

FIRST ST. JOHN'S LUTHERAN CHURCH

140 W. King Street
 York, PA 17401-1307
 Phone: 717-843-8597



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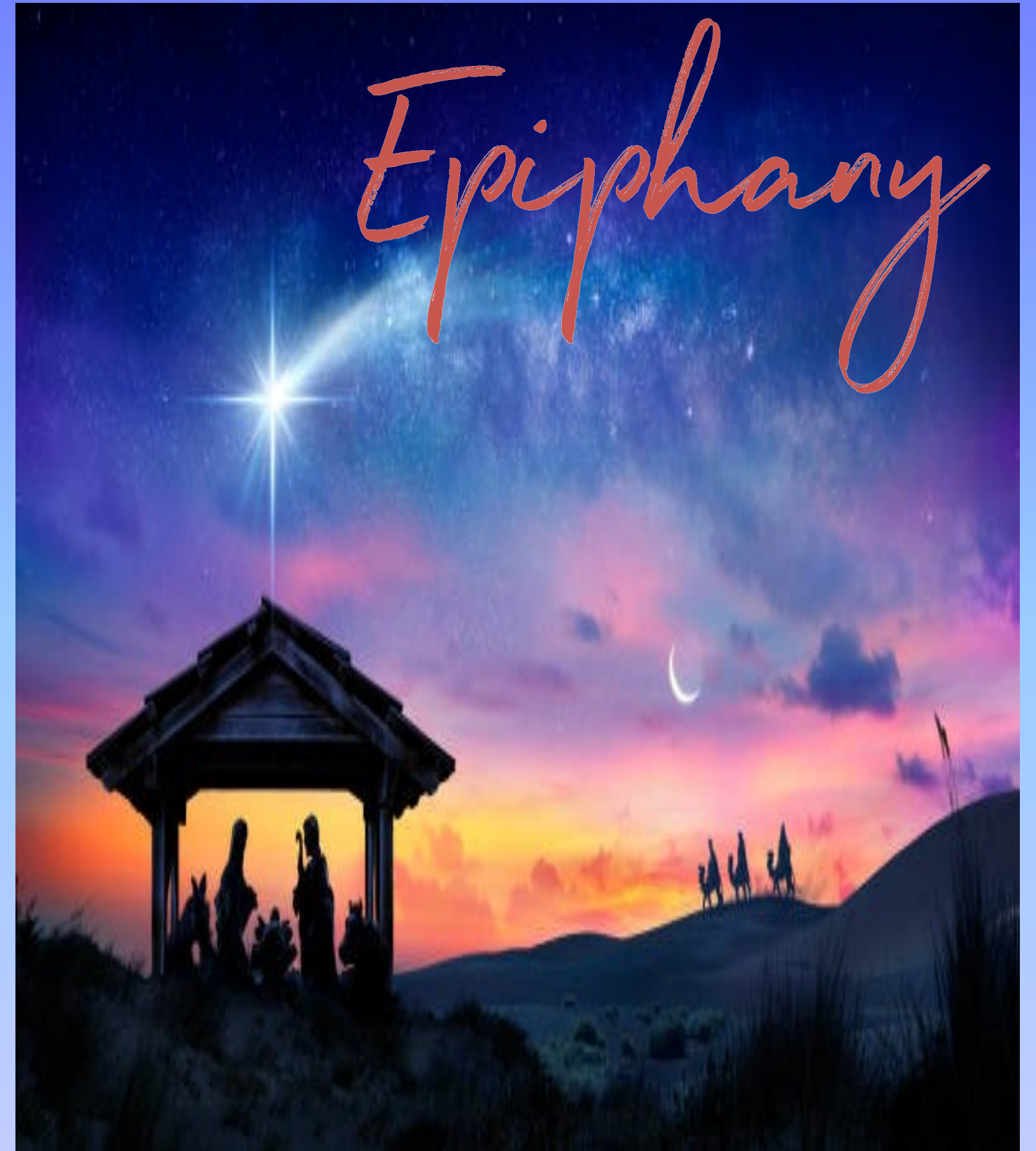
THE PEACE OF THE LORD TO

PARISH VISITOR**FIRST ST. JOHN'S LUTHERAN CHURCH**

VOL 55-ISSUE 1

Website: www.firststjohns.org

JANUARY 2023





SUNDAY WORSHIP

BIBLE STUDY 9:00 AM

SERVICE 11:00 AM

"Till all have heard! Thanks be to God!"

