

The Epistle

JANUARY 2024

**St. John's Lutheran
Red Bud, Illinois**

**Church: 508 Bloom Street
618/282-2394**

**School: 808 South Main Street
618/282-3873**

618-282-4087 (fax)

office@stjohnsredbud.org

www.stjohnsredbud.org

Worship: Saturdays at 5 p.m.

Sundays at 8 and 10:30 a.m.

Christian Education Hour:

Sundays from 9:30-10:15 a.m.

We preach the Gospel of Jesus Christ, administer the sacraments and provide Christian education in service to all people.

Rev. Mark A. Nebel, Senior Pastor

Rev. Brian Nowak, Associate Pastor

Mrs. Lindsey Hudak, Director of Parish Music

Mr. Justin Palm, Principal

Mr. William Becker, Director of Christian Education

Mrs. Amanda Falkenhain, Daycare Director

From Lutheran Church Charities

Committed and Connected

“So in Christ we who are many form one body, and each member belongs to all the others.” Romans 12:5

The Bible describes the Christian life in war terms: fight, conquer, strive, battle, overcome, victory. You're in a spiritual battle whether you realize it or not, and you need support and backup. When you became a Christian, you became a member of God's army.

Imagine you go to a recruiting office to join the Army. They say, 'Wonderful, sign here.' You say: 'Wait! I have one stipulation. I don't want to be committed to any particular platoon. I want to be able to float around. I'll be part of the Army, but I don't want to be committed to a certain group of soldiers. If the battle gets too hot in one area, I'll move to another area and join another platoon. And if I dislike one platoon's leadership, I'll join another.'

Would you want a person like that fighting by your side? Of course you wouldn't! But that's how many Christians today relate to God's army. They float around from church to church with little or no commitment to any particular group of Christians – so while the battle is being fought, they are AWOL. There is no such thing as a free-

floating believer in the Bible. The difference between just attending church and becoming a member is like the difference between getting married and just living together. The distinction is commitment.

The Greek word for fellowship is *koinonia*, which means being committed to one another. Jesus said, '*By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another*' (John 13:35). And you can't love in absentia. So, be committed and connected.

Prayer- Heavenly Father, keep me connected and committed to those who are committed to serving a hurting world with the good news of Your Son, my Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

Your Pastors' Ponderings

I shared the above devotion with you because in this age of church "shopping and hopping" these words stress the importance of commitment to one's congregation. I also like the comparison of commitment to the difference there is between just living together and being married. That could be the subject of an article itself.

But now I return to my summary of the book, To Baptize or Not to Baptize, by Sarah Hinlicky Wilson, a pastor of the Evangelical Church in America. I introduced this review in this space in September's newsletter.

"Age is not the real point of dispute over baptismal practice....Churches that baptize infants usually follow up in early adolescence with confirmation, a period of instruction in Christian teaching that leads to a public profession of faith, affirming the youth's conscious embrace of the baptism received in infancy through the intervention of others....This is ultimately what undergirds the baptism of infants. Believing parents bring their children to Christ, asking for healing, forgiveness, and salvation, because the children cannot yet ask for themselves....The baptism of infants and children is one way to enact the faith of the church on behalf of individuals, until such time as the individuals can contribute their own voices and so participate in upholding the faith of others in the church."

On a different topic, you will notice a change in our weekend worship services. In the new year we will schedule Divine Services this, hopefully simple, way:

First Sunday: Divine Service One

Second Sunday: Divine Service Two

Third Sunday: Divine Service Three

Fourth Sunday: Divine Service Four

Fifth Sunday: Divine Service Five

(Saturdays will go with the Sunday.)

Your servant in Christ, Pastor Mark Nebel

Greetings in the Name of Jesus Christ,

HAPPY NEW YEAR!!!! Now it's time to settle down for a long, long Winter's nap. 😊 I pray that everyone had a wonderful Christmas Eve and Day. I also pray this new year will be one of prosperity and one of great service to our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

We now enter into the year 2024. If you would prefer the proper way of announcing the New Year, it would be the year 2024 "In the year of our Lord (A.D. or Anno Domini)." We've come to the end of one calendar year, but at the same time, another has begun. We often see the beginning of a new year as a new beginning. A new start. A chance for a fresh start.

