

St. Luke's Visitor

*But the plans of the Lord stand firm forever,
the purposes of his heart through all generations. Psalm 33:11*

From The Pastor's Pen

As we study the Holy Scriptures, we discover truths that appear to be the exact opposite of each other, and yet both are true. These are called **paradoxes**.

Let me give you just one example up front. St. Paul writes: "If anyone is not willing to work, let him not eat" (2 Thessalonians 3:10b). And then he seems to say the exact opposite when he says that we are "to be generous and ready to share" (1 Timothy 6:18c). So which is it? Well, that's the point. It's both! To embrace one at the expense of the other is to trample on godly wisdom. So how do we embrace both? By being both generous and discerning at the same time.

Believers are invited to embrace the paradoxes of God. Consider these godly paradoxes.

Life through Death

Jesus said: *"²⁴Truly, truly, I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains alone; but if it dies, it bears much fruit. ²⁵Whoever loves his life loses it, and whoever hates his life in this world will keep it for eternal life"* (John 12:24-25). Jesus calls us to die to self, that is, to surrender our earthly desires and ambitions, so that we might have an abundant life in Him.

Strength in Weakness

St. Paul wrote: *"⁹But he said to me, 'My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness.'* Therefore I will boast all the more gladly of my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may rest upon me. ¹⁰ For the sake of Christ, then, I am content with weaknesses, insults, hardships, persecutions, and calamities. For when I am weak, then I am strong" (2 Corinthians 12:9-10). Human weakness is the conduit for divine strength.

Freedom through Service

St. Paul wrote: [We have] *"¹⁸been set free from sin, [and] have become slaves of righteousness"* (Romans 6:18). In Christ, we are new creature of righteousness and life. Why would we want to return to a life of sin and death?

Gaining through Losing

Jesus said: *"²⁵ For whoever would save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake will find it"* (Matthew 16:25). Life in this world is to be lived with our eyes focused on our heavenly reward.

Exaltation through Humility

Jesus said: *"¹² Whoever exalts himself will be humbled, and whoever humbles himself will be exalted"* (Matthew 23:12). The Lord humbles the exalted and exalts the humble.

Riches in Poverty

Jesus said: *"³ Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven"* (Matthew 5:3). Those who see themselves as spiritually poor are the ones the Lord blesses with eternal riches.

Wisdom in Foolishness

St. Paul wrote: “²⁵ For the foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the weakness of God is stronger than men” (1 Corinthians 1:25). God’s love for us in Christ is not mathematically possible. His love for us is overflowing.

Paradoxes invite us to trust in God, even when it defies worldly logic.

If you can’t join us in worship in *person*, please join us via YouTube.



I want to thank you for the very generous Christmas gift. It is truly a joy and honor to serve as your pastor.

“Sharing Jesus Christ’s love with those around us.”



November/December 2024 OFFICIAL ACTS

Transferred Out
Eric & Karen Gudjohnsen

Marriages
David Garcia & Sara Nelson



Date	Saturday 6:00 PM	Sunday 8:30 AM	Sunday 11:00 AM
February 1/2		Cora Davies	Macsen Wells
February 8/9		Isaiah Roten	Allie Winter
February 15/16		Gavin Hudson	Jovie Winter
February 22/23		Anna Larson	Tucker Lynch

St Luke's Lutheran February DCE Newsletter Article

At the end of last year, I had the chance to lead services and to share a message of encouragement.

Given the social, political, and spiritual movements of our world this year, I focused on the truths of God found in Isaiah 51 with special focus on verse 6. *"Lift your eyes to the heavens, look at the earth beneath; the heavens will vanish like smoke, the earth will wear out like a garment and its inhabitants die like flies. BUT my salvation will last forever, and my righteousness will never fail."*

I ended the message with an encouragement that has been helpful for me and I hope can be helpful for you!

I pray you be renewed daily in your Baptism. Every day, God's mercy is new. Every day is grace; every breath is a new beginning in the life of faith. Salvation's name is Jesus.

