

# JANUARY

			1	2	3	4
			HAPPY NEW YEAR! OFFICES CLOSED			
			8	9	10	11
5	6	7	1:30 Ruth Unit 5:30 Worship and BLAST 6:30 6 <sup>th</sup> – 8 <sup>th</sup> Confirmation			
9:30 am Worship with Holy Communion	<i>Epiphany</i> 					
12		14	15	16	17	18
9:30 am Worship	4:30 Faith & Family Stewardship 5:30 Property Committee	9:30 Martha Unit	5:30 Worship and BLAST 6:30 6 <sup>th</sup> – 8 <sup>th</sup> Confirmation	4:30 Finance Committee		
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
9:30 am Worship with Holy Communion		6:00 Church Council Meeting	5:30 Worship and BLAST 6:30 6 <sup>th</sup> – 8 <sup>th</sup> Confirmation			
26	27	28	29	30	31	
9:30 Worship with Holy Communion Annual Meeting Baked Potato Bar following meeting		5:00 Altar Guild	5:30 Worship and BLAST 6:30 6 <sup>th</sup> – 8 <sup>th</sup> Confirmation			
<p><b>Redeemer Lutheran Church</b>            1300 E. Nora St.            Thief River Falls, MN 56701            Phone: 218-681-3390            redeemer@gvtel.com            www.redeemertf.org</p> <p><b>Office Hours:</b>            9:00am-2:00pm            Mon-Fri</p>						

HAVE YOU  
TALKED  
TO GOD  
TODAY?



January 2025

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## Home By Another Way

I love to travel! When I was young most of our trips were from North Dakota to McIntosh, MN to see Grandma White, or out to Kalispell, MT to see mom's parents, the Alton's. Those were long trips – especially to the far side of Montana. We often traveled at night, spreading out sleeping bags in the back of the station wagon (*before seat belts were installed*) so the 4 of us girls would sleep rather than fuss in the daytime heat (*also before air conditioning!*) When dad was driving, having a more analytical, mathematical orientation of his mind, the route was direct. It saved both time and money. Good reasons.



But my mom was more creative in her approach to almost everything! When dad slept, or if we traveled with only mom, we would take the only road out of town, but then she would say, ***“Let's try this road instead!”*** As long as we were going basically the right direction, we knew we would get there – eventually! And we would see many new things along the way.

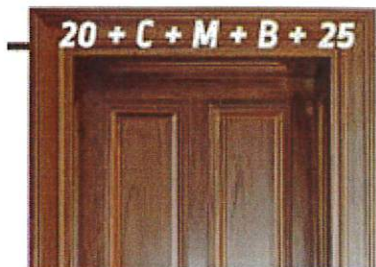


One year, we took a more extended trip – to Norway! While there, we rented an orange VW minivan and the relatives loaned us camping gear. We took two weeks and traveled to connect with other relatives in Sweden and Denmark. We learned so much, met so many people, and had a great time. When time was running short, mom ruled that we would not turn around and go back the way we came.

Instead, we drove onto a ferry boat and sailed up the fjord back to Norway. It was amazing! Water as far as the eye could see and so many cars and trucks on a boat! People speaking so many languages – mostly not English! I was stunned! With beds to sleep, food to eat, and all kinds of things to do that day! My sisters and I were thrilled! ***Overwhelmed with joy!*** Going a different way brought so many new experiences and understanding to this little girl from small town North Dakota!



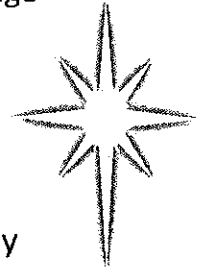
As I write this, we have come to the end of the 12 Days of Christmas, and today is the ***Feast of the Epiphany – January 6***. Many will participate in a ***“Chalking the Door Ritual”*** commemorating the visit of the Magi from the East. It is an invitation for Christ to be present in our homes and our hearts.



It also reminds us that our homes are to be places of welcome, blessing and refuge. As the magi traveled for perhaps years to reach the Infant King – Jesus, they entered the house where Mary, Joseph and Jesus were living by that time in Bethlehem. They were welcomed, encountered Christ Jesus – the Living God, and were blessed – ***overwhelmed with joy!*** (*Matt. 2:10*) Our homes, too are to become places where we can find peace, know Christ, and be known by Christ.

