

# St. John's Journal

## LUTHERAN DISTINCTIVES

V. Lutherans believe that God works through the Means of Grace.

Part 2

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Lutherans call God's Word and His Sacraments the "Means of Grace." These are channels or means by which God distributes His gifts of salvation to His people. In other words, they are instruments through which God bestows salvation on individual sinners. Baptism, which we recognize as one of the Sacraments, is included among the Means of Grace.

We Lutherans most commonly define a Sacrament as a sacred church act: 1) that has been instituted by God Himself, 2) in which God attaches His Word of promise to some tangible object, also known as a visible element, and 3) by which God bestows the forgiveness of sins and other blessings. According to this definition there are two Sacraments, and Holy Baptism is one of them.

Lutherans believe what God has spoken about Baptism. Therefore we acknowledge that Baptism is God's work, whereby He washes away sin and creates new spiritual life in us. We reject as anti-scriptural the teaching that Baptism is a symbolic ceremony only – that it doesn't actually accomplish anything, but is only an outward expression of the believer's decision to accept Jesus and be part of His church. Rather, we believe that God is powerfully and effectively working by His Word in and through Baptism to accomplish His saving purposes in the person being baptized.

Numerous Bible passages teach this. Here are a few of them. Jesus, who instituted and commanded Baptism, said, "Whoever believes and is baptized **shall be saved.**" *Mark 16:16* Peter wrote, "Baptism now **saves you.**" *1 Peter 3:21* He also preached, "Repent, and let each one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ **for the forgiveness of sins, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.**" *Acts 2:38* And when Saul (Paul) was baptized, he was instruct-

ed, "Arise and be baptized and **wash away your sins.**" *Acts 22:16*

It is God alone who forgives sins and saves us. And God clearly attaches the promise of forgiveness and salvation to Baptism. Therefore we know without doubt that God actively works by means of Baptism to bestow His saving gifts.

Because of what God teaches in the Bible, we Lutherans confess in our official writings: "Baptism is not just plain water, but it is the water included in God's command and combined with God's word." We continue, "What benefits does Baptism give? It works forgiveness of sins, rescues from death and the devil, and gives eternal salvation to all who believe this, as the words and promises of God declare." You are well familiar with these words from the Small Catechism.

We also confess in the Large Catechism, Baptism: 10 - "To be baptized in God's name is to be baptized not by men but by God Himself. Although it is performed by men's hands, it is nevertheless truly God's own act." Our Lutheran Confessions have much more to say about Baptism. If you are interested in exploring them in further depth on this or any other subject, just come and talk to me.

Praise God that He so graciously chooses to work through His Means of Grace, including Holy Baptism! Here He has given us a visible washing, empowered by His living Word, so that each baptized believer may know without any doubt: I am God's clean and forgiven child! I am saved!

- Pastor Bishop

Matthew

Mark

Luke

John

## Christian Education Sunday School

### Perfect Attendance October 2024

None

## DECEMBER BIRTHDAYS



### Dec 02

Tomi Pfanz

### Dec 04

Michelle Ferguson  
Eric Harley

### Dec 05

Stephen Sheckler

### Dec 06

Ronda Adkins  
Joe Canterbury

### Dec 07

Trevor Frankel  
Tyler Frankel

### Dec 09

Sofia Hicks  
David McCammon

### Dec 10

Owen Sumner  
Diane Webber

### Dec 11

Leslie Hauk  
Kathy Miller

### Dec 12

Tom Etter  
Michael Gillespie  
Bradley Wilson



### Dec 13

Gage Dingerson

### Dec 14

Audrey Driskell  
Valerie Ferguson  
Alexander Jones  
Bryan Sego  
Michelle Watson  
Cora Wiker

