



Our Saviour's Good News

Volume XIV, Issue I

January 2019

MISSION STATEMENT

Our Saviour Lutheran Church welcomes all people to a safe place to grow in faith and serve the Lord Jesus Christ

Inside this issue:

- **Holy Humor** 2
- **Minutes** 3
- **Annual Report Due**
- **January Mission** 4
- **Calendar of Events** 5
- **Worship Assistances**
- **Flower Calendar**
- **A Stewardship Minute** 7
- **New Council Members**
- **Altar Flowers**
- **Church NEWS** 8
- **Outreach**
- **Agape, Lutheridge, Etc.**
- **God Wants You**
- **CLW/Rachel Group**
- **A Tribute To The Bible** 9
- **Navigating by GPS** 10
- **Daily Bible Reading Guide** 11



The Day of Epiphany



On the day we call **The Epiphany of our Lord**, astrologers from the Near East found the world power predicted by their cosmic calculations -- the God-man, Jesus. Were they disappointed at the humble baby shown proudly by working-class parents, Mary and Joseph?

The Day of Epiphany was known in the earliest Christian centuries as the *Feast of the Manifestation*, the *Theophany*, and even as the *Feast of Light*. By the second or third century A.D., Epiphany was observed in the Eastern Church, second only to Easter in importance. The Eastern Church celebrated the fact that God became man more than Jesus' birth date.

Christians in the East may have set the date of Epiphany to replace a popular festival, just as Roman Christians may have done in choosing a date for Christmas. Epiphany became the day to receive new members through baptism who were called *illuminandi* - those who were about to be enlightened by Christ, the **Light of the World**.

The Day of Epiphany is a celebration by us who are not descendants of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, a celebration that hope -- light in the darkness -- is ours too in Jesus Christ, the Lord!

In this way, the Day of the Epiphany opens a season of light -- the Lord's light -- that has entered our lives and helps us see beyond the darkness, and energizes our lives with his work in the world.

Today little is made of the "Old Christmas." the Epiphany revelation of the Saviour. In the western world all our attention goes to the heartwarming scenes of Christmas. Yet, along with our Lord's resurrect

tion on Easter, the Epiphany revelation of God to the people of the world is an equally mind-boggling history-changing event.

Epiphanies of Jesus' Glory. Early Christians celebrated Epiphany by recalling the first times disclosed his glory as the Son of God when:

- foreign magi discovered divine royalty in the baby Jesus (Mt. 2)
- bystanders heard a heavenly voice identify Jesus at his Baptist (Mt. 3)
- guests at a merry wedding party in Cana saw Jesus' power in his miracle (Jn. 2). Today we hear and taste and celebrate the discovery, too.



The Season of EPIPHANY

In Protestant Churches this season extends from January 6th through Transfiguration Sunday, the climactic conclusion of this part of the Church Year.

Some might argue that the Sundays after Epiphany are not really a church season at all, but just sort of a "buffer" between Christmas and Lent. Some even refer to these weeks, with their green paraments, as "ordinary time" as though they are nothing special. But that's not what the church word "ordinary" means. It comes from one of the Latin words for number, to indicate that instead of having names, these Sundays are simply as (continued page 2 - The Season)

THE SEASON from page 1

signed numbers ("the third Sunday of the Epiphany"). The same is done with the "green Sundays" in the long Pentecost season. It seems that names ought to be given to these Sundays (more useful than mere numbers), probably names derived from the Gospel reading for each Sunday. That would make a good classroom exercise week by week.

If Christmastide presented the Son of God as a human infant, and then as a growing child, the readings for Epiphany seem to ask the question, "But who is this really?" The very **first Sunday after the Epiphany** presents God's own answer. At the **Baptism of Jesus**, the voice of God from heaven declares Jesus to be "my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased."

With the authority of the Son of God, then Jesus begins to call disciples, and to teach them and train them. His role as a prophet (today we would probably say preacher) shows up frequently in the Epiphany Gospel readings. Miracles, when they occur, reveal Jesus as one who cares about people's problems -- whether those problems be something like running out of wine at a wedding or serious, even crippling or life-threatening illness-- and is able to do something to deal with those problems.