***Epiphany*** means ***“a manifestation of a divine or supernatural being.”*** On Epiphany we give thanks to God that Jesus, Emmanuel – God in the flesh, was born to become Savior of all. That sounds like good news...except in Matthew's gospel we learn that Jesus' birth ***caused fear in King Herod and all of Jerusalem.*** (*Matt. 2:3*) For Herod it looked like a threat – for others it could mean regime change and the danger that goes with it.

“People oppose change for many reasons. They fear the loss of personal power or resources. They are reluctant to shift the way things have always been done. They are concerned about financial, personal, or societal costs. Any of these reactions might have been at work in the royal court.”<sup>i</sup> We see that in our own time and our own lives. The older I get, the less I am eager for things to change – because what I knew growing up is already so different than I expected. Somebody moved the cheese I was going for in the maze!



But fear is not the only way to respond to change! The **magi left everything** when they saw the star rising – they left homes, comfort, security, all they knew! They followed until they neared the capital – Jerusalem. Where else would you look for a king? Trusting only in their own wisdom, they encounter their nemesis – Herod – an earthly king – not the King of all kings. When they left him, the star re-appeared. They again **trusted and followed the greater guidance** – beyond earthly, human wisdom – and finding Jesus, they were **overwhelmed with joy!**

They were not of the same tribe, nationality, religion or customs, yet they were open to being led by God, they were excited for new possibilities, and they were willing expend their time, their resources, their gifts of value – giving all to this new king – and to kneel, submit themselves – reverence and kneel before Jesus.<sup>ii</sup>

***“Having been warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they left for their own country by another road.” (Matt 2:12)***

Encountering Christ – being filled with God’s Holy Spirit, means we are changed. Our lives are transformed by that encounter. Note the story of Saul becoming Paul on the road to Damascus in Acts. Consider the people who have been set free from addictions, diseases, oppressive powers whose lives are completely transformed by the work of God in their lives. As we are baptized, it is not a simply tradition or rite to appease older relatives. It is an encounter with the Living God – who claims us and walks with us – guiding us beyond our wants, our fears, from death into life!

This season of Epiphany invites us to turn – or return by a different road – having been changed by our encounter with Christ. God goes ahead of us as the Holy Spirit opens our eyes to reveal how Jesus is already working in our neighborhoods, our schools and businesses, around our world – perhaps often in ways we are not expecting.

How will you – and we as a church – follow God into the world? Where might we catch sight of Jesus and partner with him in the work God is already doing? How can we worship in service outside our building? How might our own enthusiasm, our *overwhelming joy*, help our more reluctant siblings to experience new ways of seeing and sharing God’s love, forgiveness and grace? How can you invite someone into a space for peace, grace, and love to experience Christ among you?

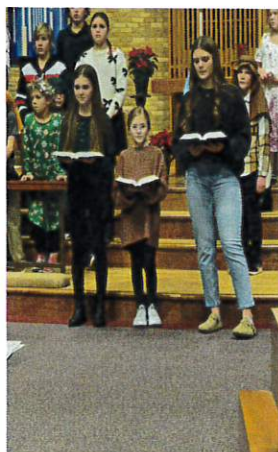
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<sup>i</sup> Gospel Message, Epiphany Day. 1-6-2025. Augsburg Fortress, [www.sundaysandseasons.com](http://www.sundaysandseasons.com)

