

January 2025

# The GOOD NEWS

Monthly Newsletter for Faith Lutheran Church and St. John's Lutheran Church-Hamburg



*The Pastor's Pen*

## May God Grant You A New Year!

Another New Year - another chance at life, another chance to make a difference, another chance to experience something that you have never done before. A New Year is a new opportunity to discover, to explore, to grow, to mend, to improve, to look forward to new possibilities.



God has given you another New Year. What sins of the last year have been wiped away by the powerful love and blood of Jesus Christ. You are a forgiven child of God. In the God's eternal judgment, it makes no difference what has happened or how many times it has occurred. The New Year is a fresh start. John R. Rice writes, *"No matter what a man's past may have been, his future is spotless."* What will you do with this New Year this new chance at life that God has given you? If you are young or if you are old, how are you going to use it?

No matter what your age or condition in life, this is a New Year for you to mold and use. It is common for some older Christians to feel that since there is far more road behind them than lays ahead of them, they can do little with their life. However, I have experienced time and time again how older members that have done a lot of "heavy lifting" for the church just by their prayer life. Through their prayers marriages make it, family members come to faith, plans succeed, concerns are overcome.

No matter who you are you have this in common with everyone else: *this New Year there will be new chances and new challenges. Therefore, always put Christ first in this New Year. Make sure that the person you stay closest to is Christ.* Start this year with a prayer like this:

## The New Year

Dear Lord,  
as this new year is born  
I give it to Thy hand,  
Content to walk by faith  
what paths I cannot understand.

Whatever coming days may bring  
Of bitter loss, or gain,  
Or every crown of happiness;  
Should sorrow come, or pain,

Or, Lord,  
if all unknown to me  
Thine angel hovers near  
To bear me to that farther shore  
Before another year,

It matters not - my hand in Thine,  
Thy light upon my face,  
Thy boundless strength when  
I am weak,  
Thy love and saving grace!

I only ask, loose not my hand,  
Grip fast my soul, and be  
My guiding light upon the path  
Till, blind no more, I see! Martha Snell Nicholson

May God grant each of you and the precious family of Calvary a Happy New Year.

*Pastor Don Love*

### Special Gifts



✚ In memory of **DONALD HOFF**, a gift to the Special Purpose Fund from Elaine Hoff

- ✚ In honor of **VICAR PAUL MROCZENSKI**, a gift to his Puerto Rican mission from Barry and Cindy Krenz
- ✚ A generous gift from Phyllis Buch for the New Building Fund.
- ✚ In memory of **HENRY AND ELIZABETH PETERS**, a special grant for the New Building Fund from the Community Foundation of North Central Wisconsin and Brian and Mollie Peters Schade.

## POINSETTIAS



Special thanks to all who supported the Poinsettia Fund to help decorate the sanctuary and narthex for the Advent and Christmas season.

- † In memory of Bruce Hein from Carol Hein
- † In memory of Otto & Selma Porath from Mark Porath
- † In memory of Danna Koebe from James Koebe
- † In memory of Lloyd & Doris Grueneberg and Leonard & Lavine Woller from the Leon Bartelt family
- † In memory of Earl & Ruth Zuelsdorff and Ron & Marlene Zuelsdorff from Ed & Connie Stiver
- † In memory of Timothy Pagel from Gene & Karen Pagel
- † In memory of Bruce & Judy Schield from Matt & Sarah Thomas
- † In memory of Louise Fox from Gerhard & Sally Hannemann
- † In memory of Cindy Salzman and LeRoy & JoAnn Sense from Sherrie White
- † In memory of LuAnn Ruhbusch from Rev. William Ruhbusch
- † In memory of James Schlueter from Judy Schlueter



- † Gift from Chris & Deb Stogbauer
- † Gift from Barry & Cindy Krenz
- † Gift from an anonymous person



Through Thrivent Choice®, persons with Thrivent membership can contribute to organizations with a personal donation. Recently Faith received Thrivent Choice Dollars from **SUSAN PANKOW**. Thank you, Susan. For more information, call 1-800-847-4836.

**Faith Lutheran Church  
Council Meeting Minutes  
Monday, December 9, 2024**

**Present:** Pastor Love, Terry Seidler (President), Mike Baumann (Vice-President), Lillie McCulloch (Secretary), Barry Krenz (Trustees), Cindy Braatz (Treasurer), Bonnie Grueneberg (Evangelism), Rod Dahlke (Elders), Cheryl Dahlke (Education).

Vice-President, Mike Baumann called the meeting to order. Pastor opened with a prayer and devotion. Meeting minutes from October were reviewed with one correction made. A motion for approval was made, seconded, and passed.