### Dec 15

John Neumann

### Dec 16

Ace Dupent  
Lilly Hicks  
Lila Lisenbee

### Dec 17

Rebecca Worlow

### Dec 18

Derrick Schumm  
Sydney Webb

### Dec 19

Kim Gudzinkas  
Jeffrey Morrison

### Dec 20

Daniel Nafziger  
Cindy Smith

### Dec 21

Kyle Barth  
Peyton Edmiston  
Kevin Rockhold

### Dec 22

Timothy Althiser

### Dec 23

Jamie Driskell  
Nicholas Fornoff  
Amanda Memken

### Dec 24

Jeffrey Gauger  
Ryan Stoehr

### Dec 26

Penny Hoover

### Dec 28

Marshall Edmiston  
Raymond Hall  
Noah Justi  
Donna Pool

### Dec 29

Jeffrey Turney  
Jeremy Turney

### Dec 31

Mackenzie Abatie  
Julie Hammond

## DECEMBER ANNIVERSARIES

### Dec 07

Daryl & Laura Dagit

### Dec 10

Roy & Debra Dagit

### Dec 12

Denny & Carol Jones  
Richard & Kelley Ward

### Dec 17

David & Lori Sego

### Dec 18

Gregory & Carol Becker

### Dec 27

Daniel & Karen Nafziger

### Dec 30

Harold & Susan Wertz

### Dec 31

Ray & Joyce Barnes

### Transferred To The Church Triumphant

Ruthanne Scott

5-29-46

11-7-24

Waltraud Hupke

3-19-33

11-13-24

# PARISH NOTES



## Church Attendance

Oct 2024 **423** - 12 services  
 Oct 2023 **561** - 15 services  
 Oct 2022 **555** - 15 services

## Sunday School Attendance

Oct 2024: **1,280**  
 Oct 2023: **1,353**  
 Oct 2022: **1,281**

## Acolytes

### Dec 1

10:30 Silas Gould

### Dec 4

7:00 p.m. Silas Gould

### Dec 8

10:30 Kenna Donovan

### Dec 11

7:00 p.m. Kenna Donovan

### Dec 15

10:30 Silas Gould

### Dec 18

7:00 p.m. Silas Gould

### Dec 22

10:30 Kenna Donovan

### Dec 24—Christmas Eve

7:00 p.m. Kenna Donovan

### Dec 25—Christmas Day

10:00 a.m. Silas Gould

### Dec 29

10:30 Silas Gould

### Dec 31—New Year's Eve

7:00 p.m. Kenna Donovan

### Jan 5

10:30 Kenna Donovan

## Elders

### Communion Assistance

#### Dec 1

8:00 a.m. Randy Couch  
 10:30 a.m. Jon Bolt

#### Dec 15

8:00 a.m. Ross Gould  
 10:30 a.m. Brian Ford

#### Dec 24

7:00 p.m. Randy Couch

#### Dec 25

10:00 a.m. Jon Bolt

#### Dec 29

8:00 a.m. Randy Couch  
 10:30 a.m. Jon Bolt

## Worship Chairman

Julie Wagner

## Videographers

Lexi & Lilly Daniels

## December Ushers

### 8:00 a.m.

Ray Barnes  
 Dave Kesselmayer

### 10:30 a.m.

Andrew Knussman  
 Brian Lundeen

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## **2025 OFFERING ENVELOPES**

Offering envelopes for 2025 are being prepared. If you do not have envelopes and would like a box, phone the church office: **347-2136**. Envelopes will be available in the gym beginning **December 15th**.

Contributions for 2024 must be received by **Dec. 31st** in order to be credited to your 2024 offering record.

## **THE CHILDREN'S CHRISTMAS SERVICE**

will be December 22nd at 10:30 am. Practices will be during Sunday School, 9:15-10:15, Dec. 1, 8, 15 and 22. Any child is welcome to participate. Show up during practice or contact Deanna Bishop at 309-201-9297.

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### **Special Services for Advent and Christmas**

## **ADVENT VESPERS SERVICES 2024**

Sermon Series:  
 "Isaiah Proclaims the Coming Savior"

All services are the Order of Vespers, TLH pg. 41 at 7:00 p.m.

