



Divine Shepherd Lutheran Church

The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod

February 2024 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:

*"For everyone who shall not confess that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh, is antichrist: and whosoever shall not confess the testimony of the Cross, is of the devil; and whosoever shall pervert the oracles of the Lord to his own lusts and say that there is neither resurrection nor judgment, that man is the firstborn of Satan."*ⁱ

For those of you that have been attending Bible Class on 1st John, the statement above sounds just like something that the Apostle John would say. This is no surprise because the writer of these words comes from the pen of Polycarp, a disciple of John.

St. Polycarp was born in 69 A.D. and was martyred in 155 A.D. It is Polycarp that the church commemorates on February 23rd.

St. Polycarp was appointed by St. John himself to be the Bishop of Smyrna (modern day Turkey) sometime before 100 A.D. He had a tremendous influence on the early church by his faith, his writings, and his pastoral care. Irenaeus (120 – 200 A.D.) another extremely important church father and disciple of Polycarp said this of him:

*Polycarp also was not only instructed by apostles, and conversed with many who had seen Christ, but was also, by apostles in Asia, appointed bishop of the Church in Smyrna, whom I also saw in my early youth, for he tarried [on earth] a very long time, and, when a very old man, gloriously and most nobly suffering martyrdom, departed this life, having always taught the things which he had learned from the apostles, and which the Church has handed down, and which alone are true. To these things all the Asiatic Churches testify, as do also those men who have succeeded Polycarp down to the present time, a man who was of much greater weight, and a more steadfast witness of truth against Valentinus, and Marcion, and the rest of the heretics."*ⁱⁱ

Polycarp lived at time when the church fought, not only against the persecutions of the secular Roman Empire, but also against those who did not teach and preach the true Word of God. The leading of the Holy Spirit was exceedingly evident in this devoted follower of Jesus Christ.

Not only do we see his faith in Jesus Christ through his writings, but even at the end of his life as he was martyred for that faith. The testimony of his martyrdom is vast and detailed. ⁱⁱⁱ

When you read the events of his martyrdom, you can't help but reflect on the persecutions and martyrdoms of Christians around the world and that the persecutions are now being experienced by believers in the United States. It is not out of the question that one day martyrdoms will appear in our country.

We can be encouraged and learn from Polycarp. When he was arrested, he offered no resistance and was allowed by the authorities to have time to pray. Polycarp prayed for an hour; praying that God's will be done. Reminiscent of our Lord in the Garden of Gethsemane.

Polycarp was then led into the arena, tied to a stake, and the fire was lit. Amazingly, by the grace of God the fire encircled him but did not burn him and his face glowed like an angel. Ready to be an acceptable burnt-offering to God, he looked up to heaven, and prayed,

“O Lord God Almighty, the Father of your beloved and blessed Son Jesus Christ, by whom we have received the knowledge of you, the God of angels, powers and every creature, and of all the righteous who live before you, I give you thanks that you count me worthy to be numbered among your martyrs, sharing the cup of Christ and the resurrection to eternal life, both of soul and body, through the immortality of the Holy Spirit. May I be received this day as an acceptable sacrifice, as you, the true God, have predestined, revealed to me, and now fulfilled. I praise you for all these things, I bless you and glorify you, along with the everlasting Jesus Christ, your beloved Son. To you, with him, through the Holy Ghost, be glory both now and forever. Amen.”

When those who wished to kill him saw that they could not burn him, a soldier ran with his dagger to Polycarp and stabbed him. It is said that as Polycarp's blood flowed it had extinguished the fire. He remained steadfast among the suffering, ridicule, and hatred of those who despised the truth.

Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight, and sin which clings so closely and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, looking to Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God. Consider him who endured from sinners such hostility against himself, so that you may not grow weary or fainthearted. (Hebrews 12:1-3).

As we approach the season of Lent, let us learn from those before us, who suffered and died for the faith. Yet, especially let us give thanks to God through Jesus Christ who suffered more than all so that we might be forgiven and receive the crown of glory that Father, Son, and Holy Spirit has placed upon them.

A very blessed Lententide and Holy Week to you all!

Listen to Jesus,
Pastor Zimmer

Christian Stewardship

Caring for My Neighbor



If any of the Ten Commandments might tempt us to think that keeping the Law is easy, it would be the Fifth Commandment. After all, how hard is it to get through life without murdering somebody? The vast majority of people can handle that!

But Jesus famously blows up this notion by pointing out that the command, “you shall not murder,” goes much deeper — down to the heart.

You have heard that it was said to those of old, “You shall not murder; and whoever murders will be liable to judgment.” But I say to you that everyone who is angry with his brother will be liable to judgment; whoever insults his brother will be liable to the council; and whoever says, “You fool!” will be liable to the hell of fire. (Matt. 5:21–22)

Hatred and disdain come from the same sort of crookedness of heart as murder. With both murder and hatred, you look down on another person and think them of little worth.