So, until the end of time, we wait in hope for his coming. Jesus exclaims in Mark 13:37, "Stay awake!" Stay awake in your life of faith. Don't let the enemy lull you to sleep. During times of trial, don't lose heart. God does not change, and his salvation is forever. Take to heart the words from the book of Jude. *"Build yourself up in faith. Pray in the Holy Spirit. Keep yourself in the love of God. Have mercy on those who doubt, and show mercy without fear."* Jude 20–23

Friends, as another year ends and a new one begins. Who knows what triumphs or tragedies we'll encounter and endure this next year? Some things in our lives will stay, and some things will go. We may enjoy times of stability or endure things that will shake us to our very core.

But know this: Our world is passing away, and One Day This World Will Come to Its End,□ but God's Salvation in Jesus Christ Has No Ending. The salvation of God, the righteousness of God, lasts forever.

You have a new beginning every day that will last forever. His name is Jesus Christ, and he is for you.

AMEN.

God is growing St Luke's in ministry and in the number of people we call St Luke's family! Make sure you are looking for opportunities to help out with the different ministries AND to warmly welcome everyone that comes through our doors!

Please continue your partnership with me as I pray for our Pastor, our leaders, our volunteers, for all the families at St Luke's. God is working in, around, and through us for His glory and for the benefit of the community around us. In situations like these Satan takes immense pleasure in causing discord and unrest. Please pray that each of us will "Fix our eyes on Christ" and that we would not be distracted by Satan's efforts.

William Prann, Director of Christian Education



- February 1:** Lola Hanson
- February 2:** Linda Graham, Derek Feld
- February 3:** Hayden Berg
- February 4:** William Wehmueller, Sinok Crawford
- February 7:** Maxine Ganske
- February 9:** Dean Genschorck
- February 13:** Kathy Dieball
- February 14:** Makayla Larson, Gail Schwanke
- February 16:** Arlyn Stiebe, Carroll Hackbart
- February 17:** Lynn Thomas, Adam Fick
- February 18:** Grace Burris, Isaiah Roten
- February 20:** Eric Cheng
- February 21:** Tessa Thiele
- February 24:** Luke Wells
- February 25:** Judy Boye
- February 27:** Jon Brott
- February 28:** Jodie Barta

- February 4:** King & Sinok Crawford
- February 15:** David & Janet Beach
- February 18:** John & Brenda Miesner



IT'S LEAP YEAR!

Support Our Youth

Support our LCMS Gathering Fundraiser at Pizza Ranch! Join us on Feb 26th from 5-9pm at 511 McCall Rd. A portion of your purchase will support our youth attending the LCMS Gathering. Dine in or carry out – it’s a great way to give back while enjoying a delicious meal! See you there!

February Door Offering for Lutheran Hour Ministries

Lutheran Hour Ministries Sunday is on Feb. 2, and the door offering will be collected on February 23. Daily Devotions, video Bible studies, and many other resources are free because friends like you have already joined our mission. Visit lhm.org/connected to find a helpful resource today.

All Member Meetings February 22 and 23.

The Building Planning Committee will facilitate an all-member meeting after each worship service Saturday February 22 and Sunday February 23. The meeting plan is the attachment to the electronic newsletter. Please plan on attending and giving your input.

Building Planning Committee Update: The committee includes: Jessica Jones, Jim Jenkins, Susan Spain, Donna Myers, Ian Hartsook, and Brad Brunkow. Four Lutheran churches have been visited to gather some ideas. Plans are set to visit with 24 groups and individuals to gather additional input for more specific needs.

LUTHERAN WOMEN'S MISSIONARY LEAGUE (LWML)

St. Luke's LWML would like to invite the women of the church and guests to our annual **Day of Prayer Service** which is based on the Beatitudes found in Matthew 5:1-12 on **Saturday February 8th in the church at 10 AM.**

THEOLOGY ON TAP

We will next meet on **Tuesday, February 18th at 7:30 p.m.** at Rockin K's (1880 Kimball Ave., Unit 100, Manhattan, KS 66502). The presenter will be **Rev. Dr. David R. Maxwell. His top will be "Cyril of Alexandria".**

CONNECT GROUPS

Sunday Adult Bible Class, Pastor Schmidt

Lutheran Layman's League, David & Julie Hatesohl, 785-845-8124 or 785-236-0493 or phoebemat@gmail.com.

