



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



## THE FAMILY FOCUS

Family of Christ Lutheran Church

Volume 21 Issue 1

January 2019



### 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, or if you would like to teach others how to do a craft, or would if you've never done a craft and would simply like to learn! For those of you that already are working on some project - bring your crafting supplies and we'll have a fun day making a variety of crafts. If you don't have any projects in the works, please join us and share the supplies and ideas with others who are working on projects. Join us for the whole day, or just an hour - whatever your schedule allows! Watch for more details to come!

Family of Christ Lutheran Church  
285 County Road E  
Houlton, Wisconsin 54082  
(715)549-6140

E-mail: [focoffice@yahoo.com](mailto:focoffice@yahoo.com)  
[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.

#### What's inside:

- LWML moves to Saturday morning
- Camp registration opens in January
- Bible study opportunities

#### STAFF

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

#### CHURCH LEADERS

Becky Volovsek,  
President  
Heather McCutchen,  
Vice-President  
Teri Zupancich,  
Council Secretary  
Deb Zwiefelhofer,  
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  
Pam Neuendorf,  
Bd. of Stewardship

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



One of my favorite parts of the Bible is from Ecclesiastes 1:2, "Meaningless! Meaningless!" says the Teacher. "Utterly meaningless! Everything is meaningless." This verse says it all! Yet, as we begin a New Year, we are not thinking about things as meaningless. Instead we usually utilize this time to make a new beginning, a fresh start, and we make plans for how to accomplish that. No one wants to hear that everything is meaningless! Well, not just meaningless, but utterly meaningless. (Way to go King Solomon for giving us those great words of wisdom!!!)

Even listening to the radio the other day I heard multiple radio speakers talking about how people are working on or in the midst of their New Year's Resolutions. They were comparing which one gained the most attention, whether it was making more money, eating healthier, exercise, etc. In the end, they came to a conclusion that for the vast majority of people, resolutions do not work. We understand this, because as we think about making a fresh start in the New Year, it is easy to recognize that eventually life will take over and defeat our resolution. I would even go so far to take it back to the verse above, and say, "maybe it is not the resolution so much, as it is that we determine the resolution process is meaningless."

Now, I am not saying that it is meaningless to eat healthier, exercise more, become more organized, budget, etc. However, I do believe that

the whole resolution piece is meaningless, because it misses the point. As Christians, each day we have a fresh start, not just once a year! Martin Luther talked about this when he said, "As you are washing your face in the morning, remember your Baptism." If you want to talk about a fresh start that is not meaningless, then I encourage you to focus on your Baptism and what it actually means to be washed clean of original sin and made a child of God.

Paul writes in Romans 6, "That we are buried with Christ through our baptism." Wow! Now that is a fresh start; a new beginning! The best part of this new beginning is that after a few weeks or months, it is still fantastic. The promise in Baptism, which is backed by Jesus, cannot and does not fail. When Luther encourages us to remember our baptism as we wash our face or even take a shower, he is reminding us to remember something that is not "utterly meaningless."

It would almost appear that Solomon and Paul disagree, but how can that be? It can only happen if you pull Solomon's words out of context. In fact, as you read through Ecclesiastes, you will eventually receive the true wisdom from Solomon as he writes, "apart from God, everything is meaningless." Therefore, I would encourage that if you want to make a fresh start, then simply remember your Baptism. If that does not work, then remember the life that you



(Pastor's message continued from page 2)

have been given by God, which is a promise of eternal life, forgiveness, and salvation. Still, as humans we find the need to make a New Year's resolution, so I would encourage you to read further into Ecclesiastes. There you find a familiar text that is full of things to remember as we enter the New Year. From Ecclesiastes 3, "There is a time for everything, and a season for every activity under the heavens: a time to be born and a time to die, a time to plant and a time to uproot, a time to kill and a time to heal, a time to tear down and a time to build, a time to weep and a time to laugh, a time to mourn and a time to dance, a time to scatter stones and a time to gather them, a time to embrace and a time to refrain from embracing, a time to search and a time to give up, a time to keep and a time to throw away, a time to tear and a time to mend, a time to be silent and a time to speak, a time to love and a time to hate, a time for war and a time for peace."

