



# The Dual-Parish Review

## Message from Pastor

### Ashamed or Redeemed?

*“For whoever is ashamed of Me and of My words in this adulterous and sinful generation, of him will the Son of Man also be ashamed when He comes in the glory of His Father with the holy angels.” – Mark 8:38*

In an era when identity politics is on the rise, there is one identity that remains not acceptable and will not be tolerated in our society: The identity of “Christian”. If you add the appropriate prefixes to that word, like progressive- or liberal- or gay- or socialist-, then you will be celebrated in the world, not for the Christian part, but because those other adjectives, those other “identities”, override everything else. Progressives who use racist language aren’t therefore racist, because “progressive” excuses and even condones such behavior. The same is true for anti-bullying bullies, anti-hate haters, anti-fascist fascists, etc. Whatever sinful behavior you commit will be excused as long as you attach the correct adjectives to it. Just don’t use the word “Christian” by itself, because that means you actually listen to Christ over-against the world, and that kind of independence from society is not tolerated.

Many people are ashamed of Christ and so they refuse to bear His name, even though they were washed by the life-giving waters of Baptism and had the name of the Triune God marked upon their heads and hearts. They refuse to allow the “Christian” part of their identity to be the guiding principle. They remain in rebellion against God and they subordinate their Christian identity to their favorite sins and their other worldly identities. Hence, we have gay-Christians who claim to follow Christ, even while rejecting His revealed Word. For them, Christ Jesus is not really Lord and God. He is a prop for putting on a play, a play in which they are the lead actor, not God. People claim all sorts of false identities, using “Christian” as one more title to gain them acceptance from man, instead of recognizing the One from whom the title derives. Instead of bowing to Him and Him alone.

You may change careers or retire and no longer get to call yourself by your profession, but you will still be a Christian. Your spouse may die and you will no longer be husband or wife, but you will still be “of Christ”. Politics and power rise and fall, but those identities lose their luster over time, until one day you realize that the tarnish isn’t just on the surface, it goes right through to the core. But seeking the Kingdom of God and His righteousness never grows old.

There is only one identity that really matters, one relationship that trumps all others and puts things into their proper perspective: Are you a Christian? A Baptized-by-God, drowned-and-brought-back-to-life, sinful-from-conception-but-redeemed-by-the-blood-of-Jesus-Christian? (How about *those* hyphens?) This is the identity which surpasses all others in this life, and in the life to come. So bear His Name without fear or timidity. You didn’t earn the title He bled for, He did. You just get the benefits of it, now and forever.



Newsletter

2021

**Bethlehem**

**Lutheran Church**

233500 County Road E  
Milan, Wisconsin 54411

**Sunday Worship at 8:00 a.m.**

**Sunday Bible Study at 9:15 a.m.**

**Pastor: Rev. Chad Schopp**

Pastors Office Hours @ BETH.

Mon. 9am-5pm

Pastors Cell: 715-680-8117

Pastors Email:

[cschopp@protonmail.com](mailto:cschopp@protonmail.com)

Office Secretary Email:

[secretary@stjbeth.org](mailto:secretary@stjbeth.org)

**St. John “High Steeple”**

**Lutheran Church**

119415 Huckleberry Road  
Edgar, Wisconsin 54426

**Sunday Worship at 10:30 a.m.**

**Sunday Bible Study at 11:45am**

**Pastor: Rev. Chad Schopp**

Pastors Office Hours: T, W, T, F:

9am to 5pm

Pastors Cell: 715-680-8117

Pastors Email:

[cschopp@protonmail.com](mailto:cschopp@protonmail.com)

Sec. Office Hours: M, T, W, F:

1pm to 4pm

Dual Parish Office:

715-352-2888

Office Secretary Email:

[secretary@stjbethstj.org](mailto:secretary@stjbethstj.org)

Dual Parish Website:

[www.stjbeth.org](http://www.stjbeth.org)

# Liturgy Parts

LCMS Worship

What do the parts of the liturgy mean?

## The Creed

In the course of his earthly ministry, Jesus put this hard question to his disciples, “Who do you say that I am?” He wasn't asking for the opinions of the crowds. He wanted a confession of faith.

