



Divine Shepherd Lutheran Church

The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod



December 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:



Who is St. Nicholas and what can we learn from him, especially during this time of Advent and Christmas?

The true story of Santa Claus begins with Nicholas who lived in the 3rd century A.D. Early in his life he lost both his wealthy parents in an epidemic. Nicholas took the words of Jesus to heart from the Gospel of Matthew: "sell what you own and give the money to the poor," and so he used his whole inheritance to assist the needy, the sick, and the suffering. He dedicated his life to serving God and his neighbor and eventually became the bishop of Myra in what is now Turkey. St. Nicholas became known throughout the land for his generosity to those in need and his love for children.¹

Under the Roman Emperor Diocletian, who ruthlessly persecuted Christians, Bishop Nicholas suffered for his faith, was exiled and imprisoned. He was released under the emperor Constantine and participated in the Council of Nicaea in AD 325. The anniversary of his death on December 6th, 343 became a day of celebration which we now observe as St. Nicholas Day.

There are many stories, some apocryphal, regarding his generosity and love for others. One of the stories attributed to St. Nicholas tell of saving his people from famine, sparing the lives of those innocently accused, and even putting gold in stockings hung by the fireplace to help those in need. He did many kind and generous deeds in secret, expecting nothing in return.

Through the centuries St. Nicholas has been honored by Lutherans, Roman Catholics and the Greek Orthodox. By his example of generosity to those in need, especially children, St. Nicholas continues to be a model for the compassionate life.

Although it wouldn't be prudent for us to sneak into people's homes and place gold in stockings, we can remember those who are struggling; spiritually, physically, emotionally, and financially. During this festive season let us show love to our neighbor and provide where and when we can for those less fortunate than us. I thank all of you who have given encouragement, prayers, contributions to the food drive and the giving tree and simply have shown love to others.

You will be enriched in every way for all your generosity, which through us will produce thanksgiving to God. (2 Corinthians 9:11)

Blessed is he who is generous to the poor. (Proverbs 14:21).

Have a blessed Advent and Christmas season.

Listen to Jesus,
Pastor Zimmer

Christian Stewardship

The Measure of Our Generosity



If you open the Small Catechism, you'll find a shortened version of the Third Commandment: "Remember the Sabbath day by keeping it holy." But if you look up the list of the Ten Commandments in Exodus, you'll find the full version:

Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days you shall labor, and do all your work, but the seventh day is a Sabbath to the LORD your God. On it you shall not do any work, you, or your son, or your daughter, your male servant, or your female servant, or your livestock, or the sojourner who is within your gates. For in six days the LORD made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that is in them, and rested on the seventh day. Therefore, the LORD blessed the Sabbath day and made it holy. (Ex. 20:8–11)

Why did Luther shorten this commandment for the Small Catechism? Was it so that the kids wouldn't have so much to memorize? No, it was because Luther knew that all the details of the Third Commandment were part of the "shadow" of the Old Testament (Col. 2:16). Or as St. Paul puts it, there is "letter" in the Old Testament law and "spirit" (2 Cor. 3:6). The details of not working on Saturday were fulfilled by Christ. That part of the Sabbath regulation no longer applies. But the spirit of the law does remain: We need to dedicate sufficient time each week to hearing God's Word and giving it honor and respect. Or as Luther sums it up in the Small Catechism's explanation to the Third Commandment: "We should fear and love God so that we do not despise preaching and His Word but hold it sacred and gladly hear and learn it."

The same sort of analysis applies to our giving. In the Old Testament, God commanded the Israelites to give a tenth of their income to the Levites so that those men could dedicate their lives to serving in God's house, teaching the people, conducting worship, etc. In the New Testament, there is a rigid requirement listed about handing in your tax forms to church to make sure you've given enough. But the mandate to have a full-time ministry, which is the spirit of that law concerning tithing to the Levites, is right there in 1 Corinthians 9:14: "The Lord has ordained that those who preach the Gospel should make their living from the Gospel."

The New Testament church's job is significantly larger than the job of Old Testament Israel. We are commanded to preach the Gospel to all nations. There was only the temple to maintain in the Old Testament, but we have churches, schools, universities and seminaries, plus missionaries everywhere. So you tell me: Can we really undertake the work of the ministry if our giving doesn't even measure up to Old Testament levels of generosity?

