The Bethlehem Star

“When they saw the star, they rejoiced exceedingly with great joy.” Matthew 2:10

January 2018



*“Fearfully and Wonderfully Made”*

Psalm 139:14

The Scripture Lessons for January:

**Baptism of our Lord**

OT: Isaiah 64:1-9

Epistle: 1 Cor. 1:3-9

Gospel Mark 11:1-10

**Second Sunday after Epiphany**

OT: Isaiah 40:1-11

Epistle: 2 Peter 3:8-14

Gospel Mark 1:1-8

**Third Sunday after Epiphany**

OT: Isaiah 61:1-4, 8-11

Epistle: 1 Thess: 5:16-24

Gospel John 1:6-8, 19-28

**Fourth Sunday after Epiphany**

OT: 2 Samuel 7:1-11, 16

Epistle: Romans 16:25-27

Gospel Luke 1:26-38

**Ten Reasons for the Hope That Is in Us**

by Rev. Michael W. Salemink

This month’s newsletter is written by the executive director of Lutherans for Life, Rev. Michael W. Salemink. Sanctity Life Sunday is January 21st and the theme this year is “Hope for Life.” The belief that all life is precious, from the moment of conception to the moment a person dies, is firmly rooted in the truth of our Creator God and His Word. As children of God, let us seek to uphold the value of life every day by our words and actions.

“We share hope. As people of Christ, we speak hope. As Lutherans For Life, we show hope. Our faith does not just consist of prescriptions. Our message does not condense to mere principles. Our identity amounts to more than only prohibitions. We proclaim promises. We perform promises.

In fact, “Hope For Life” sets our theme for the coming year. Our 2017 LFL Regional Conferences examined “Hope For Life.” Our 2018 Life Sunday resources explore “Hope For Life.” As our Heavenly Father encourages us:

 “[I]n your hearts honor Christ the Lord as holy, always being prepared to make a defense to anyone who asks you for a reason for the hope that is in you; yet do it with gentleness and respect.”(1 Peter 3:15)

 We’ve put together ten of our favorite hope reasons for you as follows:

1. Jesus is Lord. He realizes our circumstances and reigns over them.

“This Jesus God raised up, and of that we all are witnesses ... therefore know for certain that God has made him both Lord and Christ, this Jesus whom you crucified”(Acts 2:32, 36).

Continued on the next page………………..

Bethlehem Evangelical Lutheran Church 202 W. Jefferson St. Morris, IL 60450

[www.blcmorris.org](http://www.blcmorris.org) Church office: 815-942-1145 Pastor Patrick Lohse 815-584-7122

**January Birthdays and Anniversaries:**

1 Kanon Claypool

2 Carin DeChausse

 Jim & Vi Leonard

3 Timothy Smyk

5 Albert Pilch

 Roger Thorson

6 Kortnie Siron

10 Robert & Cheryl Coop

11 Nancy Goering

 Ashley Anderson

12 Ardith Cooper

 Sophia Day

13 Jacob Terry

14 Judy Daggett

 Curt Rasmusson

15 Brad Lawton

16 Scott Daggett

17 Vi Leonard

 Denise Hauge

19 Char Fruland

20 Brent Hexdall

 Ryan McCluckie

 Molly Jacobson

21 Bernice Jolley

 Jace Prium

24 Gerald & Cathy Nelson

25 Phyllis Anderson

26 Vince Cooper

27 Denise Enger

29 Brian Hauge

30 Arlene Lunde

 Esther Rasmusson



2. God is with us. He abides alongside in the womb (Psalm 139:7-13), in our suffering (John 11:35), and in the very valley of the shadow of death itself (Psalm 23:4).

3. Our Savior gives us victory over the devil and death. Temptations, fears, and failures may bark, but they cannot bite, because Christ’s ways prevail (Romans 8:37-39).

4. Forgiveness heals even the flesh. “[H]e who raised Christ Jesus from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through his Spirit who dwells in you” (Romans 8:11b).

5. The Redeemer protects and provides for body and soul. We have become heirs of His entire kingdom (Romans 8:32).

6. God works all things together for our good. Even pain and persecution have holy purpose (Matthew 10:29-31).

7. His family accompanies and assists us. “If one member suffers, all suffer together; if one member is honored, all rejoice together. Now you are the body of Christ and individually members of it” (1 Corinthians 12:26-27).

8. We will be raised again to live and reign forever. The Lord wills and works life for us: “I am the resurrection and the life. Whoever believes in me, though he die, yet shall he live” (John 11:25).

9. A new heaven and earth await us. Our Almighty Maker is restoring what sinfulness has ruined (Revelation 21:1-5).

10. We will behold and be held by God Himself. Heaven is going to envelop everything about us and our earth (1 Corinthians 13:12). ”

As Christians we have many reasons for the hope within us. Not only can we receive this hope from Christ, but we can share this with others who are enslaved in the darkness, captivated by fear, and lost in depression. This hope is also what we administer to those who failed to make the right decision concerning life and now suffer and experience guilt from abortion. There is always hope in the Lord!

In Christ,

Pastor Patrick Lohse

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If you would like to “ask the Pastor” a question you can write it down on piece of paper and hand it to me or email me at (lohs0016@umn.edu). Your name will not be printed with your question.

