

Crossroads



From our Minister—

One of the things we often associate with Christmas is giving and receiving gifts. This time of the year often finds us having spent days or weeks thinking for the perfect gift to give that special someone - spouses, children, other relatives, maybe a Secret Santa gift exchange at work or the Secret Sisters exchange here at All Saints. A lot of work goes into trying to figure out what they would really love that they've always wanted, but will hopefully also surprise them!

And then comes the enjoyment of gifts received. After the gifts are opened and the wrapping paper thrown away, I often find myself looking for new recipes I can try that will make use of that new kitchen gadget, or planning on where to hang the new piece of art so that I can get the most enjoyment from it, or thinking about what pants will go best with that new sweater. We like to use the gifts we have been given, and the gift-givers like to know that those gifts are appreciated.

We also frequently hear around this time of year the sentiment that the Christ Child is the greatest gift ever given, but do we stop to think about what that means? What do we do with that gift? Do we put it on display somewhere to admire it? No! We use it!

The presence of Christ in our lives is the gift that keeps on giving. The mercy and grace that Christ brings is not something we deserve, not



something we put on our list, not something we expect - but it is something that we are given freely, in hopes that we will use it every day.

And how do we use the gift of Christ's presence? We dig deep. We pray. We forgive others. We serve others. We take care of ourselves. And we discover that, through this gift of Christ's presence in our lives, we are given other gifts - gifts we may not realize we have been given. Gifts we have to cultivate, such as talents that lie beneath the surface, waiting to be tapped into and used in service to Christ and in service to others in our community.

Siblings in Christ, we are in need of such a gift in these days. With the Neeps' move, we are in need of a treasurer. I encourage you all to spend time this Christmas season examining the gifts you have been given, and thinking about how they can best be used. Do you have the gift of time, and a willingness to learn? Do you have the gift of a mind that can pick up new skills, even if working with numbers is not your "strong suit?" Do you have the gift of a desire to serve the church in this capacity?

This Christmas season, as you ponder the wonder of the Christ child among us, and as you contemplate the gifts Jesus' presence has brought to you, I encourage you to consider whether this, too, is a gift you have been given.

Pastor Sarah

Volume 34, Issue 1

January 20212

Our Vision

A Welcoming Place and People Sharing the Gospel of Jesus Christ

Our Mission

We seek to fulfill this vision by:

- ◇ **Celebrating God's Love**
- ◇ **Growing in God's Love**
- ◇ **Reaching out with God's Love**
- ◇ **Serving with God's Love**

Just as we anticipated the coming of the Christ child, we are anticipating the conclusion of our transition process.

This is an exciting time for us and council is anxious to receive the report from our Transition Team, so we can determine the next steps to present to you, the congregation members.

2020 has been a difficult year for all of us, and we have proven that we can work through any obstacles that are thrown in our way. We have been able to worship together (weather permitting), proving that we are adaptable in our worship styles.

We have been blessed to have our new minister, Sarah Pierce, come to us at a time when our transitional pastor, Pastor George, experienced health issues. We continue to pray for Pr. George and his continued recovery.

We are providing virtual and live streaming worship services through our website and FaceBook



page—learning new technology and again, being flexible.

Please prayerfully consider making your 2021 pledge a “Simply Giving” pledge. This helps our church finances by providing a continuous stable stream of income, and allows you peace of mind knowing that your contribution is received. We are including the form that can be completed returned to the church secretary, Jean Meroni, at any time.

Thank you for your support of your church leadership during this time. We will all continue to work together as our talents and community needs help us determine our mission in Blue Springs.

Peace to you all during this Epiphany season!

Pastor Sarah is in the church office every Wednesday, 9am-4pm, should you care to speak with her.

Ways to Participate in Virtual Worship



We continue to work towards providing live streaming video of our worship services, but that has been placed on hold for the time being with the uptick in COVID cases in the metro area. Until then, we will continue to provide videos of homilies and lesson readings on our website.

You can help! You are invited to let Ron Easton know or any council person that you would like to read lessons for use in the worship portion on any given Sunday.

It's easy. Ron will forward the lessons to you. You will be able to record your readings of each lesson and email them back to him. He will then upload to the website for viewing that Sunday.

This is a wonderful way to stay involved and participate while we all stay

***SAFETY GUIDELINES FOR CHURCH BUILDING USAGE
AT ALL SAINTS LUTHERAN CHURCH***

All groups should follow the guidelines below to best prevent the spread of illness. We ask that if you need assistance with any of these procedures, you contact church administration (council members) to determine adjustments. Council members contact information can be obtained from the church secretary.