REGULAR CHURCH EVENTS AND WORSHIP

Sunday - 9:00 AM Bible Study
11:00 AM Sunday Worship

Monday-

Panera bread distribution 9:00-11:00 AM

Wednesday

6:30 PM - Adult Choir (September through May/June)

Thursday

6:30 PM-Narcotics Anonymous Meeting (Suspended)

OUR WEBSITE ADDRESS:

www.firststjohns.org

WELCOME

Our calling is for all to know Jesus as Lord and be an effective magnet involving lives for Jesus Christ. Worship should always be focused on God, the time honored traditions of worship are observed here, we want worship to be glorifying to God, honoring to God and reminding us of the greatness and glory of God. People say that they have truly worshipped after our Sunday morning service.

We are a very welcoming church and we want to help you to know Jesus.

Contact Us

Phone 717.843.8597

E-Mail: firststjohns@verizon.net

First St. Johns Lutheran Church
140 W. King St., York PA 17401

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SUNDAY SERVICES

Communion and Non-Communion, Services are held during the month, Non-Communion services are held on the 5th Sunday of months with 5 Sundays.

We print bulletins in English (small and large print), and Chinese for morning worship. Please contact us in advance if you need a Spanish bulletin.

PHONE: (717) 843-8597

COME
WORSHIP
with us!



If you would like to receive the monthly newsletter by email please contact the church office at (717) 843-8597 or send an email to

firststjohns@verizon.net.



If you or someone you know is a shut-in, has an illness or is unable to worship with us due to other circumstances, please call the church office.

The church phone number is: 717-843-8597

OR

EMAIL: firststjohns@verizon.net



GET IN TOUCH

2. Remember All the Lord Has Done

"Take care lest you forget the Lord, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery" ([Deuteronomy 6:12](#)). Christians are enjoined to never forget what their Lord has done for them.

A Christian who obtains his greatest joy from the Lord sees January 1 as a time to remember the goodness of God as it has unfolded across the past year. Sometimes the details of God's intervention are only obvious when one surveys his goodness over time.

We can never remember the Lord's [grace](#) and mercy and love towards us too often. Remembering Christ is essential; the more one does this the better.

But at the start of a New Year, one might reassess which direction to go with regard to career or a relationship, what his or her cross might be, and to either change course or stick with the established One.

If this is a difficult season, go back to [Hebrews 4:15](#), "For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin."

Recall that Christ knows the temptations you face, the suffering you endure. He is able to sympathize, so turn to him without fear.

3. Celebrate the New Year

"This is the day the Lord has made; let us rejoice and be glad in it" ([Psalm 118:24](#)). This is the Psalmist's [exhortation](#) for every day, not just New Year's Day; not only on good days, when we anticipate the company of friends and a great meal, perhaps music and dancing. Every day is the Lord's Day and every day we are his.

Christians do not need to avoid "fun" as though Christ was averse to it. God does not demand that we be serious all the time.

Adrian Rogers [explains](#), "Jesus was not a recluse. He performed His first miracle at a wedding, when He changed water into wine. He was so full of life that His enemies called Him a wine bibber and a glutton. He was not, but there was in Him a genuine joy, and if you don't have that joy, you're not like Jesus, for He is literally leaping with joy."

We are not called into debauchery, that is not joy; but we are encouraged by Christ's example to be filled with the exuberance for life, which is living inside of us by the Holy Spirit.

"For all who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God. For you did not receive the spirit of slavery to fall back into fear, but you have received the Spirit of adoption as sons, by whom we cry, "Abba! Father!" ([Romans 8:14-15](#)). We have so much reason to celebrate.

