



Divine Shepherd Lutheran Church

The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod



November 2025 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**

Johann von Staupitz: The Pastor Who Pointed Luther to Christ

In our newsletter this month we turn our reflections to a somewhat lesser-known figure in the era of the Reformation—Johann von Staupitz (c. 1460–1524). While he never became a Lutheran in the sense of joining the break from Rome, Staupitz bears witness in interesting and helpful ways to themes we hold dear in Lutheran theology: justification by grace, the pastoral ministry of the Word and Sacraments, and the tension of sinner and saint.

The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod lists November 8 as the commemoration day of Staupitz. Though he was not a Lutheran reformer himself, he occupies a place of honor because he played a pivotal role in Luther's journey to discovering the Gospel that would reshape the church. In Lutheran praxis, we give thanks not only for those who articulate the doctrine of justification, but also for pastors and confessors who bring the word of Christ and grace into the lives of troubled sinners.

Life and ministry in brief

Staupitz was born in Saxony, into a noble family, and studied at Leipzig, Cologne and Tübingen. He entered the Augustinian Order and eventually became the Vicar-General of the German Augustinian congregations in 1503. His responsibilities included oversight of the Order, teaching, preaching, and pastoral care. In 1502 he became dean of the theological faculty at the newly founded University of Wittenberg.

One of the most significant aspects of his ministry was his relationship to Martin Luther. When Luther was suffering under the burden of sin and guilt, Staupitz served as his confessor, adviser, spiritual director. Luther later said: "If it had not been for Dr. Staupitz, I should have sunk in hell." What did Staupitz say and do that earned such a testimony?

Staupitz's pastoral approach and its Lutheran resonance

Luther in Erfurt was tormented by guilt, wrestling with his sin, confession, God's justice. He confessed for many hours. Staupitz advised him: "Look to Christ, trust His blood, the mercy of God." He counselled Luther to shift his gaze from his own despair to the cross of Christ and the gift of grace.

Here we see strong resonance with Lutheran themes:

- **Law and Gospel:** Staupitz confronted Luther's despair (Law) and directed him to Christ's blood and the promise of forgiveness (Gospel). In Lutheran theology, the distinction between Law and Gospel is foundational.
- **Justification by grace through faith:** While Staupitz himself remained within the Catholic framework, he emphasized the gratuitousness of God's grace in Christ—an emphasis that Luther later developed more fully. For example: "He pointed Luther ... to salvation through the blood of Christ."
- **The pastoral ministry of the Means of Grace:** Staupitz did not merely give a lecture; he sat with Luther in his anguish, heard his confession, offered counsel, and urged a life centered in Christ rather than self-condemnation.

What We Learn From Staupitz

Staupitz probably never imagined that his gentle pastoral counsel would help ignite a movement that would reshape Christian history. But what he did for Luther is what the Gospel still does for us:

He comforted a burdened conscience with Christ.

Many of us know what it is to feel weighed down:

- By guilt from the past
- By the feeling that we should be “better Christians”
- By worry that we do not love God enough
- By fear that we have failed too much

Staupitz reminds us that when our hearts accuse us, when our failures seem too large, when we feel like we are not “good enough,” the answer is not to try harder.

The answer is Christ.

Not what we have done, but what **He** has done for us.

Not our worthiness, but **His** mercy.

Not our perfect love, but **His** perfect love.

This is why we gather in the Divine Service. This is why we receive absolution. This is why we come to the Lord’s Supper. This is why we live as forgiven people.

The Christian life is not climbing up to God—it is receiving the God who comes down to us in Christ.

Staupitz as an Everyday Example of Vocation

Staupitz never led a movement, never nailed any theses, and never made speeches before emperors. He simply did his calling—his **vocation**—as a pastor caring for a troubled soul. And God used it mightily.

We may never know how God will use our ordinary acts of faithfulness:

- A word of encouragement to someone who is hurting
- Faithfully raising children in the faith
- Praying for someone who needs grace
- Showing kindness when it is not easy
- Speaking of Christ when someone is afraid

God works through the quiet, daily vocations of His people.

In commemorating Johann von Staupitz, we do not place him on the same doctrinal level as the principal reformers. But we *do* honor a confessing pastor who helped prepare the way for the rediscovery and proclamation of the Gospel of Christ alone, by grace alone, through faith alone.