Here we come across some great wisdom from King Solomon as he proclaims the truth regarding life. From this text Solomon promises that in life we will face all kinds of situations. The worst part of the text is that it does not tell us when, just that we will. For some this may be a little worrisome. However, in those moments, I pray that you will return to King Solomon's statement that "apart from God everything is meaningless." The key is to walk with God, and not apart

from Him. When we walk with God, it does not mean that suffering will not happen. Yet, returning to Paul for a minute, he writes, "suffering produces perseverance, perseverance produces character, character produces hope, and hope does not disappoint." The hope that we have in God cannot and does not disappoint, because through God we are made conquerors, and nothing can separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Christ overcomes all, and going back to the beginning, when we remember our Baptism, we also must remember that through Baptism we are buried with Christ so that just as He was raised by the glory of the Father, we too will rise to a new life. That new life is Heaven, for all eternity. It is for those who walk in and with God, put their trust in Him, and have faith in His promises. The outcome is not sad or somber, but joyful, exciting, wonderful, and full of life.

Sounds like a good New Year's resolution: "This year I will walk in and with God, realizing that apart from God everything is utterly meaningless. Yet with God, I have the promise of life, forgiveness, and salvation because of Christ's suffering, death, and resurrection. Therefore, I can enter this New Year, and overcome anything I deal with, not because I am strong, but because I can do all things through Christ who gives me strength." To God be the glory forever and ever!!



## Celebrating a



- 1 ~ Ron Flostrand
- 5 ~ John Banttari
- 6 ~ Eleanor Smith
- 7 ~ Bob Marty
- 8 ~ Evelyn Rydeen
- 9 ~ Cale Blinkman
- 9 ~ Shane Blinkman
- 9 ~ A.J. Longe
- 10 ~ Ruth Flostrand
- 11 ~ Dennis Bradford
- 11 ~ Chris Heinecke
- 15 ~ Vicki Schousek
- 16 ~ Tom Kendhammer
- 16 ~ Blake Myers
- 17 ~ LeAnn Amundson

- 17 ~ Tim Dornseif
- 18 ~ Lita Grezek
- 18 ~ Mike Gunderson
- 18 ~ Heather McCutchen
- 19 ~ Al Neuendorf
- 19 ~ Mike Renn
- 20 ~ Mark Votruba
- 21 ~ Greg Gove
- 23 ~ Nicole Miner
- 24 ~ Bella Kendhammer
- 24 ~ Tommy Kendhammer
- 24 ~ Roger Smith
- 26 ~ Josh Nichols
- 28 ~ Sam Phillips
- 29 ~ Kim Brown
- 29 ~ Karen Heinecke
- 29 ~ Katie Moos
- 29 ~ Jaxon Renn
- 31 ~ Marissa Brown



*Kyle & Sara McConaughy*  
5 on the 4th

*Tom & Sharon Kendhammer*  
12 on the 27th

*Mark & Glenda Brown*  
20 on the 15th

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



**Come As You aRe (C.A.Y.R.)**, the women's Bible study that meets at Keegan and Annie McConaughy's house will continue to meet at 6:45pm on the second and fourth Thursdays of each month. All women are welcome to join us.



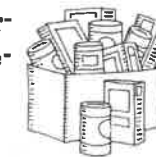
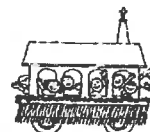
**Men's Group** meets on Saturday mornings to work on small repairs around the church. Of course, each session begins with a good solid breakfast (notice I didn't say "healthy"). What better way to ensure a quality outcome. All men are invited to participate at 8:00am on the third Saturday of the month.



