



Family of Christ Lutheran Church  
285 County Road E  
Houlton, Wisconsin 54082



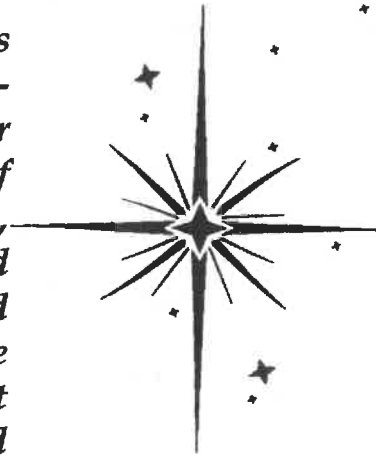
## THE FAMILY FOCUS

Family of Christ Lutheran Church

Volume 20 Issue 12

December 2018

*And there were shepherds living out in the fields nearby, keeping watch over their flocks at night. An angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid. I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people.*



*Family of Christ is offering several opportunities for all to join in celebrating this Christmas season including:*

- Sunday, Dec. 16 - 9:30am Children's Christmas program*
- Sunday, Dec. 23 - Service at 9:30am, No education hour*
- Monday, Dec. 24 - Christmas Eve Candlelight w/ Communion 4pm*  
*Christmas Eve Candlelight w/ Communion 6pm*
- Tuesday, Dec. 25 - Christmas Service w/ Communion 10am*
- Wednesday, Dec. 26 - No Confirmation, Church, or Choir*
- Sunday, Dec. 30 - Service at 9:30am, No education hour*

### What's inside:

- Advent by Candlelight
- Adopt a Family Christmas gifts
- Advent suppers
- Mitten Tree
- Christmas Trees for sale

### STAFF

Chad Czischke,  
Pastor  
Connie Gove,  
Office Secretary  
Cindy Leonard,  
Instrumentalist  
Christine Scheid,  
Choir Director  
Greg Gove,  
Custodian

### CHURCH LEADERS

Becky Volovsek,  
President  
John Bantari,  
Vice-President  
Teri Zupancich,  
Council Secretary  
Karen Heinecke,  
Treasurer  
Patty Long,  
Financial Secretary  
Dave Hayenga,  
Bd. of Trustees  
Al Neuendorf,  
Bd. of Elders  
Jan Gavin,  
Bd. of Education  
Debbie Alms,  
Bd. of Outreach  
Sue Hanson,  
Bd. of Stewardship

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[www.familyofchristhudson.org](http://www.familyofchristhudson.org)

### WORSHIP SCHEDULE:

#### Sunday~

- 9:30 a.m.—Worship w/Communion
- 10:30 a.m.—Refreshments & Fellowship
- 10:45 a.m.—Education Hour for All Ages;  
September—May
- Sunday School (age 3—Grade 5)
- Youth Group (Grades 6—12)
- Adult Bible Class

#### Wednesday~

- 5:30 p.m.—Confirmation Class (Grades 6-7)
- 6:30 p.m.—Worship w/Communion
- 7:15 p.m.—Choir (Sept. - May)
- 7:20 p.m.—Confirmation class (Grade 8)

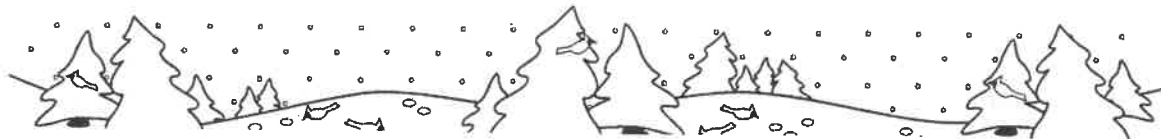
### Our Mission Statement...