**Trustees** - New LED bulbs were installed in the kitchen and secretary's office, next will be the office and classrooms on the East side. The remaining bulbs will be purchased next year. Tony Gruetzmacher will be plowing snow again and Dennis Hummer will be sanding the parking lot as needed. The church recently had a fire inspection which went well.

**President** - Terry reviewed the constitution in preparation for the upcoming Annual Meeting. Positions up for re-elect and collecting names for nominations were discussed. Keith Wendt was appointed to fill the vacant spot on the Board of Elders for the remainder of Jim Beilke's term beginning February 1st, 2025. Term to end January 2026. A motion was made, seconded and passed. Locating the list of possible greeters for scheduling was discussed. The National Youth Gathering will be in July of 2025, Terry is considering attending with the group this year. Pastor Ruhbusch called to offer funds to purchase items for the altar guild.

**Elders** - Since the last meeting the Elders reviewed their budget, which came to \$107,960. There was significant expense with guest speakers this year, primarily in paying out mileage. Going forward the plan is for some of the Elders to step up to cover non-communion services when needed.

**Treasurer** - Balance reports for October and November were reviewed, the ending balance for November was \$47,447.17.

**Board of Education** - The childrens' program will be this Sunday, December 15th. There are 4 confirmands and 7 children that will be participating. Caroling will be this Sunday at 1pm.



**Stewardship/Evangelism** - The Angel Tree is up and all the tags have been claimed. Christmas bags are ready to be assembled. Bonnie is compiling a list of members/stops for caroling this Sunday. The Ark Encounter was a great success!

**Pastor** - Iron Sharpens Iron is still going well, there were 8 attendees at the last gathering. The Ark Encounter went well. Advent services have started, attendance was low at the first service, likely due to inclement weather. A new laptop was acquired at a great price, under budget. It will be up and running by the next meeting. Jessica Pfaff was baptized and is now officially a church member

**Old Business** - No old business to discuss.

**New Business** - The Annual Meeting will be January 26th, 2025. A budget meeting will be held January 13th at 7:30pm to review all the budgets prior to the Annual Meeting.

Barry brought up the significant expense increase with our copying company. Pastor proposed decreasing the number of copies by 25% now, and then reassess to possibly decrease further in the future. It will be encouraged for couples to share bulletins and to reference the big screens instead of bulletins when possible.

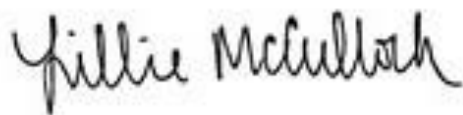
Rodney reviewed the itemized Elders' budget with the council which totalled \$107,960. A motion was made, seconded and passed.

The next dual-parish meeting is set for Tuesday, January 14th at 6:30pm.

The next regular council meeting is scheduled for February 10, 2025 at 7:30pm.

A motion for adjournment was made, seconded, and passed. The meeting closed with a prayer from Pastor Love.

Respectfully submitted,



Lillie McCulloch  
Council Secretary

### **LWML Stamps for Missions**

The LWML collects used stamps to be sold to collectors. The Forever stamps are especially good. Trim them from the envelope with a 1/4" margin. There is a container on the south wall in St. John's Fellowship Room. At Faith, bring them to the church office.



# Faith Lutheran Church

15425 South County Road K

Merrill, WI 54452

Church e-mail: [faithmerrillwi@gmail.com](mailto:faithmerrillwi@gmail.com)

Church website: [faithlutheranmerrill.com](http://faithlutheranmerrill.com)

## Pastor Donald Love

Office Phone 715-536-5443

Home Phone 715-722-0540

Cell Phone 1-815-922-0397

## Pastor's Office Hours

Mon. and Tues: Home

Wednesday: Faith

Thursday: St. John's

## Church Office Hours

Tues. and Thurs. 9 a.m.-12 noon

Mon., Wed., and Fri. varies

## Emergency Contacts

Terry Seidler 715-536-9742 (home)

715-203-5733 (cell)

