



In order to help you along with your Christian New Year's resolutions, here are a few that we at St. John's can work on together.

- Resolve to receive God's Divine Service more often. Make an effort to come to church one more Sunday per month, with the goal of training yourself up for weekly attendance. Find a family member or friend in the congregation to encourage you and hold you accountable.

- Resolve to pray every day. Pray the Lord's Prayer, pray at meal times, pray for yourself and for others. St. John's Prayer Chain on Flocknote is a great tool. Take your announcement sheet home and pray the collect of the day and the prayer requests. Buy a hymnal and pray the prayers included throughout. I hope to start a weekday prayer service sometime this year so we can pray more together in one place.

- Resolve to consume God's Word every day. Memorize a few Psalms and verses to have on hand at any time. Follow a daily lectionary/devotion like Portals of Prayer, or St. John's Text on the Text on Flocknote. Use the Bible Gateway website or app on your phone for convenience. Spend some quality time with a small chunk of Scripture per day rather than having a daily page number goal. Again, a weekday prayer service will help some of us read Scripture together as well.

- Resolve to grow in virtue. Pick a virtue: love, generosity, chastity, honesty, self-control, etc., and make a conscious effort to practice it daily. As a congregation we can seek out service projects, charitable causes, and fellowship activities that help us practice virtue.

- Resolve to daily die to sin and live to righteousness. Repent daily, and forgive others who sin against you. Make private Confession and Absolution a habit, not just for the "really bad" sins. Remove temptations from your life and seek extra help or counsel to put an end to particularly troubling vices. I hope to spend some time this year studying the Christian life through the Epistles in Bible Study.

Pick one or two of these Christian resolutions to spend extra time on this new year, or come up with a couple of your own personal resolutions. Remain diligent in your pursuit of holy living. Don't let sin, sloth, or evil get in the way of your efforts. Remember that in Christ and His forgiveness and His divine life shared with you at the altar you are a holy child of God, you are a fruitful tree, and in Christ you have the power to live a Christian life even past January!

Yours in Christ,

Pastor Thomas Cowell  
The Season of Epiphany, Anno Domini 2019

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A changeless Christ for a changing world:  
A look back at our *Parish Messenger* from January, 1931.

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[The following article written by Rev. Richmann was published in the January, 1931 edition of the *Parish Messenger* of St. John's Lutheran Church.]

### **Retrospect --- Prospect**

Let us cast another glance at the past year 1930. Its so-called hard times, which most people consider the outstanding feature of the year, are still plainly in sight and its effects keenly felt. It was a year of wide-spread unemployment, drought, low prices for farm products, bank failures, etc. But is that all you are still able to see of 1930? Are not the innumerable blessings of the year just past likewise still plainly in sight? We have had our daily bread; we have not been denied any absolute necessity to support this body and life; there have been no destructive storms or total crop failures in this vicinity. These blessings of the year we ought to behold

and recognize, and not permit its hardships to overshadow them. Then, besides these and many other temporal benefits, we must not fail to see the greatest of all gifts of the year: the Word of God, which was preached to us regularly in its truth and purity, in which God offered to us the riches of His grace, in which He showed us our sins and our only Savior from sin, with which He comforted us in our tribulation, by which He instructed us in works of righteousness, and by which He has kept us in true faith in Christ Jesus. This we have had in 1930. What a pity if you fail to see this as you look back!

But the year 1931 is veiled in darkness. The things it has in store for us we cannot now see. In many respects it will be a repetition of the past year. To be sure, there will be troubles, hardships, and difficulties, though the nature of them is unknown to us. Not a very bright prospect, is it? But it becomes cheering the moment we remember that we need not go into these things alone and unaided. This is what your loving and almighty God says: "Fear thou not; for I am with thee: be not dismayed; for I am thy God: I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee; yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness." Isaiah 41:10. What a wonderful promise! Let this dispel all gloom and doubt. What stronger assurance for a blessed New Year could you desire? Therefore, knowing that our God will accompany us, help us and bless us in our daily toil and woe, let us go into this year cheerfully and confidently. Let us hake up anew the duties of our calling and perform them to the honor and glory of God's holy name. Let us also as member of Christ's holy Church "not become weary in well-doing," let us not relax in our efforts to build His kingdom; but become ever more zealous. Let us all, men, women, and children, young and old, in harmony and unity, work for the best interest of our dear St. John's congregation, giving it our moral and financial support, and in every way seek its welfare. Likewise, let us never refuse to take part in the great work of our Synod. God will richly reward our work of love. That is a glorious prospect, is it not?

