

ST. JOHN EPISTLE

January, 2016

St. John Lutheran Church- LCMC

409 South Main, P. O. Box 265, Thrall, TX 76578

Pastor - Jon Bielfeldt - 898-2587

Church (512)898-2136

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Doris Kaase - Office Secretary

Happy Birthday

1/03 - Jill Prather	1/20 - Bradlee Pitts
1/04 - Melanie Rathke	1/20 - Michelle Byrd
1/06 - Ronald Kattner	1/22 - Curtis Kerlin
1/06 - Vernell Dvorak	1/23 - Peggy Ging
1/08 - Cheryl Hall	1/24 - Stephanie Laurence
1/11 - Juanita Poldrack	1/25 - Coty Chapman
1/11 - Madison Flores	1/25 - Susan Wuthrich
1/13 - Gary Almquist	1/25 - Laurie Jansky
1/14 - Ismael Alderete	1/25 - Braden Gross
1/14 - Addison Bennight	1/26 - Morris Krueger
1/14 - Landon Mikulencak	1/26 - Catlynn Putnam
1/17 - Tephania Brees	1/30 - Blake Whitlow
1/17 - Aundrea Abernathy	1/31 - Nancy Mikulencak
1/17 - Michael Kattner	

ANNIVERSARY

1/22 - Howard & Janice Meyer

COUNCIL HIGHLIGHTS

Dec. 13, 2015

Old Business:

Finalized the 2016 budget.

Discussed the Chili Fundraiser on Jan. 20, 2016 – proceeds to go to the Building Fund.

New Business:

- 1. Still working on bids for future repairs needed.**
- 2. Set Jan. 10, 2016 to take down the Christmas decorations after the worship service with a potluck lunch.**
- 3. Kenneth Beckermann and Nancy Hall Leshikar will be asked to be co-chairs of our annual chili fundraiser.**
- 4. Annual congregational meeting is set for Jan. 17 and installation of new Council people on Jan. 24.**
- 5. Bennie & Bonnie Tomecek were approved as new members.**

Financial Report for Nov.. 2015

General/Bldg B/F	\$ 52,114.57	Expenses/General	– 7,759.38
Income	14,712.22	Expenses/Bldg	- 179.89
Total Income	66,826.79	Total Expenses	7,939.27

Gen Acct – \$46,022.23

Bldg. Acct 12,865.29

Balance in Bank as of Nov. 30, 2015 \$58,887.52

Balance in Savings Acct. 15,152.19

Total in Checking & Savings \$74,039.71

****The following amount is needed every Sunday to meet our budget: \$2175.48**

Offering per Sunday in Nov., 2015 were as following:

Nov. 1 – 2402.00; Nov. 8 – 1908.00; Nov. 15 – 1743.00; Nov. 22 – 1526.00;

Nov. 29 – 910.00

Pastor's phone bill –\$ 19.14; Bldg/mem – 130.00; reimb/ss – 4.99;

THRIVENT CHOICE - \$153.00; ED CENTER RENT – 150.00; THANKSGIVING EVE MEAL - \$66.00; THANKSGIVING EVE SERVICE - \$200.00; BLDG FUNDRAISER - \$5,500.00

YOUTH Activities

There are at least two more fundraisers in the work for Spring 2016. As soon as dates are confirmed, we will let you know.

Upcoming Events – Mark Your Calendars

Christmas Eve Program will be held Thursday, December 24th at 6:30 pm.
Youth

Youth's Annual Pancake Supper Fundraiser

The youth will hold their annual pancake supper on Sunday, February 7th from 5 – 7 p.m. Let your friends, neighbors, and family members know! Funds raised will go toward summer camp expenses.

Lenten Soup Suppers will begin Wednesday, February 17th at 6 p.m. An email will be sent out in a couple of weeks to sign up for soup, sandwiches, and dessert. Youth who help set up and clean up afterwards will receive credit towards their camp expenses. This is a free will fundraiser for the youth.

There are several Christian faith based movies coming out in the next few months you may want to look for.

Risen

January 22, 2016

God's Not Dead – 2

April 1, 2016

Please remember that the St. John Youth are on facebook. Go to www.facebook.com and search for St. John Lutheran Youth, Thrall, Texas.

Thoughts for the month:

- ❖ If the going gets easy, you may be going downhill.
- ❖ The pessimist keeps blowing out the light so he can see how dark it is.
- ❖ The distance a person goes is not as important as the direction.
- ❖ The best gift we can bestow on others is a good example.
- ❖ The best way to break a habit is to drop it.



Texas District

Mission Moment

by Pastor Bryce Formwalt
Director of Mission Growth

Another New Year is here and it is that time of year: the time for hope-filled people to make their list of New Year's Resolutions. All across the country people are making renewed commitments to eat better and exercise more, to get organized, to spend less and save more, to quit smoking, or to spend more time with family. And the list goes on and on.