Starting a new year provides us with the opportunity for change. We can make changes to things we have done wrong in this past year or things that have not worked. We can change the person we are. We can make the conscious choice to change for the better. To follow the life of a Christian. To be the better person. To let bygones be bygones.

However, as I think about it, why do we celebrate each new year? Yes, it may be considered a tradition. But why do we do it? Because we don't need to wait to celebrate each new year. No, we can do it much sooner. We can do it each and every day.

God tells us in Psalm 118:24 (ESV), "This is the day that the LORD has made; let us rejoice and be glad in it." We also read in the Book of Jeremiah 29:11 (NIV), "For I know the plans I have for you," declares the LORD, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future." In other words, we can and should celebrate and give thanks to our Lord and God for each and every day that He has provided us with on this earth.

We do not need to wait to celebrate each new year. We thank the Lord for each and every day that we wake. For we have been given a blessing from Him. Each day we wake is a gift from Him. An opportunity to do His bidding. Each day is an opportunity for us to change. To be a better person. To seek to do God's will. To go out and be witnesses for Him. To serve Him according to His plan and for His purposes. To be loving, caring, and gracious examples to others of what it means to live life as a Christian.

So, while we celebrate the beginning of each new year, let us not forget to thank the Lord for each day He has provided to us. God's blessings for a happy new year,

Associate Pastor Brian Nowak

Happy New Year!!!

New Member Welcome

Those who joined St. John's family of faith in the year 2023 through baptism, transfer of membership or Adult Confirmation are invited to be recognized and celebrated at our New Member Welcome on Sunday, January 21 in the Fellowship Hall between worship services (9:30-10:15 a.m.). Baptism lambs will be distributed. Representatives from our congregational groups will share what their members do. Refreshments will be enjoyed!

Voters Assembly Meeting

Our annual Voters Assembly meeting will be on Sunday, January 28 at 1 p.m. in the Fellowship Hall. There will be an election of officers and ministry board members. There will be a report on our financial results for 2023. Our Senior Youth will host a lunch in the Fellowship Hall beginning at noon.

From Your Director of Christian Education

A Blessed and prosperous New Year to you as we begin 2024. In hymn 896 from LSB, *Now Greet the Swiftly Changing Year* we sing in stanza one: "Now greet the swiftly changing year with joy and penitence sincere, Rejoice! Rejoice! With thanks embrace another year of grace." It is God's undeserved kindness that we do not achieve ourselves, but Jesus has secured our eternal and heavenly home by His death and resurrection!

On Friday, January 12 I would like to host a family fun night at the Fellowship Hall. Please bring a snack to share. Lemonade and bottled water will be available. We will have some board games, cards, puzzles (you are welcome to bring a family favorite too), for a fun filled evening. Let's start at 7 p.m. and end around 9 p.m. All ages are welcome to join in on the fun! The sixth grade class is hosting a trivia night and silent gift basket auction in the old gym at school on Saturday, Jan. 13. Doors open at 5 p.m. and we will start at 6 p.m. The Junior Youth are planning an event to the Perryville Rec. Center on Sunday, Jan. 14. More details to come. Christ Our Savior Lutheran High School is hosting a trivia night on Friday, January 19. We will celebrate National Lutheran Schools' week the 22-28. With the help of the Senior Youth noon lunch will be provided before the Voter's meeting at 1 p.m. on January 28.

I pray your 2024 finds time for worship, fellowship, and the study of God's word as we begin another year with the grace and mercy of our loving God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit!

Happy New Year, *DCE Bill Becker*

From the Principal's Pen

Happy New Year! I pray for health and safety for everyone in 2024!

The month of December went by quickly as we held many Christmas services. Our 3rd through 5th grade students started the Advent Season off with their service "A.D.V.E.N.T." on November 29th. The Kindergarten through 2nd grade spread the message via "Good News" on December 7th. Our 6th through 8th grade students were actors and readers in the "Road to Bethlehem" service on December 13th. The final service sharing the birth of Jesus comes from our Daycare and Preschool students with a service entitled "Love Came Down". We were so delighted to welcome guests back to these services and enjoyed the ambiance of fellowship that came with it and the opportunity for the children to proudly share the miracle of Christ's birth. What a blessed Christmas!!