– LCMS Stewardship Ministry: lcms.org/stewardship

*Children are God's precious jewels -
help them shine for Christ*



Week of December 3-9

Sun, Dec 3, 8:30 am Divine Service
 Sun, Dec 3, 9:30 am Fellowship
 Sun, Dec 3, 10:00 am Bible Study
 Wed, Dec 6, 6:30 pm Evening Prayers
 Wed, Dec 6, 7:15 pm Choir Practice
 Sat, Dec 9, 8:30 am Church Decorating

Week of December 10-16

Sun, Dec 10, 8:30 am Divine Service
 Sun, Dec 10, 9:30 am Fellowship
 Sun, Dec 10, 10:00 am Congregational Meeting
 Mon, Dec 11, 11:30 am Altar Guild Meeting
 Mon, Dec 11, 12:01pm Women's Bible Study
 Wed, Dec 13, 6:30 pm Evening Prayers
 Wed, Dec 13, 7:15 pm Choir Practice

Week of December 17-23

Sun, Dec 17, 8:30 am Divine Service
 Sun, Dec 17, 9:30 am Fellowship
 Sun, Dec 17, 10:00 am Bible Study
 Wed, Dec 20, 6:30 pm Evening Prayers
 Wed, Dec 20, 7:15 pm Choir Practice

Week of December 24-30

Sun, Dec 24, 8:30 am Divine Service
 Sun, Dec 24 – no treats or bible study
 Sun, Dec 24, 6:30 pm Candlelight and Carols
 Mon, Dec 25 8:30 am Festive Divine Service

Week of December 31

Sun, Dec 31, 8:30 am Divine Service
 Sun, Dec 31 no fellowship or bible study

Christmas Decorating

Come and help us decorate the sanctuary for Christmas on **Saturday, December 9 at 8:30 a.m.** Many hands are needed and make light work!



Advent



Join us this Advent season for our midweek Evening Prayer services as we ponder anew the events that led up to the birth of the Messiah. **December 6, 13 & 20 at 6:30 p.m.**

Christmas Schedule

Join us in celebrating the birth of our Savior this Christmas Eve and Day. Below is the schedule of worship services:



Candlelight Lessons & Carols
 Christmas Eve @ 6:30 p.m.

Festive Divine Service
 Christmas Day @ 8:30 a.m.

Invite your relatives, neighbors, and/or coworkers to join you as we hear anew the story of God becoming man to save us from our sins. The vast array of Christmas hymns and carols will be spread out over these two services, the following Sunday, and Epiphany. O come, let us adore Him!

December Birthdays

01 Shelly Quinn
 03 Al Gernenz
 10 Victoria Fox
 16 Rev. David Zimmer
 27 Jonathan Gernenz
 28 Marjorie Jahnsen
 30 Aaron Castro



December Baptismal Anniversaries

15 Bobbie Koritzke
 15 Shellie Quinn
 24 Nick Stewart
 25 Cris Ruisz
 29 Al Gernenz



Congregational Meeting

There will be a congregational voters and budget meeting on December 3 after the service. Please plan to attend to discuss upcoming needs/events.

Choir Practice



Choir practice is on **Wednesdays**, at **7:15 p.m.** Anyone high school or older are encouraged to join. All are welcome to lend their voices in praise to our Savior, Jesus Christ. Many voices make for beautiful music.

Ladies Aid

The members of Divine Shepherd Ladies Aid send their greetings and their wishes that the Baby Jesus will shower each of us with his love and forgiveness. We receive the best gift of all--the love and caring of our Lord. That will never change.

Many things are changing however!! There are needs being experienced by members of our congregation that are not easily seen on Sunday mornings. We do have members in need of both help in paying bills, buying groceries, providing Christmas gifts for their family.



Our two current projects address these needs by giving gift cards, presents and food supplies. THE GIVING TREE is currently in the narthex of the church with envelopes requesting cards for different types of families. If you are able, please take an envelope and provide the assistance requested. Return the envelope to Lisa or Ed Cruz by **December 10**.

THE FOOD DRIVE--Our gifts of food do two things for those in need. Of course, it provides food, especially for a holiday dinner. In addition to the food that you have so generously been leaving in the narthex, we have received \$500 from Thrivent to purchase the perishables that we all need. Each family will receive meat, potatoes, vegetables, dessert, and even some "goodies" through the Thrivent Financial grants.



Mid-size sturdy boxes are needed to pack the food and can be dropped off anytime in the nursery. (Thanks).

All food and Giving Tree donations need to be at church by **December 10** to give us enough time to purchase food, sort it by family, and have it available for pickup by Wednesday December 13. Those recipients of the Giving Tree need time to use their gift cards to purchase gifts/etc.

Thank you for your generous donations!

Of course, do not forget one family/person that completes the "Reverse Advent Calendar" food drive will receive a \$25 gift card of their choice.

Ladies Aid is selling bags of chocolate. The green bag has 10 pieces of 3 different dark chocolates and 7 assorted candies and sells for \$5@. There are also smaller cellophane bags which are \$3@ or 2 for \$5.

Altar Guild

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



Forms to purchase poinsettias for the Christmas Season are in the narthex. The cost is \$12@ and payment with completed form is due **December 10**.

