

FOCUS ON FAITH

JANUARY 2021



EPIPHANY

FAITH LUTHERAN CHURCH

214 S Derby Ave

Derby, KS 67037

316-788-1715

Pastor Thomas Johnson

Pastor Johnson's E-mail: pastor_at_faith@yahoo.com

Church Office E-mail: office@flcderby.com

Church Bookkeeper E-mail: accounting@flcderby.com

Church Website: www.flcderby.com

School Website: www.fllderby.com

IN THIS ISSUE:

Birthdays and Anniversaries	pg 5
Missions	pg 3
Notes to the Congregation	pg 3-6
Pastor's Desk	pg 2-3
School News	pg 4
Worship Assistants for January 2021	pg 7



“So Peter opened his mouth and said: “Truly I understand that God shows no partiality, but in every nation anyone who fears him and does what is right is acceptable to him.” (Acts 10:34)

These Bible verses are given in support one of God’s attributes. God is fair and impartial. He is just. Our Lord Jesus Christ is totally unbiased in his dealings with “all” people. I must admit that I have occasionally overlooked this attribute of God thinking that it’s not really significant. It’s like...so what? God is fair and impartial! Big deal! I was inclined to think this attribute is a lesser one in comparison to the “biggies,” like merciful, all-powerful, and eternal. But the more I reflect upon the chaos found in this world, including the chaos from this past election on November 3rd and beyond, as well as the inequity within the journalism profession, and yes, it shows up within the church, and includes identity politics, the more I realize the need for impartiality and fairness is rather urgent. We should all appreciate this attribute of God that “His ways are justice.”

When the Bible tells us that God is “no respecter of persons,” it means He is not swayed by outward appearances. As the old saying goes, “You can’t judge a book by its cover,” and God most certainly doesn’t do this. But I think sinful human beings like us are often guilty of showing partiality, if not consciously, certainly unconsciously. Let’s face it, we live in a world where “playing favorites” is as commonplace as sin itself. Some may say in response, “it’s just politics.” The very nature of politics is made known when a person or group shrewdly promotes a policy they want advanced over/against the desires of a competing group. Of course there will be some bias; this is what triggers the politicking. And there is certainly a legitimate place for politics in the world, and yes, even in the church, but not when it comes to issues that God’s Word clearly addresses one way or the other.

One of the founding principles of our republic, of which we have all heard and most likely embrace, is the ideal of “blind justice.” This is not a negative, but rather a positive thing. In fact “Lady Justice” is often depicted wearing a blindfold. The blindfold represents objectivity. “Justice should be meted out objectively without fear or favor, regardless of identity, money, power, or weakness.” (Wikipedia) Justice should be blind to everything *but* the facts. It is blind to everything *but* the evidence. And then it renders judgment based on this.

It reminds me of the old black and white TV show called *Dragnet*. I have seen some of the 1950’s reruns. Sgt. Joe Friday, a detective in the L.A. police department, would go to a crime scene and talk to people about what happened. When the witness went off on a tangent or became highly emotional and/or opinionated or perhaps was simply afraid to speak, he would say, “Just the facts ma’m!” Similarly, I am reminded of what the word “witness” means in the Bible. It means to tell the facts about Christ’s death and resurrection. The apostles, obviously, had a front row seat to what the facts were.

But isn’t it interesting that when Jesus tells us not to judge others, what he refers to are judgments based on what is *not* factual, but rather what is hearsay or gossip or judgments based on some arbitrary human standard of right and wrong (the Pharisees

were notorious for doing this) instead of the truth of God's Word. The church is called to judge sin, though not the sinner. And, we are forbidden to judge where a certain individual will spend eternity. In truth, what Jesus forbids is not "all" judging, but judging that is based only on outward appearances rather than something objective.

One of the Bible verses I find great comfort in is found in Romans 12. It exalts God's attribute of impartiality in a practical way, "**Beloved, never avenge yourselves, but leave it to the wrath of God, for it is written, "Vengeance is mine, I will repay, says the Lord."**" When we are wronged or harmed in some way, we don't take matters into our own hands. We simply forgive. This is evidence that we completely trust in the fairness of God. We completely trust in His divine justice. Our God knows all things and sees all things. This is one of the reasons why praying to Him in difficult circumstances is so important.