Speaking of blessings, we all are very blessed to have everything the Lord has entrusted to us. We have been blessed in this way and are working to be a blessing to others in our community. This has been done in part as the Second Grade is collecting diapers, bottles and wipes for the Life Network of Southern Illinois in early January. Our school students have been decorating a "Warming Tree" in the lobby near our school entrance. The coats, scarves, hats, gloves, socks, and blankets will go to support students in need of these items. Thank you to Sara and Leslie for beginning this tradition at St. John's Lutheran. Finally, the students in junior high have been a blessing of friendship and fun as they have traveled to Garden Place on four dates in November and December to play "Farkle" with the residents. Both students and residents have enjoyed these events. We look forward to more opportunities like this in the future.

The end of the quarter was on December 20. Report cards will go home on January 5. Our students will return on January 4 after a nice Christmas break. Please also mark your calendars for January 15 as this is a holiday, Martin Luther King's Birthday. Lutheran Schools week will be held on January 21 - 28. There will be fun, fellowship, and outreach during this time with dress up days, a visit from Christ Our Savior Lutheran High School students as well as us collecting donations for a good cause. January 26th is the 100th Day of School and an early dismissal day at 11:20 am.

We will have many games and tournaments for basketball to fill our evenings in January. Then we will just be getting in to volleyball as the month ends so please watch the church and school calendar for event schedules.

May the Lord bless and strengthen you, Mr. Justin Palm



Elf on the Shelf is nothing compared to Principal in the Parking Lot. St. John's students were treated to this sight as they left school for Christmas break on December 20.

Thank You

"Thank you so very much for remembering us at Christmas with your kind cards, delicious food and snacks and generous gifts. We praise God for your goodness and support! We pray that our Lord Jesus Christ will bless you and keep you in His grace and mercy during this new year." *In Jesus' name, Pastor Mark and Cindy Nebel*

"Thank you for the generosity you have shown to our family during the holiday season. We thank God for our shared ministry in Jesus' name." *Pastor Brian and Heather Nowak and children*

"Dear school and church families of St. John's, Thank you for my gifts of Cougar Wear from the school families and for the Christmas check from the congregation. Your generosity is appreciated! May you all have a blessed New Year!" *DCE Bill Becker*

"Our deepest thanks for the many cards, gifts, food, and hugs given us at Christmas. All of the faculty and staff appreciate your generous goodness. This "thank you" also includes the Christmas bonus given to us from the congregation. We are so blessed by all of your support!"

Principal Justin Palm and the teachers & staff of St. John's Lutheran School

Evening Guild News

Our Evening Guild Gathering is Tuesday, January 16 at 7:00 p.m. with special guest Maribeth Hollinshead, Senior Solutions Director at Red Bud Regional Hospital. Devotions: Linda Guebert. Hostesses: Judy Guebert, Linda Guebert, and Peggy Hanebutt.

Mission Quilt Project Day: On Monday, January 22, assembling and tying quilts will be from 9 to 11 a.m. and again from 12:30 to 3:00 p.m. Please bring scissors.

The quilting schedule for January is Tuesdays from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. and Wednesdays from 9:00 a.m. to noon in the quilting room.

LWML Scholarships: The Southern Illinois District LWML offers scholarships to students going into full-time church work (pastor, teacher, DCE) for next fall's semester. Applications must be submitted by March 15. They are on the website at www.sidlwml.org.

Men's Club

St. John's Men's Club will gather on Thursday, January 11 at 7 p.m. in our Fellowship Hall for a time of fun, food and fellowship and perhaps some surprises.

Junior Youth

January Junior Youth Group Event--Sunday January 14th

Meet at the school parking lot at noon

Perryville Rec/Aquatic Center

800 City Park Drive, Perryville, MO

The rec center has a large pool with a slide, high diving boards, and a lily pad thing. There are also basketball courts and pickleball. A day pass is \$5 for all activities. we plan on leaving the rec center at 4 p.m. at the latest.

Junior High Youth Retreat at Camp Wartburg

Our Southern Illinois District Junior High Retreat is scheduled for January 26th-27th at Camp Wartburg. This retreat is specially crafted for youth in sixth through eighth grade, promising an unforgettable experience filled with exciting activities. Your youth can look forward to engaging in field games, indoor rock climbing, teamwork initiatives, a campfire, and much more!

