

St. John's Journal

Volume 51, Issue 2

LUTHERAN DISTINCTIVES

V. Lutherans believe that God works through the Means of Grace. Part 4

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We once again affirm some of the basic teachings that are characteristic of the Lutheran Church. We believe that God imparts His gifts of forgiveness and salvation by means of His Word: the divine Word, which we hear and read, and the Word attached to visible elements in the Sacraments of Holy Baptism and the Lord's Supper.

A special form of the Lord's spoken Word is His gift of Holy Absolution. This is Jesus' gift to His church, publicly administered by the pastors He gives to His church, to declare directly the Lord's message of forgiveness to repentant sinners.

Lutherans often refer to this authority to forgive sins as part of the *Office of the Keys*. It gets this name from the words of Jesus recorded in Matthew 16:19. Jesus said to Peter, "and I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven." The "binding" and "loosing" (releasing or untying) refer to the authority to withhold forgiveness from the unrepentant, and to forgive those who repent. This authority functions like a set of keys, so to speak, which either lock or unlock the door to heaven. That's a figurative way of describing a spiritual reality, of course.

This power of the keys was not given to Peter alone, but to Peter as a representative of the apostles and of the whole church. In Matthew 18:18, the same authority to bind and loose is spoken to Jesus' disciples generally, not just to Peter. So we understand this authority is Jesus' gift through His apostles to all believers in Jesus.

We summarize our Lord's teaching regarding the Keys in our Small Catechism: "The Office of the Keys is that special authority which Christ has given to His church on earth to forgive the sins of repentant sinners, but to withhold forgiveness from the unrepentant as long as they do not repent."

Though the term *keys* is used in the Matthew 16 passage, the same gift is described in John 20:22-23, which is the passage we cite in our Small Catechism. "This is what St. John the Evangelist writes in chapter twenty: The Lord Jesus breathed on His disciples and said, 'Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive anyone his sins, they are forgiven; if you do not forgive them, they are not forgiven.'"

The authority of the Keys is Jesus' gift for the good of sinners – to bring sinners who refuse to repent to a certain knowledge that they forfeit the forgiveness Jesus won for them so long as they remain in their impenitence, and to give the personal assurance and comfort of forgiveness declared directly to repentant sinners. The minister speaks the word of pardon to those who repent of their sins and sincerely desire to amend their lives, and he does so in the name, by the authority, by the command, and as a personal spokesman of the Lord Jesus Christ. The sinner who hears the word of forgiveness can be sure it is the very word of Jesus Christ, and it is for him or her personally!

To read more about what the Lutheran Church believes about confession and absolution, you may read Augsburg Confession XI and XXV and Smalcald Articles Part 3, VII and VIII. As always, you are welcome to borrow copies of the Book of Concord from the church library.

We give thanks to Jesus for this special gift of the Keys, by which we can hear His sweet message of pardon for our own ears as often as we wish. What a gracious Lord we have! By this gift, each one of us can know for sure: Jesus' forgiveness is for *me!*

- Pastor Bishop

Christian Education

Sunday School

Sunday School
Perfect Attendance
December 2024

None

FEBRUARY BIRTHDAYS



Feb 01

Joseph Hillman
Edward Hodgkins
Vincent Thomason

Feb 02

Nathan Barth
David Justi
Stephen Webb

Feb 04

Ryan Hansen

Feb 07

Jamie Hoover
Danny Jones

Feb 08

Emma Jones

Feb 09

Loretta Newman
R. Michael Thompson

Feb 10

Lorelei Huber
Lia Huber
Sarah Huber
Sandy Morgan
Barb Theleritis

Feb 12

Viola Deppert

Feb 13

Emma Canterbury
Carrie Schmidgall

Feb 14

Steven Depew
Belinda Frankel
Barbara Thompson

Feb 15

Lori Sego

Feb 16

Karen McCammon
Patricia Proehl

Feb 17

George Andrae

Feb 18

Michael Becker
Jeremy Garmon
Emma Hicks
Barry Pool
Gregory Swibold
Shantel Tackmann

