

Life together

Olsburg-Walsburg Lutheran Parish

January 2020

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Save the Dates!!

*Next newsletter items and
articles will be due Jan 28*

Reflections by Pastor Keith

Happy new year! It is now 2020 and we are off and running in a brand new year. So what are you going to do this year? Have you got some exciting plans?

The first Christian holiday (holy day) in the year is the Festival of Epiphany which falls on January 6. Epiphany remembers the story of the wise men visiting the infant Jesus.

We don't know much about these people. Matthew calls them magi. Some Biblical scholars think they were astrologers, which makes sense, since they spent a lot of time watching the stars. Where did they come from? Some have speculated modern day Iran, or perhaps India or Arabia - we simply don't know. But come they did, looking for a king. And when they saw Jesus, they worshiped him and presented him with gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh.

It is now 2020 and we too worship the New Born King. So let me ask you, in this new year, what gifts will you give to Jesus, your Savior and Lord?

The first gift the Magi gave was gold. Gold is the symbol of kings and the treasure of nations, desired by all but possessed by few. Gold has been cherished throughout history. In the 5th century B.C., Aristotle wondered

what would be the perfect kind of money and concluded that gold is the best choice. Still today gold remains the time-honored standard of wealth. Gold is treasured by all.

Gold is for kings and Jesus is certainly a king. In fact he is the King of kings. Jesus is no ordinary king or president or politician. Jesus rules in a far different way. Jesus rules in the hearts and lives of people and through them influences the affairs of states, nations and the world. He rules not by force, but by love. He wants to rule your life. He wants to guide you through the dangers and difficulties of life. He wants to help you have a fulfilling and rewarding life.

The wise men gave gold to Jesus. What gifts of gold can you give to Jesus this year? You may not have actual gold to give, but you have treasures. How can you use your treasures to honor the King of kings? Can you generously support the work of the church? Can you use your money to help people all over the world know about Jesus? Can you give an extra gift of money to the World Hunger Appeal? Can you help someone in need? What gifts of gold can you give to Jesus this year?

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The second gift was frankincense. Frankincense comes from dried tree sap. In the ancient world, frankincense was used to make incense. The ancient Greeks and Romans burned frankincense in their homes to produce a sweet smelling aroma. The ancient Egyptians, Assyrians, and Babylonians used frankincense in their religious rituals. According to Exodus 30, the people of Israel were told to use frankincense when they worshiped God in the sanctuary and nowhere else. Frankincense is for God and Jesus is God. He is Emmanuel - he is the way God comes to be present with you every day of your life. He is the way God is at work in your life and in the world. Through Jesus, God takes care of you and provides for you and helps you.

The wise men gave frankincense to Jesus. What sweet smelling gifts can you give to Jesus this year to honor him as your Lord and your God? Time in worship? Time in prayer? Can you take a moment each day to give him thanks? Ephesians 5 says that when we live in love we give a fragrant offering to God. Who needs your love this year? Is there someone you can reach out to? Is there someone you can care for? What sweet smelling gift can you give to Jesus this year?

The third gift was myrrh. Myrrh is also produced from the dried sap of trees. Myrrh was burned in ancient Roman funerals to mask the smell emanating from charring corpses. It was also used during the time of Jesus to embalm the dead. In Mark 15 we read that Jesus was offered myrrh mixed with wine to drink when he was dying on the cross. In John 19 we read that Nicodemus brought myrrh to prepare the body of Jesus for burial.

Myrrh is for death and Jesus came to die for you. His death makes all the difference in the world for you. His death reconciles you to God. This means you and God are not enemies. You are forgiven. God is on your side. No matter what, God is for you. At all

times. In every circumstance. Working for your good. You can count on it!

The wise men gave myrrh to Jesus. The gift of myrrh anticipated his sacrificial death. Can you give a gift of myrrh? What sacrifice can you make for Jesus this year? Can you turn away from wrong doing? Are there sins you can put to death? A grudge? A jealousy? A resentment? A bitterness? Can you give the gift of forgiveness to someone? Can you give up some personal time to participate in one of the church's ministries. What sacrificial gift can you give to Jesus?

