANUARY 2019

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

A happy and blessed New Year (2019) to you.

It is sometimes nice to get something new. I say "sometimes" because there are some old things that are certainly better than its new replacement. And some things "new" are not allowed — you cannot trade in your family for a new one. But there are some new things that we can find great blessing in—especially with what we have in Christ.

The New Testament is clear that each day we are being made new in Christ. This is a way of describing the forgiveness of sins we have in Christ. God is merciful and forgiving when we repent of our sins and seek to do what is right. Look at these from God's Word:

Lamentations 3:22–23 (ESV): The steadfast love of the Lord never ceases; his mercies never come to an end; they are new every morning; great is your faithfulness.

2 Corinthians 5:17 (ESV): Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come. (See also what Paul writes in Galatians 6:15; Ephesians 4:24; Colossians 3:10.)

Martin Luther, in his Small Catechism, brings this out in regard to living in our Baptismal grace.

What does such baptizing with water indicate? It indicates that the Old Adam in us should by daily contrition and repentance be drowned and die with all sins and evil desires, and that a new man should daily emerge and arise to live before God in righteousness and purity forever. *Where is this written?* St. Paul writes in Romans chapter six: "We were therefore buried with Him through baptism into death in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life" (Romans 6:4).

There is no doubt that we daily sin much. We don't honor or trust in God as faithfully as we think we do. We do not honor His name as courageously or as boldly before some as we ought. Do we rightly honor those in authority? Check you silent thoughts about what you sometimes think but don't say. And when it comes to gossip or sharing things about others that we really should be keeping silent about ... well, we see our sinfulness. These are what are referred to in 1 Corinthians 15:22 and 2 Corinthians 5:17.

The Lord calls us to repent of all of our sins. Those who do so, who humble themselves before Him, will be lifted up in mercy—God's everlasting loving-kindness in Christ. Our sin is forgiven in Jesus. In Him we are made new. And each day is a day of God's grace that we might go at it again, receiving His gifts and serving Him by our service to one another.

And that is my prayer for you as we enter this New Year. It will be nice to put some things behind us—some hurts and sorrows, some regrets and failures, and all of our sins especially. And as we rejoice in the opportunities and hopes that a New Year brings, I pray God helps us to see each day as a new gift from Him. With God and in Christ we are made new. Before us we have a New Year and each day is a new day from Him. May God bless you and keep you in Christ and continually make you new each day in His name and in His service.

In Christ's Love, Pastor Toensing



PLEASE HAVE ALL INFORMATION OR ARTICLES FOR THE NEWSLETTER TO CHRIS HOLLMAN BY 25TH, THANK YOU!



Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,
 Thank you all so very much for the wonderful cards and blessings you gave us for Christmas. Your generosity and love is very much appreciated. Shelley and I pray that we may continue serve you as we rejoice in the blessing you are to us. May God grant you His love and keep you Christ Jesus, our Lord and King. Love in Christ, Pastor and Shelley.

LWML NEWS:

AND THE QUILT WINNER IS...Pat Benson from Marquette NE. Pat purchased 5 tickets for the quilt and was thrilled that she won it. The drawing was held on Sunday, December 16. Six people witnessed the drawing and the winning ticket was drawn out by Morgan Wohl. An interesting side note: Pat's great grandfather was Traugott Haessler who was a circuit rider pastor in the 1870s and preached on occasion at the meetings of Christians in this area. In 1872, a permanent call was issued to him by the congregation of St. John, Kramer. His name was the first signed on our congregation's initial constitution in July, 1874. Thank you to everyone who helped support this project by buying tickets or actually working on the quilt. After expenses are paid the money will be used to purchase supplies as needed for the quilts we send to Orphan Grain Train.

EVANGELISM COMMITTEE NEWS

The Evangelism Committee will meet on Tuesday, January 2, 2019 at 7:00 p.m. Members of St. John are more than welcomed to join our topical discussion based upon the Concordia Mission Society "Good News" periodical. The regular committee meeting will follow.

In addition, while there is little time remaining for a group registration, the Evangelism Committee would like to remind members of the opportunity to attend the upcoming "Equip to Engage" workshop to be held at Peace Lutheran in Waverly on January 18th. Members wishing to be registered and travel along are asked to contact Tim McDermott prior to the January 5th registration deadline. Individuals can still register on their own for this event and a similar option in Kearney the following day. This may offer a great chance to step back from everyday tasks and examine the needs of our surrounding area, the gifts of our congregation, and how God might use us to bring His peace, hope and love to a hurting community.