Please plan on staying after church on January 6th to help un-deck the halls. It doesn't take long to pack up all the decorations if we have lots of willing hands. We can finish the job before Sunday school is done.



One year ago, I had no idea that God would call on me to raise my hand to join church council to work on outreach! 2018 was quite a year! As a church, we were able to continue with many favorite activities including **Fish Fry's**, **Summer Picnics**, and supporting our community through the **feeding at Grace Place**, the **Food Shelf** and **Backpack program**. We were also able to introduce new ways to reach our community including participating in the **Somerset Parade**, **Apple Fest** and our first **Advent by Candlelight**.



Many of our church members joined in outreach meetings throughout the year to share suggestions for how we can work together to share Christ's love to our community and world. The spring congregational survey also provided many thoughts and ideas for what we could do as a church body, and we thank you for your input!



As we started the book study Pastor began leading in December, we furthered our understanding of how and where we can join Jesus on His Mission! If you haven't read the book yet, or are not able to join the Sunday book study, I would like to encourage you to read the book (or search online for videos and information)! Jesus calls us all to work with Him. We are not alone, and when we each use our spiritual gifts, we can accomplish a great deal together.

The Outreach Committee is working through a plan for 2019, to include activities for each month starting with the Craft/Project day on January 26. We hope you will be there to work on your projects together, or learn a new craft! Watch for further updates on the opportunities for 2019, as our church members joins together to work with each other, using our God given gifts and talents to fulfill Christ's mission. If you have any suggestions or questions, please let me know! Debbie Alms - 612-839-6853 or [debbie.alms@oracle.com](mailto:debbie.alms@oracle.com).



**"Moses had the first tablet that could connect to the cloud."**



# January 2019

## 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>December 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 31		<b>1</b> 	<b>2</b> 6:30pm ~ Worship 7:15pm ~ Choir	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>6 EPIPHANY</b> 9:30am ~ Worship 10:45am ~ Education hour 	<b>7</b> 9:00am ~ Women's Bible Study	<b>8</b> 11:30am ~ Men's Bible Study (Stillwater Joseph's)	<b>9</b> 5:30pm ~ Confirmation (6-7) 6:30pm ~ Worship 7:15pm ~ Choir 7:20 ~ Confirmation (8)	<b>10</b> 6:45pm ~ C.A.Y.R. Women's Bible Study at McConaughy's 7:00pm ~ Board of Trustees	<b>11</b>	<b>12</b> 9:00am ~ LWML
<b>13</b> 9:30am ~ Worship 10:45am ~ Education hour 	<b>14</b> 8:00am ~ Ruth's Quilters 6:30pm ~ Board of Elders	<b>15</b>	<b>16</b> 5:30pm ~ Confirmation (6-7) 6:30pm ~ Worship 7:15pm ~ Choir 7:20 ~ Confirmation (8)	<b>17</b> 6:30pm ~ Church Council	<b>18</b>	<b>19</b> 8:00am ~ Men's Group
<b>20</b> coins for missions 9:30am ~ Worship 10:45am ~ Education hour	<b>21</b> 9:00am ~ Women's Bible Study MARTIN LUTHER KING JR. DAY	<b>22</b> 11:30am ~ Men's Bible Study (Stillwater Joseph's)	<b>23</b> 5:30pm ~ Confirmation (6-7) 6:30pm ~ Worship 7:15pm ~ Choir 7:20 ~ Confirmation (8)	<b>24</b> 6:45pm ~ C.A.Y.R. Women's Bible Study at McConaughy's	<b>25</b>	<b>26</b> 9:00am - Crafts/Projects
<b>27</b> 9:30am ~ Worship 10:45am ~ Education hour	<b>28</b> 5:30pm ~ Feed Grace Place	<b>29</b>	<b>30</b> 5:30pm ~ Confirmation (6-7) 6:30pm ~ Worship 7:15pm ~ Choir 7:20 ~ Confirmation (8)	<b>31</b>	<b>February 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	