4. Christ Coming Closer

Every year, someone predicts the end of the world. This so-called prophet names a year and tells the world not only when but how the world will end. With each new catastrophe and major conflict between world powers, Armageddon seems nigh, but only God knows when the end will come ([Matthew 24:36](#)).

Yet, every January 1, Christians wonder "will this be the year Jesus returns?" One thing is for sure: Jesus' return is sooner today than it was yesterday. With that in mind, we prepare.

We are God's children now, and [...] we know that when he appears we shall be like him, because we shall see him as he is. And everyone who thus hopes in him purifies himself as he is pure ([1 John 3:2-3](#)).

John Piper [explains](#) what it means to be in Christ: "if you really want to be like him by seeing him when he comes, you'll pursue being like him now. You will." In other words, the New Year is a reminder to keep Jesus ever in the forefront of our minds.

Why Does This Matter?

New Year's Day is no different from any other day as far as Christ is concerned. For the believer, however, the very idea of throwing out an old calendar and starting with 12 clean pages is a poignant reminder that the pages, like our lives, quickly become messy. New Year's Day is a day of resetting hearts, which have wandered, and of restoring the habit of turning to Christ every day for a fresh start, not in a new relationship, but in a relationship with Jesus, which is always growing.

How Should Christians Approach the New Year?

While many people are deciding how to celebrate on December 31 and figuring out their New Year's resolutions, what should Christians be doing? There might not be one "right" way to observe the transition from 2022 to 2023, but here are some thoughts to help believers stay Christ-focused.

A Fresh Start for the New Year

Many people, no matter what they believe, look at January 1 as a chance for a new beginning. If the previous year was disappointing or they made significant mistakes, they imagine wiping the slate clean and starting over.

Christians know that new starts are available any time, they are not dictated by the calendar. "The steadfast love of the Lord never ceases; his mercies never come to an end; they are new every morning" ([Lamentations 3:22-23](#)).

All those who confess and repent their sin can enjoy freedom from regret and shame. They can find courage to endure through trials. Joy and mercy are available for every believer, all the time. A new year, however, inspires this kind of thought process.

1. New Resolution: Confession

Starting over often turns into making resolutions, but quitting smoking, starting a diet, or purchasing a gym membership is only the beginning of a "fresh start." If there is a sin issue in any person's life, he or she can address it right now.

In fact, peace awaits the one who is quick to confess and repent of sin. "Many are the sorrows of the wicked, but steadfast love surrounds the one who trusts in the LORD" ([Psalm 32:10](#)).

Bad habits and addictions are symptomatic of deeper issues. Rather than making a resolution to quit doing something or start doing something else, take advantage of this renewed impetus to face sin in your life and find freedom from its effects through the Father's loving direction.

For example, you might be the kind of person who seeks attention by causing drama. You might run from conflict by exercising too much and trying to control a painful situation by regulating calories carefully.

Fear could be driving you to drink or abuse drugs. These habits or addictions enslave a person; they rob peace because alcohol or exercise or drama becomes a focus of worship; an idol.

The New Year is a perfect time to dig up the roots of trouble by the power of the Holy Spirit, under the assurance that honest and whole-hearted repentance leads to life and peace ([2 Corinthians 7:10](#)).

Remember these words from the Apostle John: "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness" ([1 John 1:9](#)).

Jesus does not want his people to be burdened by their sin. He wants them to experience freedom.

Just remember that, although God's Word contains all the answers one needs to overcome addictions and work through conflict, gospel counselors provide direction and support, helping to connect the Lord's promises to one's unique emotional needs.

A responsible and discerning counselor will also suggest medical attention where necessary: certain habits and behaviors can be the result of a clinical issue or trauma and could require medication, at least for a time.

When one faces the turmoil of personal sin in response to sins committed against him or her, the New Year could be a time when both parties reflect and make changes.

But the work of the Spirit in each person's life is between him or her and God. Part of learning to overcome addictive behaviors is, potentially, finding the courage to walk away from an abusive marriage, friendship, or job. A counselor can help.



