



Divine Shepherd Lutheran Church

The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod

January 2023 Newsletter

"My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me." [Saint John 10:27]



My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me. I give them eternal life, and they will never perish, and no one will snatch them out of my hand. John 10:27-28

Dear Sheep of the Divine Shepherd:

Let's talk about an uplifting topic...cremation. The reason I bring up the subject of cremation is to give you as much information as possible about this practice. Is this a Christian subject? Of course it is. For we confess that our bodies are made in the image of God (Genesis 1:26). We also believe in the "resurrection of the body and life the everlasting" (Apostles Creed). The body is equal to the soul in importance in the eyes of God. At the outset, I want to make clear, that although your pastor encourages and recommends the burial of the body, It is not my intention to make anyone feel guilty or make an assertion that cremation is a sin. Cremation is not a sin and I know full well that God can recreate the body whether it is whole, in ashes, or spread throughout the world.

Yet, I do want to briefly explain why this pastor, if asked the question of whether or not you or your loved one should be cremated, would answer "no". Is this my opinion? Absolutely. But this opinion is not arrived at simply because of emotion or tradition. The opinion arises out of the study and development of the practice of cremation, a study illumined by the Holy Scriptures. If I had been your pastor one hundred years ago, this subject probably would not be relevant. One hundred years ago, only 1% of Americans were cremated. According to internet statistics, 47% of Americans are cremated in this day and age. There are over 3,300 licensed crematoriums in the United States versus 163 in 1960. What drives one to decide on cremation? Well, that's easy. The main reason for choosing cremation is simply because it is less expensive. Yet, I propose that Christians take a closer look at the two options and make their decisions based on other factors as well as cost.

For this newsletter article, let us first look at the forefathers of our faith from the Old Testament. We know that from reading the histories of pagan cultures that their practice was to burn rather than bury the bodies of the dead. We also are fully aware that although God doesn't specifically mention the practice of cremation, He does command repeatedly for the Israelites not to adopt or follow pagan practices. Tacitus, a 1st century writer wrote that the Hebrews "bury rather than burn their dead bodies".

When we explore the Old Testament, from the first burial mentioned, that of Abraham's wife Sarah, then on to all subsequent forefathers of our faith, it is clearly stated that they were all buried and not cremated. Some proponents of cremation use the wrong assertion that God telling Adam he would return to the dust means that he must have been cremated. However, the opposite is true. Bodies that are burned turn to ash not dust. Only those buried in the ground turn to dust. We also remember that when Moses died, God buried him. Even the ancient Talmud, the Rabbinic Confession, which predates the New Testament states, "Follow the path of God...bury the dead, even as God did bury Moses in the valley of Moab". I will continue this discussion in the next newsletter. In the meantime, I encourage you all to read the book, *Dust to Dust or Ashes to Ashes?* By Alvin Schmidt. May God bless you all this coming year and give you

His peace.Listen to Jesus, Pastor Zimmer

The Eighth Commandment and Christian Stewardship

A steward is one who is entrusted with the management of something that belongs to another. As Christian stewards, we recognize that all we are and all we have come from God. Stewardship is not just about money or finances; it is about everything God entrusts to our care. We are to manage everything for His purposes. In the Eighth Commandment we are reminded that we are to honor God's gift of a good reputation.

The Eighth Commandment You shall not give false testimony against your neighbor.

What does this mean? We should fear and love God so that we do not tell lies about our neighbor, betray him, slander him, or hurt his reputation, but defend him, speak well of him, and explain everything in the kindest way. A good name is a valuable asset. The Christian steward is called to safeguard God's name (Second Commandment) and the name of his/her neighbor (Eighth Commandment). How we manage God's name and the name of our neighbor is important and requires careful consideration especially in an age of instant and almost constant communication.

Whether talking, tweeting, texting, or connecting on a social network, we are to safeguard the name and reputation of our neighbor. Raymond Olson writes in *Stewards Appointed*, "Standing guard over the reputation of other people calls for positive action. We are expected to defend our neighbor's reputation out of genuine love for him. We are expected to put the best interpretation on all that he says and does. There will always be voices seeking to destroy the name and reputation of a person. The Christian steward will recognize that he must have no part in this, but that he is committed to an entirely different evaluation and action ... The Christian steward is given this Commandment as a guide, for he is to speak good about others consistently".