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[The following are announcements taken from the January 1931 edition of the *Parish Messenger*.]

#### Annual Meeting January 4, 1931

The meeting was opened by reading a Scripture lesson and prayer. The minutes of the previous meeting were accepted as read. Messrs. F. A. Snyder and Albert Bierstedt were received as voting members. The treasurer then submitted his annual report, of which the following is a summary: Total receipts \$2,558.65; total disbursements \$2,432.62; balance \$126.03; bank balance \$179.00. After deducting a few bills the surplus is to be sent in for synodical purposes. [...] The following officers were elected: trustee for three years, Mr. Paul Kreger; treasurer, Mr. George Koestler; chairman, Mr. Will Koestler; Secretary, Rev. L. Richmann; organist Miss Viola Bleich. [...] A matter regarding a proposed Old People's Home was presented to the congregation; no action taken. [...] --- Meeting closed in the customary manner.

#### In Memoriam

On Dec. 29<sup>th</sup> we paid our last tribute to our esteemed senior member of St. John's. Wm. Bleich Sr. was born Feb. 19<sup>th</sup>, 1847 in Laskovniza, Province Bromberg, Germany. In 1866 he was married to Ernestine Horn. Soon thereafter he came to America, making his home for about seventten years near Avoca, Wisconsin. From 1884 to 1907 he was actively engaged in farming several miles east of Burt. Since then he lived here in Burt. He was a faithful member of the Lutheran Church formerly located in Plum Creek, and since 1915 held membership in our local St. John's Church. After a lingering illness father Bleich passed away quietly on Dec. 27<sup>th</sup>, 1930, at the age of 83 years, 10 months, 8 days. He is survived by his aged widow, 5 children, 25 grand-children, 12 great grand-children, and many other relatives and friends.

"Blessed are the dead in which died in the Lord from henceforth." Revelation 14:13.



## JANUARY BIRTHDAYS

- 1 - Gary Huber
- 1 - Peyton Marlow
- 3 - Doris Madsen
- 4 - Jordan Jahnke
- 5 - Betty Koestler
- 5 - Grant Lavrenz
- 5 - Ken McFarland
- 7 - Michael Schroeder
- 9 - Peggy Bakker
- 12 - Tysen Wickman
- 13 - Clark Christensen
- 15 - Stefanie Hatten
- 16 - Harold Lavrenz
- 16 - Christie Schutter
- 17 - Duane Peter
- 20 - Rialyn Heyes
- 21 - Caley Marlow
- 22 - Ervin Eimers
- 23 - Nicholas Christensen
- 24 - Maci Marlow
- 25 - Troy Fox
- 25 - Eric Reimers
- 28 - Austin Witham
- 29 - Michael Crosser
- 30 - Lynn Bierstedt
- 30 - Howard Eimers
- 30 - Eric Thomas



### SPECIAL SENIORS

- Ervin Eimers - January 22
- Lavonne Boderius - February 1
- John Thompson - February 1
- Russ Parsons - February 4
- Joan Peyman - February 13



## FEBRUARY BIRTHDAYS

- 1 - Jodie Wadsworth
- 1 - LaVonne Boderius
- 1 - John Thompson
- 2 - Brielle Fox
- 2 - Pam Reimers
- 2 - Mary Shipler-Oleson
- 3 - Alba Lavrenz
- 4 - Russ Parsons
- 4 - Alice Wilhelmi
- 7 - Jeff Kerkove
- 7 - Lori Schmidt
- 9 - Allison Christensen
- 11 - Scott Peymann
- 12 - Hannah Cowell
- 19 - Laura Knoll
- 21 - Kassie Renshaw
- 23 - Kim Borlik
- 27 - Kia McFarland
- 27 - Joan Peymann
- 28 - Angela Krull

### Ladies Aid and Evening LWML

Members of St. John's LWML served a Christmas Coffee after church on December 9. Several cookie containers were put together for shut-ins and seniors.

## **Baptism**

**Graham Harvey Dean Heyer**

Born: September 15, 2018

Baptism: December 23, 2018

Parents: Jesse Heyer and  
Rachel Feuring

Sponsors: Josh Heyer  
Renee Blomstrom

## **Kids of the Kingdom Preschool**

Kids of the Kingdom will once again be having a **bake sale** in conjunction with the Burt Lions Club French Toast breakfast on **March 3**, from 8–12:30 at the Burt Community Center. We have greatly appreciated your support in the past, so if you would like to contribute something to sell or come and purchase some of our wonderful goodies, we would love to see you there.

Kids of the Kingdom  
staff and board