In reality, this confession is no different than the confession of sins. In both, we acknowledge that what God has said is true. When we confess our sins, we acknowledge the truth that God speaks about us — that we are sinners. When we confess the faith of the church in the creed, our confession speaks about God — who he is and what he has done.

In every age, the same question is put to the church: who do you say that I am? As we open our mouths and begin, “I believe in God, the Father Almighty ...,” we confess a profound truth that has passed over the lips of Christians in every generation.

This confession of the Triune God is the property of no single individual, but of the whole church, including the whole company of heaven. There are more than a few saints and martyrs who put their lives on the line as they defended the truths that we confess in the creeds.

Think of Athanasius, that faithful fourth-century pastor and confessor, who was exiled numerous times for his defense of

the truth against the false teachers of his day. Or Luther, who stood firm against the combined might of the Roman Church and the Holy Roman Empire.

In our own day, there are faithful Christians who risk their lives — and sometimes die — to confess these truths.

In the Revelation to St. John, we find confession going on in heaven. Just listen to the snippets of the grand confession that swirls around God's throne:

Holy, holy, holy is the Lord God Almighty,  
who was and is and is to come! (4:8b)

Worthy are you, our Lord and God,  
to receive glory and honor and power,  
for you created all things,  
and by your will they existed and were created (4:11).

Worthy are you to take the scroll  
and to open its seals,  
for you were slain, and by your blood you ransomed  
people for God  
from every tribe and language and people and nation,  
and you have made them a kingdom and priests to our  
God,  
and they shall reign on the earth (5:9-10).

In the same way, as we stand on holy ground where Jesus comes in his Word and Sacraments, we join that noble company of saints and martyrs, confessing these holy truths concerning the Triune God.

## Agnus Day by James Wetzstein

## Mark 9: 2-9



Agnus Day appears with the permission of [www.agnusday.org](http://www.agnusday.org)

**BIBLE PASSAGE** — Six days later, Jesus took with him Peter and James and John, and led them up a high mountain apart, by themselves. And he was transfigured before them, and his clothes became dazzling white, such as no one on earth could bleach them. And there appeared to them Elijah with Moses, who were talking with Jesus. Then Peter said to Jesus, “Rabbi, it is good for us to be here; let us make three dwellings, one for you, one for Moses, and one for Elijah.” He did not know what to say, for they were terrified. Then a cloud overshadowed them, and from the cloud there came a voice, “This is my Son, the Beloved; listen to him!” Suddenly when they looked around, they saw no one with them any more, but only Jesus. — The Transfiguration of Our Lord

Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

In recent weeks, I have received a number of inquiries from concerned members of the Synod about the COVID-19 vaccines, as they seek to maintain their support for the sanctity of life and for religious freedom. These questions have come not in the interests of politicizing the matter, but out of sincere Christian moral convictions. Having consulted with our district presidents and other agencies of the Synod, I requested that the staff of the Commission on Theology and Church Relations, in collaboration with the Office of National Mission's Life Ministry, draft "[The LCMS and COVID-19 Vaccines: Facts and Considerations](#)" document is available online at [lcms.org/doc/covid19-vaccines-fact-sheet](https://lcms.org/doc/covid19-vaccines-fact-sheet). On the basis of this counsel, let me address a few of your most pressing questions.

**1) Are COVID-19 vaccines related to abortion?** The science regarding this is complex. The two vaccines currently approved by the FDA — Pfizer/BioNTech and Moderna — were not designed, developed or produced using cell lines derived from aborted human fetal tissue. Other vaccine candidates — including the UK-approved Oxford/AstraZeneca — did use human fetal tissue, however. The Pfizer/BioNTech and Moderna vaccines did perform laboratory tests using cells derived from abortions (one from 1972 and another from 1985) to confirm the final vaccine quality (as, surprisingly, do many other commonly used medications and vaccines). For more information on how the COVID-19 vaccines relate to abortion, I encourage you to consult the website of the [pro-life bioethicists at the Charlotte Lozier Institute](#) and the list they maintain there. According to their assessment, neither the Pfizer/BioNTech nor Moderna vaccines contain any substance derived from aborted human fetal cells.