In the Small Catechism, Luther also points out that every “do not” in the commandments also includes a “do this:” “We should fear and love God so that we do not hurt or harm our neighbor in his body but *help and support him in every physical need*” (SC, Fifth Commandment, emphasis added).

We are not called merely to avoid evil; we must also do positive good.

So when Jesus drew near to us and became our neighbor by taking up our humanity, He came not only to avoid harming us, but He came to positively help us, bless us and serve us.

We are now called to show the love to our neighbors that Christ showed to us. Your neighbor is yet another gift that God has given you that requires your stewardship. We are called to show mercy, to be kind, to love and serve our neighbor. One aspect of this stewardship is financial: our neighbors need us to support the church’s work so that they can hear the Gospel and come to faith. Our neighbors need the church’s alms and mercy work. Our neighbors need our faithful service in all we do in the name of Christ.

– LCMS Stewardship Ministry: lcms.org/stewardship

Ash Wednesday



This year Ash Wednesday falls on **Wednesday, February 14**. Join us as we begin our 40-day journey to the cross with a solemn Divine Service at **6:30 p.m.** This

service begins with corporate confession and absolution and the imposition of ashes (for those who wish to receive them) and ends with the Lord’s Supper.

Choir Practice

Choir practice is on Wednesdays at 6:30 pm (7:15 pm during lent midweek services). All are welcome to lend their voices in praise to our Savior, Jesus Christ.

Altar Flowers



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.

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



Week of February 4-10

- Sun, Feb 4, 8:30 am Divine Service
- Sun, Feb 4, 9:40 am Fellowship
- Sun, Feb 4, 10:00 am Bible Study
- Tue, Feb 6, 5:30 pm Confirmation Class
- Wed, Feb 7, 6:30 pm Choir Practice

Week of February 11-17

- Sun, Feb 11, 8:30 am Divine Service
- Sun, Feb 11, 9:40 am Fellowship
- Sun, Feb 11, 10:00 am Bible Study
- Mon, Feb 12, 11:00 am Altar Guild Meeting
- Mon, Feb 12, 12:01 pm Women's Bible Study
- Tue, Feb 13, 5:30 pm Confirmation Class
- Wed, Feb 14, 6:30 pm Ash Wednesday Service
- Wed, Feb 14, 7:15 pm Choir Practice
- Sat, Feb 17, 10:00 am Ladies Aid Meeting

Week of February 18-24

- Sun, Feb 18, 8:30 am Divine Service
- Sun, Feb 18, 9:40 am Fellowship
- Sun, Feb 18, 10:00 am Bible Study
- Tue, Feb 20, 5:30 pm Confirmation Class
- Wed, Feb 21, 6:30 pm Lenten Service
- Wed, Feb 21, 7:15 pm Choir Practice

Week of February 25-29

- Sun, Feb 25, 8:30 am Divine Service
- Sun, Feb 25, 9:40 am Fellowship
- Sun, Feb 25, 10:00 am Bible Study
- Tue, Feb 27, 5:30 pm Confirmation Class
- Wed, Feb 18, 6:30 pm Lenten Service
- Wed, Feb 18, 7:15 pm Choir Practice

February Birthdays

- 05 Michael Collins
- 09 Angela Pruett
- 12 Lisa Cruz
- 14 Hector (Manny) Martinez
- 21 Doug Quinn



February Baptismal Anniversaries

- 01 Melanie Witzke
- 11 Jonathan Gernenz
- 17 Hayden Quinn



February Wedding Anniversaries

- 19 Al & Ann Gernenz

Transfiguration of Jesus Christ

Jesus took Peter, James, and John with him and led them up a high mountain, where they were all alone. There he was **transfigured** before them. His clothes became dazzling white, whiter than anyone in the world could bleach them. And there appeared before them Elijah and Moses, who were talking with Jesus. Peter said to Jesus, "Rabbi, it is good for us to be here. Let us put up three shelters—one for you, one for Moses and one for Elijah." (He did not know what to say, they were so frightened.) Then a cloud appeared and covered them, and a voice came from the cloud: "This is my Son, whom I love. Listen to him!" Suddenly, when they looked around, they no longer saw anyone with them except Jesus. As they were coming down the mountain, Jesus gave them orders not to tell anyone what they had seen until the Son of Man had risen from the dead." **Mark 9:2-9.** The transfiguration of Jesus Christ was a powerful demonstration of His divine nature and manifestation of His glory, which Jesus possessed prior to coming to earth in the human body. This revelation is referenced in a passage in the Apostle Paul's message to Philippi. "Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: But made Himself of no reputation, and took upon Him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: And being found in fashion as a man, He humbled Himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. Wherefore God also hath highly exalted Him, and given Him a name which is above every name: That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father" (**Philippians 2:5-11 KJV**).

