



Divine Shepherd Lutheran Church

The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod

February 2026

"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:

St. Valentine: Love, Martyrdom, and Christ's Faithfulness

Every February our culture fills stores with hearts, flowers, candy, and sentimental cards, but beneath the modern celebration lies the memory of a Christian pastor and martyr of the 3rd century who is celebrated by the Church on February 14th.

St. Valentine lived during the reign of the Roman Emperor Claudius II (around A.D. 269). Tradition holds that Valentine faithfully served as a Christian priest or bishop in Rome during a time when the Church faced persecution. He ministered to believers, prayed with the suffering, encouraged Christian marriages, and refused to deny Christ even when threatened. Eventually, he was arrested, imprisoned, and executed for confessing the name of Jesus. So, when the early Church spoke of Valentine, they remembered not romance—but faithfulness unto death.

Who Was St. Valentine—Historically Speaking?

The history surrounding Valentine includes several early references to Christian martyrs named "Valentinus," and their stories likely blended together over time. While we cannot prove every legendary detail, two things are historically certain:

1. There was indeed a Christian leader named Valentine who was executed for the faith.
2. The Church remembered him as a confessor of Christ's love, steadfast in witness, and faithful in pastoral care.

So Valentine's Day is rooted not in fairy-tale romance, but in the courageous confession of a Christian shepherd willing to die rather than deny Christ.

How Do Lutherans View the Saints?

Lutherans do not pray to saints or treat them as mediators between us and God. Scripture is clear:

"For there is one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus." — 1 Timothy 2:5

Yet the Lutheran Confessions teach that we *rightly honor* the saints. We give thanks to God for them. We learn from their example. We are encouraged by how God sustained them. Their lives point us not to themselves, but to God's grace at work in His Church.

A Lutheran Understanding of “Love”

Our culture celebrates Valentine’s Day with romance and emotional affection. These can be good gifts of God—but Christian love runs deeper. Scripture reminds us:

“God shows His love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.” — Romans 5:8

The love connected to St. Valentine is not mere sentiment. It is sacrificial love, grounded in the cross of Christ—a love that gives, suffers, forgives, and endures. Valentine’s witness directs our attention to God’s steadfast, saving love in Christ Jesus.

Marriage, Vocation, and Faithfulness

If Valentine indeed supported Christian marriage during persecution, this beautifully connects with Lutheran teaching on vocation. Marriage is not simply romance or social tradition; it is God’s gift, created and blessed by Him. Scripture teaches that marriage reflects the faithful, self-giving love of Christ for His Church (Ephesians 5). Faithfulness in marriage—like faithfulness in confession—is part of the Christian life lived under the cross.

Law and Gospel on Valentine’s Day

A day focused on “love” can sometimes highlight our failures—broken relationships, loneliness, regret, and the many ways our love falls short. The Law reveals our selfishness, impatience, and sin.

But the Gospel speaks something infinitely better:

You are loved with an everlasting love.

Christ died for you.

You are forgiven in your Baptism.

You are fed and sustained at His Table.

You belong to Him.

That is the truest and deepest Valentine we could ever receive.

Why Remember Valentine?

We do not honor St. Valentine to sentimentalize romance or place our hope in a historical figure. We remember him because his life points us to Christ:

- Christ’s love that endures even unto death
- Christ’s victory in persecution
- Christ’s grace shaping marriage, friendship, and daily life
- Christ’s Church sustained by His Spirit across centuries

So whether you celebrate the day joyfully or quietly pass it by, let Valentine’s story turn your heart toward the greater love that defines our faith—Christ crucified and risen for us.

A Prayer for Valentine’s Observance

Gracious Lord, we thank You for the faithful witness of those who confessed Your name even to death. Strengthen us in Your steadfast love. Bless our marriages, friendships, families, and vocations that they may reflect the love of Christ. Comfort the lonely, heal the brokenhearted, forgive our failures in love, and keep our eyes fixed on Jesus, the true Bridegroom of the Church. Amen.

Listen to Jesus,
Pastor Zimmer

Christian Stewardship

Table of Duties: The Forgotten Stewardship Tool



Luther's Small Catechism is a magnificent tool. Joined with a well-used copy of the Holy Scriptures and an orthodox hymnal, and the Christian is well equipped to live a life of faithfulness to the Lord and service to the neighbor. First in German and now in English and just about any language known to man, this handy masterpiece has introduced generations of people to the central doctrine of justification by grace, through faith, on account of Jesus Christ. The Six Chief Parts have proven to be a faithful framework for a clear confession of the truth of the Gospel for nearly five hundred years!

But more than a textbook, the Small Catechism also serves well as a handbook for Christian living. As a part of its treasure, there is an element that teaches an extraordinarily strong message of stewardship. That hidden treasure that needs to be rediscovered is called the Table of Duties.