“*Pastor, are there any resources available I can point people to who are suffering from guilt because of an abortion?”*

No matter what Planned Parenthood may say as well as other abortion advocates, there are always consequences to an abortion. First a baby is killed as consequence of their mother’s wrong decision. Secondly, the mother is affected by her decision. God has wired human beings and mothers in particular to nurture and care for their children even in their womb. It is unnatural for a mother to destroy life inside of her. When abortion occurs their conscience bears witness to this sin, to this unnatural act. Some women and their husbands, boyfriends, or even parents who advocated and paid for the abortion, do everything in their might to silence their conscience. Others cannot escape the pangs! They wrestle with shame and guilt. If you have friends, family, or even coworkers wrestling with these consequences, know first of all that God loves them. It is true He hates the sin of abortion, like He does all sin, but our God is gracious in calling sinners to forgiveness.

What is God calling you to do? You can point them to Jesus! They feel the weight of their sin and are looking for hope. Show them John 3:16. Read to them Romans chapter 5. 1 Corinthians 15:56,57 lets us know we have victory overs sin, including the sin of abortion, through Jesus Christ. You can also direct them to **Word of Hope** which ministers to women who have had an abortion, are currently pregnant, or have been hurt by someone. Their phone number is 888.217.8679. Above all remember those who have had an abortion, often are not monsters, but sinners like you and are that need the healing blood of Jesus Christ.

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“Truly, I say to you, as you did it to one of the least of these my brothers, you did it to me.” Matthew 25:40

**FFHM Orphanage Mission Project**

We no longer are going to collect items throughout the year for the Baja Mission. Instead, we are going to collect items throughout the month of August.

For more information about the Foundation For His Ministry Baja Mission please check out their website at ffhm.org.

 **Crayola color) crayons, glue guns, glue**

 **sticks, balloons, stickers, & backpack sticks, balloons, stickers, backparkers (Sharpie permanent; Crayola color) crayons, glue guns, glue sticks, balloons, stickers, backp** Socks Underwear (boys & girls size 3-5)

**Mark your calendar for the following Sunday School/Youth Group Activities in January:**

* **Sunday school resumes January 7th. Stay tuned for youth group events this month.**

 



Holy Humor

“A time to laugh” Ecclesiastes 3:4



**Here is some Bible trivia on the Book of Acts:**

* Who was the human author to the Book of Acts?
* Which disciple replaced Judas the betrayer?
* Which Pharisee said that if the Gospel is truly from God, no one could ever stop it?
* What day did the apostles receive the Holy Spirit?
* What was the name of the young man who fell out of the window while Paul was teaching?
* Which gods did the people think Paul and Barnabas were?

Answers:

Read Acts 1:1 and Luke 1:1; Acts 1:20-26; 5:34-39; 2:1-4; 20:7-12; 14:8-18

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**Financial Update for the Month of December**

General Fund Missions

Needed to meet monthly budget: $16,613.00 $1108

Offerings Received: $20,028.00 $977

Net difference needed: $ $131

***Each one must give as he has decided in his heart, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver.* 2 Corinthians 9:7**





|  | **January 2018** |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Sun** | **Mon** | **Tue** | **Wed** | **Thu** | **Fri** | **Sat** |
|  | 1  | 2  | 3  | 4  | 5  | 6 **Men’s Bible Study (Sherwood Oaks) 7:30 am****Deacons Meeting 9 am.****Trustees Meeting 9:30 am****Council Meeting 10 am.** |
| 7 **Baptism of our Lord****Worship 9 am****Sunday School 10:15 am** | 8  | 9 **Ladies Bible Study 9:30 am****Bethlehem Women’s Fellowship 5:30 pm** | 10  | 11  | 12 **BLC Mom Squad 9:45-11:15 am** | 13 **Men’s Bible Study (kitchen): 7:30 am****Gospel of Mark** |
| 14 **Second Sunday after Epiphany****Worship 9 am****Sunday School 10:15 am** | 15  | 16 **Ladies Bible Study 9:30 am** | 17 **Jr. Confirmation 4:30 pm****Sr. Confirmation****5:30 pm** | 18  | 19  | 20 **Men’s Bible Study (kitchen): 7:30 am****Gospel of Mark** |
| 21 **Third Sunday after Epiphany****Worship 9 am****Sunday School 10:15 am** | 22  | 23 **Ladies Bible Study 9:30 am** | 24 **Jr. Confirmation 4:30 pm****Sr. Confirmation****5:30 pm** | 25  | 26 **BLC Mom Squad 9:45-11:15 am** | 27 **Men’s Bible Study (kitchen): 7:30 am****Gospel of Mark** |
| 28 **Fourth Sunday after Epiphany****Worship 9 am****Annual Congregational Meeting 10:30 am** | 29  | 30 **Ladies Bible Study 9:30 am** | 31 **Jr. Confirmation 4:30 pm****Sr. Confirmation****5:30 pm** | Note: Please pick up a copy of the Annual Report at Church on January 21st. Plan on attending the meeting the following Sunday, the 28th, at 10:30 am. |