*We are Christ's family, joined to him and to one another (Eph. 2:19-22, 4:16; 1 Cor. 12:27; John 15:5-8). In following the direction of our Lord Jesus Christ and sharing his love with others (Matt. 28:18-20);*

- 1) *We are committed to learning, living and teaching the Word.*
- 2) *We are committed to seeking the need for God in each other.*
- 3) *We are committed to celebrating His presence in our lives.*
- 4) *We are committed to reaching out to touch the lives of others with God's love.*

**Newsletter Articles Must be Submitted by the 22nd of each Month**





Could you ever skip Christmas?

Christmas with the Krank's was a movie that came out in 2004, that attempted to put a hilarious spin on the idea of completely skipping Christmas. Throughout the movie, the couple that made the decision to skip Christmas for a Caribbean cruise tried their best to walk away from every aspect of what they did in years past. The more they stepped away from, the more they had to change who they were in order to accomplish their new Christmas plans. In the end, their plans were changed by the return of their daughter and her new fiancée, which created additional humor as they rushed to have their big Christmas Party. Again, it was an attempt to add humor to the idea of skipping Christmas. Could you do it?

I thought about this idea as I watched the movie, and began to think about going on a cruise instead of celebrating Christmas. Yet, I approached the idea from what could I actually give up about Christmas. In the end, I realized that I could do without all the craziness around Christmas, the rushing, buying, spending, cooking, wrapping, etc. However, I could not do without hearing God's Word of life and salvation that began for

us on the first Christmas, and being with family.

There is something about gathering at church, hearing God's Word of life and salvation, receiving Christ's Body and Blood for the forgiveness of sins, and holding a candle while singing Silent Night, Holy Night, all is calm, all is bright. For that moment, all is CALM! All is BRIGHT! While singing and hearing the Word of God we are reminded of the true Light that overcomes the darkness. It is a message of hope, and one that lasts through eternity. A true GIFT from God!

For that moment, none of the busyness or craziness matters, and the focus is Christ, Salvation, Forgiveness, Faith, Hope, and Love. I could never skip that! Yet, the other stuff; I probably could! How would you respond to the idea of skipping Christmas?

Maybe before answering that question stop and think about Christmas, and what brings you back each year? Yes, I realize that no matter what, December 25 will come every year. However, what keeps you desiring to go through the craziness and busyness to celebrate each year? Is it the eggnog, meal, family, presents, or the chance to worship the Light of the World with your

Continued on page 3



(Pastor's message continued from page 2)

earthly and heavenly family?

When I think back to my childhood, I miss a couple of things about Christmas. One was going to Candlelight Service at 11pm, with my family. The second thing was the goodies that we had prior to service, and reading Christmas stories to include the First Christmas and Twas the Night before Christmas. The memories still bring me back to Christmas every year, and I still enjoy celebrating during the Candlelight Service with my family.

Changing the question again, "what memories do you have of Christmas?" Do you have fond memories of certain things that your family did? Are your memories of Christmas happy and joyful, or were things a little different in your home?

Despite how you answer the questions in this article, I hope one thing remains in your heart and mind. Actually, my prayer for you is that during this Christmas Season the hope of the Light of Christ entering the world shines brightly through you. That you will find joy in Christ, celebrate with family and friends the blessings we have because of Christ taking on our likeness in order to overcome the brokenness of sin, and that you

are filled with His love. In addition, my prayer is that as we come to the end of another year all issues, problems, trials, and sorrowful moments are given over to God, and all wonderful, happy, and joyful moments continue to fill your heart to remind you of God's many blessings.

Throughout this season labeled "The Season of Giving," the final piece of my prayer is that God's act of giving will strengthen you into the New Year, Christ's promise fills you with a never ending joy, and the Words of the Angels fills your heart and mind, "For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord."

