



The Dual-Parish Review

Message from Pastor

Members of the Household of God

January 2021

“[Jesus] came and preached peace to you who were far off and peace to those who were near. For through Him we both have access in one Spirit to the Father. So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus Himself being the cornerstone, in whom the whole structure, being joined together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord.” – Ephesians 2:17-21

The start of a new year brings a sense of optimism and energy. We start with a fresh calendar, penciling in birthdays, dentist appointments and other events. We make New Year’s Resolutions to work out more, to eat fewer sweets, to read more books. But the start of 2021 is looking a lot like 2020 and it is easy to become depressed as we face many more months of restrictions on our lives. We thought we were almost done with this but even with the vaccines recently released, the talking heads are saying it could be months or years before we can put COVID-19 behind us.

Despite what the media keeps repeating, 2020 was not the worst year in history. Not even close. We are not witnessing the end of capitalism, the end of America or the end of the world. But we allow our fears to run unchecked and instead of recognizing them, we bury them under anger. Finger-pointing is the new national pastime. Everything is someone else’s fault. We demand that everything be done our way, whether that is more masks and restrictions or none at all, and anyone who disagrees with our opinion is the enemy and must submit.

We are all guilty of this and need to repent. We must never allow politics to seep into the Church. Christ’s kingdom is not of this world and while we honor and obey the civil authorities as much as we can, our first duty is always to God. Intelligent, well-meaning individuals can disagree on things of the Left-Hand Kingdom (the temporal kingdom) and that is okay. They are not your enemy because they have a different idea on local zoning or because they like/dislike a politician sitting in an office in a far-off city. That other person may even like a team other than the Packers and that is okay.

That person with a mask on is not trying to destroy America. That person without a mask on is not trying to kill you. They are both people for whom Christ died. Whether or not someone gets a vaccine will have no bearing on us in church. If that person is with you in church, they are your brother or sister in Christ. This is the relationship that matters; **“You are fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God”** (v.19). This is the starting-point and ending- point of every thought and conversation. They deserve your love and forgiveness just as you deserve theirs. So the Year of our Lord 2021 will be like any other year: It is an opportunity to grow in faith in Christ, to serve your neighbor in humility and to share the Gospel of Jesus far and wide.



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

Office Secretary Email:

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

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

1pm to 4pm

Dual Parish Office:

715-352-2888

Office Secretary Email:

secretary@stjbethstj.org

Dual Parish Website:

wwwstjbeth.org

Liturgy Parts

LCMS Worship

What do the parts of the liturgy mean?

Word of God and Sermon

Frequently we conclude the reading of Holy Scripture with the phrase, "This is the Word of the Lord!" More than just a "word" from God, this is his revelation in which he makes known to us his will, most specifically, his merciful will that desires our salvation.

Ultimately, this word points us to the Word, the incarnate Son of God. He is God's final and full revelation to us, the mirror of the Father's heart.

That is the point that the writer to the Hebrews makes in the opening verses of his epistle: "In many and various ways God spoke to his people of old by the prophets, but now in these last days, he has spoken to us by his Son" (Heb. 1:1-2a).

Only through him — God's only Son — are we able to know the Father's favor and grace.

In the sermon, the Word of God is brought to bear on the lives of the hearers. This is the equivalent of sitting at the feet of Jesus. But it's more than mere instruction.

Through the sermon, God speaks to us with his two-edged sword of condemnation and promise, Law and Gospel. The subject of the sermon is both God and us.

Through the sermon we come to a better understanding of ourselves, especially our need for God's forgiveness. But we also come face to face with God's mercy and love.

Week after week, God's faithful hear the voice of their Good Shepherd, preparing them, in a sense, for that final day when Jesus calls them to their eternal reward.

We are Pro-Life, not Anti-Abortion Pastor Schopp

The media constantly defames the Pro-Life movement with derogatory labels instead of the name we apply to ourselves. The Pro-Life movement is called "Anti-abortion" and "Anti-choice" because those are both negative sounding and it is a quick way to smear us.