Feb 20

Dean Cooper
Marcille Frevert
Shirley Williamson

Feb 22

Susan Waddell

Feb 23

Alison Burris

Feb 24

David Sego

Feb 25

Tyler Widby

Feb 26

Lea Ann Becker

Feb 27

Christina Herold
Christine Neumann

Feb 28

Ava Friedinger
Sandra Gay
Linda McGuire
Carl Whitlatch

FEBRUARY ANNIVERSARIES

Feb 02

Gerald & Paula Norman

Feb 14

Colby & Ashley Jones
James & Julie Widby
Barry & Katherine Wright



LENT - The Lenten Season will begin with Ash Wednesday on March 5. We will again have Lenten midweek services the six Wednesdays in Lent at 7:00 p.m. each week.

We would like to furnish a Soup & Sandwich Supper this year before the service starting at 5:30 p.m. Sign-up sheets are up throughout the church for any committees and organizations who wishes to help furnish a meal to sign up.

Thank you in advance for your help.

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OFFERING ENVELOPES are available in the gym on a table under the bulletin board.

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SHUT-INS for 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 February are: Donna Corso, John Evans Supportive Living, 1320 Executive Ct., Pekin; Honor De-iss, 804 Illinois, Pekin; Viola Deppert, Charter Senior Living, 2700 S. 14th St., Apt. 120 & Marcille Frevert, 1107 S. 4th St., Pekin.

Thank you from your St. John's Ladies Guild

Transferred To The
Church Triumphant

Wilma Garber
4-11-1942
1-21-2025

PARISH NOTES



Church Attendance

Dec 2024— **992—21** services
 Dec 2023— **901—19** services
 Dec 2022— **507—14** services

Sunday School Attendance Year-to-Date

Dec 2024: **1,551**
 Dec 2023: **1,644**
 Dec 2022: **1,500**

Videographers

Jim Lonergan

Worship Committee

Diane Gould

February Ushers

8:00

Jerry Bohannon
 Randy Couch
 Steve Kesselmayr

10:30

Ross Gould
 Jacob Gould



A big thank you to all our Service Volunteers.

We appreciate the time and dedication you give to our Church community.

Acolytes

Feb 02 10:30 Kenna Donovan
Feb 09 10:30 Silas Gould
Feb 16 10:30 Kenna Donovan
Feb 23 10:30 Silas Gould

USHERS ARE NEEDED : If you would like to volunteer to be an Usher please let Jim Lonergan, 309-202-7183, or anyone on the Worship Committee know. Thank you.

GREETERS: It is always nice to have someone greet us as we come into church. So we have put up sign-up sheets for February, March and April are on the bulletin board in the Narthex. Please consider being a greeter.

The Flower Chart for 2025 is posted in the Narthex. Please sign-up for the Sunday(s) that you would like to provide flowers for the altar and **call the church office, 347-2136**, and let us know what you want in the bulletin.



We are now using Greenhouse Flower Shop 347-5921. Cost of the flowers are \$40 plus \$10 for delivery, unless you have a special order and that could have an additional cost.

Remember you can pick up your flowers after the 10:30 service (please leave the green liners) or Mon. to Fri. from 8:00 a.m. to 12 Noon.

CHURCH DOORS: If you unlock one of the doors to the church, please check to make sure it is locked before you leave. Thank you.

TREASURER'S REPORT DECEMBER, 2024

	<u>December</u>	<u>Y-T-D</u>
<u>INCOME</u>	48,718.16	378,119.74
<u>EXPENSES</u>	<u>35,176.73</u>	<u>391,787.10</u>
<u>INCOME</u>	13,541.43	(13,667.36)
<u>EXPENSE</u>		

General Fund Accounts

General Fund	30,701.55
General Fund Total	30,701.55

Educational Fund Accounts

Educ. Grant Fund Checking	1,948.56
Ed Grant CD LCMS 12/23	51,863.96
Ed Grant CD LCMS 12/24	51,835.93
Ed Grant Fund #2 Vanguard	63,887.43
Educational Fund Total	169,535.88