The **final Sunday in the Epiphany season** celebrates the Transfiguration of our Lord, when Jesus leads his three closest disciples up a mountain, where they see him shining with brilliant light. At the Epiphany season had begun with the voice of God from heaven at Jesus' baptism, proclaiming Jesus to be God's beloved Son, so the season ends with that voice again, with the very same message. If the Christmas season ended by making us wonder, "Who is this baby, really? And what is he going to become?" the time of Epiphany offers a shining response: "This is the Son of God, who speaks God's good word and does God's wonderful deeds." The wise men had it right: This is the One who deserves to be worshiped!

Transfiguration, the last Sunday after the Epiphany, celebrates Jesus' last epiphany in this season and calls for our last alleluias until the resurrection of our Lord on Easter.

**HOLY HUMOR**

A father was approached by his small son who told him proudly, "I know what the Bible means!" — His father smiled and replied, "What do you mean, you know what the Bible means?" — The son replied, "I do know!" "Okay," said his father. "What does the Bible mean?" — "That's easy, Daddy..." the young boy replied excitedly, "*It stands for Basic Information Before Leaving Earth.*"

There was a very gracious lady who was mailing an old family Bible to her brother in another part of the country. — "Is there anything breakable in here?" asked the postal clerk. "*Only the Ten Commandments,*" answered the lady.

Somebody has said there are only two kinds of people in the world: There are those who wake up in the morning and say, "*Good morning, Lord,*" and there are those who wake up in the morning and say, "*Good Lord, it's morning.*"

A minister parked his car in a no-parking zone in a large city because he was short of time and couldn't find a space with a meter. Then he put a note under the windshield wiper that read: "*I have circled the block 10 times. If I don't park here, I'll miss my appointment. Forgive us our trespasses.*" — When he returned, he found a citation from a police officer along with this note "*I've circled this block for 10 years. If I don't give you a ticket I'll lose my job. Lead us not into temptation.*"

There is the story of a pastor who got up one Sunday and announced to his congregation: "*I have good news and bad news. The good news is, we have enough money to pay for our new building program. The bad news is, it's still out there in your pockets.*"

While driving in Pennsylvania, a family caught up to an Amish carriage. The owner of the carriage obviously had a sense of humor, because attached to the back of the carriage was a hand printed sign... "*Energy efficient vehicle: Runs on oats and grass.. Caution: Do not step in exhaust.*"

A Sunday School teacher began her lesson with a question, "Boys and girls, what do we know about God?" A hand shot up in the air. "He is an artist!" said the kindergarten boy. "Really? How do you know?" the teacher asked.. "*You know - Our Father, who does art in Heaven....*"

People want the front of the bus, the back of the church, and the center of attention

Our Saviour Lutheran Church Bill Trudnak, President November 19, 2018 Board Minutes



Devotions: Bill Trudnak

Meeting called to order by President Bill Trudnak

Members present: Bill Trudnak, Melinda White, Jeff White, Alice Vlaservich, Betty Ratchford, Denise Traveria, Steve Digh, Teri Trudnak, Robbie Wooten (Pastor Feige by phone)

Members Absent: Bud Penley

Minutes for October 15, 2018 were reviewed. Betty Ratchford gave a motion to approve the minutes and Alice Vlaservich gave a second

Reception of Petitions and Communications:

Marie Robinson discussed simplifying the worship service in order for substitute organist/visitors to be able to follow the service better. Alice Vlaservich gave a motion to begin studying a simpler service, discussing with Worship Committee and Pastor Feige; Teri Trudnak seconded the motion. The Council will further discuss at next meeting. Marie also discussed a presentation on 4/12/2019 by Chosen People Ministry and our support. The Council would like to research and discuss at the December meeting.

Several Christmas Wish Lists were presented for our congregation to support. Alice Vlaservich made a motion we support Heritage Oaks Assisted Living Center in Gastonia; Denise Traveria gave the second. Details to be placed in the newsletter and bulletin. Deadline for donations to Heritage Oaks is 12/9/2018.