This year, our Bible study theme is 'Where is He?' We'll be exploring the concept that Jesus is everywhere, even within us. It's an opportunity for personal growth, reflection, and connection with others.

The cost is \$99. You can secure your spot by registering at <https://campwartburg.com/>. If you have any questions or would like more details, feel free to reach out. We look forward to creating lasting memories together!

Senior Youth

Senior Youth will meet on Sunday, January 7 (a week earlier than normal) at noon in our church basement hangout.

Our Senior Youth is selling greeting cards (all occasions) for \$1. Cards are on display in the Fellowship Hall. We are using an honor system for payment. A money box is next to the card display. We also have full boxes of greeting cards for sale. They cost \$30 for 30 cards and a lovely storage box. *Stephanie & Kirk Liefer*



St. John's Lutheran Senior Youth Life committee along with Southwestern Illinois Lutherans for Life, assembled 21 baskets consisting of newborn items and cleaning supplies for the Coalition for Life Christmas Basket program. Coalition for Life is located in Fairview Heights and serves women who are facing unplanned pregnancies. Funds for the purchase of the items were supplied by Thrivent. Pictured with the baskets are Senior Youth members Jakob Biffar, Karson Liefer, and Samuel Roscow.

Invitation for Lutheran Young Adults*

Lutheran Young Adults (LYA) is a new group for young adults in the area to get together, meet new friends, and do something fun each month! Starting after January, we will be meeting on the third Friday of the month for different social activities. Our first event will be a volleyball night. We hope to see you there!

WHAT: Young Adult Volleyball Night

WHERE: Holy Cross Lutheran School (Gym), 304 South Street in Collinsville

WHEN: Friday, January 12th at 6:30 p.m.

At the start of the event, we'll split up into small teams. Teams will play games to 15 points. Teams will play on a rotation so everyone gets a chance to play each team. Snacks will be provided, too.

(*loosely defined as college age with no kids)

Website Bible Studies

Bible studies topics under the Media tab of our website www.stjohnsredbud.org are Amen, Angels, Antichrist, Apostles, Apostolic Preaching of the Resurrection, , Baptism Q & A, Church & Homosexuality, Communications Skills, Cremation, Christian Citizenship, Discussing Homosexuality, End of the World, Eternal Election and Predestination, Fear or Faith? Terror or Trust? Worldly Worry or Christian Living, God's Will in the Lives of His People, Haggai, Having the Right Attitude, Heaven, The Justice of God, Justification and Sanctification, Islam, Live By the Spirit, Malachi, Meditation, Philemon, Purses, The Resurrection in Revelation, Was Jesus a Vegetarian?, and Word Dwellers.

Sunday School

Our mission project this year (10% of our offerings) will benefit a local project, the Musketeer Market & Royal Table. Both of these are operated through our local District 132 Schools that supply families with food, basic care needs, and supplies for making birthday cakes for the elementary children in our local community.

Perfect Attendance for December-

3-Year-old: Eve Guebert, Lillian Guebert, Nolan Liefer, Clarke Thien, Colby Young, Clay Zeller; 4-Year-old: Demi Grohmann, Nolan Kassing, Benjamin Langrehr; Kindergarten: Kaly Young; First Grade: Jettson Grohmann, Ava Moll; Second Grade: Natalie Bowles, Ellie Stellhorn; Third Grade: Brewer Krick, Liam Langrehr; Fourth Grade: Jackson Carnahan; Fifth Grade: Natalie Kassing, Sydney Krick, Abby Stellhorn, Kade Young; Sixth Grade: Jozlynn Palm; Seventh Grade: Carson Bowles, Clare Carnahan, Carson Moll; Eighth Grade: Sydney Kassing. Thank you for your participation in and your support of our Sunday School ministry!

Financial Need For Medical Treatment

St. John's member and recent Red Bud High School graduate Ashlynn Crafton is battling leukemia. We can provide some financial assistance for her treatments at her GoFundMe account <https://gofund.me/3579ba87> or at an account set up with Buena Vista National Bank Account #272745. Thanks for helping her during this trying time.