East Bluff Property

East Bluff Property Vanguard	38,890.98
East Bluff CD LCMS 12/23	53,808.61
East Bluff CD LCMS 12/24	53,770.40
Cat Stock at FMV	133,859.52
Total	280,262.25

Memorial

Memorial Fund Checking	38,942.12
Memorial Vanguard	95,618.84
Memorial Fund Total	134,560.96

Building Fund Checking	21,693.33
Sunday School Fund Checking	11,652.59

TOTAL ASSETS **648,406.56**

Checking Acct Balance	104,938.15
Total	104,938.15

LIABILITIES

Payroll Liabilities	2,836.55
Misc. LCMS Orgs Fund	152.90
Total Liabilities	2,989.45

Fund Balance

Net Income (Loss)	32,523.59
Capital Accounts	613,893.52
Total Fund Balance	645,417.11

TOTAL LIABILITIES & FUND BALANCE **648,406.56**

What kind of music did the Pilgrims like to listen to?

Plymouth Rock!

HI-LITES OF ST. JOHN'S VOTERS ASSEMBLY January 13, 2025

Ross Gould called the meeting to order. A quorum was not present so all motions will be held until next month's meeting. Pastor Bishop opened with devotions.

The December Parish Report was reviewed.

The December meeting minutes were reviewed.

Treasurer's Report – Rod Bollinger presented the November and December Treasurer's Reports. There was a net loss for the month of November of \$3,495.55. There was a large expenditure during November for the repairs done to the bell tower. December was a good month for contributions resulting in net income of \$13,541.43, which helped reduce the overall net loss for the year to \$13,667.36. Rod noted that income was up slightly for the year as compared to 2023. Expenses were up 3.9% compared to 2023. Rod went through the items on the check register for December that are not ordinary. The extra line item to Good Shepherd Lutheran School was the result of a member wanting to donate to the school's capital campaign through a stock sale, which was run through the church's stock account. There was no impact on the church's finances due to this.

Board of Trustees – Dave Kesselmayer reported the Trustees met and elected officers. Dave Kesselmayer is the committee chair. Dane Watson is co-chair and Steve Kesselmayer is secretary. Dave reported that there was an issue with a boiler that needed repaired. Also, one of the rooftop units on the new addition is having an issue. We are waiting on a part to complete the repair. We received a check from Mr. Weyhrich for farm income in the amount of \$4,575.00. We received a termination notice from the insurance company for the policy on the Ewe's Home Furnishings building effective February 28th. Dave is trying to follow up with the insurance company to clarify their reasoning. Several members have approached the Trustees about the coffee machine. Dave contacted Johnson Mechanical for a bid on a replacement. The amount needed to replace the machine is \$1,323.64. A question was raised as to what the limit is that the Trustees can approve without needing a motion.

Board of Elders – No report.

Board of Finance – Rod Bollinger indicated that the board has not met. He will get in touch with the board to discuss the results for 2024. Bob Oliverius asked again about the handling of Qualified Charitable Distributions. Further review is needed to be able to determine how to identify these contributions.

Board of Christian Education – Laura Dobbelaire reported that the committee is looking for a Sunday School superintendent. They have around 7 kids in Sunday School. In February, the youth group activity will be wacky games and tacos. Youth from Trinity and Sand Prairie will be invited to attend. National Lutheran School week will take place in February. The school will have a spaghetti dinner and a talent show. John Neumann reported for Good Shepherd School board. The board meets tomorrow. John inquired about a candidate from our church to be on the board and Pastor Bishop indicated that Eric Oller has agreed to fill that position. John indicated that the new teacher has started this semester. John also noted that at the board meeting tomorrow there will be discussion regarding the upcoming budget and the funding formula. As of December 31, the balance on the loan was an even \$600,000. John indicated that at the end of January they expect the balance will be below \$520,000 based on funds they know are coming in. There are enough funds in the reserve flex account to make 12 more monthly payments.