Bible Study

9:00 AM

**JANUARY 2023
PARISH VISITOR**

FEBRUARY 2023 DEADLINE

[Articles Due](#)

[Friday, January 20th](#)

[Send Date](#)

[Thursday, January 26th](#)

Newsletter

MEETINGS IN JANUARY

Worship Committee

Meeting—Proposed Jan. 18th

Church Council –

Jan. 10th



UPCOMING JANUARY SERVICES

January 1st- Communion (New Years Day).

January 8th- Non-Communion (Epiphany).

January 15th- Communion (2nd Sunday of Epiphany).

January 22nd- Non-Communion (3rd Sunday of Epiphany).

January 29nd- Non-Communion (4th Sunday of Epiphany).

*Sunday
Services*

OPPORTUNITIES TO KNOW JESUS
Bible Study 9:00 AM
Sunday Morning Service 11:00 AM

First St. John's Lutheran Church
140 West King Street, York, PA 17401 / 843-8597

JANUARY 2023

CHURCH OFFICE
Phone Number 717-843-8597

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
1 Name of Jesus C / White	2 Panera Bread 9:00-11:00 am	3	4 Adult Choir 6:30 PM	5	6 Epiphany	7
8 Epiphany NC / White	9 Panera Bread 9:00-11:00 am	10 CHURCH COUNCIL MTG. 6:00 PM	11 Adult Choir 6:30 PM	12	13	14
15 2nd Sunday of Epiphany C / Green	16 Panera Bread 9:00-11:00 am MARTIN LUTHER KING DAY	17	18 Adult Choir 6:30 PM	19	20	21
22 2nd Sunday of Epiphany NC / Green	23 Panera Bread 9:00-11:00 am	24	25 Adult Choir 6:30 PM	26	27	28
29 2nd Sunday of Epiphany NC / Green	30 Panera Bread 9:00-11:00 am	31	USHERS Dave Stambaugh Bill Lupp	ALTAR GUILD Lois Stambaugh		

Good King Wenceslas (Continued)

The servant almost gives up, but Wenceslas calls on him to walk directly behind him. And miraculously, the servant can feel the saint's warmth as he walks in his footprints.

"Sire, the night is darker now, and the wind blows stronger;
Fails my heart, I know not how; I can go no longer.'
'Mark my footsteps, good my page. Tread thou in them boldly.
Thou shalt find the winter's rage freeze thy blood less coldly.'

In his master's steps he trod, where the snow lay dinted⁴;
Heat was in the very sod which the saint had printed."

The carol concludes with a call to all Christians to bless the poor, and in that find a blessing for themselves.

"Therefore, Christian men, be sure, wealth or rank possessing,
Ye who now will bless the poor, shall yourselves find blessing."

The final phrases remind me of two passages from Scripture. The first is from Proverbs:
"He who is kind to the poor lends to the Lord,
and he will reward him for what he has done." (Proverbs 19:17)

The second is Jesus' Parable of the Sheep and the Goats (Matthew 25:31-46) that calls on all his disciples to aid the poor and suffering. In the parable, his disciples don't remember any acts of kindness towards him, for which he blesses them.

"Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you something to drink? When did we see you a stranger and invite you in, or needing clothes and clothe you? When did we see you sick or in prison and go to visit you?"

The King will reply, 'I tell you the truth, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers of mine, you did for me.'" (Matthew 25:34, 37-39)

So when you sing the Christmas carol "Good King Wenceslas," understand the example that the old saint sets for us - and do likewise this Christmas season and always.

"Therefore, Christian men, be sure, wealth or rank possessing,
Ye who now will bless the poor, shall yourselves find blessing."



Good King Wenceslas Christmas Carol with a Message

by Dr. Ralph F. Wilson

"Good King Wenceslas looked down
on the feast of Stephen...."

I have heard this carol since I was a child, but didn't really know the story behind it. It turns out that Good King Wenceslas (ca. 907 - 935 AD) was the Duke of Bohemia (now the western portion of the Czech Republic). His grandfather and father had turned from paganism to Christianity. His mother, however, was the daughter of a pagan tribal chief. When Wenceslas was 13, his father died, and his mother, having embraced paganism once more, tried to turn him away from Christ.