Report of the Pastor: Report was reviewed and discussed. Melinda White made a motion we accept and Robbie Wooten gave the second on that motion. Pastor Feige requested a purchase of a new laptop for church work purposes. Robbie Wooten made a motion we make the purchase and pay for the laptop out of the memorial funds (Margaret Ratchford) and Betty Ratchford seconded that motion.

Report of the Treasurer: Motion by Alice Vlaservich to accept the Treasurer Report and seconded by Betty Ratchford

Report of the Ministries:

Property: A repair company assessed the roof leaks. It was determined it was not the roof shingles, but the gutters and flashing causing the damage. Hence, the gutters and leaks have been repaired. Some ceiling tiles were replaced also due to the water damage.

Stewardship and Finance: Working on 2019 budget

Worship & Music: Preparing for Christmas season, plans to decorate and Hanging of Greens service

Youth Team: No report this month

Witness: Cards and prayers continue to be sent to shut ins

Christian Education Team: No report this month

Report of Auxiliaries: Rachel Circle: Met at the home of Alice Vlaservich for bible study and refreshments, six in attendance. The next meeting will be at the home of Betty Clemmer for a Christmas luncheon.

Old and/or Unfinished Business:

The copier needs replaced. We can no longer get parts for it

and it is over 10 years old. A buy or lease proposal was presented and the Council, after much discussion, decided to purchase a new copier. Steve Digh made a motion we purchase instead of leasing and Robbie Wooten gave a second on the motion. The cost is approximately \$5200.00. Donations will be accepted by the congregation to help offset the unbudgeted item. The remaining balance will be paid from the savings account.

New Business:

The 2019 proposed budget was presented and a motion was made by Melinda White to accept and send for congregational for review and approval on 12/2/108. Alice Vlaservich gave a second on the motion made.

Ballots for new Council members will be distributed on 12/2/2018

A motion was made by Robbie Wooten and seconded by Alice Vlaservich to send a letter to the congregation regarding Christmas gifts for our staff.

General Information:

Kids Alive Report

Attendance

Town of Dallas Water Bill adjusted AGAIN because of water problems and we will receive additional credit on the upcoming bill.

Adjourned with Lord's Prayer

Next Meeting: December 17, 2018

Devotions for December: Melinda White

Next Meeting: December 18, 20167

Devotions: Teri Trudnak



ANNUAL REPORTS

2018 has ended and a New Year as began.

All Team (Committee) Chairpersons please submit your Annual Reports, Scheduled for Team Meeting dates, and Looking Ahead activities, such as: Group Meeting, VBS, Conventions, etc. by Jan. 15, 2019

Thank you!



2018 JANUARY MISSION EMPHASIS

International Fellowship of Christians and Jews

Why and How Should Christians Support and Bless Israel? (from the IFCJ's website)

Christians should look to God's holy word as the voice of truth regarding the problems in the Middle East. What does the voice of Scripture say? Thousands of years ago, God made an eternal covenant decree in which He gave the Promised Land to Abraham and his descendants.

Israel needs to be supported by Christians because all other nations were created by an act of man, but Israel was created by an act of God! The royal land grant that was given to Abraham and his seed through Isaac and Jacob was an everlasting and unconditional covenant. (See Genesis 12:1-3; 13:14-18; 15:1-21; 17:4-8; 22:15-18; 26:1-5; and Psalm 89:28-37.)

The Lord said to Abraham: *And I will establish my covenant between me and thee and thy seed after thee in their generations for an everlasting covenant, to be a God unto thee, and to thy seed after thee. And I will give unto thee, and to thy seed after thee, the land wherein thou art a stranger, all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession; and I will be their God.* (Genesis 17:7-8)

Today, we are witnessing the unfolding of biblical prophecy in the return of the Jewish people to Israel. The Bible foretold Israel's ingathering and also prophesied that God would call "the Gentiles" to help accomplish this miracle.