<sup>ii</sup> Ibid

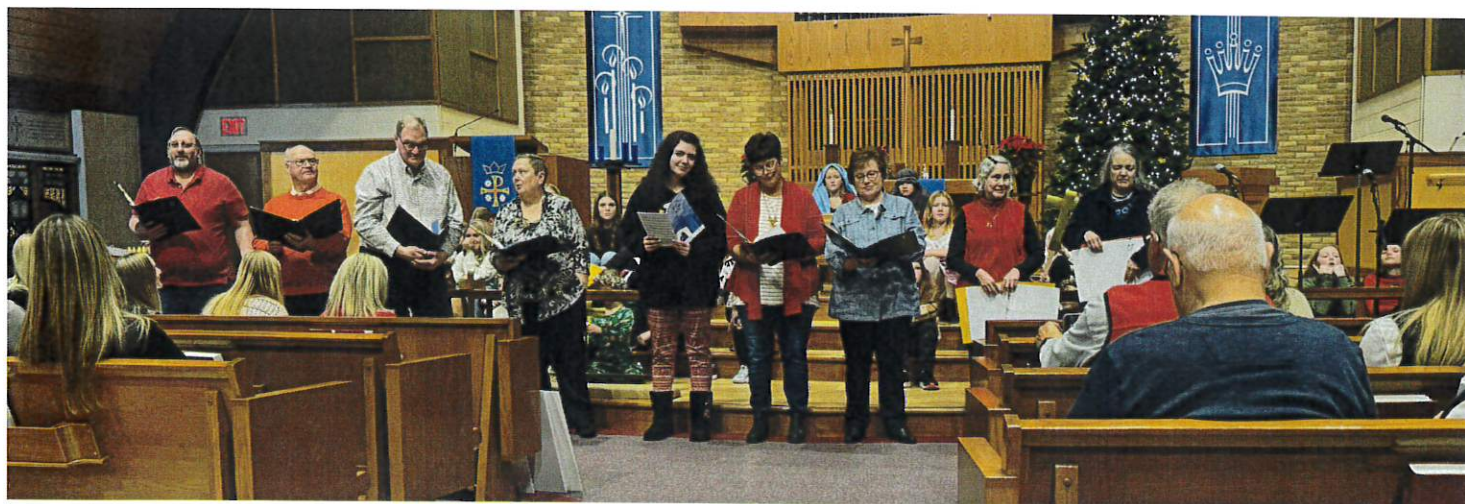


Some of the confirmation student readers...



Presenters of Signs  
of Christmas—BLAST  
students...

Senior Choir





## BLAST & 6th–8th Grade Confirmation Students



Children singing, bells ringing, and choirs singing was the theme of the Christmas presentation this year. Signs of Christmas produced by Diedre Nordin and Kate Anderson.





# 7 Resolutions for Christians

Excerpts from Cally Logan—Author of *The Wallflower That Bloomed*



I found this article on line and found it interesting and helpful. I have recently been struggling with instances on resolution #5 myself. Hope you enjoy—Dianne

## 1. Meditating on God's Word

God has graciously given us His Word to not just read but to dwell in, absorb, and cherish. Many studies will help you to stay on track to read the entire Bible in a year, but remember it is about knowing Him better, not finishing just to check off a box on your to-do list. Consider the words of Psalm 1:2-3: "But his delight is in the law of the LORD, and on his law, he meditates day and night. He is like a tree planted by streams of water that yields its fruit in its season, and its leaf does not wither. In all that he does, he prospers."

When you find your delight, safe haven, and mind set on meditating on God's Word, even if it is but a verse a day, know that it holds value. The Lord often speaks through His Word; through it, you will be reminded again and again of Who He is and of His faithfulness.

## 2. Time Spent Alone with God

Life gets busy, that is an unavoidable fact of life, but there can always be time made for the right things. Ask the Lord to help you find a specific time of day or adjust make time that you hold for God. Be very mindful to not let this time of communing with the Lord to be sullied by passing thoughts or distractions, but rather take a deep breath and give Him your full attention. Even if it is just a few minutes a day, know that those moments are the most important of your entire day. Our time alone with God is where we can listen for His voice, rest in His presence, and connect with Him intentionally.

## 3. Doing a Check on Media Content Consumption

A new year is a great time to check up on the specific media you are consuming. Remember that your eyes and your ears are the doors to your mind. [Matthew 6:22-24](#) shares, "The eye is the lamp of the body. If your eyes are healthy, your whole body will be full of light. But if your eyes are unhealthy, your whole body will be full of darkness."

We may not even realize it because we have become too desensitized to what we watch, listen to, or take part in. Ask yourself if the content you are giving your attention to is full of truth, beauty, or goodness.

## 4. Inviting God into ALL Daily Life

God does not desire to just be a part of your life, but for Him to be your whole life. When we enter a relationship with God, it is not like a relationship with a human being; humans cannot and will not fill all that you need. Only the Lord can do that, so when we live a life truly submitted and surrendered to Him, we see that He is not just a part, but He is the whole of life. [Galatians 5:25](#) paints it as, "Since we are living by the Spirit, let us follow the Spirit's leading in every part of our lives."