"Luther," writes Robert Kolb in *Teaching God's Children His Teaching*, "saw an important application of this commandment within the church and condemned the readiness of his opponents to condemn godly Christian preachers as heretics, apostates, seditious and accursed scoundrels. But all sins of the tongue which might injure the neighbor or disrupt his peace stand under God's judgment. Those could include the lying, betraying, backbiting, and defaming which Luther mentioned in the explanation of the Small Catechism. Those could also include the use of flattery to harm another person, spreading gossip, double-talk, anything done to bring someone's conduct, speech, or wealth into question or disrepute, permitting others to speak evil of a neighbor, failure to defend the neighbor's reputation, failure to stop someone else from backbiting, failure to speak well of the neighbor and put the best construction on all her acts, concealing the truth and not defending it".

"Why do we do such things?" asks Richard E. Lauersdorf in *As Luther Taught the Word of Truth*, "It's not just 'tongue trouble' but 'heart trouble.' The sin in Eden's Garden changed not only our vertical relationship with God but also the horizontal one with our neighbor. When sin exiles God from the human heart, our neighbor also loses his worth. When the heart regards God as a nobody, how can our neighbor be somebody? When God's name means little or nothing, what's in a neighbor's name? ... Guilty? Of course, we are. It's time again to plead in repentance, 'God be merciful to me, a sinner.' God will hear and answer. His own living Word of love he placed into a stable and pierced on a cross to cleanse us also from the sins of the tongue. As he plants Christ in our hearts, he also trains our tongues, so that we can use them to help our neighbor". We are Christian stewards who have been given the wonderful gift of words. We are privileged to use them to defend our neighbor, to speak well of him/her, and to always explain our neighbor's actions in the best possible way.



January

Week of January 1-7

Sun, Jan 1, 9:00 am Divine Service
Sat, Jan 7, 9:30 am Church Un-Decorating

Week of January 8-14

Sun, Jan 8, 9:00 am Divine Service
Sun, Jan 8, 10:05 am Fellowship
Sun, Jan 8, 10:30 am Bible Study
Mon, Jan 9 7:00 pm Elders Meeting
Tues, Jan 10, noon Altar Guild Meeting
Tues, Jan 10, 1:00 pm Women's Bible Study
Wed, Jan 11, 6:30 pm Choir Practice

Week of January 15-21

Sun, Jan 15, 9:00 am Divine Service
Sun, Jan 15, 10:05 am Fellowship
Sun, Jan 15, 10:30 am Bible Study
Mon, Jan 16, 7:00 pm Council Meeting
Wed, Jan 18, 6:30 pm Choir Practice
Sat, Jan 21, 10:00 am Ladies Aid Meeting

Week of January 22-28

Sun, Jan 22, 9:00 am Divine Service
Sun, Jan 22, 10:05 am Fellowship
Sun, Jan 22, 10:15 am Bible Study
Wed, Jan 25, 6:30 pm Choir Practice

Week of January 28-31

Sun, Jan 28, 9:00 am Divine Service
Sun, Jan 28, 10:05 am Fellowship
Sun, Jan 28, 10:15 am Bible Study

Christmas Un-Decorating

Come and help us pack away the Christmas decorations on **Saturday, January 7th** beginning at **9:30 a.m.** Many hands make light work.



January Birthdays

02 Hayden Quinn
06 Joan Fox (H)
13 Karen Moritz
15 Paul Edgar
15 Melanie Witzke
18 Dawn Rousar
20 Pat Gray
31 Emily Zimmer



January Baptismal Anniversaries

05 Teresa Pape
20 Pat Gray
29 Joan Fox



The Sound of Music

A special *thank you* to those who musically enriched our worship services during Advent and Christmas. All your time and hard work is greatly appreciated!

Choir Practice

Choir practice is on Wednesdays at 6:30 pm. All are welcome to lend their voices in praise to our Savior, Jesus Christ.

2023 Offering Envelopes

The 2023 members' new offering envelopes are in your church mailbox. Any questions please see Barb Potempa.

Important, please note if you use the small brown envelopes in the pew you need to place your name or members envelope # to get credit for the yearly tax forms. With no info and cash, the money is put in the general fund. Thank you.

The past 2 services we have received 3 envelopes totaling 250.00 cash with no name or envelope #.