What is the difference? Our view of the worth of all humans is derived from God's Word and the incalculable cost of the blood of Christ. Jesus humbled Himself by taking up our fallen flesh, not to free us from the prison of our bodies (which is a Buddhist idea) but to redeem all mankind and pave the way for the New Heaven and New Earth. After

God made the universe, our planet, kangaroos, ladybugs and people, He said it was "GOOD". He didn't make us physical beings on accident. It was only the universal infection of sin caused by our first parents that has corrupted everything in our universe. That is why Jesus came to redeem ALL of creation ("*the creation itself will be set free from its bondage to corruption and obtain the freedom of the glory of the children of God.*") – Rom 8:21).

So all of creation is good. Life – physical life in a physical body – is good. We, honor Christ's sacrifice by treating all human life with the respect it deserves, respect for a life paid for by the Son of God on the cross. The Pro-Life movement is not only about preventing abortions. It is about protecting all who are without a voice and changing our culture to value everyone. A Pro-Life mindset will cause us to examine many facets of our modern life, including some that are especially important right now:

"Assisted" suicide and End of Life Decisions: Falsely called euthanasia (or "good death"), many proponents in Europe and Canada have already made it far easier for physicians to kill patients of all ages when someone else deems that their life is not worth living. What is the difference between allowing someone to die and causing them to die?

Birth Control: Many techniques of birth control are actually abortifacients – devices or medications which cause an embryo (a human life) to be destroyed.

In-Vitro Fertilization (IVF): For older folks, this was first called "test tube babies". Those who have not been blessed with children sometimes take matters into their own hands... or rather, they put the matter into the hands of clinics who are all too happy to make you a child using technology. Aside from the high cost, it is the fate of the "unused" embryos that is most concerning to Christians.

Recently the governor of Virginia argued that infanticide (the murder of an infant) was a subject best left to the mother and her physician. This is a truly scary proposition and should alarm everyone.

As you can see, this is not a single-issue cause. Even if abortion were outlawed tomorrow, the Pro-Life movement would not cease to exist. Because all mankind is sinful, we are constantly straying from God's will revealed to us in natural law. It is the duty of Christians to educate others and prevent these wrongs from being perpetrated in the name of progress. We speak the love of God to everyone, even those who do not believe, while seeking to protect those without a voice from violence and death.

Lutheran Early Response Team (LERT) training

“There is an enormous need to have groups that are trained before a disaster strikes,” said the Rev. Ross Johnson, the LCMS Office of National Mission’s Disaster Response director. “You never know when a tragedy is going to happen, and there’s nothing more helpful when a tragedy happens than to have people trained and ready to go in at a moment’s notice.”

One of the ways in which the Synod enables LCMS districts and congregations to respond to crises is by building up their local response capacity through early training available year-round through LCMS Disaster Response.

“We offer a one-day course for LERT — Lutheran Early Response Team training — which is a 6- to 7-hour event normally done on a Saturday, and it focuses on what to do and what *not* to do when disaster strikes,” said Johnson. “Having trained disaster-response teams in place helps form a network of responders ready to go and makes it easier to [rapidly] deploy additional volunteers for disaster recovery.”

He said those who complete the training are formally certified as LERT members, and they receive badges allowing them access to certain controlled areas where relief and recovery operations are conducted in the aftermath of a natural disaster.

Johnson said districts can plan LERT training events where LCMS Disaster Response helps them become self-sufficient, adding that the best responders are those who are trained and who live near the affected area, since this allows for the most rapid initial response. He said the Synod also certifies LERT trainers at the district and congregation level. “Train the trainer” courses are normally provided for District Disaster Response Coordinators (DDRCs) and other people they identify to be qualified, said Johnson.

Value of LERT training

“LERT training is an integral part of what we do,” said Ricks, also a certified LERT trainer. “Through LERT training, we have formed a relationship with a number of churches in the region. We are able to mobilize volunteers quickly and make an impact. Our LERT training helps us focus on disaster response as a ministry. The focus of sharing God’s mercy sets our ministry apart from other organizations.”