Table Talk, Sundays at Noon during the school year. Meal for college students here at the church

Women's Bible Study, 2nd & 4th Mondays of the month, Diane Mosier, sdmosier_2000@yahoo.com

Card Making, Janet Beach and Ann Williams

Campus Ministry Bible Study, Mondays @ 9:00 PM, during the school year; meets at the Blue House

Men's Bible Breakfast, 7:00 AM Tuesdays, Vista Drive In, Walt Fick, 785-776-0879 or fick.walter@att.net

Mission of Love (working on quilts), 2nd Tuesday of the month, 9:00 AM, Dorothy Burtness, 785-341-5530.

Cancer Companions, Jamie Spikes, 785-313-1587; Judy Boye, 785-320-6355

Theology on Tap, 3rd Tuesday of the month, 7:30 PM, Rockin K's, 1880 Kimball Avenue, Manhattan

TRAIL LIFE USA AND AMERICAN HERITAGE GIRLS

St. Luke's owns and operates **KS0057 Troop**, Trail Life and American Heritage Girls. **These groups meet during the school year.** For TLUSA, boys Kindergarten through 12th grade meet on the 2nd & 4th Mondays of the month from 6:30 PM - 8:00 PM.

For AHG, girls Kindergarten through 12th grade meet the 1st & 3rd Mondays of the month from 6:00 PM - 7:45 PM.

“Christ’s Life, and Love, and Light”

Open our eyes Lord to see Your love’s intent,
To know with minds and hearts its depth and height
May thankfulness be days in service spent
Reflection of Christ’s life, and love, and light. (LSB 788)

As stewards enter the month of February, it is fitting that we look at the last stanza of the stewardship hymn, “Forgive Us, Lord, for Shallow Thankfulness” (LSB 788). It is in these words that we see that the heart of stewardship is indeed love. Love has flowed from our Lord to us in the person and work of Jesus Christ. This love is then to flow from us to others. Being a conduit of love is really the central task of what it means to be a steward. The Lord entrusts us with His love that reconciles us to Himself, so that we might be stewards of the Gospel reconciliation that is freely given through us to those around us.

If we don’t see this love from God to us, then through us, to others, our eyes will be closed not just to the needs of those around us. They will also be closed to the very heart of the Gospel itself. This is why the hymnist prays that the Lord would “Open our eyes, Lord, to see Your love’s intent, To know with minds and hearts its depth and height.”

Only when we are immersed in God’s Holy Word, washed in Holy Baptism’s life-giving water and fed on the holy, precious, body and blood of Jesus in the Holy Supper, will the Spirit be able to open our eyes to see the Lord’s loving intent for us, and those we know and love. Sin blinds us. It makes us think that we are the center of our world, and our pleasure is the key.

In the Word, the Lord shows us the depth and height of His love. The depth of that love is what moved Him from His throne in heaven into our world. There He would don our human flesh, walk the dusty roads of Palestine, and set His face toward Jerusalem. Once there we get to see the height of His love, as He is elevated on a Roman cross to die a death that we deserve. But that would not be the end. He would be lowered into a tomb for three days. On that third day we then see the heights of love ascended to in His resurrection. This resurrection is already ours too!

The depth and height of this love poured out on us by the Holy Spirit then is distributed through us to others. Christ’s servant love is shown in our servant love. The hymn utters the prayer of every Christian steward:

May thankfulness be days in service spent
Reflection of Christ’s life, and love, and light.

This is the task for which stewards were originally created. Bearing the image of creation and redemption, we reflect Christ’s love to those around us. The light of Christ shining through us to others is the true stewardship to which we are called. It takes place in our homes. It is lived out in our workplaces and classrooms. As we bear the life, love and light received in Word and Sacrament, we carry it out in service to our neighbor and for the glory of God!

Forgive us, Lord, when our stewardship of thankfulness is shallow or lacking! Fill us with Your life, love and light! Not just for us, but through us to those we know and love, that they may know Your life, love and light for them!

LCMS Stewardship Ministry: lcms.org/stewardship

FEBRUARY