Your annual tax letter will be in your mail slot later this month. If you have any questions please see or call, Barb Potempa, Financial Secretary.

The Epiphany Season



As the Christmas season draws to a close, we enter the Epiphany season. The word Epiphany means “revelation” —God reveals how Jesus Christ is His Son, our Savior. The season begins with the Epiphany of Our Lord, a celebration of the visit of the Gentile wise men to the baby Jesus, who was born for all people. The season continues with Jesus’ baptism in the Jordan River and culminates with Jesus’ transfiguration before three disciples. Come and be a part of this joyous season as God reveals to us His Son, His plan and purpose, and His salvation.

The Baptism of Our Lord



We will celebrate the Baptism of Our Lord in January. Though He had no sin of His own, Jesus undergoes baptism for us. He does this to fulfill all righteousness and to fill the water of Holy Baptism with Himself, His forgiveness, and His righteousness. So, rejoice in your baptism. For through that water combined with God’s Word, you are a child of God, clothed in Christ’s perfect righteousness, and a temple of the Holy Spirit!

Altar Flowers



Thank you to everyone who donated flowers to decorate the altar and sanctuary in 2022. A special thank you to **Ruth** for arranging the beautiful bouquets.

The 2023 flower charts are posted. This is a wonderful way to help beautify God’s house, celebrate a birthday or anniversary, or remember a departed loved one. If you would like to contribute flowers to help beautify the sanctuary on Lord’s Day, please add your name to any open Sunday on the flower charts.

Ruth Ogden will do two altar bouquets for \$30. If you sign up, **Karen** will contact you to get your flower request, and a brief note to place in the worship bulletin. When the worship service is over, you are welcome to take your bouquets home

Ladies Aid

We send all of you our wishes for a happy and healthy new year. Our Lord has kept Divine Shepherd in His care thus far and we trust that He will continue to do so.



Once again thank you for your Giving Tree and Food Drive contributions. These, along with funds from the Ladies Aid treasury and \$1,000 from Thrivent, were met with extreme gratitude. We helped 37 people (9 families, 5 seniors, 4 adults) and the food drive helped 10 people. Also, adult coats/hats/scarves/hand made afghans and t-shirts were given to the Morning Star Mission in Joliet.

A special thank you to Lisa Cruz/family for once again heading up the ‘giving tree’ and to Joan Sturm for spear-heading the food drive and to Ron Ruisz for taking the items to the Mission.

All females are automatically members of the Ladies Aid. Please join us for the January 21st meeting, at 10:00 a.m. We will be planning activities for the coming months of the year, including our annual Rummage Sale. Suggestions for projects around our church building are welcome. Perhaps you have a suggestion for a social activity.

A wine/chocolate social is being planned for February 18 at 3:00 pm. More information will be in the February newsletter and weekly bulletins.

Ladies Aid Money at Work



Listed below are a just a few of the projects Ladies Aid has contributed to in 2022

- monthly stipend to a seminarian
- pastor appreciation
- the Giving Tree/food drive
- cleaning supplies
- paper goods/drinks for Sunday treats
- Alms Fund

These projects are made possible by your generous support of our rummage sale and RaiseRight program. Thank you.

Ladies Aid Officers

President: Judy Yuenger
Vice President: Lisa Cruz
Secretary: Joan Sturm
Treasurer: Karen Moritz

Elder Members/Assignments

Kevin Pape (Asche-Boehm)
Ron Ruisz (Carone-Donaldson)
Scott Collins (head elder) (Donnelly-Learnahan)
Ed Cruz (Lewis-Quinn)
Nathan Geschke (Rose-Viscariello)
Kelly Stewart (Walter-Zimmer)

Council Members

Chairman: Ed Cruz
Secretary: Laurrie Bingenheimer
Treasurer: Doug Quinn
Vice Chairman: Open

Board of Elders: Kelly Stewart

Altar Guild Members

Those serving on the Altar Guild for 2023

Denise Collins
Karen Moritz
Ruth Ogden
Joan Sturm
Judy Yuenger
Julie Zimmer

Altar Guild Fund

If you are planning a future memorial donation, please consider giving it to Altar Guild to purchase additional frontals, banners, candles, altar cloths, etc to beautiful the sanctuary.



Prayer Chain

Several members are part of a church prayer chain. If you (men or women) would like to join them in praying for our congregation's special needs, please contact Bobbie Light at **630-251-7860**.