### ALTAR GUILD JANUARY SCHEDULE

January 1 - 13 Chris Pfaff and Phyllis Beilke

January 14 – January 27 Phyllis Buch and Deb Stogbauer

January 28 – February 12 Gene and Karen Pagel

### January 2025

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1	2	3	4
5 9:15 a.m. Sunday School 10:15 a.m. Worship with Holy Communion 11:15 a.m. Bible Class	6 6:30 p.m. Worship with Holy Communion 7:30 p.m. Elders' Meeting	7	8 10:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m. AbleLight 5:30 p.m. Confirmation Class at Faith	9	10	11
12 9:15 a.m. Sunday School 10:15 a.m. Worship 11:15 a.m. Bible Class	13 6:30 p.m. Worship 7:30 p.m. Budget Meeting	14 6:30 p.m. Dual Parish Meeting at Faith	15 5:30 p.m. Confirmation Class at Faith	16	17	18
19 9:15 a.m. Sunday School 10:15 a.m. Worship with Holy Communion 11:15 a.m. Bible Class 12:15 a.m. Evangelism/Stewardship Meeting	20 6:30 p.m. Worship with Holy Communion	21 6:00 p.m. Trustees' Meeting	22 10:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m. AbleLight 5:30 p.m. Confirmation Class at Faith	23	24	25
26 9:15 a.m. Sunday School 10:15 a.m. Worship 11:30 a.m. Annual Meeting	27 6:30 p.m. Worship	28	29 5:30 p.m. Confirmation Class at Faith	30	31	

# January 2025 Elder, Usher, Greeter, Scrip Schedule

## Sunday, January 5 10:15 a.m.

Elders Lee Pfaff, Randy Braatz  
 Ushers Cindy Braatz, Carol Hein  
 Greeter Duane Grunenwald  
 Scrip Cindy Braatz

## Monday, January 6 6:30 p.m.

Elders Jim Beilke, Jason Westfall  
 Usher Ed Stiver  
 Greeter Ed Stiver  
 Scrip Debbie Stogbauer

## Sunday, January 12 10:15 a.m.

Elder Mark Porath  
 Ushers Brian and Lynn Klug  
 Greeter Brian Klug  
 Scrip Lynn Klug

## Monday, January 13 6:30 p.m.

Elders Rodney Dahlke Jim Beilke  
 Ushers Keith Wendt  
 Greeter Keith Wendt  
 Scrip Debbie Stogbauer

## Sunday, January 19 10:15 a.m..

Ushers Kyle Young, Lee Pfaff  
 Elders Bob and Bernice Porath  
 Greeter Duane Grunenwald  
 Scrip Bernice Porath

## Monday, January 20 6:30 p.m.

Elders Randy Braatz, Jason Westfall  
 Ushers Cindy Braatz, Carol Hein  
 Greeter Carol Hein  
 Scrip Cindy Braatz

## Sunday, January 26 10:15 a.m.

Elders Mark Porath, Mike Beilke  
 Ushers Leroy Laabs, Keith Wendt  
 Greeter Sandy Laabs  
 Scrip Cindy Krenz

## Monday, January 27 6:30 p.m.

Elders Rodney Dahlke, Jim Beilke  
 Usher Ed Stiver  
 Greeter Ed Stiver  
 Scrip Debbie Stogbauer

## Sunday, February 2 10:15 a.m.

Elders Lee Pfaff, Kyle Young  
 Ushers Leon and Beth Bartlet  
 Greeter Susan Pankow  
 Scrip Becky Rajek

## Monday, February 3 6:30 p.m.

Elders Joe Heisinger, Jason Westfall  
 Ushers Amanda Heisinger  
 Greeter Amanda Heisinger  
 Scrip Debbie Stogbauer

### HOLY COMMUNION

Sunday, January 5 10:15 a.m.  
 Monday, January 6 6:30 p.m.  
 Sunday, January 19 10:15 a.m..  
 Monday, January 20 6:30 p.m.  
 Sunday, February 2 10:15 a.m.  
 Monday, February 3 6:30 p.m.

### UPCOMING DATES

**Monday, January 6**  
 Elders' Meeting  
**Sunday, January 26**  
 Annual Meeting  
**Wednesday, March 5**  
 Ash Wednesday



### ELDERS

Rodney Dahlke, chairman Randy Braatz, secretary  
 Joe Heisinger, Mike Beilke, Lee Pfaff,  
 Mark Porath, Jason Westfall,  
 Keith Wendt. Kvie Young

# JANUARY

## Birthdays & Anniversaries

### ST. JOHN'S BIRTHDAYS

January 3 Russell Bloch  
Craig Jahnke  
January 4 Kathryn Henrichs  
January 5 Deb Wiederhoeft  
January 8 Karyn Blasky  
January 10 Eric Vogel  
January 11 Rolly Koppa  
January 21 Mikaela Wood  
January 22 Chris Blasky  
January 24 Mark Czech  
January 26 Kristine Punke  
January 27 Amy Hinz  
January 28 John Sturm