As the movie ends you hear one of the actors say, "Skipping Christmas, what a crazy idea." Missing God's love, joy, and peace at Christmas is crazy. May His love, grace, and mercy bless and keep you this Advent and Christmas Season. God's Blessings,

Pastor Czischke





## Birthdays & Anniversaries

- 1 ~ Kay Bierbrauer
- 1 ~ Teri Zupancich
- 2 ~ Ron Burton
- 2 ~ Karen Raleigh
- 2 ~ Ken Swenson
- 3 ~ Mindy Milich
- 6 ~ Kooper Rydeen
- 7 ~ Heidi Sandquist
- 8 ~ Lexi Czischke
- 11 ~ Debbie Alms
- 12 ~ Russ Callender
- 12 ~ Jeramy Grezek
- 13 ~ Mackenzie Myers

- 14 ~ Beth Pierce
- 16 ~ Nathan Erickson
- 16 ~ Caymen Gebheim
- 17 ~ Brandon Hovel
- 19 ~ Olivia Nelson
- 19 ~ Eden Phillips
- 20 ~ Jeff Robers
- 21 ~ Finley Rome
- 23 ~ Greg Blair
- 23 ~ Tracy Renn
- 24 ~ Bjorn Carlson
- 25 ~ Ben Pierce
- 25 ~ Elizabeth Rome
- 25 ~ Natalie Sandahl
- 26 ~ Trent Blinkman
- 26 ~ Kim Gunderson
- 26 ~ Cullen McConaughy
- 28 ~ Peyton McConaughy
- 29 ~ Emily Alms

*Rob & Sarah Heinecke*  
8 on the 5th

*Scott & Gayle Boumeester*  
11 on the 31st

*Vic & Clara Veyland*  
16 on the 27th

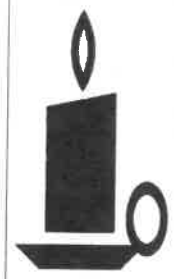
*Glenn & Jacquelyn Gasmen*  
28 on the 1st

*Louis & Kristie Naber*  
37 on the 31st

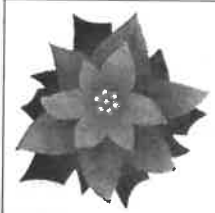
If your special day is missing or incorrect, please notify the office.

We are hosting an **Advent by Candlelight** for ladies of the congregation, on Sunday, December 2 at 6:00 pm. There is no charge for this event. The theme is Let your Light Appear. This is a wonderful evening of the Word, music, and fellowship to help you prepare your hearts for the Advent season before the holidays get into full swing!

**Hostess Opportunities:** Do you enjoy decorating? Volunteer to be a table hostess and we will reserve a table for you! You may also co-host and work together with a friend to host a table. Hostesses provide table settings, Advent wreath and candles and a dessert for a table of 6 to 8 ladies. It is lots of fun, and requires only a few hours of your time for planning, baking and decorating. If you want to host a table please sign up on the Bulletin Board. If you need more information before committing, please contact Debbie Alms or Jan Gavin.



The next **Come As You aRe** meeting is scheduled for Thursday, **December 6th at 6:45pm**. This Bible study for women is held at Annie and Keegan McConaughy's house (114 Heritage Tr., Houlton)



**Poinsettias for Christmas** - Please help us beautify our Worship & Narthex area by purchasing a poinsettia. They will be delivered a week or two before Christmas weekend. Prices vary because we're offering 3 sizes this year. Note pot size and cost after your name when signing up on the bulletin board. Please sign-up by Sunday, December 9th. Thank you!



Family of Christ's **Christmas Tree** lot is open for business. The trees are clearly marked and the lot is self-serve, but someone will come to your aid if you give a shout. to cover the cost of the trees we give to needy families in the area.



**Adopt-a-Family** Because our congregation is so very blessed, we are able to share our gifts with 2 local families this Christmas. The families are participants in our backpack program. They will all be very appreciative of the generosity of the members of Family of Christ. Their wish lists are on the bulletin board. Please sign up to give an item or two to each of these very deserving families. All gifts should be wrapped and labeled ( family #1 - boy 10, family #2 - girl 5, etc.) and brought to the church office by Dec. 23 unless other arrangements have been made with Pastor Chad.