Board of Worship – Julie Wagner reported that the committee met on January 2nd. Julie is the chair, Diane Gould is treasurer, and Brian Fuelburth is secretary. Julie indicated that the committee took the Christmas decorations down. Julie further noted that the use of Divine Service One (without communion) from the Lutheran Service Book will be used on the second Sunday of the month for the next 3 months. After that, the committee will see whether the congregation likes or dislikes the service to determine whether it will be added to the rotation periodically. The committee is still looking for a pianist to accompany the choir. Julie stated that Pastor Bishop suggested checking with ICC to see if any students might be interested. The committee is still in need of an additional member.

Board of Evangelism – Pastor Bishop relayed that Tracy Glass indicated the committee will meet in early February.

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 – Ross Gould indicated that several people have agreed to serve on the following boards: Dorothy Sheckler – Board of Education, Vince Tennell – Elders, and Eric Oller – Good Shepherd Lutheran School board member.

New business – Ross Gould indicated that we need a delegate to attend the CID convention that takes place from July 13th – July 15th. Dave Drockelman has agreed to fill this position. Ross thanked everyone who helped with the Christmas decorating. Bob Oliverius inquired as to whether we have considered lowering the number of people needed to make a quorum. Ross will investigate whether this is something that we can do

based on how this is spelled out in the constitution or by-laws. Bob also inquired about the item in the bulletin on the CID leaflet about the next Small Church Summit in CID that is being held at Trinity Lutheran in Pekin on February 22nd. Pastor Bishop indicated that based on attendance figures, St. John's is considered a mid-size church.

The meeting closed with the Lord's Prayer.

Respectfully submitted,

Linda Wagner
Secretary

Camp CILCA Outdoor Ministries

Summer Camp registration is OPEN!
To celebrate CILCA'S 75th anniversary, all program sessions for summer 2025 are **\$75** if you register before April 1.

See brochures on the tables in the Annex area.

Act Like Men Woodcutters: Feb 28-Mar 1

Cutting trees, splitting wood, fellowship with other men, good food, and time in God's Word are all great ways to get started in this endeavor. You do not have to be skilled in using a chainsaw, hammer, or tractor to come to this event. Strong backs and eager hands are just as helpful. The study sessions will cover topics relevant to men navigating life in the modern age. Email director@cilca.org or register at cilca.org/act-like-men-woodcutters-retreat to sign up today!

Women's Retreat: March 28-29

Our retreat theme is **Lean & Learn**: join us as we lean into God's word, digging into what God says to us and learn how we live it out in our daily vocation as women. Two choices for our retreat... You can join us overnight for \$100 and stay in the Christian Growth Center. There is a day-only option for \$75. Registration is open.

Camp CILCA exists to strengthen and foster faith in Jesus Christ, and relationships with others in a unique outdoor setting.

FEBRUARY LIBRARY CORNER
By Eileen Tiona



"Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to men on whom His favor rests."

I haven't any new books to report on this month, but would like to invite everyone to come into the library and check out all the wonderful books that are available.

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We received a thank you letter from Lutherans for Life for our donation.

Shelf-life of Foods for Storage

Use within six months:

- Powdered milk (*boxed*)
- Dried fruit (*in metal container*)
- Dry, crisp crackers
- Potatoes



Use within one year:

- Canned condensed meat & vegetable soups
- Canned fruits, fruit juices & vegetables
- Ready-to-eat cereals & uncooked instant cereals (*in metal containers*)
- Peanut butter
- Jelly
- Hard candy & canned nuts
- Vitamin C

YOUNG ADULT FELLOWSHIP (for ages 20-35) will meet @ Trinity Lutheran Church, 135 NE Randolph Ave., Peoria on Saturday, February 15, 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.

GSLs is still in need of 1 1/4" 3-way PVC fittings and 1 1/4" PVC end caps for our TAPS service project. We will collect these throughout the year and take beds to TAPS as we are able to make them.