Generally speaking, these are all positive resolutions and people do genuinely desire to live better and differently, even though it may be very difficult to make significant progress on one or more of these if it means altering years of bad habits. And our mistake is often in going this alone without the help of God or others. But through prayer, the power of the Holy Spirit and the partnership of community, many well-intended resolutions can bring about significant life change.

In the church, the New Year begins with Advent and I recently challenged a couple of our congregations during this season with two questions that I believe could lead to some powerful New Year's Resolutions:

1. How am I, personally, passionately, sharing Jesus with those who don't know him?
2. How are we, together as a church, purposefully engaging in mission and evangelism in the neighborhood in which God has planted us?

Now if you're like most church-going Christians in America, you will likely struggle to find an answer to both of those questions. And if that bothers you, then that's a good sign! That's a sign that God has got a hold of your heart and He desires to change your heart! And I would like to invite you to think about how you, individually, and your congregation working together, can more intentionally share the Good News of Jesus with others.

Visit with your pastor and brothers and sisters in Christ and in this New Year resolve to make a difference and break old patterns of complacency both personally and corporately. And through prayer, the power of the Holy Spirit, and with the partnership of your congregation, I know God can do amazing things in you and through you! In my mind, there is no greater investment to be made in life than in the Kingdom of God. So seek first God's Kingdom and righteousness, and all that you need will be given to you as well!



This is an article that I want to share with you. It was written by Rev. Douglas Morton and appeared in the Institute of Lutheran Theology publication, *The Word at Work*, Fall 2015 Vol.4.3&4. The article's title is,

THE UNIQUENESS OF THE GOSPEL.

How many religions are there out there in the world? Actually, while there are many different types of religious expressions, there are only two classes of religion. There are religions of the Law, which seek to reconcile the deity by things they do. Then, there is the religion of the Gospel, which brings us Jesus, through whom we have been reconciled to God.

The various religions of the Law differ with each other on many things in the areas of beliefs and morals. However, the one thing each one has in common is the idea that somehow, someday, I must do something - be it hard or simple - to get on the good side of the deity (or deities).

There is something inside all people that tells them they must do certain things to be in the good graces of whoever or whatever runs this universe. Thus, people invent all sorts of things they must do. One religious expression may differ with another religious expression on what needs to be done, but each one agrees that something needs to be done by the religious devotee. The only problem is, no one who follows this type of thinking can ever be sure if he or she is in the deity's good graces, because no one can ever seem to do enough.

On the other hand, it is the Apostle Paul who says there is nothing we can do to get on the good side of God. Rather, this is done by God himself. "But God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us" (Romans 5:8; ESV). "In Christ God was reconciling the world to himself, not counting their trespasses against them" (2 Corinthians 5:19; ESV).

This is the 'religion of the Gospel: where the news of what God has done for the world in Jesus Christ is truly good news. The gospel is so revolutionary that no human being would have ever thought it up. It is the message of forgiveness of sins in Jesus Christ, a message that says all our sins have been dealt with on Jesus at the cross. Its message says that Christ takes our sin and gives us his righteousness. "For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God" (2 Corinthians 5:21;ESV).

Just before Jesus died on the cross, he cried out, "It is finished" (John 19:30; ESV). "It is finished;" means that everything needed for us to be made right with God has been accomplished by Jesus; nothing more needs to be added. That's good news! That's the Gospel! Rather than working at trying to get into God's good graces, the Gospel invites us to simply rest in the fact that we are in God's good graces through Jesus Christ. That is why it can only be received through faith (trust).

There is religion of the Law, and then there is the religion of the Gospel. The religion of the Law is the way of works, the way of 'doing'. The religion of the Gospel is the way of forgiveness in Christ which makes us right with God. Or, as the Apostle Paul writes, "Now to the one who works, his wages are not counted as a gift but as his due. And to the one who does not work but believes in him who justifies the ungodly, his faith is counted as righteousness" (Romans 4:4-5; ESV). Now, what excites you more? Religion of the Law with its 'do, do, do!', or religion of the Gospel with its 'done, done, done'? I know the one that gets me all excited. It's unique and like no other message in the world.

AMBASSADORS FOR GOD

	Jan. 3	Jan 10	Jan 17	Jan 24	Jan. 31
ACOLYTE	D. Qualls	S. Koehne	K. Klotz	Blake Whitlow	M. Hamann
READER	C Koehne	L Richter	C. Pick	K. Klotz	K. Meyer
FLOWERS	open	open	open	B. Putnam	open
GREETER	C. Koehne	L. Richter	J. Pick	B. Putnam	D. Schwettman
NURSERY	Open				
Communion Assistant	K. Klotz		K. Klotz		
USHER	K. Klotz				
OFFERING HELPERS	Youth	Youth	Youth	Youth	Youth

COUNCIL SERVERS Debbie Ging, Richard Jansky, Chris Meyer, and Linda Richter.