**Lutheran Women in Mission**

**Monthly Bible Study & Fellowship is "Moving"**

The group of women that have been meeting for LWML Bible study and fellowship on the second Tuesday of each month made the decision to move our meeting time to the **SECOND Saturday of each month - beginning on January 12<sup>th</sup> @ 9:00am**. The January Bible study will be "Grace Upon Grace" taken from the FALL Lutheran Women's Quarterly, pages 16-17, with extra copies available for any newcomers. John 1:16 states *For from his (Jesus') fullness we have all received, grace upon grace*. ALL women & friends at Family of Christ are welcome to join in this discussion of encouragement, comfort and hope! If you have any questions regarding LWML or need a ride to our meeting, please contact Joyce Banttari @ 715.247.5248 or 651.434-3261.

Please watch the bulletin board and weekly announcements for details and sign-up to attend the LWML Winter Workshop that will be held on the morning of Saturday, February 2, 2019 at Eastern Heights Lutheran Church in St. Paul. We will plan to carpool together from FOC.

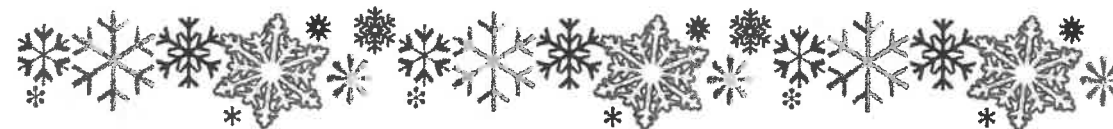
The St. Croix River Zone Spring Delegate Board Meeting will be hosted at FOC Monday, February 11, 2019 at 9:30am. Anyone interested is welcome to attend.

Mark your calendars for Saturday, April 6, 2019 and plan to attend the LWML Spring Zone Rally that will be held at Rose of Sharon Lutheran Church in Cottage Grove. Guest speaker will be Rev. Ben Griffin, from LINC Twin Cities.



The new **flower calendar** for 2019 has been posted on the bulletin board. Please sign up for as many dates as you wish to bring flowers to decorate our altar; recognize a special date or just because. You can take them home after the worship service and enjoy them all week. How's that for incentive?

**Temples are free to enter but still empty. Pubs charge to enter, but are full. People ignore inner peace & choose to pay for self destruction.**



**Cash Flow Statement**

	<b>November 30</b>	<b>Year-to Date</b>
Income – donations	\$ 16,098.34	\$176,621.49
Building fund donations	1,030.00	13,302.38
Fundraiser income	0.00	2,446.40
Rent	0.00	925.00
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>\$ 17,128.34</b>	<b>\$193,295.27</b>
<b>Less Expenses (includes Int. on Loan)</b>	<b>\$ -14,617.72</b>	<b>\$ -184,780.97</b>
<b>Net income</b>	<b>\$ 2,510.62</b>	<b>\$ 8,514.30</b>
<b>Less principal loan payments</b>	<b>\$ -1,763.05</b>	<b>\$ -18,996.19</b>
<b>Balance</b>	<b>\$ 747.57</b>	<b>\$ 40.00</b>
Building loan balance 01/01/18	\$437,487.04	
Total principal payments year to date	-18,996.19	
Loan balance 11/30/18	\$418,490.85	
Loan payments each month are \$ 3,514.11		
<b>Bank balances as of 11/30/18</b>		
General checking	3,996.27	
Unrestricted savings	676.88	
	<u>4,672.15</u>	
Restricted savings (contingency)	81,096.27	

Full financial statements are available in the Church office and a copy is on the bulletin board. Karen Heinecke, treasurer



It's not too early to begin thinking about **summer camp at Camp Wapogasset, Amery, WI!** Our church has reserved 10 spots for the August 4 -9, 2019 session for upper elementary and middle school youth and friends. **Registration opens on January 15, 2019.** It is especially important to register early if your child is interested in attending any of the Specialty Camp activities like horseback riding as they fill quickly! FOC's registration link is: <http://lwlbc.com/foc-houlton>. This link is active beginning on January 15, 2019. Keep in mind that our 10 spots are reserved for us only until March 2019. The kids who attended last year really liked Camp Wapo! If you have questions about this opportunity please talk to Jan Gavin, Board of Ed Chair.