### Dec 4

Sermon: "The Sign of Immanuel" Isaiah 7:14

### Dec. 11

Sermon: "A Child of Many Names" Isaiah 9:6

### Dec. 18

Sermon: "A Just King from David's Line" Isaiah 11:1, 4a

A light supper will be served before the services beginning at 5:30.

## **CHRISTMAS SERVICES**

Tuesday, Dec. 24 - 7:00 p.m. Christmas Eve Service with Holy Communion

Wednesday, Dec. 25 - 10:00 a.m. Christmas Day Festival Communion

Tuesday, Dec. 31 - 7:00 p.m. New Year's Eve Service

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**TREASURER'S REPORT  
OCTOBER 2024**



**HI-LITES OF ST. JOHN'S VOTERS ASSEMBLY  
November 11, 2024**

	<u>October</u>	<u>Y-T-D</u>
<b><u>INCOME</u></b>	26,449.41	302,819.97
<b><u>EXPENSES</u></b>	33,716.57	326,533.21
<b><u>INCOME-EXPENSES</u></b>	<b>(\$ 7,267.16)</b>	<b>(\$ 23,713.24)</b>
<b>General Fund Accounts</b>		
General Fund		18,274.41
<b>General Fund Total</b>		<b>18,274.41</b>
<b>Educational Fund Accounts</b>		
Educational Grant Fund Checking		1,948.56
Ed Grant CD LCMS 12/23		51,863.96
Ed Grant CD LCMS 12/22		51,835.93
Educational Grant Fund #2-Vanguard		64,315.80
<b>Educational Fund Total</b>		<b>169,964.25</b>
<b>East Bluff Property</b>		
East Bluff Property—Vanguard		39,154.42
East Bluff CD LCMS 12/21		53,741.35
East Bluff CD LCMS 12/22		53,770.40
Cat Stock at FMV		138,818.88
<b>East Bluff Property</b>		<b>285,485.05</b>
<b>Memorial</b>		
Memorial Fund Checking		37,347.12
Memorial Vanguard		96,263.95
<b>Memorial Fund Total</b>		<b>133,611.07</b>
Building Fund Checking		38,223.33
Sunday School Fund Checking		11,265.47
<b><u>TOTAL ASSETS</u></b>		<b><u>\$656,823.88</u></b>
<b>Checking Account Balance</b>		
Checking Account Balance		107,059.19
<b><u>TOTAL</u></b>		<b><u>107,059.19</u></b>
<b>LIABILITIES</b>		
Payroll Liabilities		2,786.38
Misc. LCMS Orgs Fund		111.73
<b>TOTAL LIABILITIES</b>		<b>2,898.11</b>
<b>Fund Balance</b>		
Net Income (Loss)		41,032.25
Capital Accounts		612,893.52
<b><u>TOTAL FUND BALANCE</u></b>		<b><u>653,925.77</u></b>
<b><u>TOTAL LIABILITIES &amp; FUND BALANCE</u></b>		<b><u>\$656,823.88</u></b>

**St. John's Rummage Sale** will be held April 25 & 26, 2025. More details coming soon. Start saving your items.

Ross Gould called the meeting to order. A quorum was present. Pastor Bishop opened with devotions.

The October Parish Report was reviewed. The September Parish Report was reviewed at the last meeting. A motion was made by Gary Pool, seconded by Dave Drockelman, to approve the September and October Parish Reports. Motion carried.

The October meeting minutes were reviewed. September's meeting minutes were reviewed at last month's meeting. A motion was made by Dave Drockelman, seconded by Dave Kesselmayer, to approve the September meeting minutes. Motion carried. A motion was made by Julie Wagner, seconded by Diane Gould, to approve the October meeting minutes. Motion carried.