JANUARY BIRTHDAYS & *BAPTISMS*

BIRTHDAYS

- 1 Arlin Pomajzl
- 3 Blythe Dewey
- 4 Tom Nyhoff
- 5 Lyndsey Williams
- 6 Marilyn Nelson
- 7 Paul Beck, Patricia Prochnow, Julie Reetz, Jeana Scholz
- 9 Skye Hoyer
- 11 Denise Slama, Castyn Ziemann
- 13 Joy Kouba
- 15 Barb Hansmeyer
- 16 Jessica McBride, Estelle Reetz
- 17 Kristi Doiel
- 18 Logan Adam, Nick Hollman
- 19 Loren Beck, Matt Walker

- 20 Nick Ellingson
- 23 Anne Fletcher
- 25 Matt Karl
- 26 Angela Dello
- 27 Harry Meinke, Nicole Reetz, Kyle Shore
- 28 Savannah Hensley
- 29 Sherry Davis
- 30 Brian Persing
- 31 Dave Eggert

BAPTISMS

- 1 Steve VanAsperen, Fred Weidner
- 3 Tanna Nitzel
- 4 Aaron Meinke

- 7 Ellen Miller
- 8 Jayne VanAsperen
- 10 Lilian Underwood
- 12 Chris Williams
- 14 Joe Kalkwarf, Don Rejcha
- 15 Hannah Ochs
- 16 Melissa Gash, Kate [LaVerna] Kattau
- 19 Troy Henning, Barb Meinke
- 20 Marilyn Nelson, Lyndsey Williams
- 21 Doug Kattau, Scott Murphy
- 23 Jeana Scholz
- 27 Estelle Reetz
- 28 Matt Walker, Seth Brethouwer, Liam Lee
- 29 Dan Meinke, Andrew Munro, Kent Nelson

OUR MISSION Share the Joy of His News by growing inward through God's Word, Sacraments and fellowship and by growing outward through words, actions, and mission outreach.

I CAN DO ALL
THINGS
THROUGH
HIM
WHO
STRENGTHENS
ME.
PHILIPPIANS 4:13

MEN'S BIBLE STUDY

All gentlemen of St. John are again invited in January to a Lutheran Hour Ministries' Bible study entitled, "Reel to Real". In this chosen topic, the Men's group look at the similarities between our adventures with the fishing reel and our real life with families and friends. This series has proven to be a fun and relaxing discussion starter. There is room on the boat for everyone on Tuesday, January 8th at 7:00 p.m. in the Fellowship Hall.

BUILDING COMMITTEE UPDATE

The Building Committee has collected, compiled and supplied the architect with "group survey evaluations" based upon responses of our church Boards and Committee groups within the congregation. This information will be included with earlier received membership survey information and used to better formulate a plan(s) in consideration of a church Addition. Representatives from each Board/Committee have been requested to participate in a round-table or breakout meeting currently scheduled for Monday evening, January 14th at 6:30 p.m. This session is intended to bring the building committee and the architects into a broader understanding of all needs expressed.

FINANCIAL PLANNING

Financial Peace University is a course by Dave Ramsey that can assist you and your family to manage your finances in God pleasing way. This course can lead to finding peace and satisfaction in managing your finances. FPU (Financial Peace University) is being offered as a 9 week course at Bethlehem Lutheran Church in Crete. Class begins January 13th at 6 pm and will run for two hours each session. The cost is \$100 for the course which includes the online kit. Please contact Dave or Deb Welsch at 402-826-9691 for information. Terry Dittmer is also willing to share information about this course.

Sunday Morning Adult Bible Study: "Love, Joy, and Peace: The Fruit of the Spirit"

Begins January 6, 2019

Only hours before Jesus was arrested, He delivered an important message to His disciples (John 14-16). At the heart of this message He describes the "fruit" His disciples would bear, the works they would do to glorify the heavenly Father. Through the gift of the Spirit, Jesus promised love (John 14:21), joy (15:11), and peace (14:27) to them and to you. This Bible Study, "Love, Joy, and Peace: The Fruit of the Spirit," will help you produce the fruit God calls you to bear as a believer. Through biblical examples and teaching from both the Old and New Testaments, you will explore God's goodness and blessings for you in Christ.