The Table of Duties is really nothing more than a categorized gathering of Bible verses. These verses are set apart for "various holy orders and positions, admonishing them about their duties and responsibilities." Addressing pastors and people, government and citizens, husbands, wives, children, youth, workers and so many more, it very clearly lays out what faithful stewardship looks like. Even better, these assembled passages teach one important truth: we are stewards of one another!

The Table is much more than a "how-to" tool; it also lays out the interconnectedness that exists within the body of Christ. Pastors are described by what they are to be as stewards of the Word. 1 Timothy 3 highlights the characteristics of a faithful pastor. Even more, Titus 1 highlights the need for the pastor to be faithful for the sake of those under his care.

Those who hear the faithful preaching of the pastor are stewards of the pastor as well. 1 Corinthians 9 talks about the need for the people to support the livelihood of the pastor. Galatians 6 talks about how the hearers share in the good things that the pastor teaches. 1 Timothy 6 talks about the honor that is owed to the pastor, not because of WHO he is, but rather WHAT he is teaching! Hebrews 13 shows the impact of this stewardship on the pastor, that they perform their duties with joy. Joyful pastors and people are always going to be better stewards of the Gospel!

Outside the church this interdependent stewardship is on display as well. Romans 13 highlights the respect necessary for the governing authorities. As citizens, the faithful steward is called to pay taxes (Matthew 22), pray for their leaders (1 Timothy 2) and that they should be ready to serve in the civil realm (Titus 3), because they are in these positions by God's direction (1 Peter 2).

These steward duties are in the home too! 1 Peter 3 and Colossians 3 shape the husband steward. Ephesians 5 and 1 Peter 3 shape the wife steward. Ephesians 6 form parental stewards and child stewards.

The Table of Duties is a wonderful place for the individual steward to learn how much our stewardship is more than just a "me and Jesus' thing!" In fact, it ends with these words: "Let each his lesson learn with care, and all the household well share fare." This is interdependent stewardship on clear display. As each learns stewardship in this way, the more faithful we will be as a family, congregations, communities and the church at large.



Week of February 1-7

Sun, Feb 1, 8:30 am Divine Service
Sun, Feb 1, 9:40 am Fellowship
Sun, Feb 1, 10:00 am Bible Study

Week of February 8-14

Sun, Feb 8, 8:30 am Divine Service
Sun, Feb 8, 9:40 am Fellowship
Sun, Feb 8, 10:00 am Bible Study

Week of February 15-21

Sun, Feb 15 8:30 am Divine Service
Sun, Feb 15 9:40 am Fellowship
Sun, Feb 15 10:00 am Bible Study
Wed, Feb 18, 6:30 pm Ash Wednesday Service
Sat, Feb 21, 10:00 am Ladies Aid Meeting

Week of February 22-28

Sun, Feb 22, 8:30 am Divine Service
Sun, Feb 22, 9:40 am Fellowship
Sun, Feb 22, 10:00 am Bible Study
Wed, Feb 25, 6:30 pm Lenten Midweek Service

February Birthdays

05 Michael Collins
09 Angela Pruett
12 Lisa Cruz
13 Hattie Bingenheimer



February Baptismal Anniversaries

08 Victoria Fox
11 Jonathan Gernenz

February Wedding Anniversaries

19 Al & Ann Gernenz

Ash Wednesday



This year Ash Wednesday falls on **Wednesday, February 18**. 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.

Lenten Services



Join us for our midweek Evening Prayer services during Lent. These services are held each Wednesday at 6:30 p.m. Come and join us.

Altar Flowers

The 2026 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 a 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

Altar Guild

Please see Ruth Ogden if you would like to join the Altar guild and can devote a couple of hours every third weekend of the month.

Ladies Aid

The meetings are on the third Saturday of each month, and we certainly would like to have you join us at **10:00 am** on **February 21**. Projects for 2026 will be discussed (including if there will be a garage sale this year).

Important Phone Numbers

Church office: 630-759-5300
Pastor Zimmer: 583-880-9532
Deacon: 708-253-3506 (Mark Drevlow)
Head Elder: 630-360-5573 (Scott Collins)
Prayer Chain: 712-584-5301 (Julie Zimmer)
Newsletter info: 630-759-3188 (Karen Moritz)
(items are due February 23)

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

RaiseRight (Manna)

Shop with RaiseRight cards are available throughout the year for everyday expenses and gifts for any special occasion. Next order date is **February 8**. 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

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 2026 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.

2026 Elders

Scott Collins (head elder) Ed Cruz,
Nathan Geschke, Kevin Pape, Dan Rossof
Ron Ruisz, Kelly Stewart

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 (712-584-5301).



**THRIVENT
FINANCIAL®**

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 2025 Choice Dollars to Divine Shepherd, please do so **before March 31 or they are lost.** 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. Choice dollars are used to support various church/member needs. Thanks.

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)*

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)

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