Please be aware that we are following current county health guidelines. Some of these procedures may change should those guidelines change. We reserve the right to refuse entrance by groups if these procedures are not followed. Our church body has many older and vulnerable members, We err on the side of caution to keep everyone healthy.

- 1) Prior to any meeting or gathering, wipe down any and all surfaces you may or think you may be touching. We hope to continue having wipes available for use, but as a group, you should bring some just in case our supply is low.
- 2) No shared food or drink will be permitted at this time.
- 3) A mask is required for everyone indoors. Gloves are optional.
- 5) We fully recommend the six-foot social distance protocol. Current community guidelines state no more than 10 people inside our building at any one time, due to the upsurge in COVID cases. Please follow these occupancy guidelines until further notice.
- 6) Please do NOT use the drinking fountain.
- 7) Take attendance of those attending your gathering and leave in the church office. If the office is closed, please leave on the table when you leave. Provide contact information for at least one person in the group, in case we need to reach out to the group.
- 8) Wipe down all surfaces used, including the bathrooms and door handles of the front door, before and after use.

We want to be as welcoming as possible. Please understand that we do not have an on-staff janitor, but rely on the goodness of one person to maintain the cleanliness of our building. Your assistance in cleaning before and after will help us keep you and others safe during this time. Questions can be directed to any council person.

Thank you for your help.

Little Bear and the Simply Giving Song

By Nancy Cramer

“Now where are Mama and Papa Bear?” Little Bear looked from room to room. He had something very important to ask them. He heard voices coming from the kitchen, and there they were. Sitting at the table with some papers on the table and holding pencils, they looked very serious.

Was this good time to ask for something,” he wondered. Just then they saw him in the doorway.

“Little Bear, you look like you want to ask us something,” Papa Bear said. “Come on in, Mama Bear and I have just about finished, isn’t that right, dear?” He looked at Mama Bear and smiled, nodding his head.

“Well, if you think we can afford it and you won’t lose work like you did this year with the virus,” she agreed. It was useless to say anything more, he was so determined. “What do you want, Little Bear?” She smiled and held out her arms to give him a hug.

“Papa Bear and I are deciding what we want to give the church, he likes the ‘the Simply Giving’ program and I...” She was interrupted by Papa Bear who said, “I don’t think we need to involve Little Bear. He is too young to understand about giving to the church.”

But what was “Simply Giving?”

Papa Bear could tell his little son was puzzled, so he said “Simply’ means “easy to do” and Mama Bear and I have decided that every month the bank will pay a certain amount of our money to the church. We won’t have to bring the right amount of money or...” He stopped when he saw Little Bear frowning.

“Does that mean I don’t get to drop my quarter in the offering plate?” he asked worriedly.

His parents looked at each other and smiled. “No, Little Bear, you can still drop your shiny quarter in the offering plate. You are good about remembering to bring it. It’s just Mama and I who sometimes forget to bring the right amount of money.”

“Sim-ply giv-ing, Sim-ply giv-ing.” Little Bear sang to himself. He liked the sound of the words. They made a nice song, and he repeated it. Mama Bear gave him another hug while Papa Bear started to laugh at the picture his little family made.

Mama Bear and Little Bear looked at him, and they started to laugh also. Isn’t that what bears are supposed to do?



But what was
“Simply Giving”?

City Lights, Country Life

By Jimmy “Mel” McDonald

In the spring of 1955, my father planted his last crops on the farm. Although we didn't encounter the heat wave of 1954, it was just as dry, and the crops again failed. True to his word, that fall, he began advertising the farm and preparing to move.

In the fall of 1955, I was reunited with my mother at a town school about seven to eight miles west of our farm. The town was on Highway 5 between Tipton and Versailles. My mother was teacher/principal. She taught sixth, and seventh, and eighth grades.

I was only in the fifth grade, so had a different teacher. After my terrible experience at the Latham town school near our farm in 1954-55, it was sure enjoyable to be a new setting. The other children were quite nice, and not just because my mother was the principal. Many of the children came from a Mennonite community south of the school. I will always remember how kind and friendly they were to me, and my mother.

The one blemish as I remember was an event that was scheduled to be held in the spring in Tipton. Our school, Fortuna, was invited to compete in a track meet against Tipton grade school which was about 5 times larger in enrollment. Since we only had four fifth graders, we were allowed to use third and fourth graders on our team.