“Chainsaw training is available for members of congregations who are already LERT trained, at the congregation’s request, for those congregations in regions prone to tornadoes, hurricanes and other severe storms,” said Johnson. “This helps a lot with cleanup operations and debris removal following a natural disaster.”

Johnson said LCMS Disaster Response also assists districts and congregations in getting critical equipment needed to safely perform recovery work. “We’re also able to help responders with the gear needed to do hands-on recovery operations — generators, power washers, tools, wheelbarrows — all the stuff needed for a smooth, effective response to help the affected communities when a disaster happens,” he said. “This year alone, we’re giving out dozens of grants, so congregations and districts have the necessary equipment.”

Johnson said LCMS Disaster Response also has partnered with the Lutheran Women’s Missionary League to provide disaster-response trailer grants. Disaster-response trailers house essential equipment and resources needed for disaster-relief operations and to provide Gospel comfort to churches and communities suffering in the wake of disasters.

Simple qualifications

Any LCMS Lutheran over 18 can be a valuable LERT member, including those with physical limitations. “The only requirement is that LERT members must be LCMS Lutherans and at least 18 years old. There is no maximum age limitation,” said Johnson. “Not all work is physically demanding — teams also need members who can prepare meals, do laundry, organize equipment and supplies, and people to organize child care, human-care and spiritual-care. He added, having more trained responders strengthens the Synod’s network to provide body-and-soul care for all those suffering in the aftermath of catastrophes like the recent floods and tornadoes.

“This is how we are able to help not only LCMS Lutherans but also entire communities affected by natural disasters,” said Johnson.

Why Not Just Self-Deploy Into a Disaster?

We all know the feeling, you're up late watching the news and you see pictures and videos of unspeakable destruction. Houses rendered to toothpicks, people lining up for an ever dwindling supply of food, and calls for donations from all of your favorite brands. Your empathy or perhaps even sympathy is peaked as you hear the tearful stories of people who have lost everything to a hurricane or earthquake or wildfire. As you fiddle the credit card in your wallet debating whether or not to get on the next flight, consider these thoughts about self-deployment.



Doing an assessment of a house after a tornado. Where do you start?

1. Disaster scenes are, by their very nature, chaotic

People have lost their homes and even the most basic needs such as food and clothing. As they anxiously dig through piece after piece of their damaged or destroyed possessions they are constantly interrupted by the distant whine of emergency sirens or heavy machinery threatening to take the last remnants of their former life with them. Government Agencies, Insurance assessors, and non-profit organizations are crisscrossing the cluttered streets trying to make their assessments and in turn reduce people's lives into dollars and statistics.

And this is when you only have certified disaster response teams doing their work. Imagine if this were combined with tens or hundreds of well meaning self-deployed volunteers. The chaos would escalate and would certainly get out of hand. Self-deploying limits or even eliminates the effect of your volunteer service.

2. Duplicate and Unnecessary Service

You look at victims sorting through what is left of their most cherished belongings and your heart sinks. You see the roof over their head sagging or the walls stained from the flood waters. At this point, homeowners may be hopeful that since the floodwaters have receded or the aftershocks have stopped they can safely move back into their homes and pick up life where they left off. Encouraging words from a well-meaning but ill-informed volunteer might reinforce that hope to their detriment by telling them that they can help get them back into their homes. The truth is that often, while the home may look solid, the damage is deeper than the drywall and the mold or hairline cracks have rendered the house unlivable. Or perhaps worse, your assessment of the situation was already made by another agency and your assistance not only hinders future response but negates the assessment by the insurance company making the homeowner ineligible for their claim. Volunteering WITH a certified team helps to ensure that the work that you do is meaningful and effective and not counter-productive.

3. You WILL be turned away by law enforcement

With very few exceptions, disaster zones (especially the most devastating ones) are completely shut off to anyone besides the residents and business owners who are trying to preserve their lives and incomes, law enforcement and first responders, insurance agents, and CERTIFIED disaster response teams. If you are not one of those groups and have not been deployed for official business purposes, law enforcement will most likely turn you away. They do this to prevent looting, preserve or restore order, and provide some level of privacy and security to people who are forced to leave all of their personal belongings out in the open.