**Treasurer's Report** – Rod Bollinger clarified some questions that were brought up during the September meeting regarding expenditures from the prior month. Rod presented the Treasurer's Report for the month of October. There was a deficit of \$7,267.16 for the month of October. Year-to-date, the deficit stands at \$23,713.24. Rod indicated that last year at this time, there was a deficit of just over \$20,000.00. Generally, donations increase at the end of the year and last year ended with a deficit of just over \$3,000.00. Expenditures for the month of October were normal budgetary payments. A motion was made by Nancy Drockelman, seconded by Dave Kesselmayer, to accept the September and October Treasurer's Reports. Motion carried.

**Board of Trustees** – Dave Kesselmayer reported that a member expressed a desire to see the stained-glass windows displayed better. Improvements were made to the lighting. An inquiry was made by a stay-at-home mom about using the church gym for a couple hours a week. The Board of Trustees is discussing the topic. There could be a sizable group of children and adults. Questions were posed as to whether the group has insurance, how they would get entry, etc. Dave indicated that they needed to have some additional information before a decision could be made. Otto Baum started the work on the bell tower. The original repair plan needed some adjustment. The contractor agreed to keep the bid price at the original amount. Dave indicated that work on the interior of the tower has begun, and exterior work would be done as weather permits. The Kesselmayer/Heisel family would like to hold another rummage sale in April of 2025 to help raise funds to replace some of the furniture in the church. A motion was made by the Trustees, seconded by Brian Ford, to approve having a rummage sale after Easter for the purpose of purchasing some new furniture. Motion carried.

**Board of Elders** – Ross Gould reported that the Elders met to review the budget in addition to approving the purchase of some additional gas cards.

Board of Finance – Nancy Drockelman reported the committee met to go over the budget.

Board of Christian Education – Leslie Hauk reported that the youth group will meet on November 17<sup>th</sup> to do yard work for senior members who need help. The Sunday School Christmas program is on December 22<sup>nd</sup> during the second service. The board is still in need of one half time Sunday School teacher starting at the first of the year for grades 5-6. John Neumann reported for the Good Shepherd Lutheran School board. In response to a question raised last month, John reviewed the process for how the funding that St. John's provides to the school is determined. Budget projections for next year were also discussed. John also gave an update on the capital campaign. As of June 30, 2024, the outstanding balance on the loan was \$1,018,249.14. Through board action and cash contributions given thus far, the balance on the loan as of the end of October stands at \$691,689.11. John indicated that they are working on additional matching fund opportunities. The school needs a new teacher for grades 7 and 8 as the current teacher is no longer with the school. The school board meeting is tomorrow night.

Board of Worship – Julie Wagner reported that the committee met last week. The pianos have been tuned and they are working on getting the organ tuned. The committee will be decorating the church on November 30<sup>th</sup>. Anyone who wants to help is welcome to join. The committee is investigating the use of another service from the Lutheran Service Book. We have the Lutheran Service Book builder so Sandy Ferguson can use that to print the service in the bulletin. Discussion took place. It was indicated that this was just a trial to see if we want to use the service occasionally and not to totally replace the current service. After a trial period of 4 months, a decision can be made. A motion was made by the Worship Committee, seconded by John Neumann, to try another service from the Lutheran Service Book. Motion carried.

Board of Evangelism – Pastor Bishop indicated that the committee met in October and discussed Friendship Sunday and the possibility of doing a new pictorial directory. Tracy Glass is exploring leads.

Board of Stewardship – No report.

Long Range Planning Committee – No report.

Educational Grant Fund Committee – No report.

East Bluff Property Committee – No report.

Constitution By-laws Committee – No report.

Unfinished business – No unfinished business.

New business – Rod Bollinger went over the proposed budget for 2025. Discussion took place. The budget will be voted on during the December Voters Assembly meeting. Ross indicated that candidates for offices are needed by December 1<sup>st</sup> so Sandy Ferguson can update the slate for the December meeting. Steve Kesselmayer thanked those that were involved with putting on the brat luncheon yesterday.

A motion was made by Bob Oliverius, seconded by Brian Ford, to close the meeting. Motion carried.

The meeting closed with the Lord's Prayer.