Listen to Jesus,
Pastor

Christian Stewardship

“Pointing to the Rock of Ages”



*Not the labor of my hands Can fulfill Thy Law's demands;
Could my zeal no respite know, Could my tears forever flow,
All for sin could not atone; Thou must save, and Thou alone. (LSB 761:2)*

While the classic hymn “Rock of Ages” shows up in the *Lutheran Service Book* in the “Hope and Comfort” section, it can also teach us a valuable lesson about Christian stewardship. If that surprises you, stay with me on this one.

No Lutheran would ever dispute the fact that our work does not save us. Ephesians 2 makes it truly clear that we are dead in our trespasses and sins and would remain in that state until Christ raises us by grace. There is not a ladder on which we can climb out of the grave that our sins have dug for us. No blood, sweat nor tears will be able to rescue us. We all know this.

Our works do not save. Christ’s work on the cross of Calvary does! He bore human flesh. He carried the burden of our sin to the cross. His body was beaten, bruised and bloodied for us. He has indeed atoned for us! This is more than enough reason for this hymn to be bouncing around in your head all day today!

But our work has a place. The place is in response to what the Father has done for us in Jesus. The Rock of Ages, who is Jesus, becomes the foundation on which our lives of faith are built. The Holy Spirit uses the means of grace to make us God’s workmanship that Paul talks about in Ephesians 2:10.

Our workmanship does not display our power or prowess. Like the heavens declare the handiwork of the Creator, the works of a redeemed sinner point others to the salvation that is worked only by Jesus alone. Our work is a response to and reflection of a grace and glory that we ourselves could never accomplish or achieve.

We become stewards of the treasure that is the Gospel. When we faithfully support the work of the Gospel of Jesus Christ with our financial support, we are doing the work which points to the One who alone atones. When we come alongside a struggling sister or brother for whom Christ died and we share the stewardship work of compassion and care, we enfold the treasure of God’s love and redemption. When we make it a weekly priority to arrange our schedule to be in the Lord’s House with other stewards of the Gospel to receive again and again the Gospel’s precious gift, we are stewards of the Body of Christ in the congregation that points even more people to Jesus.

We cannot do this. Jesus does it through us. We are simply stewards of this precious treasure!.

– LCMS Stewardship Ministry: lcms.org/stewardship

November birthdays

01 Cris Ruisz
02 Laurrie Bingenheimer
03 Kristina Learnahan
05 Jonathan Fritsch
05 Cynthia Szoldatits
09 Jim Bingenheimer
10 Heidi Boehm
12 Diane Weaver
14 Melissa Ruisz
16 Edward Cruz
22 Daniel Rossof

November Baptismal Anniversaries

12 Spenser Fox
30 Kelly Stewart

November Wedding Anniversaries

06 Ron & Cris Ruisz

Daylight Savings Time Ends

Remember to set your clocks back one hour on
Saturday, November 1.

November

Week of November 2-8

Sun, Nov 2, 8:30 a.m. Festive Divine Service
Sun, Nov 2, 9:40 a.m. Fellowship
Sun, Nov 2, 10:00 a.m. Bible Study
Wed, Nov 5, 6:30 p.m. Choir Practice

Week of November 9-15

Sun, Nov 9, 8:30 a.m. Divine Service
Sun, Nov 9, 9:40 a.m. Fellowship
Sun, Nov 9, 10:00 a.m. Bible Study
Mon, Nov 10, 6:00 p.m. Elders Meeting
Wed, Nov 12, 6:30 p.m. Choir Practice

Week of November 16-22

Sun, Nov 16, 8:30 a.m. Divine Service
Sun, Nov 16, 9:40 a.m. Fellowship
Sun, Nov 16, 10:00 a.m. Bible Study
Mon, Nov 17, 6:00 p.m. Council Meeting
Wed, Nov 19, 6:30 p.m. Choir Practice

Week of November 23-29

Sun, Nov 23, 8:30 a.m. Divine Service
Sun, Nov 23, 9:40 a.m. Fellowship
Sun, Nov 23, 10:00 a.m. Bible Study
Wed, Nov 26 6:30 p.m. Thanksgiving Eve Service
Wed, Nov 26 7:15 p.m. Choir Practice

Week of November 30

Sun, Nov 30, 8:30 a.m. Divine Service
Sun, Nov 30, 9:40 a.m. Fellowship
Sun, Nov. 30, 10:00 a.m. Bible Study

Outreach Clothing Drive

Ladies Aid is sponsoring a clothing drive to support a local mission that helps homeless families and veterans. Clean/in good condition clothing, shoes/boots, linens, may be dropped off at church until November 30. Thank You!