How do I get in?

By now you know that you can't just show up at a disaster site and hope to make a difference. But your heart still aches for these people and you want to know how you can get in and help. Did you notice a recurring theme in the 3 reasons listed above? The idea of a CERTIFIED disaster response team kept coming to the surface. The federal government has provided guidelines and basic requirements to certify teams from community centers, schools, churches, and non-governmental organizations to deploy their teams into disaster zones. Said a different way, Lutheran Early Response Training (LERT) is a curriculum which meets these basic requirements and allows you and your church to deploy into any disaster zone where you have been called. Going through this brief, one day course gets you a brightly colored vest which clearly identifies you as a member of a Lutheran Early Response Team, an official wallet sized identification card, and the safety information and basic skills that you will need to provide both spiritual and material assistance to those in need. Hosting a LERT training at your congregation also inserts you into a network more than 14,000 Lutheran Volunteers who are deployed by District Disaster Response Coordinators in each of the 35 districts.

This information taken from NWD-LCMS website at LCMS.org . (for more information type **LERT training** in LCMS search bar, there are many accounts of service projects done through out the year.)

St. John December Church Council Minutes

Meeting was called to order by Doug Brown with Cathy Schneider, Jeff Werner, Kay Christiansen, Ronda Durkee, Pastor Schopp, Steve Schneider, and Sharon Niemann present.

Pastor opened with prayer and gave his report as printed. He reviewed the service times which were in the newsletter, calendar, and followed the published dates and times. COVID has made it increasingly difficult to visit shut-in members. Lois Unums death on Nov. 27 was not reported by the family and the news reported the service held at a nondenominational church in Schofield. Pastor will be circuit visitor for our zone starting later next year. More details will follow as they are available.

Trustee information was given by members of the council that had worked on different projects. A drain was put around the septic tank area and it intersected the ditch on the south side of Huckleberry Rd. Mel Niemann with Sharon, as his assistant, will map out the sacristy project work. We simply want to make it a usable space for the altar guild.

Outreach committed will host a blood drive on Jan 2nd. Reservations are encouraged. You can contact Cathy Schneider at 715-352-3227.

Board of Education announced that Sunday School for the children will be on vacation for the 27th of December and January 3rd. Adult class will meet on the 3rd of January.

The Treasurer reported a short fall of \$1190 for the month of November. That brings us to a year-to-date negative balance of \$14,465. This does include the negative of \$8600 that we started the year 2020 with.

Money from the Harvest dinner was dispersed. Motions were made and passed to send 10% to the Iowa relief effort from the devastation this past summer. Then the rest will go to special funds for the LERT program we hope to start here in the future. This is to be our answer to help during emergency times like happened in Iowa with the awful winds. For now, the money is in the special funds. Just to review, the profit after expenses on the harvest dinner was just over \$3800.

Finance committee still needs 2 people to help with the counting duties. See Jeff Werner if that is something you can help with.

All reports were approved.

Old business:

The cross from the parish hall will be hung soon. The new projector for the bible class is working great; come and see the difference.

March For Life is taking on different options. With c19, we may recommend that we try to put out our own type of voice to the community.

New business:

Watch the bulletin and newsletters for the new emails for the office

secretary@StjBeth.org

Our web hosting and email will be work done by GoDaddy. It works with M S office 365 and office 360.

Meeting closed with the Lord's Prayer

Respectively Submitted, Sharon Niemann

Bethlehem

Birthdays

Yessa, Raymond	1/05
Hammel, Patricia	1/07
Anderson, Keagen	1/08
Molthen, Arlette	1/10
Underwood, Virgil	1/11
Carlson, Luke	1/14
Graun, Thomas	1/14
Kilty, Braxton	1/19
Carlson, Philip	1/21
Reynolds, Randy	1/22
Denzin, Bryan	1/23
Kosik, Isaac	1/24
Freimund, Dorean	1/28
Ebben, Leta	1/29
Venzke, Thomas	1/29
Hammel, Olivia	1/30
Kilty, Troy	1/31