## When I Got to Heaven

**I was shocked, confused, bewildered  
As I entered Heaven's door  
Not by the beauty of it all  
By the lights or its decor.**

**But it was the folks in Heaven  
Who made me sputter and gasp  
The thieves, the liars, the sinners  
The alcoholics, the trash.**

**There stood the kid from seventh grade  
Who swiped my lunch money twice  
Next to him was my old neighbor  
Who never said anything nice.**

It is no secret that God calls us to be generous with the gifts He has given us. Throughout the Bible, we read that just as God has generously given to us, so are we to give generously one to another. As Jesus said, "By this all people will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another" (John 13:35) and "Be merciful, even as your Father is merciful" (Luke 6:36).

But God also calls us to give to Him. And He, who does all things well, presses it into service for the benefit of all the people of God. See for example what God spoke to Moses on Mount Sinai, after he and the people were safely brought out of Egypt across the Red Sea on dry land:

*The Lord said to Moses, "Speak to the people of Israel, that they take for me a contribution. From every man whose heart moves him you shall receive the contribution for me. And this is the contribution that you shall receive from them: gold, silver, and bronze, blue and purple and scarlet yarns and fine twined*

**Uncle Bill, who I always thought  
Was rotting away in hell  
Was sitting pretty on cloud nine  
Looking incredibly well.**

**I nudged Jesus, "What's the deal?  
I would love to hear Your take  
How'd all these sinners get up here?  
God must have made a mistake."**

**"And why is everyone so quiet  
So somber? Please give me a clue."  
"Hush, child," said He. "They're all in shock  
No one thought they'd see you!"**

*linen, goats' hair, tanned rams' skins, goatskins, [a] acacia wood, oil for the lamps, spices for the anointing oil and for the fragrant incense, onyx stones, and stones for setting, for the ephod and for the breast piece. And let them make me a sanctuary, that I may dwell in their midst. Exactly as I show you concerning the pattern of the tabernacle, and of all its furniture, so you shall make it. (Ex. 25: 1-9)*

Notice in verse two that the Lord instructs Moses to tell the Israelites to "take for me a contribution" and that from everyone motivated from gratitude for what God has just accomplished and given to them, Moses is to gather up "the contribution for me."

Pay attention, though, why the Lord wants the people of Israel to gather up these contributions for Him.

God tells Moses precisely why: "let them make me a sanctuary, that I may dwell in their midst." The purpose for the contribution of the Israelites was so that He may dwell with them, that He would live among them. Through the tabernacle and the priesthood, through their rites and ceremonies, through their



feasts and festivals, as through means, the Lord God, who brought them out of the bondage of Egypt would live and dwell among them and be their God, and lead them into the promised land, which flowed with milk and honey.

God dwells among us still. In the fullness of time, God's son was born of woman, born under the law to redeem those under the law. He brought us out of bondage to sin, death, the devil, and Hell, and He did this by His obedient suffering and death, his resurrection and ascension. But He is not gone. He dwells with us through the means of His Word and His sacraments, through the preaching and the teaching of our pastors, through the rites and ceremonies of our liturgy. He dwells with us in the Church through those means. And He is leading us to the true promised land, to the new heavens and the new earth in the new creation.

In the meantime, as God, even now, continues to call us to give to Him, let us, who have been saved from slavery to sin and death, the devil and hell, be so moved in our hearts as to give generously to Him so that the means of grace, the means of His gracious dwelling among us, would continue now and into the future. For just as He did then so does He do now. He presses the gifts given to Him into service for the benefit of all His people. He puts it to use so that we may have Him with us always, even unto the end of the age.

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 listened 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).*