The Transfiguration of Jesus will be celebrated at a Divine Service on February 11th.

Ladies Aid

Our meetings are the third Saturday of each month, and we certainly would like to see you join us at **10:00 am** on **February 17**. The annual rummage sale will be discussed at the February meeting. Many hands will be needed to set up the items and to work the sale.

Valentine's Day – Divine Love of Jesus

February is the month when “Valentine’s Day” is celebrated and thus a month in which we think of “love.” A few short weeks ago we celebrated Christmas—the occasion that marked God’s great love gift to the world, His only-begotten Son. Jesus came into our world as a servant and took upon Himself our human flesh and form, as well as our sin, guilt, and shame, and then offered His life as the perfect sacrifice for our sins and the sins of the whole world. This act of sacrificial love caused the hymn writer to pen these words: “What wondrous love is this, O my soul, O my soul! What wondrous love is this, O my soul! What wondrous love is this that caused the Lord of bliss to bear the dreadful curse for my soul, for my soul, to bear the dreadful curse for my soul!” (LSB, 543).

The truth is that the love of Jesus is far more wondrous than we can ever describe or imagine, much less imitate and practice. The best that we can do is respond to that wondrous love with our free and joyous stewardship. True Christian stewardship is not something that we do because of laws, rules and commands. True Christian stewardship is always a response to the love of God for us. The Apostle John said it so well: “We love because He first loved us.”

So, during this month of February when “Valentine’s Day” reminds us of human love, we do well to pause and reflect on the divine love of Jesus. By the power and presence of the Holy Spirit we are equipped to show our love through deeds and words that support and encourage.

Christian stewardship is the free and joyous activity of the child of God and God’s family, the church, in managing all of life and life’s resources for God’s purposes. Let your love show in your giving of time, talent and financial resources to God’s glory and the expansion of His kingdom.

¹ Early Christian Writings, copyright © 2001-2024 Peter Kirby Ibid

Commemoration of Martin Luther (2/18)

God, through your servant Martin Luther, You formed Your Church. You taught us once again what the bible so clearly proclaims: that sinners are justified by grace alone, a gift received through faith alone on the foundation of Christ’s work alone. Help Your Church to always be the place where that doctrine is zealously proclaimed, for it is our very life and salvation. *(Portals of Prayer*

Updated Church Directory

The church directory is being updated. If in the past twenty months you have changed your phone number, email address or home address, please let Barb know ASAP. Thank You



Directing Choice Dollars is a great way for eligible Thrivent members to show support for what matters most to them. 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 2023 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)
Head Elder: 630-360-5573 (Scott Collins)
Newsletter info: 630-759-3188 (Karen Moritz)
(Articles are due February 26)

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.* Please consider supplementing some of the “sugary goodies” with crackers and cheese and/or fruit for our diabetic members. The 2024 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.

RisiseRight (Manna)

Shop with RaiseRight cards are available throughout the year for everyday expenses and gifts for any special occasion. Next order date is **February 18**. 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

Thank you for your continued support.

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](https://www.facebook.com/DSLcBolingbrook)

Twitter: @dslc60440

The Tax letters

Tax letters are done and were passed out to members at church or put into your mail slot in January. Any questions see Barb.

Dear Friend of Caring Network,

We need your help! We are urgently trying to fill positions in our nursing team. “In order to continue meeting the needs of women facing unplanned pregnancies, Caring Network is urgently seeking Nurses (RN’s), or sonography technicians (RDMS) in Du Page county. We have full-time and part-time positions. Our mission at Caring Network is to honor Jesus Christ as we provide emotional, spiritual, and practical help to anyone dealing with an unplanned pregnancy. We will train nurses in ultrasound skills. Please email your resume to jill@caringnetwork.com or website:

Thank you for your help! 630-455-0300

Bridgett Hallstrom ANP-BC Director of Nursing

Prayer for our Nation’s Leaders

Lord, bless the president of the US and our nation’s leaders. Give them wisdom and strength as they carry out their responsibilities. Humble our leaders to receive counsel from Your Word that they may defend our people in wisdom, especially the weakest among us – the aged and unborn – through Jesus Christ, our Lord. *(Portals of Prayer)*

The Mind of God Toward You

There is never a time
when you're not in His thoughts,
never a time without grace,
never a time when He turns away
from any need you face.

There is never a time
when you're not in His heart,
never a time without love,
never a time when you're not blessed
with good things from above!

How precious also are Thy thoughts unto me, O God! How great is the sum of them! If I should count them, they are more in number than the sand: when I wake, I am still with Thee. Psalm 139:17-18

(The devotional gift book **Always Loved** by Roy Lessin)