We cordially invite you to the Family of Christ **Children's Christmas program** during worship on **Sunday, December 16th ~ 9:30am**. You will enjoy the traditional story of Christmas as told by our preschool through 5th grade classes. Come early to get a good seat!



**Advent meals** will be served each Wednesday in Advent (Dec. 5, 12, & 19). Sign up on the bulletin board if you would like to contribute to one of the meals. Everyone is welcome.



We continue to collect mittens for the children at Grace Place until their party in mid-December. Please place your donations on the **Mitten tree** in the narthex. They will be taken to Grace Place after the worship service on **December 9th**.





# December 2018

## Family of Christ Lutheran Church



- Please note there is always the possibility of meetings and events being cancelled and/or added. Be sure to check the weekly bulletin for changes.
- To have events and meetings included on this calendar page, they must be noted on the calendar in the office before the 22nd of every month.

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat		
<b>2</b> 9:30am ~ Worship 10:45am ~ Education hour 6:00pm ~ Advent by Candlelight	<b>3</b> 9:00am ~ Women's Bible Study	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b> 5:30pm ~ Confirmation (6-7) 5:30pm ~ Advent supper 6:30pm ~ Worship 7:15pm ~ Choir 7:20 ~ Confirmation (8)	<b>6</b> 6:45pm ~ Women's Bible Study at McConaughey's	<b>7</b>	<b>1</b>		
<b>9</b> 9:30am ~ Worship 10:45am ~ Education hour	<b>10</b> 8:00am ~ Ruth's Quilters  6:30pm ~ Board of Elders	<b>11</b> 11:30am ~ Men's Bible Study (Stillwater Joseph's)  7:00pm ~ LWML	<b>12</b> 5:30pm ~ Confirmation (6-7) 5:30pm ~ Advent supper 6:30pm ~ Worship 7:15pm ~ Choir 7:20 ~ Confirmation (8)	<b>13</b> 6:30pm ~ Church Council 7:00pm ~ Board of Trustees	<b>14</b>	<b>15</b> 8:00am ~ Men's Group		
<b>16</b> coins for missions 9:30am ~ Worship 10:45am ~ Children's Christmas Program	<b>17</b> 9:00am ~ Women's Bible Study	<b>18</b>	<b>19</b> 5:30pm ~ Confirmation (6-7) 5:30pm ~ Advent supper 6:30pm ~ Worship 7:15pm ~ Choir 7:20 ~ Confirmation (8)	<b>20</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>22</b>		
<b>23</b> 9:30am ~ Worship	<b>24</b> 4:00pm ~ Christmas Eve Worship 5:30pm ~ Feed Grace Place 6:00pm ~ Christmas Eve Worship	<b>25</b> 10:00am ~ Christmas Worship	<b>26</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>29</b>		
<b>30</b> 9:30am ~ Worship	<b>31</b>							
					<b>November 2018</b> S M T W T F S 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30		<b>January 2019</b> S M T W T F S 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31	



**Lutheran  
Women  
in Mission**

**LWML ~ Monthly Bible Study & Fellowship**

ALL women are invited to join our next LWML Bible study and fellowship on Tuesday, December 11th @ 7pm . The topic will be taken from the FALL Lutheran Women's Quarterly with extra copies available for any newcomers. There will also be a brief business meeting to discuss changing our meeting day and time from the second Tuesday evening to the second Saturday of the month beginning in January 2019. Other important upcoming dates are:

- February 2, 2019 - Winter Workshop @ Eastern Heights, St. Paul
- February 11, 2019 - St. Croix River Zone Delegate Board Meeting @ FOC
- April 6, 2019 - Spring Zone Rally @ Rose of Sharon, Cottage Grove