January Servers

Flowers: Cindy Steele

Paraments: Ella Hemmer Cloths: Lynn Langrehr

We Bid a Fond Farewell

December 5 Removal of Chris Henry and Sandra Henry

December 14 Death of Faye Schwartzkopf

December 26 Death of Christine Stechmesser

The Prayer Chain

Vickie Heller is our Prayer Chain Coordinator. To serve in the Prayer Chain or if you have a prayer request, please contact her at dvheller@htc.net or 618/521-7417. Call our office to add someone to our worship prayers. *Confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous man is powerful and effective (James 5:16).*

Acolyte Schedule

Sat. Jan. 6 5 p.m. Brynlee Liefer
Sun. Jan. 7 8 a.m. Jacob Liefer
10:30 a.m. Lilly Meyer

Sat. Jan. 13 5 p.m. Addy Schloemann
Sun. Jan. 14 8 a.m. Aubrey Kiefer
10:30 a.m. Lucas Summers

Sat. Jan. 20 5 p.m. Case Hess
Sun. Jan. 21 8 a.m. Blaine Rohlfing
10:30 a.m. Kaydence Proctor

Sat. Jan. 27 5 p.m. Sydney Kassing
Sun. Jan. 28 8 a.m. Elle Sutton
10:30 a.m. Jackson Pensoneau

If you are not able to serve when scheduled, please switch with another acolyte and contact our office with the change. Thanks!

Worship Greeters

Sat. Dec. 30 5 p.m. Virginia and Mark Moeller
Sun. Dec. 31 10 a.m. Kalin and Kathy Liefer
5 p.m. Ron and Donna Burgdorf

Sat. Jan. 6 5 p.m. Stanley and Lynn Langrehr
Sun. Jan. 7 8 a.m. Olivia Schmitz and Cindy Steele
10:30 a.m. Ron and Diane Kunkelmann

Sat. Jan. 13 5 p.m. Virginia and Mark Moeller
Sun. Jan. 14 8 a.m. Clyde and Kathy Rowold
10:30 a.m. Gerald and Jill Hanebutt

Sat. Jan. 20 5 p.m. Stanley and Lynn Langrehr
Sun. Jan. 21 8 a.m. Roger and Peggy Hanebutt
10:30 a.m. Vernitta Wolter / Cindy Ebers

Sat., Jan. 27 5 p.m. Virginia and Mark Moeller
Sun. Jan. 28 8 a.m. Lisa Quinn / Christine Kellerhouse
10:30 p.m. Ken and Karen Wetzel

We need a person or couple to serve as greeters for the 5th Saturday of the month (4x a year) and special services. The only requirements, expectations and duties are to stand for about 15 minutes, smile and say "Good evening" to people as they enter the church. In other words, you can do this!

Midweek Bible Classes

Our midweek Bible classes will resume during the first week of January. Wednesday Women meet at 9:30 a.m. Wednesday evening's class on 2nd Chronicles meets at 7:30 p.m. and Thursday morning's class meets at 7:30 a.m. All of these classes meet in the Fellowship Hall.

Men's Bible Breakfast will be at 7 a.m. on the first and third (6th and 20th) Saturdays in January as we continue to study the Old Testament book of Proverbs, "God's Ancient Wisdom for Our Modern Living."

Music CDs Available

St. John's member Joan Voges offers music CDs from her Lilyfields Collection to us for a donation to our school's ministry. All of her Lilyfield CDs are available on the table in the Fellowship Hall for a \$10 donation to our school ministry. Former St. John's member Bryan Perdue has made his latest CD of music, "Freely Given, Freely Received," available for us to purchase. The \$10 will be used for our congregation's Debt Reduction. They are on the table in the Fellowship Hall.

Casey's Rewards

Cash for Classrooms- When you shop at Casey's using its rewards program you can donate your points to our St. John's school. Thank you!

Attention Coffee Drinkers

We are part of Community Coffee's program, "Cash for Schools." Clipping the proof of purchase off packages of ground coffee and/or K cups earns our school rewards. You can drop off proof of purchases at the school office. Thank you for using this program to benefit our school.