The magi were drawn to Jesus. I doubt they knew much about him. They had not heard his teachings and they didn't know about the cross and the empty tomb. Yet they were drawn to him. You know the story of Jesus far better than they. Knowing what Jesus has done for you, will you not worship him and give him gifts?

What gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh will you give this year?

Yours in Christ,
Pastor Keith

First Communion

Children desiring to begin receiving Holy Communion are invited to participate in a First Communion class which will begin in January. Parents are asked to notify Pastor Keith of their child's desire. Times and dates of the class will be announced later.

Annual Meeting Dates

Olsburg Annual Meeting

February 2 – Gather at Noon for a “pot-luck” lunch. The Annual meeting will follow immediately after lunch.

Walsburg Annual Meeting

February 9— Annual meeting following worship.

January birthdays and anniversaries

If you know of a member whose birthday is not listed, please contact the church office.

January Birthdays

- 2 Skyler Zoeller (O)
Landry Zoeller (O)
- 3 Darnell Vargo (O)
- 5 Gavin Hargrave (W)
- 6 Gary Holt (O)
- 8 Julie Strauss (W)
- 9 Jerry Bohnenblust (W)
Emily Nelson (W)
- 10 Marlene Jenkins (W)
- 15 Jeremiah Brenner (O)
- 16 Ethan Bohenblust (W)
Madison Hedden (W)
Witten Ricketts (O)

- 18 Russell Berry (W)
Lacy Brown (W)
Chase Gibbs (O)
- 19 Dawson Dick (W)
- 20 Colt Kasselman (O)
- 25 Bailee Howland (O)
Jan Nelson (W)
- 27 Brandon Nelson (O)
- 28 Alan Nelson (W)
- 29 Ryker Befort (O)
- 30 Bee Erickson (O)

January Anniversaries:

- 7 Mike & Debbie Hagenmaier (W)

Members in service

Thank you to these members for their service to the parish during January.

Olsburg

Ushers: Kent Nelson; Kyle Clifton; Bill Monser; Jacob Nelson
Communion Assistants: 1/5 Gregg Gibson; 1/19 Kristi Fronce
***Acolytes:** 1/5 Kaden Gutsch; 1/12 Grady Kasselman; 1/19 Brooklynn Zoeller; 1/26 Emma Kasselman
***Lay Assistants:** 1/5 kathy Monser; 1/12 Tom Nelson; 1/19 Karl Kasselman; 1/26 April Brenner
Altar Committee January: Kathy Monser; Kristi Fronce

Walsburg

Ushers and Greeters: Dennis & Denise Peterson; Trenton & Lynn Hargrave
Communion Ushers: Bill Neilson & Denise Peterson
***Lay Assistants:** 1/5 Linda Toomire; 1/12 Lori Rogge; 1/19 Dennis Peterson; 1/26 Mary Kay Henry
***Acolytes:** 1/5 Harper Befort 1/13 Mason Scofield; 1/19 Dawson Dick; 1/26
Altar Committee: January: Denise Peterson

***If you are unable to be present for your assignment, please find a replacement and contact the church office so the correct name will appear in the bulletin.**

Reminder

Our LifeTouch Mobile Directory is available online at <https://mobilizedirectory.lifetouch.com/201152/walsburg-lutheran-church>. The access code needed to get in to the directory is 18wlc.

“Souper” Bowl Kick Off Party at Walsburg

Walsburg Lutheran Church will host its annual "Souper Bowl Kickoff" lunch on Sunday, February 2.

The Fellowship/Outreach Committee will coordinate this event immediately following the worship service by serving hot soup, relishes and desserts. The public is invited to attend and bring cans of soup and/or cash to help support the Food Pantry.