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 Julie Zimmer at 712-584-5301 or jdzimmer@aol.com

Ladies Aid

In mid-November you will see the Giving Tree for members and their families. If you know of someone in need, please give their name to Lisa ASAP. Most of the time these families request gift cards from their favorite stores. You can purchase cards at the retail outlets, but even more convenient, order the cards from MANNA, or RaiseRight (as it is now called). Choose an envelope from the tree, see what the recipient is requesting, and order cards, purchase at stores, and bring items to church by **December 14**. See **Lisa Cruz** with any questions.

At the same time as fulfilling those Giving Tree wishes, will be the annual Food Drive and the Advent Food drive. First, we like to provide the members on this list with items that can be used for a festive holiday dinner, and then provide staples to save those amounts so that they can be used by the family for the Merry CHRISTmas season. Each time you go to the grocery store until Christmas, try to purchase an item for the Food Drive. In the past years, we have given each family an amazing amount of food and other staples (paper towels, toilet paper, napkins, etc.). We would like to do that again this year.

Altar Flowers

Thank you to everyone who donated flowers for the altar in 2025 and to Ruth Ogden for arranging the beautiful bouquets.

The 2026 altar flower signup sheets will be posted in early December. See Ruth to purchase two bouquets for \$30 to beautify the altar.

Please check upcoming bulletins in mid-November for forms to make a memorial donation to Altar Guild. Payment with completed form is due **December 14**.

We will not be purchasing poinsettias this year.

Important Phone Numbers

Church office: 630-759-5300
Pastor Zimmer: 630-759-5300
Prayer Chain: 712-584-5301 (Julie Zimmer)
Head Elder: 630-360-5573 (Scott Collins)
Newsletter info: 630-759-3188 (Karen Moritz)
(Due November 25)

Thrivent Financial

Directing Choice Dollars is a great way for eligible Thrivent members to show support for what matters most to them. Thank you to everyone who donated their choice dollars – Remember to donate your third quarter choice dollars.

Sunday Treats

Do you enjoy treats and fellowship after Sunday services? If so, please consider signing up on any given Sunday(s). *Empty slots mean no treats.* To enable our diabetic members to enjoy these treats, consider supplementing some of the “sugary goodies” with crackers/cheese /fruit. The signup sheet is posted on the Luther Hall bulletin board.

Raise Right

Shop with Raise Right (new name) cards are available throughout the year for everyday expenses and gifts for any special occasion. Next order dates are, **November 9 & 23, and December 7 and 14.** Pre-purchased cards are available after Sunday services and forms are on the bookcase in Luther Hall. These cards make many of the Ladies Aid projects possible, and best of all they do not cost members anything beyond the face-value amount. RaiseRight pays us to use their service. What is more, many of these cards can be reloaded so you do not have to continually buy new cards.

Your Organization:

Divine Shepherd Lutheran Church – Manna

Your Coordinator: **Lisa Cruz**

630-636-6359 • dslcmanna@yahoo.com

shopwithscrip.com

Your Enrollment Code:

B2LD2C7A55973



You are invited to listen to Issues, Etc. — the radio voice of the Lutheran faith for the 21st century. Issues, Etc. is Lutheran talk radio hosted by LCMS Pastor Todd Wilken and produced by Lutheran Public Radio. Listen live (3:00-5:00pm CST) or at your leisure via the following options (go to issuesetc.org and click on the ‘listen’ tab for specific options.

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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/](https://www.facebook.com/dslc60440) Twitter: [@dslc60440](https://twitter.com/dslc60440)



Prayers Honoring Veterans And Their Sacrifices In The Military

Heavenly Father,

We lift up our voices in heartfelt thanksgiving for the veterans who have served and sacrificed for us in the military. We think of how they put their very lives on the line and gave themselves for the country and people who they loved and served.