In lieu of purchasing a poinsettia, a donation may be given to the General Memorial Fund.

The 2024 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. Traditionally flowers are not used during the penitential seasons of Lent and Advent. We typically have special floral arrangements for certain festivals: palms on Palm Sunday, spring flowers on Easter Sunday, red bouquets on Confirmation, and poinsettias on Christmas. If you would like to contribute flowers, 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.



THRIVENT
FINANCIAL®

Thrivent members are encouraged to donate their Choice Dollars to Divine Shepherd before March 2024. These dollars are used to support various church/member's needs. Grant monies in the amount of \$1250 was given to the church to supplement the "Giving Tree" and "Food Drive

Sunday Treats

Do you enjoy treats and fellowship after Sunday services? If so, please consider signing up on any given Sunday(s). The 2024 signup sheet is posted in Luther Hall. Why not sign up with a friend? *Empty slots mean no treats.*

Raise Right

Shop with RAISE RIGHT cards are available throughout the year for everyday expenses and gifts for any special occasion. Next order dates are **December 3, 10 & 17**. Pre-purchased cards are available after Sunday services and forms are on the bookcase in Luther Hall. These cards make many of the Ladies Aids projects possible, and best of all they do not cost members anything beyond the face-value amount. They pay 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. <http://www.raiseright.com>

Your Organization:

Divine Shepherd Lutheran Church – Manna

Your Coordinator: **Lisa Cruz**

630-636-6359 • dsldmanna@yahoo.com

shopwithscrip.com

Your Enrollment Code: B2LD2C7A55973

There are also many new cards available. \$25Meijer, Target, Amazon, Darden, shell, Starbucks, Walmart, Dunkin, and \$10 cards are chipotle, McDonalds, Panera, Starbucks, Target, and more \$10 Walmart.

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: @dsld60440

Prayer Chain

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

Important Phone Numbers

Church office: 630-759-5300

Pastor Zimmer: 583-880-9532

Prayer Chain: 630-251-7860 (Bobbie Light)

Head elder: 630-360-5573 (Scott Collins)

Newsletter info: 630-759-3188 (Karen Moritz)

(items are due December 26)

2024 Offering Envelopes Yearly Tax Letter

If you need new offering envelopes, please see Barb ASAP. In mid-January look for your end of year tax letters. If you have any questions, please see Barb Potempa, Financial Secretary.

Jesus is the Heart of Christmas

Bake cookies, buy gifts, plan special menus, send cards, decorate outside, attend concerts.

The Christmas to-do list weighs on our hearts. But wait! There's more! Trim the tree, make gingerbread houses, purchase food, wrap packages, visit family. There's always more. Too often the pace of Christmas threatens to overwhelm your hearts completely.

This year, let Jesus Christ lift up your heart – far above the chaos - and give you calm in the midst of turmoil. Jesus encourages all to take their Christmas preparation from 'doing' to simply 'being' as you prepare to celebrate His birth.

Let your Savior set your heart ablaze with hope as you reflect on His love for you. Allow the wonder and joy of the newborn Christ Child to take hold of your heart and keep you focused on Jesus, the Heart of Christmas. (CTA)

**A Blessed Christmas and
a Happy New Year**



You are cordially invited to
A BIRTHDAY CELEBRATION!!!

Guest of Honor: Jesus Christ

Date: Every day. Traditionally, December 25
but He's always around, so the date is flexible...

Time: Whenever you're ready.
(Please don't be late, though, or you'll miss out on all the fun!)

Place: In your heart.... He'll meet you there.
(You'll hear Him knock.)

Attire: Come as you are... grubbies are okay.
He'll be washing our clothes anyway. He said something about
new white robes and crowns for everyone who stays till the last.

Tickets: Admission is free. He's already paid for everyone...
(He says you wouldn't have been able to afford it anyway...
it cost Him everything He had. But you do need to accept the ticket!!

Refreshments: New wine, bread, and a far-out drink He calls "Living Water,"
followed by a supper that promises to be out of this world!

Gift Suggestions: Your life. He's one of those people who already has everything else.
(He's very generous in return though. Just wait until you see what He has for you!)

Entertainment: Joy, Peace, Truth, Light, Life, Love, Real Happiness,
Communion with God, Forgiveness, Miracles, Healing, Power, Eternity in Paradise, Contentment, and much more!
(All "G" rated, so bring your family and friends.)

R.S.V.P. Very Important!

He must know ahead so He can reserve a spot for you at the table.
Also, He's keeping a list of His friends for future reference. He calls it the
"Lamb's Book of Life."

Party being given by His Kids (that's us!!)



© Maria Bell * www.ClipartOf.com/69930