Respectfully submitted,

Linda Wagner  
Secretary

**POINSETTIAS FOR CHRISTMAS:**

If you are interested in providing poinsettias for our Christmas service, please Joyce Lonergan at 309-267-5286 or call the church 309-347-2136. Orders will need to be placed by Dec 15. Cost is \$20.00.



If you would like to bring your own poinsettias, please let Joyce know and have poinsettias at the church by Friday, December 20. Thank you.

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**Friends In Harmony** is pleased to announce that our annual Christmas performances will be on December 13 at 7:00 p.m. and December 14 at 2:00 p.m. They are still in the F.M. Peterson Theater in Pekin High School. This is our 19th year of helping to get our local community into the Holiday Spirit. Tickets are \$15 and are available at Steger's or you can call Pam at 309-346-1896 to reserve your tickets.

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**PARENTS OF COLLEGE STUDENTS or FAMILY MEMBERS IN THE MILITARY:** Please let the office know the address of your college student(s) or if you have someone serving in our Armed Forces. We would like to send them our monthly newsletter and other information. Thank you.

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**LUTHERAN YOUNG ADULT FELLOWSHIP** (for ages 20-35) will meet @ Trinity Lutheran Church, 135 NE Randolph Ave., Peoria on Saturday, December 21, from 6 p.m. to 9 p.m. Fellowship includes: food, games, movies, etc. For more information regarding this, please see bulletin board in gym.

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Please save the date for the **19th annual Good Shepherd Lutheran School Benefit Auction!** Let's go "Down on the Farm with Ewe" on Saturday, March 29, 2025. Please notice our new location at the **Embassy Suites in East Peoria, IL**



**DECEMBER LIBRARY CORNER**  
*By Eileen Tiona*

*This is the name by which He will be called:  
The Lord Our Righteousness." Jeremiah 23.6*

I haven't any new books to report on this month, but you are welcome to come into the Library and check out all the wonderful books that are available for your enjoyment.

*Wishing everyone a Blessed Christmas and a Happy New Year.*

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**GIVING TREE:** Again, this Christmas season we will be doing the giving tree with children's names from the Children's Home Association of Illinois. The tree will be outside the Chapel next Sunday. You can pick a name or names off the tree. The gifts will be due back to the church on Sunday December 15th. If you have any questions you can contact Faye Kesselmayr at 309-202-7350.

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**SHUT-INS of the MONTH:** Even though some of our members cannot attend church, we want to keep them in our thoughts and prayers and let them know they are not forgotten. Please send a card or pay a visit to these shut-ins this month. Shut ins for December are: Tom & Rhonda Lappie, 13634 Glenmar Dr., Pekin; Adam Miller, 2007 Willow, Pekin; Loretta Newman, Sunset Rehab & Health Care, 129 S. 1<sup>st</sup> Ave., Canton 61520, and Hazel Nichols, 1106 S. 8<sup>th</sup>, Pekin.

Thank you from your St. John's Ladies Guild.

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Come to the country for food and fellowship! **St. Luke Lutheran Church, rural San Jose**, will once again host its annual Chili and Oyster Stew Supper on Monday, December 2, from 3:30 to 6:30 p.m. Chili, oyster stew, chicken salad, ham sandwiches, hot dogs, and a wide variety of delicious desserts will be served for a donation. The church is located at 15757 N. County Road 3600 E., San Jose. We hope to see you there!

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**GSLs GIFT CARDS FOR CHRISTMAS!** Please allow the Good Shepherd Raise Right/Scrip gift card program to fill all of your needs for gift cards this Christmas Season. Whether for giving or shopping, there are many stores to choose from! The last day to order cards to insure delivery before Christmas is DECEMBER 15th. Place your orders at your church Scrip table or bring them to the GSLs office before 10:00 AM on a Monday morning. On-line orders may still be placed at any time. Merry Christmas and thank you for supporting Good Shepherd through this program!