Suggestions for Sunday Bible Study

Pastor Toensing would like to hear any suggestions you have for study and discussion for the Adult Bible class time on Sunday mornings. Please join us for refreshments, mutual conversation, and study after church on Sundays. Please email any suggestions you have to him or place a written note in his mailbox. A book of the Bible? A current topic? A timely issue? What does the Bible say about ...? Thank you for your suggestions.



PLEASE PRAY

The Nominating Committee is working on putting together a slate of nominees to serve in elected offices for the coming year. Some of our congregational officers have served their term and/or their term limitations according to the By-laws. It is not always easy for this committee to find enough people to be willing to serve. According to the By-Laws “all attempts should be made to have two or more candidates for each position.” Not just in our congregation, but in many rural congregations this is a common By-Law. But many of these congregations used to be much larger and had plenty of voting members to choose from and who were willing to serve. But with declining voting members of our congregations, there are fewer and fewer people to serve or willing to serve. Yet, the work of the congregation does need to be conducted. But sometimes we can only find one person that might be willing to serve a vacancy. Therefore, we ask you to please do the following:

1. Please pray for and support those who serve and are willing to serve in congregational offices. Pray that the Lord provides the leaders our congregation needs.
2. If you are not a voter, please consider becoming one. We especially need some of our younger to mid-age members involved in a greater capacity. Thank you to those of you who are voters and willing to serve in congregational offices.
3. Please be willing to serve if you are asked. And pray for our nominating committee members.

READING RESOLUTIONS

Every January, many Christians resolve to read the entire Bible in one year. That’s a worthy goal, but God doesn’t require us to read a certain number of verses or chapters per day. Instead, he tells us to simply be in his Word — and thus be with him — so he can grow our faith, light our path and assure us of his love and forgiveness. God’s Word is a precious gift, but we need to “unwrap” it!

F.B. Meyer offers this helpful advice for a new year of discovering (and rediscovering!) Scripture: “Read the Bible, not as a newspaper, but as a home letter. If a cluster of heavenly fruit hangs within reach, gather it. If a promise lies upon the page as a blank check, cash it. If a prayer is recorded, appropriate it and launch it as a feathered arrow from the bow of your desire. If an example of holiness gleams before you, ask God to do as much for you. If the truth is revealed ... entreat that its brilliance may ever irradiate ... your life.”

FROM THE ELDERS

Dear Fellow Redeemed,

“LET THEM SAY WE STOOD WHERE DUTY REQUIRED US TO STAND” This inscription may be found on the President George H. W. Bush Library and Museum Building. It caught my eye while watching the funeral services of the 41st President. This inscription caused me to remember another familiar saying, this time from Martin Luther. “What does this mean?” So let’s examine this inscription in the same manner that we might examine one of the Commandments. Who is “them”? Them is anyone who is in a position to observe us. It was easy for us to observe Mr. Bush, both in his public as well as in much of his private life. Most of us are not subject to such scrutiny but we do share much with Mr. Bush. He as well as you and I have a vocation, a calling to perform certain acts in our life. Mr. Bush and us have many observers in common, spouse, family members, friends, neighbors, co-workers and others who observe us in public. There is one other observer that we all share and that is God. Our vocation is a gift from God but, as Christians, it is also a “duty required”. As the redeemed, we are compelled by our love of Christ and the fear and love of the Father to live our vocation according to His commandments. Because we are expert sinners, we struggle with this “duty required” and we will fail often. But through God’s grace we will repent, be forgiven, and we will try again to do our duty. This constant struggle to live our vocation according to God’s word can be a most powerful evangelistic witness to “them”, the observers around us. Let us also consider that “we” not only refers to us individually but also to our family and to our Church. In the coming New Year of 2019, will they say we stood where duty required us to stand? “For I know the plans I have for you, declares the Lord, plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.” Jeremiah 29:11. May God cover you with His grace and mercy in the coming New Year.