**2) Does the Synod have a position on the reception of vaccines using human fetal tissue?** The Synod does not have an official position on such vaccines at this time. Official decisions of this nature come through the Synod acting in convention, and no convention action has yet been taken. However, our church body remains firmly committed to the sanctity of life, and we continually seek to advocate for pro-life positions in the public square.

**3) Can I obtain a religious exemption for the COVID-19 vaccine?** Religious or personal belief exemptions are based on conscientious objection and do not require official support from the denomination. The absence of an official Synod stance does not impact your ability to seek an exemption. Please consult your local lawmakers or public health officials for more information on how to proceed should the need arise.

**4) Should I take the COVID-19 vaccine?** This is a question only you can answer. Some may choose not to take the vaccine because of concerns over its relation to abortion or fear of possible health complications. Others may take it in spite of such reservations out of concern for their own health or that of their neighbor. Since neither Scripture nor the Synod has explicitly addressed this issue, it remains a matter of Christian freedom where you must choose according to your individual conscience.

**5) How should I talk about the vaccine with others who disagree with my view of it?** In a sensitive issue of this nature, we remember the words of St. James: "Let every person be quick to hear, slow to speak, slow to anger" (James 1:19). Listen carefully and openly to the points of others. Consider them. Share your positions patiently and objectively. Reflect upon your own penchant for error. Forgive others where they sin against you and ask for forgiveness where you wrong them.

In this contentious issue, we must respect the consciences of fellow believers who share our same commitment to Scripture and the Lutheran Confessions, as well as our life together as a Synod. As St. Paul urges us regarding matters of conscience, "let no one seek his own good, but the good of his neighbor" (1 Cor. 10:24), and "let us not pass judgment on one another any longer, but rather decide never to put a stumbling block or hindrance in the way of a brother" (Rom. 14:13). At a time of cultural upheaval, I would encourage you not to allow disagreement even over undoubtedly important matters such as this to take precedence over the faith that unites us in Christ. In all things, we should heed the call to "maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace" (Eph. 4:3).

[Please study the document linked here.](#) It provides a summary of what we know about the COVID-19 vaccines, their relation to the issue of abortion, and what we can (and cannot) say about these matters from the Synod's perspective. I hope it proves useful to you as you wrestle with how to bear Christian witness in this world through your love of both God and neighbor.

"Now may the God of peace who brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, the great shepherd of the sheep, by the blood of the eternal covenant, equip you with everything good that you may do his will, working in us that which is pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory forever and ever. Amen" (Heb. 13:20–21).

**PS:** "The LCMS and COVID-19 Vaccines: Facts and Considerations" document is available online at [lcms.org/doc/covid19-vaccines-fact-sheet](https://lcms.org/doc/covid19-vaccines-fact-sheet).

## St. John Church Council Minutes

Church Council Minutes

January 12, 2021

7pm

The meeting was called to order by Doug Brown and Pastor Schopp opened with prayer. Attending were Mike Thompson, Jeff Werner, Pastor Schopp, Kay Christiansen, Doug Brown, Ronda Durkee, and Sharon Niemann.

Pastor gave his report and the funeral for Daniel Morien was on 12/19/20. Transfer of Raymond Yessa to Bethlehem, Milan. His visitations are continuing where there are allowances for them. Records of the church attendance needs to be filled out in the pew books at the regular services.

Confirmand church attendance is a concern and the elders are working with Pastor to resolve this problem.

Christian Foundations Class will begin on Thursday Feb. 11 at 6pm. Invitations will be available for distribution shortly. Members are encouraged to attend with their friends.

Ash Wednesday services are Feb. 17<sup>th</sup> 1:30 at St. John and 7:30 at Bethlehem.

Elders had nothing new to report.

Outreach reported that the recent blood drive was a success with 26 donations. The next one is planned for February 27<sup>th</sup>. Planning for a billboard proclaiming the Lutherans for Life message is in the works. We have an offer from Bethlehem, Milan to share in the costs. Work continues to gain approval for a church identification sign along highway 97.

Board of Education is continuing with the Sunday School food drive for the Edgar Food Pantry. Milestone books and Bibles will be given on February 17<sup>th</sup> during church.

Treasurer report shows that all bills are currently paid. We do owe the Special and Restricted Funds portion of our treasury \$9594. This is the negative balance for the start of year 2021.