Notes of Thanks

Many thanks for all the cards and gifts and expressions of Christmas joy and hope during the Christmas season. We are so grateful for each and every one of you! What a blessing you are! Pastor Keith and Carol

Thank you to the Walsburg Women of the ELCA who always remember me at Christmas time. I love the cookie plate and look forward to snacking while running bulletins! Shelly Burkland

Joys and sorrows

- † We rejoice that Jeremy and Anita Hinkle and their sons Jacob and Joshua who became new members at Walsburg on December 8. Jeremy is from near Barnes and Anita grew up in Abilene. They both work in Manhattan and live just a couple of miles from the Walsburg Church. Jacob is five years old and Joshua is three years old.
- † We rejoice with Ann Ingham who became a new member at Walsburg on December 8. Ann grew up in the Walsburg Church and is rejoining after a number of years. She lives in Raymond, Kansas, with her husband Michael, is a retired school teacher and a sister to Rhonda Baer..
- † We sorrow with the family and friends of LeRoy Bohnenblust who joined the saints in the Kingdom of Heaven on November 26, 2019. LeRoy was a member of Walsburg and was buried in the Walsburg cemetery.
- † We sorrow with the family and friends of Jerald (Jerry) Erickson who joined the saints in the Kingdom of Heaven on December 6, 2019. Jerry was a member of Walsburg and was buried in the Leonardville cemetery.

Words of Wisdom

“On entering the house, they saw the child with Mary his mother; and they knelt down and paid him homage. Then, opening their treasure chests, they offered him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh.” Matthew 2:11

“All they saw was a tumbled down shack and a poor young mother with a poor little Baby. He was not like a king at all, humbler than one of their own servants. Yet they did not hesitate, but with great faith cast out the doubts of common sense and accepted Jesus for a king, fell on their knees, worshiped Him and presented their treasures. If we Christians could be like the wise men, we should shut our eyes to all that glitters in the world and look rather on what is despised and foolish, help the poor, comfort the lowly and aide the neighbor in his need.” Martin Luther

“Each of you must give as you have made up your mind, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver. And God is able to provide you with every blessing in abundance, so that by always having enough of everything,

you may share abundantly in every good work.”
2 Corinthians 9:7-8

“O Lord, my God, you are all my riches, and everything I have is from you. You alone are good, just, and holy. You can do all things, give all things, fill all things with your goodness. Remember your mercies, Lord, and fill my heart with your grace.” Thomas a Kempis

Walsburg Lutheran Church Council Meeting Highlights

The Walsburg Council met on December 4, 2019. Below are some highlights from the meeting.

- The council approved adding the following members into our congregation: Ann Ingham and Jeremy, Anita, Jacob, and Joshua Hinkle.
- The council is working on the preparation of reports for the annual meeting.
- Pastor Keith will be offering communion classes starting in January for those wanting to begin receiving communion.
- The council is purchasing a tripod for the camera system so we can start utilizing this technology during the services.
- The council will be sending a letter to Pastor Janelle to thank her for visiting and considering our congregation and let her know our door is always open if she decides to reconsider us in the future.
- New council officers for 2020 are Gary Hargrave as President, Lee Hartford as Vice President, and Denise Peterson as Secretary.
- The 2020 Joint budget and Walsburg budget was accepted for recommendations to the congregations.
- Christmas morning offerings and council offerings will be donated to the Riley Food Pantry.
- The installation of new council members will be during the February 16, 2020 service.
- A new vacuum will be purchased for the church custodian.
- The Fellowship and Outreach is hosting the Christmas light tour on December 8, 2019.
- The church property committee will be working on cleaning up the lawn mower and replacing the yard lights that have already been purchased in front of the church.
- The fundraising committee has reported that all of the stained-glass windows have been pledged.

The meeting adjourned with the Lord's Prayer.

WALSBURG SUNDAY SCHOOL NEWS

2019 MITTEN TREE

Nearly 100 items were placed on the 2019 Christmas Mitten Tree! Items were distributed to Special Education students in Ft. Riley, two area elementary schools, and the Food Pantry. Thanks to all those who donated hats, scarves, and mittens/gloves.

CHILDREN'S SUNDAY SCHOOL CHRISTMAS PROGRAM

Thanks to the Walsburg Sunday School children for their Christmas program, "Twas the Night Before Christmas" on Sunday, December 8. Everyone enjoyed hearing the children share the story of Jesus' birth! The performance, including ringing of the bells, singing of the songs, and recitations of the children is a joy every Christmas! Thanks to Amber Befort for directing the program and the children's mothers who supported their children during practice and the performance!