Southern Illinois District Mission Partnership

Our SID Mission Partnership Task Force is looking for support from congregations. The Dominican Republic Mission Partnership Task Force, a volunteer committee for the Southern Illinois District of the LCMS, is working to support the Lutheran Seminary in the Dominican Republic through partnership with our district congregations. We would like to ask you to consider joining us in our mission. You can join us by:

- Praying for the Dominican Republic seminary;
- Participating in local fundraising efforts and events;
- Partnering with us to organize and plan support ideas.

For information on getting involved, please contact our committee at sidlcmsmessage@gmail.com Thank you!!

LCMS Stewardship Ministry

The Chief Stewards of Humanity: Mom and Dad
St. Paul tells the Ephesians that the first commandment with a specific promise attached to it is, "Honor your father and mother so that it may go well with you, and you may live long in the land" (Ephesians 6:2). This promise is one indication of the importance of this commandment. The other thing that highlights the special nature of this commandment is its placement within the Ten Commandments.

The Ten Commandments are clearly organized in two big categories. The first three commandments deal with our relationship with God. This category is called the First Table of the Law. The last seven commandments, the Second Table of the Law, tell us how we should relate to other people. These two tables correspond to what Jesus calls the two greatest commandments: "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind," and "You shall love your neighbor as yourself" (Matthew 22:37-39).

The order of the Second Table of the Law is also important. We would say that murder is a greater sin than adultery, which is a greater sin than stealing, or lying, or coveting. But why is the Fourth Commandment first in the Second Table, ahead of "you shall not murder"? Is disobeying your parents really worse than murder? Or maybe we should give up thinking these commandments are ordered?

The overall effect of this order is to get us to see our parents as a connection point between our neighbors and our God. Throughout our upbringing our father and mother stand between us and God and deliver His gifts to us: God clothes us, feeds us, protects us and teaches His Word to us through our parents. So, parents have a very high calling from God. They are called to be stewards of the greatest gift: the gift of life.

Parenting thus gives us a keen insight into all our stewardship. Parents know that they have been given a great treasure in their children, a treasure that does not belong to them, yet for which they feel a great deal of responsibility. Truth be told, every gift we have been given is like this, because everything we have — whether our own personal skills and powers or our wealth and time — is all from God. He entrusts it all to us so that we can use it all and take care of it all for His great purposes.

LCMS Foundation

Bringing order and simplicity is a goal of estate planning

Louis and Brett were having coffee, the day after Christmas. Both were sharing with each other about how much their families have changed. Children are talking about retirement. Grandchildren are out of college and advancing in their careers. Brett said to Louis, “When Sally and I put our estate plan together 25 years ago, we felt a great responsibility to provide for our family, as they seemed to have so many needs. But now it seems to have changed somewhat. Even my youngest grandchild is better off financially than I am. But I do have a grandchild with special needs, and we are wondering what we should do for her. We also think a lot about our church and its future as times are changing. We are also stirred by the LCMS missionary who talked about the impact of the gospel on families over in Kenya. We know we need to update our plan, but it seems so complex and chaotic. We just don’t know where to start.”

Brett’s predicament is not uncommon. Most people find that their life situations and the tug of the gospel urge them to update their gift plans. We certainly do not live in a static world. It is therefore a good practice to review the gift plan within one’s estate plan every so often, whenever you feel life has changed. That look may certainly bring some effort. But that is just good stewardship of God’s things. We want to do well with God’s gifts, to make sure our families see Jesus through our care for them, and the world sees Jesus through our support of ministry.

In a bigger project, having some help always makes it easier. Your LCMS Foundation Gift Planning Counselor can help you create a roadmap for working through this process. In the end, you will have peace of mind knowing you are doing the Lord’s will. To get started on your journey, contact Scott Radden at (618) 977-4049 or Scott.Radden@lfnd.org for more information or to start your plan.

The Academy of Music

LESSONS are available for youth and adults. Our experienced instructors are excited to work with you! Weekly 30 or 60 minute lessons are offered on piano, flute, clarinet, saxophone, trumpet, french horn, trombone, tuba, organ, and voice. Students can expect recital and other community performance opportunities throughout the year. More information can be found by visiting us online at theacademyofmusic.org. To register, call 618-353-3322 or email hannah@theacademyofmusic.org or

THE ACADEMY INSTRUCTORS are offering lessons to help area students prepare for solo and ensemble contests. You may sign up for one or more lessons to work on contest music. Check our website or Facebook page in January to sign up! ([facebook.com/theacademyofmusic.cos](https://www.facebook.com/theacademyofmusic.cos))

SPRING SESSION BEGINS JANUARY 1. This is located at Christ Our Savior Lutheran Church in Freeburg.