THANKS TO EVERYONE WHO SERVES! IF YOU CAN'T SERVE WHEN SCHEDULED, PLEASE FIND SOMEONE TO TAKE YOUR PLACE!!!! Please notify the church office by Tuesday if you are placing flowers on the altar & for what occasion.

March 2015

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
					1	2
3 9 am Sunday School 10:15 am Worship/Holy Communion	4	5	6	7	8	9
10 8 am Council 9 am Sunday School 10:15 am Worship	11	12	13 2pm Circle 7pm Mens Group	14	15	16
17 9 am Sunday School 10:15 am Worship/Communion- Annual Meeting	18	19	20 5-7pm Annual Chili Fundraiser	21	22	23
24 9 am Sunday School 10:15 am Worship/Installation of Council	25	26	27	28	29	30
31 9 am Sunday School 10:15 am Worship						

ANNUAL CHILI FUNDRAISER

The annual chili fundraiser will be on Wed. Jan. 20 from 5-7 pm. Kenneth Beckermann and Nancy Hall Leshikar will be the Co chairpeople.

Everyones help is needed to make this fundraiser a success!

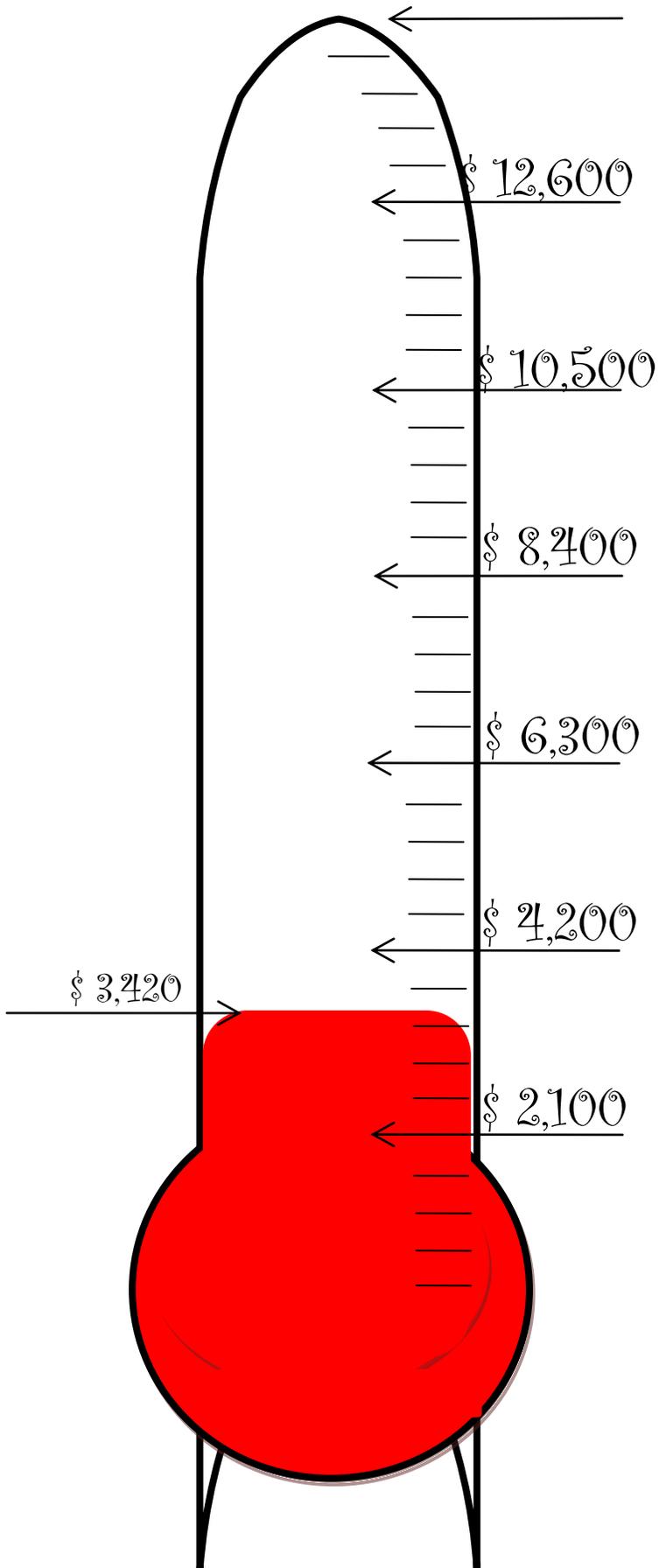
We will need cookers, bakers, servers, and clean up people.

Tickets are \$10! If you have not picked up your tickets yet please pick them up at the church office. You can also pick up tickets to sell.

YEAR BOOK – 2016

Work has begun on the 2016 Yearbook! If you have a new address, new phone number or any other new information – please turn it in to the church office by January 4, 2016. Your help with this will be appreciated.

2016 Camp Eagle



Every donation counts!