Thus saith the Lord GOD, Behold, I will lift up mine hand to the Gentiles, and set up my standard to the people: and they shall bring thy sons in their arms, and thy daughters shall be carried upon their shoulders. (Isaiah 49:22)

Genesis 12:1-3 gives the clearest expression to this idea: *Now the LORD had said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will show thee: And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing: And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curse thee: and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed.*

The biblical mandate given to the Gentiles is to relate to Israel and the Jewish people with unconditional love. Christians are called to be a source of solace and comfort to the people of Israel, to be a blessing and to stand in solidarity with them in their times of need.

It is important to also know what Jesus said about the future of Israel and Jerusalem. Jesus said: *And they shall fall by the edge of the sword, and shall be led away captive into all nations: and Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled.*

In this statement, Jesus made predictions about the future of Jerusalem. He predicted the destruction of Jerusalem which came true in 70 A.D. Jesus said His Jewish brethren would be dispersed among the nations. This also came true. The Romans scattered the Jews where they lived among the nations. But the cry of their heart has always been, *L'Shana Ha Ba 'A Birushalayim*—"Next year in Jerusalem."

Also, Jesus said the Gentile nations would dominate Jerusalem, as they have for the past 2,000 years. But Jesus spoke of a distant time when Gentile domination of Jerusalem would come to an end, and the Jews would once again control their ancient city. This prophecy of Jesus was fulfilled in 1967 when Israel took control of biblical Jerusalem and marched directly to the Western Wall, the only remaining wall of the Second Temple.

The Apostle Paul spoke about Christians helping Jews in their time of need. He wrote: *It hath pleased them verily; and their debtors they are, for if the Gentiles have been made partakers of their spiritual things, their duty is also to minister unto them (Jews) in carnal things.* (Romans 15:27)

Our Mission

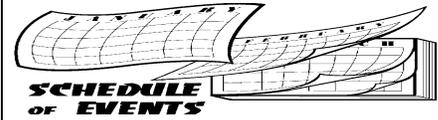
The International Fellowship of Christians and Jews was founded in 1983 to promote understanding and cooperation between Jews and Christians and to build broad support for Israel and other shared concerns. Our vision is that Jews and Christians will reverse their 2,000-year history of discord and replace it with a relationship marked by dialogue, understanding, respect and cooperation.

(Mission cont'd on page 6)

January 2019



Sunday School: 9:45 pm
Church Service: 11:00 pm



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1 It's a New Year!	2	3	4	5
6 Epiphany	7 Team Mtg.	8 Gaston Together	9	10	11	12
13 Baptism Lord	14	15 Prayer Group	16	17	18	19
20 2nd Sun. after Epiphany	21 Board Mtg.	22	23	24	25	26
27 3rd Sun. After Epiphany	28 CLW/Rachel	29	30	31		

- **Jan. 1**— Happy New Year
Circumcision and Name of Jesus
- **Jan. 6**—Epiphany of Our Lord
Install of new Board members.
- **Jan. 7**— Team Meetings: Youth 6:30 pm
Others 7:00 pm
- **Jan 8**—Gaston Together (see p 8)
- **Jan. 13**— Baptism of Our Lord/
1st Sunday after the Epiphany
- **Jan. 15**—**Deadline for Annual Reports**
Prayer Group will meet at Home
of Shirlee Marazza at 1:30 pm
- **Jan. 20**— 2nd Sunday after Epiphany
- **Jan. 21**— Board Meeting
Martin Luther Kings, Jr. birthday observed
- **Jan. 27**— 3rd Sunday after Epiphany
- **Jan. 22**— CLW/Rachel Group

FOOD FOR THE MONTH: **Pork & Beans, Pinto Beans, Soup**



Choir practice each
Wednesday at 5:00 pm
unless otherwise announced

the bulletin



Birthdays

- 8 Shirlee Marazza
- 15 Mariel Schmideler
- 16 Brett Lowery
- 19 Ashley Holland
- 20 Noelle S. Agrew
- 25 Chris Messick
- 26 Carson Dease
- 31 Allison Murray



- Doyle Clemmer
- Bud Penley
- Shana Dease
- Sarah Wooten



Holy Communion Schedule:

Jan. 6: Epiphany of Our Lord

Worship Service Assistance:

Acolyte: Nick Vlaservich

Communion

Asst: Ryan Gordy

Lay Reader: Keenan Pfeiffer

Worship Asst: Nick Vlaservich

Greeters: OSLC Members

Ushers: OSLC Members

Collection: Yvonne Finger

Devotion: Robbie Wooten

FLOWERS

Flower Schedule:

- Jan. 6 Brady & Betty Ratchford
- Jan. 13 Nick & Alice Vlaservich
- Jan. 20 Brady & Betty Ratchford
- Jan. 27 Carlos & Denise Traveria

Please sign up to place flowers on the
altar in the glory of God
and
in honor or memory of your love ones.

Plenty of opening
Please sign up and help
Decorate the altar of our Lord



ANNIVERSARIES

- 19thBrady and Betty Ratchford
- 23rdBryan and Jill Petzold

(Mission cont'd on page 4)

Based in Chicago and Jerusalem, *The Fellowship* operates under the leadership of Rabbi Yechiel Eckstein, and is governed by an independent board of directors, people from both faith groups who share our strong belief in building bridges between the Christian and Jewish communities.

Projects

GUARDIANS OF ISRAEL provides food, clothing, shelter, housing and other urgent needs for all Israelis, who are suffering due to poverty, terrorism and war.

ISAIAH 58 provides children and elderly Jews in the former Soviet Union with food, clothing, heating, and other necessities by funding humanitarian programs in the FSU.

ON WINGS OF EAGLES helps Jews make aliyah (immigrate to Israel) from around the world, and helps them with their klitah (resettlement) needs once they arrive in the Holy Land.

- ***Aliyah***
- ***Klitah (resettlement assistance)***
- **Youth Movements Program**
- **Spiritual Center**

STAND FOR ISRAEL aims to engage people both spiritually and politically on behalf of Israel and the Jewish people by encouraging prayer for Israel and teaching others to advocate for the Jewish state.



A Light to the Nations

A Stewardship Minute

At worship services we hear about being good stewards. We are reminded that everything we have ultimately came because of God. God created us; body, mind, and spirit. Our talents, creativity and achievements are all God-given. We have possessions because God has given us the ability to obtain them. Not to be overlooked is the time God gives us to live on earth, which is a theme in this month's Stewardship. The article makes the point that our time is a sacred trust from God as long as we live. St. Paul makes that point in his letter to the Ephesians: "Be careful then how you live, not as unwise people, but as wise, making the most of the

time..." (Ephesians 5:15-16). Christian stewards are those who make the most of the time that they have. In short, we are called to spend our time responsibly, using our talents to serve the Lord in whatever way we can.

Some years ago a brilliant Englishman named Malcolm Muggeridge, who for years used his mental and spiritual powers wastefully, wrote a book called *Chronicles of a Wasted Life*, in which he told of his foolish living. A wasted life! How sad. Fortunately, in his later years he became a dedicated Christian and went to India where he detailed the wonderful service of Mother Teresa in a book called *Something Beautiful for God*. That, of course, was Mother Teresa's goal: to be something beautiful for

God.

What if we were such steadfast servants of God that we used our time profitably in service to God whatever our occupation happened to be?

Imagine what a world that would be!
Prayer: Lord, give us the courage to make our lives beautiful for you. Amen.



Altar Flowers

NEW FLOWERS CALENDER FOR THE CHURCH is posted on the first door in the hallway of the Education wing. Please sign up to place flowers on the altar in the glory of God and in honor or memory of your loved ones. You can then take them home with you or give them to one of our shut ins-



Congratulations to
Joe Finger
Teri Trudnak (2nd term)
 They will be sworn in on January 6, 2019

They were newly elected to the Church Council.

Thank you for serving
Bud Penley and Teri Trudnak (1st term) for serving on the Board.