The Elders

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OPPORTUNITIES FOR FURTHER GROWTH

Schedule at a Glance

| | |
|--|------------|
| Worship Service (Sundays) | 9:00 a.m. |
| Sunday School & LYF (Sundays) | 10:30 a.m. |
| Bible Class (Sundays) | 10:30 a.m. |
| Midweek Classes (Wednesdays) | 6:30 p.m. |
| Elder’s Meeting (January 7) | 6:30 p.m. |
| Men’s Bible Study (January 8) | 7:00 p.m. |
| Lutheran Women in Mission (January 15) | 7:00 p.m. |
| Ladies Aid Meeting (January 30) | 2:00 p.m. |

QUARTERLY VOTER’S MEETING

JANUARY 27, 2019 following worship

LAMBS OF CHRIST PRESCHOOL

Preschool Christmas Program... Thank you to everyone who was able to attend our program. The children did a great job and it was a blessing to watch them sing about our savior’s birth and the great gifts he has given us.

Annual Chili Fundraiser... We will be holding the annual chili fundraiser on Sunday January 27th. The children will sing at both the fundraiser and during church that morning. Please mark your calendars and spend some fellowship time enjoying the children. We will also be having raffle prizes so if you have something that you like to donate let me know.

Classes Resume on January 7. It will be great to see everyone after the holiday!

Gods Blessings, Kathy Oelschlager **lambsofchristcrete@gmail.com** 402/826-4375

LADIES AID MINUTES

St. John Ladies Aid held their annual Christmas party on December 19, 2018. After the Advent Service. lunch was served to twenty-four people.

Pastor Toensing installed the new Altar committee. They are Deanna Eggert, Linda Eggert and Bonnie Bleich. The afternoon was spent singing Christmas carols and playing card bingo.

Our next meeting will be January 30, 2019. Shirley Reetz, secretary

THOSE SERVING DURING THE MONTH OF JANUARY

| DUTY | Jan 6, 2019 | Jan 13, 2019 | Jan 20, 2019 | Jan 27, 2019 |
|-----------------|--|--|---|---|
| Organist | Jolene Reetz | Jayne VanAsperen | Jolene Reetz | Jayne VanAsperen |
| Elders | James Walker | Todd Hoyer | Gary Meinke | Roger Koch |
| Greeters | Mr & Mrs Jeff Meinke, Barb Meinke, Fran Sieck | Mr & Mrs Gary Meinke and Mr & Mrs Dave Musil | Mr & Mrs Marvin Nitzel and Mr & Mrs Larry Pomajzl | Mr & Mrs Brian Persing and Mr & Mrs Elmer Reetz |
| Acolytes | Jordyn Adam & Skye Hoyer | Madison Hestermann & Katelyn Novak | Nick Holman & Kian Morris | Cole Novak & Hugo Pomajzl |



LESSONS FROM A SNOWMAN

- It's okay to wear white well after Labor Day.
- Simply hanging out in your front yard can be fun.
- Accessories don't have to be fancy or expensive.
- We're all made mostly of water.
- You know you've "arrived" when a song is written about you.
- So what if you're a little bottom-heavy?
- Don't get too much sun.
- Sweating too much can be disastrous!

Apple Crisp with a Twist!

Recipe from ??? It was in my mailbox but NO NAME! A mystery!

Prep time—15 minutes Bake time—35 minutes

This will serve only 1-2 for those alone

1 large tart apple peeled & sliced (or two smaller)

1/4 cup sugar

1 Tbsp flour

1/2 tsp ground cinnamon

1/8 tsp ground nutmeg

Combine the above ingredients and transfer to a sprayed or buttered 3 cup baking dish

Topping:

1/2 cup flour

1/4 cup sugar

1/4 cup cold butter

3 Tbsp chopped pecans

1/3 cup apricot jam

Combine flour and sugar in a small bowl. Cut in butter until mixture is crumbly. Stir in pecans. Sprinkle this mixture over apple mixture. Drop jam by teaspoonfuls over the top. Bake uncovered at 350 degrees for 35-40 minutes until apple slices are tender.



A NEW CREATION

The apostle Paul says everyone who believes in Jesus becomes brand new.

Directions: Cross out every third letter. Then write the remaining letters in the blanks to complete 2 Corinthians 5:17, NIV.

THIEROEFQORXEIDFAMNYAON
 SEILSITNCVHRKISDTTBHEWNE
 QWCDREYATMIOC�HFASWCOR
 MEGTHWE OFL DXHASSGZONL
 ETJHEWNEQWIDSHREROE

 ----- : -----

 ----- ! 2 CORINTHIANS 5:17, NIV

Answer: Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: The old has gone, the new is here! 2 Corinthians 5:17, NIV