Sunday Treats



Do you enjoy treats and fellowship after Sunday services? If so, please consider signing up on any given Sunday(s). Why not sign up with a friend? *Empty slots mean no treats.* To enable our diabetic members to enjoy these treats, please consider supplementing some of the "sugary goodies" with crackers and cheese and/or fruit. The 2023 signup sheet is posted on the Luther Hall bulletin board. Monetary donations are accepted to defray the cost of drinks and paper products, which are supplied by Ladies Aid.



THRIVENT
FINANCIAL®

Directing Choice Dollars is a great way for eligible Thrivent members to show support for what matters most to them. We received over \$1,890 from Choice Dollars in 2022. If you have not given your Choice Dollars to Divine Shepherd, please do so. Thrivent members and Choice Dollars are an important source of support for the work the organization does. Why not do everything you can to make sure that you are getting the most out of your participation. A reminder, that all 2022 Choice Dollars will have to be donated by **March 31** or they will be lost. These dollars are used to support various church/member's needs. Thanks.

Important Phone Numbers

Church office: 630-759-5300
Pastor Zimmer: 583-880-9532
Prayer Chain: 630-251-7860 (Bobbie Light)
Newsletter info: 630-759-3188 (Karen Moritz)
(items are due January 31)

Portals of Prayer

Now that 2023 is here, we are asking those who make use of the "Portals of Prayer" devotionals to pay this year's annual subscription rate of \$15.00. Simply submit this via the offering plate, earmarked Portals of Prayer. Blessings on your continued study of God's Word.

Our Cleaning Crew



A special thank you to our church's cleaning crew for all their hard work in helping to clean our church facilities on a regular basis. This volunteer cleaning crew works diligently to vacuum, dust,

scrub, mop, tidy, empty trash, and prepare our facilities each weekend. If you can clean once a month, please see Kelly Stewart.

An additional thank you to all those volunteers who have helped to take down, clean, serve, and set up on Sunday mornings and for special events. Your help and service are greatly appreciated!

Amazon Smile

Go to smile.amazon.com, select Divine Shepherd Lutheran Church in Bolingbrook as your charitable organization begin each of your purchases at smile.amazon.com, and Amazon will do the rest. Our congregation will receive 0.5% of every Amazon Smile purchase made.

RisiseRight (Manna)

Shop with RaiseRight cards are available throughout the year for everyday expenses and gifts for any special occasion. Next order date is **January 15**. Pre-purchased cards are available after Sunday services and forms are on the bookcase in Luther Hall

Your Organization:

Divine Shepherd Lutheran Church – Manna

Your Coordinator: **Lisa Cruz**

630-636-6359 • dslcmanna@yahoo.com

<http://www.raiseright.com>

Your Enrollment Code:

B2LD2C7A55973

Follow Us on Social Media

Follow us on social media to keep up to date with church happenings and events, find a variety of new and old congregational photos, and read inspirational posts and quotes from Holy Scripture, the Lutheran Confessions, and various Christians throughout the centuries.

Facebook: fb.me/DSLcbolingbrook

Twitter: @dslc60440

God's Resolutions

We often resolve to improve the “little things” in life (time, weight, finances, etc.) that we completely forget about the “big things” that God would have us focus on! What are these big things? God has ten of them for you:

1. Fear, love, and trust in God above all things.
2. Call upon God's name in every trouble, pray, praise, and give thanks.
3. Hold preaching and God's Word sacred and gladly hear and learn it.
4. Honor, serve and obey, love, and cherish your parents and other authorities.
5. Help and support your neighbor in every physical need.
6. Lead a sexually pure and decent life, and love and honor your spouse.
7. Help your neighbor to improve and protect his possessions and income.
8. Defend your neighbor, speak well of him, and explain everything in the kindest way.
9. Help and be of service to your neighbor in protecting his inheritance and house.
10. Urge your neighbor's spouse, workers, to be faithful to Him.

Love Is God

Love is God shining through you.
Love is giving what you'd like to receive.
Love is taking the time, even when you do not have the time.
Love is listening with your heart.
Love is remembering.
Love is being there.
Love is believing in the good, the true, and the beautiful.
Love is the light of the world.

May Christ's love shine thru you now and always. The only thing that counts is faith expressing itself through love. (Galatians 5:6) (American Greetings)

Happy, healthy 2023