Church News



GASTON TOGETHER'S CLERGY & CITIZENS COALITION

January 8
8:30 to 10:00 am
Clinton Room, Gaston Memorial Hospital

OUTREACH MISSION

SHUT-INS NURSING HOME RESIDENTS

Please remember our church members who are shut-ins or reside in a nursing home* and visit them.

Marilyn Finger
1150 Meadow Way Dr., Dallas

Jerri Presley
2604 Ole Home Trail, Dallas
(If others, please let the church office know)

EVENTS for:

Agrape/Kure Beach

Contact Camp Agapé:
Telephone: 919-552-9421
e-mail: agape@agapekurebeach.org

Contact Kure Beach Lutheran:
Telephone 910-458-0783
e-mail: kurebreach@agapekurebeach.org

Web site: www.agapekurebeach.org

Directions to Camp Agapé are on the web site.

Please see calendars and other information on the bulletin board or go on-line

Events for:

Lutheridge -Lutherock-Lutherspring- Lutheranch

Web site: www.NovusWay.com

If you need a Pastor, please contact Pastor Pete Feige at 704-516-2805 or our office at 704-922-4648. Check out our website at oslc-nc.org or email us at oslcdallas@aol.com.



CLWRACHEL GROUP

WILL BE MEETING IN THE TBA
on January 28, 2019 AT 1:30 PM

LET US PRAY... "Are any among you suffering? They should pray...The prayer of faith will save the sick, and the Lord will raise them up." (James 5:13-15)



MARGARET Addington (Brady Ratchford's sister and friends of the community), VELMA Amling (cancer-friend of Ryan Gordy & Keenan Pfeiffer), SUSAN Aderholt, SETH Alexander, AMANDA (friend of the Penley's), MARVIS Anderson, KELLY Ballard (friend of Shana Dease), BRAXTON Bearden (friend of the Locketts), ADDISON Blanton (friend of Dease's), KATHY Bohanan (cancer), KAREN Brady, HARDY Feige (Pete's dad – chronic back pain), JOE Glenn (Melinda White's father), JASON Hames (friend of the White's) DANA Kirshman (friend of Robbie Wooten-cancer), ROBERT L. McCanless, Jr. (failing health - Charles McCanless' father), GARY Neal, (friend of Caleb Dease), MARY O'Shea (co-worker of Melinda White's). EDITH Paysour, LAWRENCE Paysour (friend of Ratchford's), RIVER Peedin (Ursela Peedin's great-grandson– leukemia), JANICE and JOHNNY Pendleton (grandparents of Raygan Carpenter – Janice has strokes), KEENAN Pfeifer (hip replacement), SONDRRA Phillips (friend of Melinda White), JERRIE Presley, GARY Turner (father of Jason Murray), KELLY Walters (mother of Brie Murray), MELINDA White, ANNE White (niece of Betty Ratchford-breast cancer), NANCY Wilson (neck and foot). MARY Wooten (Sara's great-grandmother and Rosalee's great-great grandmother)



GOD WANTS YOU!

- God wants you to participate in His worship service for **2019** by servicing as a worship assistant as a Communion Assistant, Crucifer, Acolyte, Lay Reader, Worship Assistant, Greeter or Usher
See the sign up sheet on the bulletin board and please help.
- New Flower Calendar is up. Please remember your love ones and also help decorate our Lord's altar. **Cost of Flowers: \$35.10**

A TRIBUTE TO THE BIBLE

God's Word as the traveler's map, the pilot's compass, the pilgrim's staff, the believer's log.

The Bible contains light to direct you, comfort to console you, food to sustain you, wisdom to teach you, fire to warm you.

***THIS BOOK REVEALS THE MIND OF GOD,
THE STATE OF MAN,
THE WAY OF SALVATION.***

Its author is God.
Its writers were men.
It is infallibly inspired.

Here heaven opens.
Paradise is restored,
Hell's gates are disclosed.

It is given you in life,
Opened in judgement,
And will endure forever.

Its histories are true,
Its doctrines are holy,
Its precepts binding.

It is a mine of wealth,
A river of pleasure,
A paradise of glory.

Read it thoughtfully,
Read it frequently,
Read it prayerfully.