SUNDAY SCHOOL BIBLE STORIES

During the month of January, children will be hearing the Bible stories listed below:

- January 5: John Prepares the Way
- January 12: Jesus is Baptized
- January 19: Jesus Calls Disciples
- January 26: Jesus Turns Water Into Wine

ELCA presiding bishop issues pastoral message on Iran conflict

"Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God" (Matthew 5:9). The current crisis between the United States and Iran is worrisome for many of us in our church, in our nation and in the world. Our country and Iran need urgently to find ways to resolve our differences through a de-escalation of the current crisis, using diplomacy and other peaceful means.

Armed conflict and war are always tragic for those directly involved and often as well for civilians, who also may suffer under punitive sanctions. These situations are evidence of broken relationships.

Our social statement, "For Peace in God's World," offers guidance: We of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America share with the Church of Jesus Christ in all times and places the calling to be peacemakers

The basis of the Church's peace-calling is in God's final peace, the peace of God's eternal reign. That calling is to proclaim the Gospel of God's final peace and to work for earthly peace. For our part, we have a window of opportunity to stop the current conflict before it worsens. We should appeal now to our elected officials to pursue the path of dialogue and diplomacy with Iran — for our sake, for the sake of the people of Iran and for the sake of the world God so loves.

In peace,
The Rev. Elizabeth A. Eaton
Presiding Bishop
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

Synod Assembly Planning Underway



The annual synod assembly will be held on June 4-6, 2020 at the [Renaissance Hotel](#), 9801 Natural Bridge Road, St. Louis, MO. The theme of the assembly is

God's Vitality Among Us: We are Church.

In addition to the business of the assembly, we will celebrate the 50th anniversary of the ordination of women and hear from **Dr. Cheryl Petersen** who has written the book *Who is Church: An Ecclesiology for the 21st Century*.

According to our synod constitution which was amended by action at the 2019 churchwide assembly:

- All rostered ministers under call shall be voting members of the assembly. Deacons no longer count as lay voting members, but as ordained.

At least 60 percent of the voting members shall be laypersons. Each congregation shall be entitled to send two lay voting members, typically one of whom shall be a man and one of whom shall be a woman. (Congregations with baptized membership over 500 are entitled to send additional voting members. Those congregations are listed [www.css-elca.org/assembly](#).) The synod council shall seek to ensure that at least 45% of the lay members of the assembly shall be women and at least 45% shall be men. This amendment allows for individuals to register without indicating a gender preference.

If in the event that a congregation needs to send two lay voting members who are both women or both men, that congregation must submit a waiver to the synod office by March 1, 2020. (waivers are available at [www.css-elca.org/assembly](#).) Please note that in order to ensure that at least 45% of the lay voting members are women and at least 45% are men, the synod council may not approve all waivers.

- A congregation may send additional lay voting members provided the person is a person of color or whose primary language is other than English or the person is a youth, under the age of 18 at the time of their election.

Registration will open by mid-February. Information can be found on the website at [www.css-elca.org/assembly](#) along with how to make a reservation. Early registration ends April 15, 2020.

Other deadlines to note:

- Submission of Nominations – April 15, 2020 (Open positions and forms will be posted on the website.)
Submission of Resolutions – April 15, 2020.

Save the Dates!

SAVE THE DATE for Noah The Musical, showing in Walsburg's Memorial Hall on Sunday, February 16. Musical starts at 5:00 p.m.

Noah The Musical, produced at a Sight and Sound theater, is an accurate re-telling of the story of Noah and the Ark from the Bible. Noah presented in such grand fashion, complete with on-stage ark, live animals and overall intricate set design. Noah the Musical will bring the story of Noah to life like never before.

Bring a snack to share at intermission. There is no admission charge. Invite family and friends!



Make plans now to attend our
COMMUNITY VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL

May 26th – May 29th

9 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.

Olsburg Lutheran Church

Where we will get on the Rocky Railway so our children will enjoy a faith-filled adventure and discover that trusting Jesus will pull them through life's ups and downs!

ALL CHILDREN 3 years old (and potty trained) through those who are in 6th grade are invited, and encouraged, to attend.

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We NEED adult and youth volunteers to make this VBS time a success! So, please, volunteer to help this year whether you've helped in the past or not. Should you be able to help us out just one or two days, please, give Luellen a call and let her know what day(s) you'd be available.

For questions, or to volunteer, please contact
Luellen Kasselman at 785.565.1240 or woodyk@twinvalley.net