Rev. Dr. Matthew Harrison, President of The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod

Advent is a time for repentance and gift giving, as we remember the birth of our Savior, Jesus Christ, who came to earth some 2,000 years ago for us and for our salvation.

This year, the Rev. Dr. Matthew C. Harrison, president of The Lutheran—Church Missouri Synod, reflects on the words of Matthew 2:10–11: “When the Wise Men saw the star, they rejoiced exceedingly with great joy. And going into the house, they saw the Child with Mary His mother, and they fell down and worshiped Him. Then, opening their treasures, they offered Him gifts, gold and frankincense and myrrh.”

“The Wise Men recognized the gift of Christ, and they came and gave Him their gifts,” Harrison says. “We recognize the gift of Christ to all of us. Our sins are forgiven. ... He came, this Babe in Bethlehem, to die on a cross for the sins of the world. Commemorating that fact, we rejoice, and we give gifts to one another. God’s richest blessings to you and your loved ones these Advent, Christmas and Epiphany seasons.”



January Church and School Calendar

Saturday, December 30-

5:00 p.m. Divine Service with Holy Communion

SUNDAY, Dec. 31- No Sunday School or Bible classes today

10:00 a.m. Divine Service with Holy Communion

5:00 p.m. New Year's Eve Holy Communion Service

Monday, January 1, 2024- Happy New Year!

10:00 a.m. New Year's Day Matins Service

Tuesday, January 2- Office Closed

9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Quilting in the Fellowship Hall

7:00 p.m. Board of Elders meets in the Fellowship Hall

Wednesday, January 3- No School!

9:00 a.m. Faculty meeting

9 a.m. to Noon Quilting in the Fellowship Hall

9:30 a.m. Women's Bible Class in the Fellowship Hall

7:30 p.m. Adult Bible Class in the Fellowship Hall

Thursday, January 4- School resumes!

7:30 a.m. Adult Bible Class in the Fellowship Hall

9:00 a.m. Office Staff meeting

5:30 p.m. Boys' Basketball at Chester Public School

6:00 p.m. Girls' A team Basketball at New Athens

6:00 p.m. Bell Choir practice in the church balcony

Friday, January 5- Girls&Boys B team tourney @ Collinsville

9:00 a.m. All-School Chapel service in the new gym

Saturday, January 6-

7:00 a.m. Men's Bible Breakfast in Fellowship Hall (Proverbs)

5:00 p.m. Divine Service with Holy Communion

SUNDAY, January 7-

8:00 a.m. Divine Service with Holy Communion

9:30 a.m. Adult & Youth Bible Classes; Sunday School

10:30 a.m. Divine Service

Noon Senior Youth gathering in church basement hangout

2:00 p.m. Take down Christmas decorations at church

Monday, January 8-

6:00 p.m. Girls' A & B Basketball vs. Rocher (8th grade night)

6:00 p.m. Board of Trustees meets in the school library

7:00 p.m. Choir practice in the school's music room

7:15 p.m. Board of Education meets in the school library

Tuesday, January 9- Girls' Basketball Regionals

10 a.m. -3 p.m. Pastors at Circuit Conference-Steeleville

9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Quilting in the Fellowship Hall

6:00 p.m. Boys' A team in OVC tourney @ St. Mary's

Wednesday, January 10-

7 a.m. & 3:30 p.m. 7th & 8th Public School confirmation classes

9:00 a.m. Grades 3-8 Chapel service at church

9 a.m. to Noon Quilting in the Fellowship Hall

9:30 a.m. Women's Bible Study in the Fellowship Hall

7:30 p.m. Adult Bible Class in the Fellowship Hall

Thursday, January 11-

7:30 a.m. Adult Bible Class in the Fellowship Hall

9:00 a.m. Office Staff meeting

3:00 p.m. Holy Communion service at church

6:00 p.m. Bell Choir practice in the church balcony

7:00 p.m. Men's Club gathering in the Fellowship Hall

Friday, January 12-

8:30 a.m. Early Childhood Chapel in the new gym

7:00 p.m. Family Fun Night in the Fellowship Hall

Saturday, January 13- 5:00 p.m. Divine Service

SUNDAY, January 14-

8:00 a.m. Divine Service

9:30 a.m. Sunday School, Adult and Youth Bible Class

10:30 a.m. Divine Service with Holy Communion

Noon Junior Youth to Perryville Rec Center

Monday, January 15- No School!

