



# Acts of Faith

Faith Evangelical Lutheran Church  
The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod  
Kewanee, Illinois



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## To Fulfill All Righteousness:

Jesus answered him, “Let it be so now, for thus it is fitting for us to fulfill all righteousness.” Matt. 3:15

The Church has set aside the First Sunday after Epiphany for us to focus on the Baptism of Our Lord. The account of Jesus’ Baptism is recorded in Matthew, Mark, and Luke’s Gospels. God clearly wants us to know that this is an important event in the life of Christ. This baptism marks the launching of Christ’s public ministry; the day when He takes up the position as the promised Messiah. The Father’s voice proclaims Jesus as his beloved Son, His chosen one.

In the presence of holy and sinless Jesus, John is painfully aware of his own sinful condition: “I need to be baptized by you, and do you come to me?” John says incredulously. Are you aware of your own sinfulness, as John was? But Jesus is gently insistent. He answers John: “Let it be so now, for thus it is fitting for us to fulfill all righteousness.” What’s going on here? What does Jesus mean by this? Why does he need to be baptized?



Jesus is acknowledging that this is how He is going to save sinners, by standing in with them, standing in for them, acting as their substitute. He’s embarking on his one mission, to save people from their sins, precisely by standing in for us, taking our place, beginning with this baptism and aiming for the cross. That’s why this baptism is so fitting.

Baptism signifies that one being baptized is connected to the baptizer. The act of baptism connects Christ with humanity’s need for cleansing, and points to His forthcoming role in the redemption of sinners. When Jesus was baptized by John, it was a confirmation that John was the messenger and forerunner to the Messiah as prophesied. Jesus was being obedient to God’s plan for salvation of all. By undergoing baptism and every element of the Father’s will, Jesus fulfills every righteous requirement set forth in Scripture. The mainstay of His plan of redemption is Jesus’ righteousness covers human imperfections and His faithfulness absorbs the penalty for sin.

Every aspect of Christ’s life, from baptism to resurrection, confirms the fullness of His obedience, secures the believer’s hope in salvation, and demonstrates that He is the ultimate revelation of God’s plan throughout all of Scripture. When we were baptized all our sins were washed away, by virtue of this man standing in the river and going to the cross. The Spirit of God came down on you, giving you a new heart, and bestowing God’s favor and blessing upon you. The Father’s voice came from heaven, declaring you to be his beloved child. Yes, dear Christian, in your baptism you are joined to Jesus, connected to Christ in his death and resurrection, buried with Him into death, and raised with Him in His resurrection. You are a new person now by baptism. You have a real purpose to your life, and you have a bright hope ahead of you.

“To fulfill all righteousness.” is a fitting way for you to think of the Baptism of Our Lord and to live in the joy and blessing of your own baptism. It’s a great thing to be baptized into Christ.

Heavenly Father, help us remember what all you have done for us so that we may gladly serve those in need.

**“If God is making you wait,  
do what waiters do and serve.”**

Christmas decorations take down  
Saturday, January 10,  
9:00 AM



**Worship Schedule**  
**9:00 AM, Sunday Worship Service**



Jan. 04	Carol Cook	White
Jan. 11	Leah Weber	White
Jan. 18	Kari Tavares	Green
Jan. 25	Marilyn Sturtevant	Green

***January's Calendar***

- Jan. 01 New Years Day
  - Jan. 04 Second Sunday after Christmas with Holy Communion**  
Mite box collection
  - Jan. 06 Epiphany
  - Jan. 08 WOF meeting 10:00 AM
  - Jan. 10 Remove decorations 9:00 AM
  - Jan. 11 Baptism of our Lord with Holy Communion**  
Voters Assembly 10:00AM
  - Jan. 18 Second Sunday after Epiphany with Holy Communion**
  - Jan. 19 Martin Luther King Jr. Day Observance
  - Jan. 25 Third Sunday after Epiphany with Holy communion**
- There will be no Elders or Council meeting in January

**ELDER'S LIST:**

- Kevin Hull: 309-852-0801
- Ron Larson: 309-853-5111
- Ted Sturtevant: 309-853-8203
- Gary Hahn 309-854-2203

**USHER'S LIST**

- 1st Sunday: Ted Sturtevant
- 2nd Sunday: Nick Phillips
- 3rd Sunday: Gary Hahn
- 4th Sunday: William Croegaert
- 5th Sunday: Jim Cook

Portals of Prayer devotional booklets are now available for the first quarter of the year (January-March) in small and medium sizes. Please pick up a copy for yourself and others you might know .

**Those For Whom We Pray:** Please include the following in your thoughts and daily prayers.

**Our Faith family:** Allison Leezer, Cari Bridgewater, Nancy Tudder, JoAnne Behnke, Nancy Gillespie, Melissa Newman, Peggy Faber, Bonnie Nuding, Randy Stockner, and Betty Godke.

**Friends:** Lesa Griffin, Jim Tudder, Steve Faber, and all military personnel and first responders.

**CID:** Our campus, prison, deaf, and Hispanic missions in the District need your prayers and support.

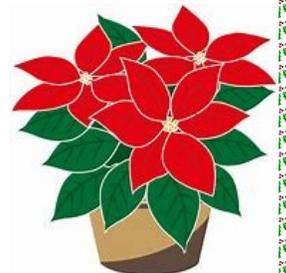
**Inactive Members:** Pray the Holy Spirit bring them to the understanding of their need to be in regular worship in church on Sunday, and that we as their brothers and sisters in Christ would reach out to them.



***Lord have mercy, Christ have mercy, Lord have mercy***

**Christmas poinsettias:** Thank you to those who donated flowers to decorate the chancel for the Christmas season. Thanks also to Kari who secured them for us.