Finance Committee is currently needing one more person. The work load for each Sunday is greatly reduced now that more of the members have gone to e-giving. If anyone is available to work this position please see Jeff Werner.

Trustees are working on putting new LED cannister lights in the narthex entrance. The current ones are leaking and the LED will save electricity. The 2020 electric use has decreased significantly with the LED being used in the church and parsonage.

Motion was made to accept all reports.

No old business.

Reminders came from the church office that annual reports are due in the church office before the end of the month. These should tell the story of the work your group has done this past year.

Also Sunday, Jan. 17 is voters' meeting and any copies or overhead materials need to be in the office well ahead of the meeting.

Meeting closed with the Lord's Prayer

Respectfully submitted by Sharon Niemann

## Bethlehem

### Birthdays

Bernt, Graecyn	2/03
Strack, Robert	2/03
Kosik, Kevin	2/09
Penk, Jill	2/12
Venzke, Rick	2/12
Bender, Braison	2/15
Venzke, Brian	2/17
Schwarting, Delbert	2/20
Venzke, Wanda	2/20
Strack, Maria (Kena)	2/28

### Anniversaries

Kevin & Beth Kosik	2/14
Daniel & Jane Becker	2/17

## St. John

### Birthdays

Martens, Virgene	2/01
Miessner, Selma	2/02
Syring, Arabella	2/04
Thompson, Cassidy	2/05
Reis, Jared	2/08
Mueller, Greg	2/09
Syring, Randall	2/12
Murkowski, Char	2/16
Werner, Eunice	2/20
Schneider, Cathy	2/21
Wolff, Miriam	2/28

### Anniversaries

Dan & Sue Gehrke	2/01
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## In loving memory

A Memorial was given in memory of Gen Bandle.

## Funeral

Daniel Morien Dec. 19, 2020

## Transfer Membership

Raymond & Samantha Yessa to Bethlehem from St. John

## Remember in our Prayers

Dorothy Sprotte	BETH
Elizabeth Kirchner	BETH
Megan Nuemann	BETH
Ruben Schafer	BETH
Shirley Buss	BETH
Doris Bornowski	STJ
Mary Hamann	STJ

## All

**Christian Foundation Class at St. John:** Starts on Thursday, February 11 to April 15, 2021 and begins at 6pm. Each session is 90 minutes. This is a 10 week course on the basics of the Christian Faith. The class is free, nor is there any obligation to join. We have printed invitations if you know of someone looking for a church home, or if they would like to become members, or if you just want a refresher and are looking to take your faith and piety up a notch.

Please RSVP with the Dual Parish Office by email to secretary@stjbeth.org or by phone at 715-352-2888

**Lent 2021** - Ash Wednesday & Mid Week Lenten Services begin on Wednesday, February 17.

**Times of Services Are:** St. John at 1:30pm and Bethlehem at 7:30pm.

**“Return to the Lord” Daily Devotional books for Lent:** “Return to the LORD your God, for He is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love; and He relents over disaster” (Joel 2:13). God’s invitation and promise finds its fullness in Jesus Christ, who personified and accomplishes all that God declares. Follow different events during the Passion, specifically focusing on the people that followed Christ, to see how God calls His people to return to Him this Lenten season. We will be handing out this devotional book to each family to each family as well as a Lenten Family Calendar for the Children.

**The “Lutheran Hour”** has been broadcast for over 90 years. Many of our members support this ministry. Each month in the Record Review the broadcasts are listed along with other opportunities for hearing the gospel.

On Sunday, February 7<sup>th</sup> we want to collect an offering for the Lutheran Hour Ministry. Sub sandwiches will be available at both churches for a fee will offering. If you wish to order early, order blanks are available in the narthex area at both churches, or you can call the church office to order.

**STJ Blood Drive:** Outreach reported that the recent blood drive was a success with 26 donations. The next one is planned for February 27<sup>th</sup>. We plan to sponsor a blood drive every eight weeks if possible. Appointments preferred call 877-232-4373.

## Christmas and Epiphany Food Pantry Drive



Sorting and packing up your generous donations for the food drive to be distributed to the three local food pantries, Edgar, Athens, and Stratford.

Thank you to all who helped and the Sunday School children who shopped from a list. We bought the items with money left from the Christmas treat bags.