But when Wenceslas was 18, he gained the throne, had his mother exiled, and sought to reign over his people with mercy and justice as a truly *Christian* monarch.

He is best known for his acts of kindness - one of which is immortalized in the carol we sing at Christmas. An early biographer wrote of his legendary deeds:

"Rising every night from his noble bed, with bare feet and only one chamberlain, he went around to God's churches and gave alms generously to widows, orphans, those in prison and afflicted by every difficulty, so much so that he was considered, not a prince, but the father of all the wretched."

Though he ruled for but a decade, he was beloved by his people. At the age of 28, Wenceslas was assassinated on his way to church by his brother, but his influence lived on. He was considered a martyr, was canonized by the Catholic Church, and today is the patron saint of the Czech state.

The carol was written in 1853 by English hymnwriter John Mason Neale. You've probably sung a verse or two of the carol without thinking of the story it tells or the Christian values it teaches - and some stanzas are omitted in modern hymnals.

The first stanza observes Wenceslas, who watches a poor man collecting wood on a cold winter's night. The Feast of St. Stephen is celebrated on December 26th each year.

"Good King Wenceslas looked out, on the Feast of Stephen,
When the snow lay round about, deep and crisp and even;
Brightly shone the moon that night, tho' the frost was cruel,
When a poor man came in sight, gath'ring winter fuel."

The king asks his page or servant where the poor man lives.

"Hither, page, and stand by me, if thou know'st it, telling,
Yonder peasant, who is he? Where and what his dwelling?'
'Sire, he lives a good league² hence, underneath the mountain;
Right against the forest fence, by Saint Agnes' fountain."

Wenceslas commands the servant to gather meat, drink, and firewood that they will personally carry to the poor man's home.

"Bring me flesh, and bring me wine, bring me pine logs hither:
Thou and I shall see him dine, when we bear them thither.'
Page and monarch, forth they went, forth they went together;
Through the rude wind's wild lament and the bitter weather."

Bonnie Abendschoen

138 Crown Pointe Drive
York, PA 17402

Dawn Frey

382 West North Street
York, PA 17401

Joyce Devan

2408 Lovegren Court
York, PA 17404

Kim Thompson

30 South Beaver Street
York, PA 17401

If you are aware of any changes with those on the list please contact the church office.

We encourage you to drop a card or letter to our shut-ins to let them know that they are missed and a valued member of the congregation.

**The Epiphany: O God, who by the leading of a star
didst manifest thy only-begotten Son
to the peoples of the earth:
Lead us, who know thee now by faith, to thy presence,
where we may behold thy glory face to face;
through the same Jesus Christ our Lord,
who liveth and reigneth
with thee and the Holy Spirit, one God,
now and for ever. Amen.**



www.graceanniston.org





PRAYERS

Christians especially in the Middle East– persecuted
Prayer Warriors—Spirit is moving
Helen Wu-Husband in nursing home
Joyce Devan-Health issues
Ruth Strathmeyer-Health issues
Kim Thompson-Health issues
Susan vanDyk-Baum
Ed Hanes (Nancy Hildebrand’s brother)-Health issues
Bruce Blankenstein-Wife’s Health issues
Jeanne Noll-Health issue
Ed Abendschoen-Health issues
Nancy Hildebrand-Health Issues
Benjamin-Grandson of Mary Homsher Health issues.
Ed Benedick-Health issue (friend of Ed Abendschoen)
Jon Van Sliedrecht-Health issue
Bonnie Abendschoen-Health issues
David-Health issues (friend of Ed & Bonnie Abendschoen)
Karen Hildebrand-Health issues
Fran Shoff-Health issues
Tom Gibson-Health issues
Tammy Cahoon-Health issues
Lois Stambaugh-Health issues
The Christian Church in Northern Nigeria
Bonita Bollinger-Undergoing treatment for breast cancer
Our prayers are with the hurricane Ian victims
Ron Mumford-Health issues
Mark Parent-Husband of Candy Parent (Bill Lupp’s niece)-
Heart transplant