We trained very hard in anticipation of the meet, and with a couple of speedy fourth graders had a really fast relay team. Once a week, a man would come down from Tipton and give us a little coaching and check us out.

On his last visit he commented that our relay team had a faster time than Tipton's team. Boy, that made us feel on top of the world, as visions of David besting Goliath danced through our heads. Alas, the two nights before the meet we experienced torrential rain, and sadly, the track and field, was so muddy, the event was cancelled, never to be rescheduled.

That summer, Mother completed her courses to get her degree, Father was able to find a buyer for the farm, and the migration began.

I was able to attend Summer school in Warrensburg where my mother was, and that will be the main topic of my next article.

Have a holly, jolly Christmas, and go Chiefs.



*“True to his word,
that fall, he began
advertising the
farm and
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Blue Springs Community Services League Update

We all know that 2020 was a most difficult year for many families who have lost jobs. The Blue Springs Community Service League is continuing to reach out and to help those families in need. Some with assistance for food, others to help them with rent or utilities or in finding a new job. Today, 1 in 5 children do not know where their next meal is coming from. They appreciate whatever we can do to help serve our neighbors.

A short list of needs includes:

- ◆ Peanut Butter
- ◆ Jelly
- ◆ Side Dishes
- ◆ Skillet meals
- ◆ Instant Rice
- ◆ Instant Potatoes
- ◆ Canned meats
- ◆ Jell-O
- ◆ Cereal
- ◆ Soup/Large cans
- ◆ Jiffy Corn Muffin Mix
- ◆ Cereal bars

Should you know of any families who are in need please direct them to the Blue Springs office at 200 SW 10th St in Blue Springs. Phone number is 816-229-0033. Hours are Monday and Wednesday 9 to 12 and 1pm to 4 pm. Friday 9 to 12.

The church office is open 9am-12pm, Monday through Friday, to drop off donations.

Church Leadership Opportunities—

It is becoming imperative that we find a church treasurer, as Doug and Tammy Neeb will begin their move to North Carolina in December. The other option is to hire an outside accountant to handle this duty. Please think prayerfully about your abilities and consider sharing your time.

We also still have an opening on council as a representative of the congregation. Any council member is happy to discuss these positions. If interested, please contact Pam Meek. Thank you!





Happy Birthday to:

Tracy Nelson	1/2
Hollie Benz	1/4
Judy Taylor	1/15
Mary Ann Gross	1/16
Lisa Melton	1/16
Sharon LeVasseur	1/17
Jerry Green	1/18

Sign Up for Text Messaging!

Get notified via text, when we have sudden church closings due to weather, news events, special announcements, and general reminders.

How to sign up:

On your phone, text the keyword **EZASLCBS** to **484848**. In a few seconds you'll get a confirmation text and when you reply to that, you're in.

Church Group Schedule—

The church building is open with the current guidelines listed on page 3.

Please refer to the building use guidelines, and inform Jean at the church if your group will want to utilize our building, and if so the dates and times, as well as a contact person to keep on file.

Please note that if your group is new to utilizing our facility, it does need to seek council approval to prevent conflicts. Contact any council member with that request.

Thank you!

All Saints Lutheran Church
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816-229-3633

<https://aslcb.org>
allsaintslc64015@gmail.com

Sunday Services
(currently online at aslcb.org)

2020-2021 Church Council

President	Pam Meek
Vice President	Ron Easton
Secretary	Sara Meyers
Treasurer	Doug Neeb
Member	Nancy Cramer
Member	Carla Girkin
Member	vacant

Program Ministries

Witness/Marketing/Advertising	Ron Easton
Learning/Youth	Carla Girkin
Property	Pam Meek
Service/Stewardship	Nancy Cramer
Community Life	vacant
Worship/Music	Sara Meyers

Newsletter Deadline is the
20th of each month.
Submissions can be emailed
to the church office or Pam
Meek, at pameek@kc.rr.com.

JANUARY 2021

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					1 New Year's Day <i>Office Closed</i>	2
3	4	5	6 Epiphany <i>Minister's Office Hours</i>	7	8	9
10	11	12	13 <i>Minister's Office Hours</i>	14 <i>Council Meeting via Zoom 6:30pm</i>	15	16
17	18 Martin Luther King, Jr. Day <i>Office Closed</i>	19	20 <i>Minister's Office Hours</i> Newsletter Deadline	21 Thomas Ultican Elementary PTA 6 pm	22	23 Project Comfort 9am-12pm
24 Coffee With Council—Zoom 11am	25	26	27 <i>Minister's Office Hours</i>	28	29	30
31						