**LWML MITE Offerings**

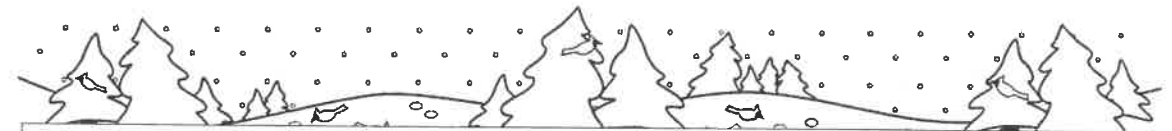
**THANK YOU** to all who contributed to the FOC semi-annual Fall MITE offerings! Your generous gifts of coins, cash and checks totaled \$291 to help support the National and District LWML Mission Grants & Goals. *Trust in him at all times, O people; pour out your heart before him; God is a refuge for us. Psalm 62:8.*

If you have any questions regarding LWML, please contact Joyce Banttari @ 715.247.5248 or 651.434-3261.



**BANK ACCOUNT** Imagine there is a bank, which credits your account each morning with Rs 86,400, carries over no balance from day to day, allows you to keep no cash balance, and every evening cancels whatever part of the amount you had failed to use during the day. What would you do? Draw out every pence, of course! Well, everyone has such a bank. Its name is Time.

Every morning, it credits you with 86,400 seconds. Every night it writes off, as lost, whatever of this you have failed to invest to good purpose. It carries over no balance. It allows no overdraft. Each day it opens a new account for you. Each night it burns the records of the day. If you fail to use the day's deposits, the loss is yours. There is no going back. There is no drawing against the "tomorrow." Therefore, there is never not enough time or too much time. Time management is decided by us alone and nobody else. It is never the case of us not having enough time to do things, but the case of whether we want to do it.



**Cash Flow Statement**

	<u>October 31</u>	<u>Year-to Date</u>
Income – donations	\$ 16,778.76	\$160,523.15
Building fund donations	890.00	12,272.38
Fundraiser income	0.00	2,446.40
Rent	0.00	925.00
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>\$ 17,668.76</b>	<b>\$176,166.93</b>
<b>Less Expenses (includes Int. on Loan)</b>	<b>\$ -15,424.58</b>	<b>\$ -170,163.25</b>
<b>Net income</b>	<b>\$ 2,244.18</b>	<b>\$ 6,003.68</b>
<b>Less principal loan payments</b>	<b>\$ -1,755.74</b>	<b>\$ -17,233.14</b>
<b>Balance</b>	<b>\$ 488.44</b>	<b>\$ 40.00</b>
Building loan balance 01/01/18	\$437,487.04	
Total principal payments year to date	-17,233.14	
Loan balance 10/31/18	\$420,253.90	
Loan payments each month are \$ 3,514.11		
Bank balances as of 10/31/18		
General checking	4,494.69	
Unrestricted savings	114.94	
	<u>4,609.63</u>	
Restricted savings (contingency)	86,032.78	

Notes: On Sept. 30 we borrowed \$6,000. from the contingency fund to pay bills. In Oct. the full amount was paid back.  
Full financial statements are available in the Church office and a copy is on the bulletin board.  
Karen Heinecke, treasurer



**PLEASE NOTE:** All contributions for the 2018 year must be received by December 30th. Any donations received after that will be posted to your 2019 statement. Contributions cannot be backdated. Please plan your offerings accordingly.



Family of Christ will be hosting a **Craft/Project Day on Saturday, January 26 from 9 am – 4 pm.** This free event is open to everyone, whether you already know how to do a craft/project, or if you would like to teach others how to do one, or if you've never done a craft and would simply like to learn! Bring your crafting or project supplies and we'll have a fun day making a variety of items. Join us for the whole day, or just an hour – whatever your schedule allows!