Blessings from the St. John Sunday



## Life Ministry Announces Virtual Life Conference

LCMS Life Ministry will host its first-ever virtual life conference March 19–20, under the theme “Making Disciples: Valuing Life.” Registration is open now.

“This conference is for everyone,” explains Life Ministry Director Deaconess Tiffany Manor. “The pandemic constraints have given us an opportunity to share presentations by many experts with students of all ages, missionaries, church workers and congregation members who couldn’t make it to previous in-person events.” And that includes you!

Conference sessions will help you explore a distinctly Lutheran understanding of the sanctity of human life, specifically as it pertains to:

- Speaking for life in the public square;
- Caring for life in your community; and
- Teaching about human life.

Hear from theologians and human care advocates, including LCMS President Rev. Dr. Matthew C. Harrison, Focus on the Family Vice President of External and Government Relations Timothy Goeglein, and Deaconess Manor.

Explore a variety of life topics for participants of all ages, with your family, congregation or on your own. A Spanish track — with sessions offered in the language — will be available as well.

“More than ever we need to be focused on the truth of our triune God’s value of all human life no matter a person’s stage of development or abilities,” Manor notes.

Join in:

- Access the conference by livestreaming, watching on-demand videos and engaging with speakers through question-and-answer opportunities.
- Register individually, or as groups of 10 for a group registration discount. (Consider gathering a group at a local congregation to stream the conference together.)

To register for the conference or learn more information, visit [lcms-life.org](https://lcms-life.org)

**Giving**   
**WARMES THE HEART**  
**Saturday**  
**DONATE BLOOD**

**Wednesday**  
**February**  
**27**

**Helpful tip:**  
Make sure to eat a healthy meal and drink plenty of water before donating.

**St. John Lutheran Church**  
119415 Huckleberry St. Edgar

The SARS COV-2 antibody test, AKA COVID-19 Antibody Test (CAT), will be performed on all blood donations as part of our standard testing

APPOINTMENTS PREFERRED

Call 877-232-4373 or visit [https://donate.wisconsin.versiti.org/donor/schedules/drive\\_schedule/212360](https://donate.wisconsin.versiti.org/donor/schedules/drive_schedule/212360)

MORE INFORMATION

Contact Cathy Schneider at 715-687-3227



**Grain Train School Kits:** The L.L.L. and St. John Sunday School are collecting items for School Kits. The list has changed, so we have made sheets of paper with the list of items needed, for you to take with you. They are available in the Narthex area. St. John is a packing station for the Orphan Grain Train school kits. We will be using one of the unused Sunday school classrooms.

### Orphan Grain Train School Kits

- |                                 |                     |
|---------------------------------|---------------------|
| 1 Back Pack                     | 2 Spiral Note Books |
| Ruler                           | Scissors            |
| 2 Pencils                       | 2 Glue Sticks       |
| Crayons (24 pack)               |                     |
| Washable markers (8 or 10 Pack) |                     |
| 10 Sheets of construction paper |                     |





# Lutheran Hour Sermon Schedule

## February 7

### "Stories Around the Table"

Speaker: Rev. Dr. Michael Zeigler  
Dr. Michael Zeigler shares a story about people who had more in common than they thought.  
(Mark 6-8)

## February 14

### "Shines and Saves"

Guest Speaker: Rev. Cody Cooper  
Jesus surpasses all expectations as we see Him revealed on the Mount of Transfiguration.  
(Mark 9:2-13)

## February 21

### "Do You See Anything?"

Speaker: Rev. Dr. Michael Zeigler (Mark)

## February 28

### "TBD"

Speaker: Rev. Dr. Michael Zeigler (Mark)

## Lutheran Hour Radio Broadcasts

Lutheran Hour Ministries ~ God has called all laypeople to be powerful witnesses for Christ to their families and communities. At LHM, we strive to create convenient ways for you to connect with Jesus and share your faith with others. Our products are free, easy, and digital so that you can use them in your home, on-the-go, or wherever you may be.

In this time of uncertainty, don't find yourself feeling isolated. HE is always with you! Discover FREE resources for your entire household and continue enriching your faith even when we can't gather together. Visit [lhm.org/covid-19](http://lhm.org/covid-19) and explore all of the ways you can hear God's Word, equip yourself in outreach, and provide Gospel-centered activities for the kids!