FIRST TIME REQUESTS

Anna vanDyk-Health issue
Gloria Sindlinger-Heart issues

SHUT-IN MEMBERS

Bonnie Abendschoen
Joyce Devan
Dawn Frey
Kim Thompson

LEADERS

Vicar Geoff Abendschoen, Minister of Music Ken Sanders, Lay
Leaders, Pastor Cosgrove, Pastor Zimmerman, Pastor Brasso,
Pastor Seifferlein , Pastor Merrell, Pastor Banach, Pastor Robert-
son, Pastor Schaefer. Sally Hiller, David Maack. District President
John Denninger

PRAISE AND THANKSGIVING

For all of God’s Gifts
Lois Hollinger

**We remember in
prayer those who are
in need of God’s spe-
cial presence in their**



4th—Dezzaray Tanner
7th - Hans Abendschoen
15th - Lois Hollinger
28th - Karen Hildebrand



Early February Birthdays

2nd - Michelle Taylor
5th - Edward Abendschoen IV

PRAYER LIST (cont.)

SPIRITUAL NEEDS

For all those who do not know Jesus as Lord
For our “action” committees/task forces
Our Community and Families



MILITARY

Sgt. Tyr Abendschoen U. S. Army



POLICE

Jonathan



First, attend the Divine Service to receive God’s gifts of forgiveness, life and salva-
tion. If you’ve not been faithful in attending worship to hear the preaching of
God’s Word, to receive forgiveness and feast on the rich food of our Lord’s body
and blood for the eternal benefit of your body and soul, then repent and come to
receive the gifts God freely gives. God doesn’t want your money. He wants you —
all of you (Matt. 22:20–22).

Second, pray for the Lord’s help. Your right as a Christian is to speak with your
Father, the King of all creation, freely through His Son, our Lord, Jesus Christ.
Go to the throne of grace and ask for strength and wisdom to follow His bidding
faithfully (John 15:1–16).

Third, consider what the church is and what the church does. The church is a
place of mercy. It inhales the mercy of the Father by the death, resurrection and
ascension of His Son through the preaching of the Gospel and the Sacraments. It
exhales this mercy in love toward neighbors. You are a member of the church, of
God’s family. Thus, you are not only a recipient of God’s mercy, but a bearer of
that mercy for the life of the world. You spread that mercy through the generous
giving of your income to support the work of the church in the world, as the Israel-
ites did in the Old Testament (Lev. 27:1–34).

Fourth, take stock of your current giving in light of the New Testament’s teaching
on supporting the work of the church. Are you giving of your first fruits, taking it
out of your paycheck first, or does God get what’s left over? Are you giving volun-
tarily and cheerfully? Are you giving proportionally and generously? The Old Tes-
tament required a tithe, or ten percent. The New Testament gives freedom to be
generous, to give more for the Church’s work. Are you relying on God’s promise to
provide and increase what you need to do His work? If your answer is no to any of
these, repent. If God gave you His only Son, will He not provide for you all things,
even physical things? Trust Him, His Word, and heed it.

So, don’t let your past define your future. Rather, commit for the year a generous
proportion of your income, which is God’s gift to you for this body and life.



Your Past Does Not Define Your Future

New Year's is a celebration of the past and the future. We take stock of the past with thanksgiving and sometimes even relief (that it's over), and we look to the future in hope and anticipation, and perhaps with some worry, for what it holds.


The point is that New Year's celebrations remind us of who we are as opposed to who we would like to be, what we have done in comparison to what we want to do. It reminds us of our accomplishments, but mostly it reminds us of our failures. What we've lost. Who we've lost.

New Year's is our own version of Charles Dickens' classic, *A Christmas Carol*. And we all play Scrooge. We are visited by the ghosts of our pasts, presents and futures.