**Martin Luther quotes for every occasion**

- To perform a good deed once or twice is easy. But to avoid becoming bitter from the ingratitude and wickedness of those for whom you have done good deeds, that is difficult.
- There is no lovelier thing than a woman's love, for those who are granted it.
- A lie is like a snowball; the longer it goes on, the bigger it gets.
- There is nothing more powerful in the world than superstition.
- High oaths advertise profound lies.
- No sin is alone, but rather one always pulls the others after it.
- The world praises what it should disgrace and disgraces what it should praise.



I needed some supplies from a Sunday School cupboard that was seldom used and was secured with a lock. I didn't know the combination, but our clergyman offered to give it a try. Father Jack placed his fingers on the lock's dial and raised his eyes heavenward for a moment. Then he confidently spun the dial and opened the lock. Seeing how impressed I was with this demonstration of faith, he smiled and confided, "The numbers are written on the ceiling."

A small child with a bad cough was taken by her parents to a hospital emergency room. A nurse, examining the child's lungs with a stethoscope, told the child, "I have to see if Barney is in there." "I have Jesus in my heart," the child replied. "Barney is on my underwear."

A Sunday School teacher decided to have her young class memorize one of the most quoted passages in the Bible -- Psalm 23. She gave the youngsters a month to learn the verse. Little Bobby was excited about the task, but he just couldn't remember the Psalm. After much practice, he could barely get past the first line. On the day that the kids were scheduled to recite Psalm 23 in front of the congregation, Bobby was so nervous. When it was his turn, he stepped up to the microphone and said proudly, "The Lord is my shepherd . . . and that's all I need to know!"

A three-year-old boy went with his dad to see a litter of kittens. On returning home, he breathlessly informed his mother, "There were two boy kittens and two girl kittens." "How did you know?" his mother asked. "Daddy picked them up and looked underneath," he replied. "I think it's printed on the bottom."



Throughout his epistles and his preaching recorded in the Book of Acts, St. Paul refers, in one way or another, to thanksgiving and thankfulness nearly 50 times. Whether vertically toward God, or horizontally toward the neighbor, thanksgiving is a major theme within St. Paul's body of work.

What does this mean? It means thankfulness is intrinsic to the life of those baptized into Christ. In other words, giving thanks is what Christians do as they live out their lives in this world.

The problem is that we often forget this. Consider your average, run-of-the-mill, normal day. When you get home, and your parents, your spouse or your children ask about your day, what first comes to your mind? After 99 percent of things went right, went exactly as planned, were enjoyable and blessings, we tend to focus on and remember the 1 percent of things that went poorly, that didn't go as planned, and that were nuisances.

We remember the bad things. We focus on discontent. And we fail to give thanks in all circumstances for everything (Eph. 5:20) and to rejoice in the Lord always (Phil. 4:4).

Thankfulness and contentment go together. We are content with things for which we are thankful. St. Paul could be content with having plenty or when in need because He gave thanks to the Lord for all things. He thanked the Lord for those who had prayed for him and lis-

tened to his proclamation of the Gospel. He gave thanks for their good works in and for the Church of Christ. He gave thanks for the grace of God in Christ Jesus and found that God's grace was sufficient for him.

So, give thanks for all things and in all circumstances dear brothers and sisters in Christ. For you have been saved from sin, death, and hell by the death and resurrection of our Lord, Jesus Christ. You have been added to the very family of God in an adoption of grace through Holy Baptism. God is your Father. Our Lord, Jesus Christ is your brother.

But He not only provides for your spiritual well-being, He cares also for this body and life. Your Father in heaven provides food and clothes, house and home, husband, wife, and children. He gives you reason and all your senses. He has given you the raw talents that you have developed into careers. Everything you are and everything that you have is a gift from His fatherly divine goodness and mercy, without any merit or worthiness in you.

Give thanks for these things. Make a list -- every morning if you must. Say them out loud. Sing about them within the congregation of the saints. And remember this: God has given you these things so that you may be of service to those around you -- your family, your neighbors, your brothers and sisters in Christ. For to whom much is given; much shall be required (Luke 12:48).