God's glory is the end,
The Lord Jesus Christ
Is its wonderful object
And our good is design

Read it to be wise,
Believe it to be safe,
Practice it to be holy,
Memorize it to grow.

God's Word Is . . .

LIGHT: *Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path.* Psalm 119:105

SEED: *The seed is the word of God.* Luke 8:11

BREAD..... *know that man does not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of the Lord doth man live.*

MILK: *As newborn babies, desire he sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby.* 1 Peter 2:2

MEAT: *But strong meat belongeth to them that are of full age.* Hebrews 5:14

GOLD: *More to be desired are they than gold.* Psalm 19:10_a

HONEY: *Sweeter also than honey and the honeycomb.* Psalm 19:10_b

SWORD: *For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword.* Hebrews 4:12

FIRE: *Is not my word like as fire saith the Lord.* Jeremiah 23:29_b

HAMMER *and like a hammer that breaketh the rock in pieces?* Jeremiah 23:29_b



GO OUT ON A LIMB

GET INVOLVED

BE A WORSHIP ASSISTANT

A positions are still open. Participate in the service of the Lord and sign up.

Sign up sheets
for the 2019 calendar year are in the

JANUARY — Epiphany — Navigating by GPS

When they had heard the king, they set out; and there, ahead of them, went the star that they had seen at its rising, until it stopped over the place where the child was. — Matthew 2:9

In the church of Jesus Christ we do our work by starlight.

The wise foreigners in the story of Jesus' birth found their way to the Messiah by following a mysterious light that guided them through unfamiliar territory. They navigated by GPS — God's Peculiar Star. It was a surprising, uncommon, traveling star. It appeared out of nowhere, but somehow they knew it was a sign from God. It led them to a peculiar place where they found a peculiar scene: a poor child in a manger who was King of the universe, Son of God, Prince of Peace, and Savior of the world. The Bible tells us that they were "overwhelmed with joy" as they bowed to worship him.

Leaders in the church are servants who allow themselves to be guided by God's mysterious starlight through unfamiliar territory to the places where Christ is revealed. As we move through the darkness of uncertainty, or conflict, or puzzling change, we know that we are headed in the right direction as long as we follow God's light. We never lose faith, even when the destination seems a bit peculiar. The manger and the cross are not treasures in the eyes of the world, yet in God's grace we know that these peculiar gifts come to us bearing eternal life.

God's guiding starlight is still everywhere in the church and the world. It glistens in the water of Baptism, illumines the bread and the wine, and shines over places of poverty and hopelessness where Jesus lives among the poor. By this light, miracles happen, wounds are healed, the hungry are fed, prayer is answered, leaders are raised up, and reconciliation overcomes hatred.

We can feel the joy grow as we find our way closer and closer to the places where God calls us to be the light of Christ. Even though we were frightened and uncertain as we set out to follow this peculiar light, the overwhelming joy at the end of the journey assures us that it is God who has brought us to this place.

Prayer: God of Grace, we thank you for starlight and peculiar destinations. Guide us by your mysterious light to the places where you want us to serve. Give us the courage to travel in unfamiliar territory, the wisdom to recognize your light, and joy at the end of our journey. Amen.



Daily Bible reading guide from NALC, LCMS and LCC

Reading the Word of God, a daily Bible reading guide, has been prepared for Lutherans to use over the next three years.

The North American Lutheran Church has joined with the Lutheran Church-Canada and the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod to compile a three-year plan of *daily* Bible readings and a year-long series of *weekly* readings on Martin Luther's approach to the Scriptures.

Daily readings

The daily readings are listed on calendars for **2019** and **2020**. The plan provides a guide that will take the reader through the entire Old Testament one time in three years, with the exception of Psalms, which are read twice each year. The New Testament will be read twice in the three years.

A reading from the Old Testament, a psalm (or portion of a psalm) and a reading from the New Testament are assigned for each day. Certain church festivals - Christmas, Easter, Pentecost and so forth - have readings appointed for the specific occasion.

Each month of the Daily Bible Reading Guide will be in the monthly newsletter.