- |                       |              |                            |
|-----------------------|--------------|----------------------------|
| In Memory of:         | Donna Becker | Loved Ones                 |
| Cervantez Family      | Loved Ones   | Jim and Carol Cook         |
| Gary and Mary Hahn    | Loved Ones   | Sandy Heinrich             |
| Mike and Paula Leezer | Loved Ones   | Ted and Marilyn Sturtevant |
|                       |              | Loved Ones                 |



# January



## Birthdays

Michael Estes	1/01
JoAnn Behnke	1/04
Maclin Talbot	1/10
Sophie Cervantez	1/11
Dawn Hull	1/14
Marilyn Sturtevant	1/18
Pamela Helmkamp	1/21
Aimery Jackson	1/21

## Baptism Dates

Sharon Larson	1/09
Ashley Phillips	1/02
Kaitlyn Johnson	1/31
Maclin Talbot	1/23
Casidy Tavares	1/10
Emma Tavares	1/01
Theo Tavares	1/18



**Women of Faith:** The women of Faith will be meeting at 10:00 AM on January 8th. Mary Hahn is the hostess. Bring a brown lunch. All ladies of the congregation are welcomed. Pictured at the right Carol Cook attempts to move a marshmallow with solo cup mittens in a game at the WOF Christmas luncheon last month. Six members and six guests were in attendance.



This month's mission grant is **Christ-Centered Hope for Cancer Patients- Phil's Friends**, — \$100,000 Phil's Friends has sent nearly 60,000 care packages and more than one million Cards of Hope. This ministry supports anyone with cancer regardless of age, gender, ethnicity, or income level. The care packages are hand-decorated, and the contents are customized according to the age and gender of the recipient. They are filled with simple, practical comfort items that cancer patients can use during their treatments. Phil's Friends is 100% donor supported. This grant will purchase supplies for care packages and Cards of Hope and will pay for shipping and postage to support 1,000 cancer patients for one year. Thank you for your support.



**2025 Operation Thankful** is a program sponsored by our Faith congregation in December to assist the Kewanee Food Pantry. Members are encouraged to bring donations of non-perishable food items or dollars to worship services during this season. This has been approved as a Thrivent Action project and \$250 has been received. This is a wonderful way for us to show our Christian love for the fellow citizens in our community. Items will be collected thru January 4th, 2026.



# Happy New Year 2026



*"Trust in the LORD with all your heart, and do not lean on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge Him, and He will make straight your paths." Proverbs 3:5-6*



**Church Council Report:** The treasurer's December's report was distributed, and Sue reported that the general fund has \$38,787.13 and the Memorial/Dedicated Fund has \$9,566.24 for a total of \$48,353.37. The church extension fund balance is \$96,645.63. Jim Behnke memorials totaling \$345 were received.

Pastor reported that Faith will hold three Thursday evening Advent services at 6:30 pm in December. Church Christmas decorations will be put up on December 6th at 9:00 am, and removed on January 10th.

A 2026 budget was approved and will be presented to the Voters in January. There were no new nominations of officers.

We are waiting on information from the State of Illinois concerning our certificate for our elevator which passed inspection last October. No word from Getz Fire Protection on a testing date for our sprinkler system.

Gary and Ted met with contractor about the repair of the north ceiling and wall. A bid of \$8500 to complete the work was accepted and a tentative start date of January 12 was agreed upon. Robert Godke's daughter, Julie, has offered to cover the cost of this project in memory of her parents. We thank her for this gift.

The Central Illinois District recently received a \$30,000 contribution for church worker scholarships from the ladies of the LWML – Central Illinois District as the first Mite Project of their annual convention cycle. Through generous gifts like this one, your CID Scholarship Fund was able to award more than \$170k in church worker scholarships this past year.



**Josh Bieri's Thank you:** Josh Bieri has sent the congregation a thank you for our gift of \$500 in his support. He thanks you all so much for your continued prayers and support. He is now serving a vicarage in La Crosse and Viroqua, WI. The note card is posted on the bulletin board in the Narthex area.

**Voters' Assembly** on January 11th business includes:

- Adopt 2026 Budget
- Elect 2026 Officers
- Officer's 2025 reports of blessings and remaining challenges.
- Chose voting lay delegate for LCMS Presidential election in 2026.
- Provide ideas and thoughts for congregational action in the new year.

**CID-CEF Investment Special Offering:** Even though the Federal Reserve just dropped their interest rate, the CID-CEF is still offering their 11-month investment at 3.75%. This is a limited time offer, so please take advantage of this opportunity to assist our churches and schools in financing the expansion of their ministries

**CID Dollars for Missions:** The current DFM project is for \$11,000 to replace original kitchen equipment in the sexton's apartment at Immanuel Lutheran Center in Macomb. The Student Center was dedicated in 1969, but some of the equipment in the kitchen of the apartment for the live-in student who takes care of the student center (the sexton) has not been replaced since then.

Q: Who were the wise men in the nativity story?

A: The story of the Wise Men, also known as the Magi, visiting the newborn Jesus is one of the most cherished narratives in Christian tradition. While the Gospel of Matthew's nativity account mentions their visit, he does not explicitly state their number or names, leaving much to interpretation and tradition. The names that are traditionally associated with the three kings – Melchior, Balthazar and Caspar – find their origin in an eighth-century Greek manuscript. Probably, these Gentiles were from the land of Arabia, Babylon, or Persia; whom God led to Jesus by a brilliant star in order to manifest that His saving plan is indeed for Gentiles as well as Jews.