Station	City, State	Freq.	Day	Time
WDLB	Marshfield, WI	1450 AM	Sun	8:00am
WRVM	Marshfield, WI	91.3 FM	Sun	10:00am
WRVM	Medford, WI	98.7 FM	Sun	10:00am
WRVM	Wausau, WI	101.3 FM	Sun	10:00am
WSAU	Wausau, WI	550 AM	Sun	8:30am
WSAU	Wausau, WI	99.9 FM	Sun	8:30am
WAXX	Altoona, WI	104.5 FM	Sun	6:30am

You can also go on line at [www...lhm.org](http://www...lhm.org) or download the free App @ [LHM.ORG/APPS](http://LHM.ORG/APPS)

## Internet Resources:

Worship Anew is an online ministry put out by Concordia Theological Seminary, Fort Wayne available to view on the Internet. The current week's program can be found on their homepage at [Worshipanew.org/program](http://Worshipanew.org/program).

Moments of Comfort is an online video ministry of Worship Anew which speaks to the sufferings we face in this life with the comforting message of God's Word.

They have a list of archived programs listed on the site.



Issues, Etc. is a ten-hour weekly syndicated radio talk show and podcast.

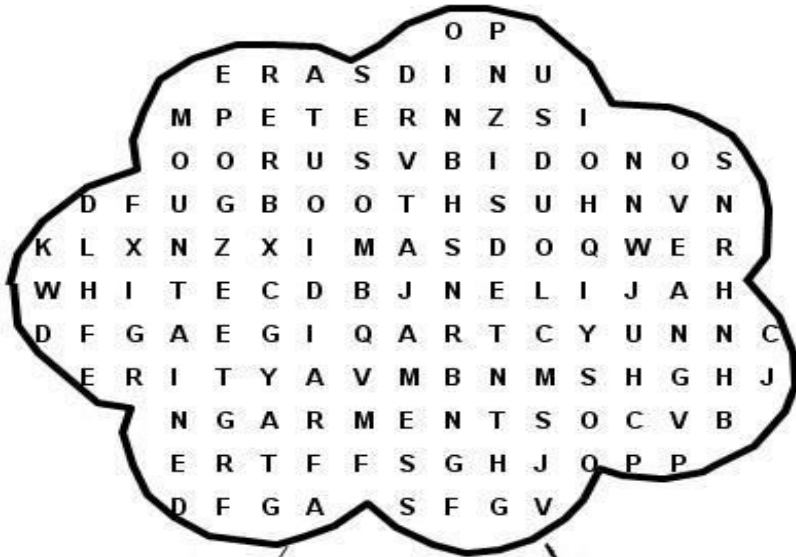
The program features expert guests, expansive topics, while extolling Christ. The program is hosted by Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod Pastor [Todd Wilken](#) and produced by [Jeff Schwarz](#).