St. Paul writes: "The point is this: whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows bountifully will also reap bountifully. Each one must give as he has decided in his heart, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver. And God is able to make all grace abound to you, so that having all sufficiency in all things at all times, you may abound in every good work. As it is written, 'He has distributed freely, he has given to the poor; his righteousness endures forever.' He who supplies seed to the sower and bread for food will supply and multiply your seed for sowing and increase the harvest of your righteousness. You will be enriched in every way for all your generosity, which through us will produce thanksgiving to God" (2 Cor. 9:6–15).

St. Paul tells us that the Lord will both supply and increase what we need to give to the church for its work in the world. He tells us that this work God does in us will enrich and bless us in every way, and through this, will produce thanksgiving to God. With this in mind, here is some practical advice to help you take stock of your giving in years past and change what needs to be adjusted, improved, or done away with altogether.





FREE BREADS AND DESSERTS
DONATED WEEKLY BY: PANERA BREAD
to First St. John's Lutheran Church
140 W. King St., York, PA 17401
EVERY MONDAY
From 9:00 through 11:00 am - Pickup at the church
DOORS OPEN AT 9:00 AM

FIRST ST. JOHN'S MEMBERS AND GUESTS

WE WELCOME AND ENCOURAGE YOU.
 ENJOY OUR "LIVE" WORSHIP.



Women's Care Center
Pregnant?

WOMEN'S CARE CENTER

**Formerly Pregnancy & Family
 Resource Center**

40 South Richland Avenue

York, PA 17404

Phone: (717) 854-6285



Music & Worship Notes



December has passed. It was a month of many worship opportunities. Mid-week Advent, Sundays of Advent, Lessons and Carols service, German Christmas Service, Christmas Eve and Day services. Now we enter into a new calendar year and fewer opportunities to worship. All of the services will be on Sunday morning. New Years Day, the first Sunday, begins the month. The second Sunday will be focused on the Epiphany. The following Sundays continue the season of Epiphany. We learn many things about our Savior's early years.

A big **Thank You** to all the people who helped to make worship in December, meaningful. The Choir, The instrumentalists, The Liederkrantz-Hoby Chor, The people who provided the meals for the Wednesday evening services. The ladies of the LWML for serving the food at the reception after the German Christmas Service. The members of the congregation for decorating the church. All of you helped to make the services and events in December special.

The day and time to un-decorate the church is Friday, January 13 beginning at 6:00 pm

The Choir has begun working on music for the Lent and Easter season. They will again help to lead the Choral Tenebrae Service on Good Friday.

Ken Sanders,
MINISTER OF MUSIC



Epiphany



**ADULT
CHOIR**

Lois Hollinger, Lois Stambaugh, Dave Stambaugh, Beverly Card, Ding Wang, Zihong (Andy) Su.



Jesus' Baptism



Bible Story: Jesus' Baptism

Bible Text: Matthew 3:13-17

Story Truth(s):

- Jesus obeyed, which pleased God.
- Baptism is a picture of burial (death) and resurrection.
- Jesus set an example for all believers by being baptized.

Story: John was a prophet God called to announce the arrival of Jesus, the Messiah and Savior. John was baptizing people. "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand," John told them. Many ventured into the wilderness to confess their sins and be baptized by John. When they did, John told them that the baptism he offered wasn't enough to save, but that "He who is coming after me is mightier than I... He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire." John encouraged the people to look to the coming Savior for salvation.

The people gathered on one particular day. John began to tell them about their need for a Savior. He waded into the water to invite those who wanted to be baptized to come. Then the crowd parted, and Jesus came to be baptized!

At first, John was so humbled he said, "I need to be baptized by you, and you come to me?" But Jesus insisted. Even though Jesus did not need to repent because He never sinned, His baptism showed that Jesus would take the punishment for our sin. So John baptized Jesus.

As He came up out of the water, a voice from heaven said, "This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased." Oh, how those words must have blessed Jesus. His Father loved Him! His Father was pleased with Him! How He must have treasured those words in the difficult days that followed.

All who stood at the edge of the water that day were amazed by the baptism of Jesus. Even John, who had been telling the people Jesus was coming, was awed. The baptism of Jesus set the example for all His followers. Baptism is still a picture of our spiritual death and resurrection. So today, followers of Christ continue to be baptized.