We are grateful for their selflessness that has been a blessing to so many, even in the face of hardship, loss and pain. We just want to take a moment to honor them for the many ways that they have sacrificed and have been separated from their families.

We think of those who have fallen, and their grieving loved ones. We pray for Your comfort to surround them, and that they will hold tightly to the [hope](#) that is found in Christ not only for this life but for the one beyond.

We pray for those who have returned home from their duties. Thank You for protecting them and sparing their lives. May they be a reminder to us of those who may not be with us anymore, and who served faithfully alongside them.

We want to give thanks and honor to all our veterans who we celebrate today. Thank You for the freedoms that we get to experience today because of their selfless service. May they be blessed richly in Christ. In Jesus’ name, we pray, amen.

Though there are many ways to honor our beloved veterans, one of the ways we can do that is through praying for our veterans. We can honor all those who have served in the military this Veteran’s Day as we reflect on the sacrifices they made, and lift them up in [thankful](#) prayer.

Prayers of Thanksgiving from Psalms

Psalm 95 - "Come, let us sing for joy to the LORD; let us shout aloud to the Rock of our salvation. Let us come before him with thanksgiving and extol him with music and song. For the LORD is the great God, the great King above all gods..."

Psalm 118:29 - "Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good; his love endures forever."

Psalm 103:1-5 - "Praise the LORD, my soul; all my inmost being, praise his holy name. Praise the LORD, my soul, and forget not all his benefits - who forgives all your sins and heals all your diseases, who redeems your life from the pit and crowns you with love and compassion, who satisfies your desires with good things so that your youth is renewed."

Thanksgiving Prayer

Accept, O Lord, our thanks and praise for all that you have done for us. We thank you for the splendor of the whole creation, for the beauty of this world, for the wonder of life, and for the mystery. We thank you for the blessing of family and friends, and for the loving care which surrounds us on every side. We thank you for setting us at tasks which demand our best efforts, and for leading us to accomplishments which satisfy and delight us. We thank you also for those disappointments and failures that lead us to acknowledge our dependence on you alone. Above all, we thank you for your Son Jesus Christ; for the truth of his Word and the example of his life; for his steadfast obedience, by which he overcame temptation; for his dying, through which he overcame death; and for his rising to life again, in which we are raised to the life of your kingdom. Grant us the gift of your Spirit, that we may know Christ and make him known; and through him, at all times and in all places, may give thanks to you in all things.

End of the Church Year (11/23)

Lord Jesus, when You return, You will restore everything. All the years of Pain will be erased; every tear of disappointment will be wiped away; every bitter experience will be utterly forgotten. With perfect eyes, we will see Your hands and feet that took the nail; Your head that was crowned with thorns; Your back that was scourged; Your side that was pierced. Even so, come quickly, Lord Jesus! Amen and Amen (Portals of Prayer)

Reverse Advent Food Drive Non-perishable only

Share the Love this Christmas with Ladies Aid and help give nutritious food to church families or others in need in our community.

Prepare for Christmas by creating an Advent box or bag, count down the days till drop off date by placing an item in the box each day.

The list is only a suggestion, it does not replace the annual food drive. Only non-perishable food items.

If you place a different item, please cross out and write item placed inside .

Return the box/bag to church NO LATER than **December 7.**

If you have any questions, please contact Lisa. Food items in any amount are greatly appreciated.

If you turn in a complete box or bag, your name will be placed into a drawing for a gift card.

Thank you for your support

Name: _____

November 10 – box of cereal
November 11 – peanut butter
November 12 – stuffing mix
November 13 – boxed potatoes
November 14 – mac and cheese
November 15 – canned fruit
November 16 – canned tomatoes
November 17 – canned tuna
November 18 – dessert mix
November 19 – jar of applesauce
November 20 – canned sweet potatoes
November 21 – cranberry sauce
November 22 – roll of paper towels
November 23 – box of crackers
November 24 – package of rice
November 25 – package of oatmeal
November 26 – package of pasta
November 27 – spaghetti sauce
November 28 – can of soup
November 29 – package of toilet paper
November 30 – can of corn
December 01 – can of mixed vegetables
December 02 – can of carrots
December 03 – can of green beans