### FAITH BIRTHDAYS

January 3 Donna Schulz  
January 4 Marlene Krenz  
Joshua Klug  
January 7 Nicholas Gaeu  
January 9 Sherrie White  
January 10 James Goetsch  
James Beilke  
January 14 Jason Westfall  
Ivan Hein  
Emily Klug  
January 15 Debra Grueneberg  
January 17 Jordan Knoble  
January 21 Ryan Baguhn  
Rev. Hans Heisinger  
January 22 Raegan Zuelsdorff  
January 23 Joseph Zuelsdorff  
January 24 Laney Zuelsdorff  
January 25 Karen Pagel  
January 26 Linda Janisch  
January 27 Sharon Kleinschmidt  
Timothy Bartelt  
January 28 Sherry Frazier  
January 29 Kovyn Young  
January 30 Deborah Stogbauer  
January 31 Karissa Karau

### FAITH ANNIVERSARY

January 3  
Joseph and Amanda Heisinger 16 years

## Bible Memory Verse



### Week of January 5, 2025

Joel 2:32

And it shall come to pass that everyone who calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved. For in Mount Zion and in Jerusalem there shall be those who escape, as the Lord has said, and among the survivors shall be those whom the Lord calls.

### Week of January 12, 2025

Titus 3:4-6

When the goodness and loving kindness of God our Savior appeared, he saved us, not because of works done by us in righteousness, but according to his own mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit, whom he poured out on us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior.

### Week of January 19, 2025

Colossians 2:8-9

See to it that no one takes you captive by philosophy and empty deceit, according to human tradition, according to the elemental spirits of the world, and not according to Christ. For in him the whole fullness of deity dwells bodily.

### Week of January 26, 2025

Ephesians 5:25b-27

Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her that he might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word, so that he might present the church to himself in splendor, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing, that she might be holy and without blemish.

# St. John's Lutheran Church

134058 County Road L Athens, WI 54411  
715-536-1810

Church e-mail: [stjohns486@gmail.com](mailto:stjohns486@gmail.com)

## Pastor Donald Love

Office Phone 715-536-5443

Home Phone 715-722-0540

Cell Phone 1-815-922-0397

E-mail

[church7663@sbcglobal.net](mailto:church7663@sbcglobal.net)

## Pastor's Office Hours

Mon. & Tues. Home

Wednesday Faith

Thursday St. John's

Friday Off (Family Day)

## Elders

Jeremy Fromm 715-574-2003

Bob Burish 715-573-7078

Mark Czech 715-409-9174

Mike Schultz 715-539-0995

## Christian Day Care

Patti Beilke 715-539-8120

## Elder of the Month

Don Gille 715-573-8197

## Setting the Lord's Table

Misty Vogel

## January 2025

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1	2	3	4
5 8:30 a.m. Worship with Holy Communion Sunday School during Sermon 1:00 p.m. Epiphany Potluck Lunch for Mary-Martha Guild	6	7 6:00 p.m. Church Council Meeting 7:00 p.m. Elders' Meeting	8 5:30 p.m. Confirmation Class at Faith	9	10	11
12 8:30 a.m. Worship Sunday School during Sermon	13	14 6:30 p.m. Dual Parish Meeting at Faith	15 5:30 p.m. Confirmation Class at Faith	16	17	18
19 8:30 a.m. Worship with Holy Communion Sunday School during Sermon	20	21	22 5:30 p.m. Confirmation Class at Faith	23	24	25
26 8:30 a.m. Worship Sunday School during Sermon	27	28	29 5:30 p.m. Confirmation Class at Faith	30	31	





THE LUTHERAN CHURCH—MISSOURI SYNOD

# Pray For Us Calendar

## EPIPHANY — JANUARY 1-31

Epiphany is from a Greek word meaning to "reveal" or "make manifest." The season of Epiphany is our time to focus on the revelation of who Jesus is — both true God and true man — as we remember Christ's revelation to the Gentiles in the visit of the Wise Men.

*Give thanks as you pray:*

1. That God would make us bold witnesses to the Good News of Jesus Christ in this new year and always.
2. For opportunities to witness to friends, family members and strangers. Please send Your Holy Spirit to give us wisdom and faithful words to use during these encounters.
3. For our congregations, that God would strengthen them by fostering a faithful Lutheran approach to confessing Christ to neighbors and planting daughter congregations.

4. That our schools would be faithful mission outposts, reaching unchurched families with the Gospel and strengthening the faith of church-ed families.

5. With thanksgiving for all the Synod's faithful church workers, that they might be re-energized daily and find great joy in their service.

6. That just as You made known Your Son to the Gentiles through the leading of a star, You would continue to bring the light of Your Gospel to the hearts of all people.

7. For new church plants and mission starts, that the Lord would help faithful congregations sprout up in every corner of the United States.