# The Transfiguration of Jesus

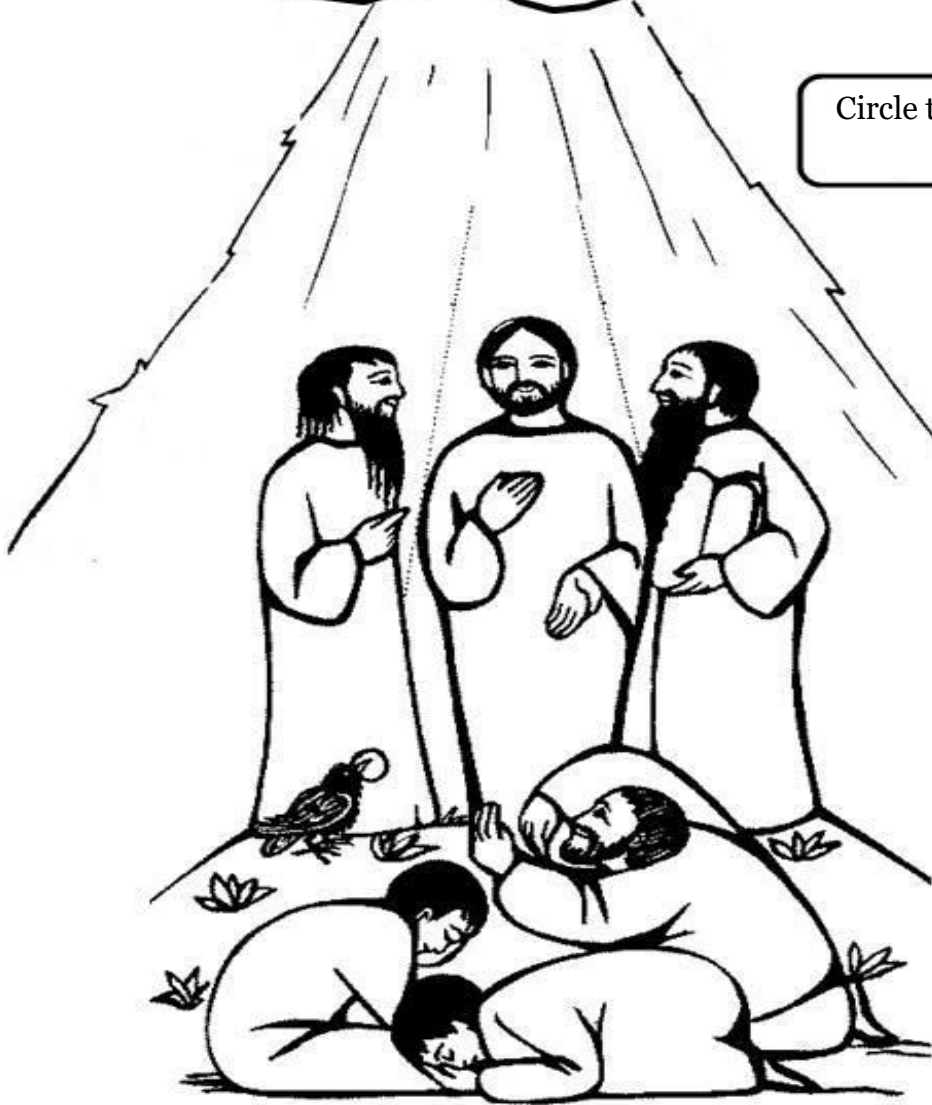
(Mark 9: 2 - 10)



Peter  
James  
John  
Mountain  
Garments  
White  
Elijah  
Moses  
Booths  
Afraid  
Cloud  
Voice  
Son



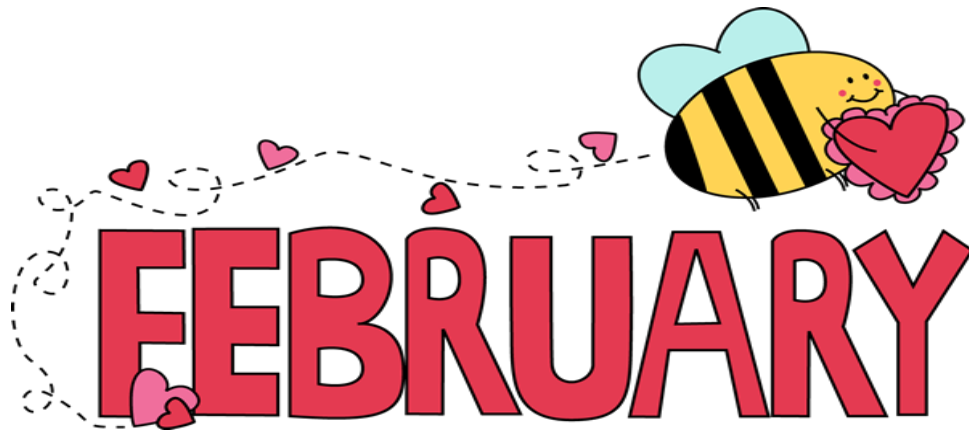
Circle the words in the cloud



and his garments became glistening, intensely white, as no fuller on earth could bleach them (Mark 9: 3).

Mount Tabor





**Bethlehem & St. John Lutheran Churches**  
119415 Huckleberry Road  
Edgar, Wisconsin 54426  
715-352-2888



*Where  
the  
light  
of  
Jesus  
Christ  
Always  
Shines*