January

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		<i>1</i> <i>Judges 10</i> <i>Ps. 1</i> <i>Acts 15:22-35</i>	<i>2</i> <i>Judges 11:1-27</i> <i>Ps. 2</i> <i>Acts 15:36-16:10</i>	<i>3</i> <i>Judges 11:28-12:7</i> <i>Ps. 3</i> <i>Acts 16:11-24</i>	<i>4</i> <i>Judges 4:12-8-13:8</i> <i>Ps. 4</i> <i>Acts 16:25-40</i>	<i>5</i> <i>Judges 13:9-25</i> <i>Ps. 5</i> <i>Acts 17:1-9</i>
<i>6</i> <i>Epiphany</i> <i>Is. 60:1-6</i> <i>Ps. 72</i> <i>Eph. 3:1-12</i> <i>Matt. 2:1-12</i>	<i>7</i> <i>Judges 14</i> <i>Ps. 6</i> <i>Acts 17:10-21</i>	<i>8</i> <i>Judges 15</i> <i>Ps. 7</i> <i>Acts 17:22-34</i>	<i>9</i> <i>Judges 16:1-14</i> <i>Ps. 8</i> <i>Acts 18:1-17</i>	<i>10</i> <i>Judges 16:15-31</i> <i>Ps. 9</i> <i>Acts 18:18-28</i>	<i>11</i> <i>Judges 17</i> <i>Ps. 10</i> <i>Acts 19:1-20</i>	<i>12</i> <i>Judges 18:1-17</i> <i>Ps. 11</i> <i>Acts 19:11-20</i>
<i>13</i> <i>Judges 18:18-31</i> <i>Ps. 12</i> <i>Acts 19:21-41</i>	<i>14</i> <i>Judges 19</i> <i>Ps. 13</i> <i>Acts 20:1-16</i>	<i>15</i> <i>Judges 20:1-25</i> <i>Ps. 14</i> <i>Acts 20:17-38</i>	<i>16</i> <i>Judges 20:26-48</i> <i>Ps. 15</i> <i>Acts 21:1-16</i>	<i>17</i> <i>Judges 21</i> <i>Ps. 16</i> <i>Acts 21:17-26</i>	<i>18</i> <i>Ruth 1</i> <i>Ps. 17</i> <i>Acts 21:27-36</i>	<i>19</i> <i>Ruth 2:1-16</i> <i>Ps. 18:1-15</i> <i>Acts 10:26-</i>
<i>20</i> <i>Ruth 2:17-3:6</i> <i>Ps. 18:16-30</i> <i>Acts 22:6-21</i>	<i>21</i> <i>Ruth 3:8-4:4</i> <i>Ps. 19</i> <i>Acts 22:22-2</i>	<i>22</i> <i>Ruth 4:5-22</i> <i>Ps. 20</i> <i>Acts 22:30-23:11</i>	<i>23</i> <i>1 Sam. 1:1-20</i> <i>Ps. 21</i> <i>Acts 23:12-22</i>	<i>24</i> <i>1 Sam. 1:21-2:11</i> <i>Ps. 22</i> <i>Acts 23:23-35</i>	<i>25</i> <i>1 Sam. 2:21-26</i> <i>Ps. 23</i> <i>Acts 24 2:1-24</i>	<i>26</i> <i>1 Sam. 2:27-3:21</i> <i>Ps. 24</i> <i>Acts 25:12</i>
<i>27</i> <i>1 Sam. 4</i> <i>Ps. 25</i> <i>Acts 25:13-27</i>	<i>28</i> <i>1 Sam. 5</i> <i>Ps. 26</i> <i>Acts 26:1-11</i>	<i>29</i> <i>1 Sam. 6:1-7:1</i> <i>Ps. 27</i> <i>Acts 26:12-32</i>	<i>30</i> <i>1 Sam. 7:2-17</i> <i>Ps. 28</i> <i>Acts 27:1-12</i>	<i>31</i> <i>1 Sam. 8</i> <i>Ps. 29</i> <i>Acts 27:13-38</i>		



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A New Year
of Giving

January 2019