8. That we would be effective in reaching out to people of different ethnicities who are living in our communities. Pray that the Lord would use us

as His instruments to make the LCMS a reflection of the Church Triumphant.

9. For those marching for life, whether at the National March for Life in Washington, D.C., or a pro-life event closer to home. Please pray that all those who attend might be a powerful witness to others.

10. For all children, that they would be brought to the saving waters of Baptism and raised in the love, nurture and admonition of the Lord.

11. That the Lord would help us raise our children and young people in the faith, always pointing them to the hope and salvation found only in Christ.

12. For college students, who are struggling with many different issues and challenges. Ask God to make them receptive to the peace and healing of the Gospel.

13. For the aged, that they would be godly examples to the young as they are patient in their tribulations, joyful in their hope, firm in their faith and humble in all they say and do.

14. That God would strengthen our hope and impact by encouraging partnerships in the Gospel that clearly confess Christ.

15. For the Synod's 35 districts, that they might have the resources and wisdom to effectively reach out to their communities.

16. For strong districts, congregations and Recognized Service Organizations. When our Synod is strong at home, we can better reach out across the world.

17. For all missionaries around the world, who leave family and friends to travel to a foreign land to share the Gospel with those who have not heard. Pray that God would grant them safety, wisdom and strength.

## JANUARY *Pray For Us Calendar*

**18.** *With thanksgiving for all the faithful brothers and sisters in Christ who support the work of LCMS missionaries through their prayers and gifts.*

**19.** *That God would raise up indigenous pastors, deaconesses and other church leaders to reach out to their own communities and share His Word.*

**20.** *For the Synod's partner churches around the world, that they would continue to teach Christ's Word in all its truth and purity.*

**21.** *With thanksgiving for all past missionaries. Thanks be to God, the Gospel seeds they planted continue to bear much fruit.*

**22.** *That God would raise up more missionaries to serve at home and abroad, according to His will.*

**23.** *That the Lord would open up the hearts and minds of people around the world, so that His grace-filled message can be spread far and wide.*

**24.** *For discernment, that we might heed God's call to serve in His name, whether around the world or right here at home.*

**25.** *That God would bless mission work in urban areas and protect those He sends to work in these often-difficult situations.*

**26.** *For mission work in suburban areas, that we would not become complacent in the work God has called us to do in our own communities.*

**27.** *For mission work in rural areas, that congregations would be equipped to respond to the changing demographics around them.*

**28.** *That congregation members might be welcoming to every person the Lord brings to their church.*

**29.** *That God would strengthen our faith so that His Word has free course in our congregations and homes.*

**30.** *For all people who turn away from the loving arms of their Savior. Pray that the Holy Spirit would transform their hearts and minds.*

**31.** *With thanksgiving that God has called and equipped us to join in His mission to seek and save the lost. Ask God to give you courage to be His witness in your daily life.*



Congregations and individuals are invited to copy these pages for newsletters or other distribution. Download at [lcms.org/prayforus](http://lcms.org/prayforus) or call 888-843-5267 to request a copy.







# New Creation in Christ

## JANUARY

### Daily Reading Plan



- Day 1: 2 Corinthians 5:17
- Day 2: Galatians 2:20
- Day 3: Isaiah 43:18-19
- Day 4: 2 Corinthians 5:17-21
- Day 5: Colossians 3:9-10
- Day 6: Ephesians 2:10
- Day 7: 2 Peter 1:4
- Day 8: Ezekiel 11:19-20
- Day 9: Ephesians 4:22-24
- Day 10: 2 Corinthians 3:18
- Day 11: Titus 3:5
- Day 12: Galatians 6:15
- Day 13: 1 Peter 3:18-22
- Day 14: Romans 6:3-4
- Day 15: Isaiah 65:17
- Day 16: Ezekiel 36:25-27
- Day 17: Isaiah 65:17-25
- Day 18: Isaiah 64:8
- Day 19: Ephesians 4:24
- Day 20: Romans 8:1
- Day 21: Colossians 3:1
- Day 22: Colossians 2:12
- Day 23: Colossians 2:13
- Day 24: Colossians 3:2
- Day 25: Romans 6:1-23
- Day 26: Philippians 2:5
- Day 27: Romans 12:1-2
- Day 28: 1 Peter 1:23
- Day 29: Colossians 2:6
- Day 30: 2 Corinthians 5:21

*Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come.  
2 Corinthians 5:17*



**FAITH LUTHERAN CHURCH**  
**15425 South County Road K**  
**Merrill, WI 54452**

NON-PROFIT ORG  
U.S. POSTAGE PAID  
PERMIT 44  
MERRILL, WI 54452