God has given us His Holy Spirit to abide within us, to give us truth, and to give us direction for every element of our lives.

## 5. Doing a Heart Check on Unforgiveness

Did you know that holding unforgiveness towards another person keeps you at a distance from God? Not only that, but it allows the Enemy to sneak in and to build in you a bitter state in your very life. [Mark 11:25-26](#) is where Jesus explains, "Whenever you stand praying, if you have anything against anyone, forgive him, that your Father in heaven may also forgive you your trespasses." This can be a very hard thing to do, especially when another person has very wrongly hurt you. Remember that you are not alone in navigating unforgiveness, we can call upon the Lord to help us. [2 Corinthians 12:9](#) reminds us that, "My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness."

When we give God our weakness, struggles, and fear of what it would mean to forgive someone, we are met with His supernatural power to help us accomplish this task. It may not be overnight, but keep bringing it to the Lord and ask Him to help you forgive those you need to forgive.

## 6. Praying Ephesians 6 Armor Daily

Something to not just set as a New Year's Resolution, but as a daily practice is to arm yourself with the [Ephesians 6](#) armor of God. [Ephesians 6:10-18](#) details the armor: "Put on the full Armor of God, so that you can take your stand against the devil's schemes."

Make it a daily habit, not just an occasional line of defense, to pray this armor over yourself as you get ready for the day. Ask the Lord to lead you each day in these specific aspects of the armor and to teach your heart what they each mean so that you may testify to others how powerful these verses truly are in application.

## 7. Leaning Not on Your Own Understanding

Finally, make the resolution to not lean on your own understanding. We live in a world where what we can see, touch, and feel defines our choices, our logic, and our trust ultimately. [Proverbs 3:5-6](#) shifts the mindset in offering, "Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways submit to him, and he will make your paths straight."

We may not understand the *why* behind the asks or ways of God, but He knows what is necessary to ultimately bring you to where you are supposed to be. Trust Him and take Him at His Word, even in moments where it feels so countercultural, so outside of our logic, and so against the grain of this world. Know He is worthy of our trust and worthy of our obedience.







# January Birthdays

.....Happy Epiphany!

## January Birthdays –

1 – Suzanne Browning 2 – Hillary Teie, Kenneth Olson 3 – 4 – Brenda Poe, Paul Hejlik 5 – Deb Neimela, Hudson Eidelbes, Liam Mapes 6 – Deb Jacobson, Janelle Nelson 7 – Darlene Newland, Dena Halsa, Tom Goddard, John Azure 8 – 9 – Kaitlyn Sanden, Lois Hejlik, Kim Gilbert, Jayce Olson 10 – Annabelle Cuppett, Kathi Jenkins, Haley Olson, Presleigh Ryba 11 – Sue Bendickson 12 – 13 – Lillian Lund, Javyn Eidelbes 14 – June Johnson, Houston Kirkeide 15 – Sara Johnson, Sharon Odegaard 16 – Kyla Klaven 17 – Greg Dally 18 – Jett Cornelius 19 – Doug Disterhaupt 20 – Angie Westling, Emily McLean 21 – Ashley Borchardt, Kylie Gustafson 22 – Alivia Ann Conely, Skya Wilson 23 – Christi Halbasch, John Bugge, Diane Eggerud, Piper Kezar, Ryan Hible 24 – Taylor Berg, Jeff Gilbert 25 – Larry Forsberg 26 – Zeb Nelson, Cora Hintz 27 – Arlo Johns 28 – Dee Wollenzien, Blake Halbasch, Shawn Sandahl, Livia Thibert 29 – Chris Cuppett 30 – Michaela Myhrer, Emmett Gustafson 31 – Beth Wilson



## Memorials

<i>In Loving Memory of</i>	<i>Fund</i>	<i>From</i>
<i>Ce Jae Forsberg</i>	<i>Undesignated</i>	<i>Ron &amp; Linda Engelstad</i>
<i>Grace Lunsetter</i>	<i>Music</i>	<i>Christi Halbasch</i>
<i>Grace Lunsetter</i>	<i>Music</i>	<i>Nate &amp; Dianne Stroh</i>