7:00 p.m. Church Council meeting in the school library

7:00 p.m. Choir practice in the school's music room

Tuesday, January 16-

9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Quilting in the Fellowship Hall

6:00 p.m. Boys' Basketball at Valmeyer

7:00 p.m. Evening Guild gathers in the Fellowship Hall

Wednesday, January 17

7 a.m. & 3:30 p.m. 7th & 8th Public School Conf. classes

9:00 a.m. Grades 3-8 Chapel service at school

9 a.m. to Noon Quilting in the Fellowship Hall

9:30 a.m. Women's Bible Study in the Fellowship Hall

7:30 p.m. Adult Bible Class in the Fellowship Hall

Thursday, January 18- Boys' ALT A team tournament

7:30 a.m. Adult Bible Class in the Fellowship Hall

9:00 a.m. Office Staff meeting

6:00 p.m. Bell Choir practice in the church balcony

Friday, January 19- 8:30 a.m. Early Childhood Chapel in new gym

Saturday, January 20-

7:00 a.m. Men's Bible Breakfast in Fellowship Hall (Proverbs)

5:00 p.m. Divine Service with Holy Communion

SUNDAY, January 21-

8:00 a.m. Divine Service with Holy Communion

9:30 a.m. New Member Welcome in the Fellowship Hall

9:30 a.m. Adult & Youth Bible Classes and Sunday School

10:30 a.m. Divine Service (Alternative)

Monday, January 22- Lutheran Schools' Week

9-11 a.m. & 12:30-3 p.m. Mission Quilt tying in the FH

7:00 p.m. Choir practice in the school's music room

Tuesday, January 23- Boys' Basketball Regionals

9 a.m. - 3 p.m. Quilting in the Fellowship Hall

1:30 p.m. Holy Communion at Red Bud Garden Place

Wednesday, January 24- Volleyball A team tourney at RBC

7:00 a.m. & 3:30 p.m. 7th & 8th Public School Conf. classes

9 a.m. Grades 3-8 Chapel service at church

9 a.m. to Noon Quilting in the Fellowship Hall

9:30 a.m. Women's Bible Study in the Fellowship Hall

7:30 p.m. Adult Bible Class in the Fellowship Hall

Thursday, January 25- Science Fair at school

7:30 a.m. Adult Bible Class in the Fellowship Hall

9:00 a.m. Office Staff meeting

1:30 p.m. Mad Science Assembly in old gym

4:00 p.m. Estate Fund Committee meeting in Pastor's office

6:00 p.m. Bell Choir practice in the church balcony

Friday, January 26- 100th Day of School

11:20 a.m. Early School dismissal; 12:45 p.m. Faculty meeting

Saturday, January 27- 5:00 p.m. Divine Service

SUNDAY, January 28-

8:00 a.m. Divine Service

9:30 a.m. Sunday School, Adult and Youth Bible Class

10:30 a.m. Divine Service with Holy Communion

Noon Senior Youth serve lunch in the Fellowship Hall

1:00 p.m. Annual Voters Assembly meeting

Monday, January 29-

6:00 p.m. Sunday School teachers' meeting in library

7:00 p.m. Choir practice in the school's music room

Tuesday, January 30-

9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Quilting in the Fellowship Hall

Wednesday, January 31-

7:00 a.m. & 3:30 p.m. 7th & 8th Public School Conf. classes

9 a.m. Grades 3-8 Chapel service at church

9 a.m. to Noon Quilting in the Fellowship Hall

9:30 a.m. Women's Bible Study in the Fellowship Hall

5:30 p.m. Volleyball at Chester Public School

7:30 p.m. Adult Bible Class in the Fellowship Hall