**GOOD SHEPHERD LUTHERAN SCHOOL**

**Friday, 12/6** - School Improvement Day - PK-8 early dismissal, Pre-K @ 12 p.m. and K-8 @ 12:30 p.m.

**Tuesday, 12/10** - Dining Out at Chickfila.

**Tuesday, 12/17** - Pre-K Christmas Program 10 a.m. & 6:30 p.m.

**Thursday, 12/19** - K-8 Christmas Program 10 a.m. & 6:30 p.m.

**Friday, 12/20** - School Improvement Day, Early dismissal

**Christmas Break** is from December 23 to January 6.

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**GSLs** is once again a drop off location for Toys for Tots. We are collecting items until Dec. 11<sup>h</sup>. Please donate new unopened toys. Toys for Tots will not distribute any gifts that look like realistic weapons or anything with food. If you wish to donate cash, please visit their website [www.toysfortots.org](http://www.toysfortots.org) for more information

**In Our Prayers**

*If you know of anyone who needs to be added,  
please let the church office know.*

**IN OUR PRAYERS**

*If you know of anyone who needs to be added,  
please let the church office know.*

All our shut-ins

- |                      |                 |
|----------------------|-----------------|
| Pastor Niemann       | Sandy Morgan    |
| Robert Rilea         | Jeff Ferree     |
| Peggy Farlin         | Debbie Miller   |
| Addie Burling        | Julie Rilea     |
| Eileen Tiona         | Keith Gleason   |
| Gabriella Kesselmayr | Paula Jensen    |
| Pat Proehl           | Suzanne Reising |
| Kellen Norman        | Joyce Barnes    |
| Lee Morgan           | Ray Garber      |
| John Durdle          | Suzanne Reising |
| Anna Knussman        | Butch Williams  |
| Rosetta Turner       | Wilma Garber    |
| Kathy Daly-Unfricht  | Melvyn Gentry   |
| Bob Hurst            | Deanna Oltman   |
| Michelle Watson      | Pam Woolsey     |
| Shirley Gentry       | Tom Lappie      |



St. John's Lutheran Church  
711 Court St.  
Pekin, IL 61554

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## Bible Wordsearch

Wordsearch 231

Matt. 1:16 - 2:5

A	G	C	H	I	L	D	M	A	E	R	D	M	E	O
H	N	B	M	H	P	E	S	O	J	D	A	X	E	W
N	O	G	I	O	L	O	R	D	F	G	I	I	C	L
C	I	L	E	R	T	L	H	A	I	L	R	A	R	N
O	E	G	Y	L	T	H	T	U	E	V	P	D	O	E
N	F	P	R	O	P	H	E	T	S	P	A	T	V	T
C	U	I	A	I	E	E	I	R	E	B	S	D	I	T
E	L	J	M	R	V	R	N	A	A	I	A	G	D	I
I	F	E	E	M	I	D	R	O	R	T	P	N	P	R
V	I	S	M	P	A	E	E	H	I	E	S	I	D	W
E	L	U	S	M	D	N	C	G	O	N	H	K	I	D
D	L	S	C	I	L	B	U	P	D	S	U	F	A	O
S	T	S	E	I	R	P	L	E	R	E	E	Y	R	R
S	W	E	J	U	D	E	A	O	L	L	L	I	F	E
F	M	A	T	T	H	E	W	O	K	E	E	P	A	H

Birth of Jesus

AFRAID	APPEARED
ANGEL	CONCEIVED
BIRTH	CHRIST
CHILD	DIVORCE
DAVID	FATHER
DREAM	FULFILL
EXILE	HEROD
HOLY	HUSBAND
JESUS	IMMANUEL
JEWS	JOSEPH
JUDEA	MATTHEW
KING	MOTHER
LORD	PEOPLE
MAGI	PLEDGED
MARY	PRIESTS
STAR	PROPHET
UNION	WORSHIP
VIRGIN	PUBLIC
WIFE	SPIRIT
WOKE	WRITTEN

After you find all the hidden words the left over letters spell out a Bible verse reading from the top left to the bottom right

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MORE PUZZLES AT:  
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