Women in Faith—LWML

Women In Faith – LWML will meet Saturday, Feb. 1, at 10 a.m. in the church basement. They are collecting items for the Pregnancy Resource Center here in Pe-kin. Items needed are any size diapers but especially sizes 5, 6 & 7, Diaper rash cream, baby shampoo, ba-by lotion, baby wipes and bigger items are car seats, high chair, pac n play & clothes and coats. Thank you.

All women are welcome.

St. John's Rummage Sale will be held April 25 and 26, 2025. You can start bringing your items and put on the stage. No electronics or appliances. If you have any questions, please call Kathy Heisel @ 309-346-7066.

LCMSFoundation

Considering distributions from your estate that will directly support ministries of the Church may present competing priorities that have existed in you throughout your life.

Greg and Deb sat down after Christmas to have a serious conversation about their future goals for the distributions of their estate, especially those that will go to ministry. For the last twenty years, Deb has been involved in an afterschool outreach effort through a local urban congregation that has opportunity to provide tutoring and intentional sharing of Jesus with young children. Greg is a trustee at their own congregation and is known as the guy who fixes everything. In their conversa-tion, Greg expressed his desire to make a gift to their congregation's endowment fund, specifically for long-term care of the building. Not surpris-ingly, Deb desires to support the local congregation involved in the children's ministry. At first, they were getting into a bit of an argument, as both were passionate about their feelings. Finally, Deb said, "I think we need to ask someone to help us work through this. Maybe it doesn't need to be an either-or proposition."

Your LCMS Foundation Gift Planning Counselor can be the one to talk and pray with you as you discern God's will. Contact Scott Radden, Gift Planning Counselor, at (618) 977-4049 or Scott.Radden@LFND.org.

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

Robert Rilea

Peggy Farlin

Addie Burling

Eileen Tiona

Gabriella Kesselmayr

Pat Proehl

Kellen Norman

Lee Morgan

John Durdle

Butch Williams

Melvyn Gentry

Bob Hurst

Pam Woolsey

Tom Lappie

Bobby Gregory

Sandy Morgan

Jeff Ferree

Debbie Miller

Julie Rilea

Keith Gleason

Paula Jensen

Suzanne Reising

Joyce Barnes

Ray Garber

Suzanne Reising

Rosetta Turner

Kathy Daly-Unfricht

Michelle Watson

Shirley Gentry

Cameron Conway

Donna Pool

GOOD SHEPHERD LUTHERAN SCHOOL

- Fri. Feb 7 Spaghetti Dinner & Talent Show—4:30 p.m. to 7 p.m.— Free will doantion
- Sun. Feb 9 All School Choir to sing at St. John's, Sand Prairie @ 10:30 service
- Feb 9—16 National Lutheran School Week
- Fri. Feb 14 School Improvement Day, Early Dismissal
- Mon. Feb 17 No School — President's Day
- Thurs. Feb 27 Parent Teacher Conferences 3:30 to 6:30 p.m.
- Fri. Feb 28 No Student Attendance due to Parent Teachers Conferences

GSLS annual auction - "Down on the Farm with Ewe" is coming fast! Please get in your reservations soon! We will be holding the auction on Saturday, March 29, 2025 at the Em-bassy Suites in East Peoria. We are always looking for dona-tions. Please get them into the school by February 28th! We thank you for supporting our kids and our school!

HELP WANTED!!! GSLS is looking for a PreK aide. If you or someone you know is interested, please contact Mr. Kilgus.

(Address Service Requested)

Bible Wordsearch

Wordsearch 185

Solomon's Temple

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

ALTAR	CHAMBERS
ARK	CHERUBIM
BASINS	CURTAINS
BOWLS	FIGURES
BRONZE	FLOWERS
CEDAR	FURNITURE
COURT	HOLYPLACE
GOLDEN	INCENSE
GRAVEN	LAMPSTAND
INNER	MERCYSEAT
PALMS	OFFERINGS
PILLARS	PARTITION
PORCH	SACRIFICES
ROOMS	SANCTUARY
VESSELS	SHEWBREAD
TABERNACLE	



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

Prov.27

MORE PUZZLES AT:
<http://biblewordgames.com>

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