Anniversaries

Bruce & Jolene Gumz	1/12
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St. John

Birthdays

Schultz, Mary	1/07
Krebsbach, June	1/13
Marshall, Elizabeth	1/16
Yessa, Kelly	1/17
Brown, Douglas	1/22
Yessa, John	1/22
Koch, Cole	1/24
VanDerLeest, Sam	1/25
Heise, Paul	1/29
Mortvedt, Bud	1/30

Anniversaries

none

Agnus Day by James Wetzstein



BIBLE PASSAGE — In the time of King Herod, after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, wise men from the East came to Jerusalem, asking, “Where is the child who has been born king of the Jews? For we observed his star at its rising, and have come to pay him homage.” When King Herod heard this, he was frightened, and all Jerusalem with him; and calling together all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Messiah was to be born. They told him, “In Bethlehem of Judea; for so it has been written by the prophet: ‘And you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, are by no means least among the rulers of Judah; for from you shall come a ruler who is to shepherd my people Israel.’” Then Herod secretly called for the wise men and learned from them the exact time when the star had appeared. Then he sent them to Bethlehem, saying, “Go and search diligently for the child; and when you have found him, bring me word so that I may also go and pay him homage.”

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. When they saw that the star had stopped, they were overwhelmed with joy. On entering the house, they saw the child with Mary his mother; and they knelt down and paid him homage. Then, opening their treasure chests, they offered him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. And having been warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they left for their own country by another road. — The Epiphany of Our Lord

Bethlehem

Soup Sale: We would like to thank everyone who helped to make Bethlehem’s Soup Drive up a very successful day. We have two awesome church families that helped to make this day an awesome event. We could not have done it without all your help. After expenses our profit was \$3,000.00 Praise Be to God! God’s Blessing to all! Dorean & Marlene

Poinsettias: Thank you to everyone who donated a Poinsettia this year. The church is glowing with beautiful red, pink and white poinsettias.

Praise Be to God this Christmas Season. God’s blessings to you all in the New Year! “Merry Christmas”. Marlene

In Memory of Loved Ones: Dorean Freimund & family
 Del, Michelle Schwarting, & family
 Verlyn, Judy Wittlinger
 Dick, Lois Niemi
 Shane, Pattie Hammel & family
 Russell, Shirley Buss
 Joshua, Jill Penk & family
 Galen, Marlene Schreiber
 Joanne Luther & family
 Darlene Wittlinger & family
 Ladies Aid
 CWIA

In Celebration

St. John Church Cleaning Jobs: A list of various cleaning jobs is available on the table in the narthex. If you wish to volunteer to take on an area please do so. You can also sign up to job share with someone.

Poinsettias: Thank you to all who donated Christmas Poinsettias

ST. John Ladies Aid
 Lloyd & Mary Schultz
 Mel & Sharon Niemann in Celebration
 Greg & Linda Mueller
 Albert & Miriam Wolff
 Stacey VanHoy
 Roger & Sharon Ballerstein

In Memory of Ronald Brown
 In Memory of Loved ones

Matthew 2:1-12



Lutheran Hour Sermon Schedule

January 3

"Too Much"

Speaker: Rev. Dr. Michael Zeigler
The Gospel according to St. Mark shows us the Savior Who is always on the move.
(Mark 1:1 - 2:12)

January 10

"The Backstory Behind a Bible 'Contradiction'"

Speaker: Rev. Dr. Michael Zeigler
(Mark 2:13-28)

January 17

"Lost in Wonder, Love, and Praise!"

Guest Speaker: Rev. Dr. Dale A. Meyer
(Mark 3)

January 24

"TBD"

Speaker: Rev. Dr. Michael Zeigler

January 31

"TBD"

Speaker: Rev. Dr. Michael Zeigler

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 and explore all of the ways you can hear God's Word, equip yourself in outreach, and provide Gospel-centered activities for the kids!

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.

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.

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 or download the free App @ LHM.ORG/APPS



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.

January



HERE'S THE NEWS

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



Where
the
Light
of
Jesus
Christ
Always
Shines