During this Christmas/Epiphany season, why not rejoice in the fact that God does not give us what we deserve? If God treated us as our sins deserve, there would be no hope of salvation. In this sense, God is totally biased. He gives us what we don't deserve: forgiveness and eternal life. The very nature of "grace" says as much. It is God's "undeserved favor." Those of us who have come to believe in the baby born of the Virgin Mary, who became man and suffered and died on the cross for our sins, are those to whom God is partial. This is true only by virtue of the merits of Jesus Christ. Speaking of blind justice, in a sense this is God's approach, He is blind to what we are by nature and the sin our nature leads us to commit. All God sees is the blood and righteousness of His Son and then His just verdict is pronounced, "Not guilty!"

~ Pastor Johnson



The visits Dan usually make to Guatemala & other parts of Mexico are on hold due to Covid. The activities for the training of national workers are not, however. Dan is finishing up a deacon course, deaconess course, and seminary course on the Psalms. All these courses will be taught via the ZOOM application.

~ The Conrads lcms.org/Conrad

Missions



GRACE FOOD PANTRY COLLECTION

All grocery donations to help the Grace Lutheran Food Pantry are appreciated! **The suggestion for January is canned soup & saltine crackers.** *Donations may be placed in the shopping cart in the breezeway.*

THE FLOWER CALENDAR FOR 2021 is posted in the narthex above the Bible bookcase. If you would like to provide flowers on any Sunday in 2021, please sign up and indicate if it is a special occasion or a remembrance. The cost is \$15 and the flowers are yours to keep after second service. For your convenience, you will receive a friendly reminder during the week prior to your designated Sunday. Thank you!



Faith Lutheran School News



Principal:	Sue Kleber	Para:	Mandi Forward
Kindergarten Teacher:	Deb Doesken		
Grades 1 & 2 Teacher:	Anita Norris	Preschool Director/Teacher:	Karen Holt
Grades 3 - 5 Teacher:	Cheryl Voss	Preschool Clerk:	Cheryl Judd
ELA Teacher:	Peggy Johnston	Preschool Teacher:	Angela Beeson
Aide:	Jennifer Brownlee	Preschool Teacher:	Dawn Meade
Aide:	Rebecca Doesken	School Office Administrator:	Becky Pankratz
Aide:	Vickie Kalous		

This Month's Events ...

Mon	Jan 4	Classes Resume	Mon	Jan 18	MLK Day-No School
Fri	Jan 8	Report Cards Issued			

JANUARY 24 - 30, 2021

National Lutheran Schools Week provides more than 1,900 preschools, elementary schools and high schools with the public opportunity to proclaim and celebrate God's work among us in schools of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod.

We thank God for the opportunity to provide excellent academic preparation for the children we serve. We are most grateful for the opportunity to share Jesus' amazing love with children and their families. The theme this year is *Sent to Serve*.

National Lutheran Schools Week gives us an opportunity to proclaim these great blessings within the communities we serve. Our schools are amazing incubators for faithful witness of God's love for us through Christ by teachers and students alike.



THANK YOU FOR YOUR DONATIONS! The Grace Food Pantry was thrilled with the items delivered last month. Sharing our blessings from God with those who are less fortunate is a testimony of our gratitude for the love that God showed us in sending His Son, Jesus Christ. Many thanks for your generous support of our Christmas project! ~ *Circle of Peace*



CIRCLE OF PEACE



All women are invited to join us **Saturday, Jan. 9 from 9:00 – 11:00 am** in the church kitchen. We will be cleaning the kitchen and enjoying time together. For more information, contact Sandy Fogle, 788-4200, or Joy Klepacki, 259-4431.

YOUTH & FAMILY MINISTRY MEETING: The youth & family ministry will meet on Sunday, Jan. 10, at 9:30 am, for planning. Everyone is welcome!



Birthdays and Anniversaries

Happy Birthday...

- 1 Marsha Murray
- 1 Matthew Sowden
- 1 Cheryl Voss
- 2 Hailey Trapp
- 7 Kimberly Powell
- 7 Sera Voss
- 10 Troy Ohlde
- 12 Becca Doesken
- 12 Colleen Ervin
- 13 Kale Biggs
- 13 Levi Ohlde
- 13 Janae Trapp
- 13 Jordan L. Voss

- 15 Russell Helmers
- 18 Lawanda Hearing
- 19 Logan Adams
- 20 Gregory Landsverk
- 23 David Brack
- 25 Allison DeMeyer
- 25 Addie Jensen
- 25 AJ Thorpe
- 26 Jeremy Bruner
- 27 Gus Fry
- 29 Patsy Pickens
- 29 Tristin Zaragoza
- 30 Brandon Hare

- 31 Liam Harland

Happy Anniversary...

- 8 Gus & Earline Fry
- 12 Rich Polwort & Cheryl Meyer
- 19 Jerry & Jo Newbury
- 30 Marci & Bryan Howard

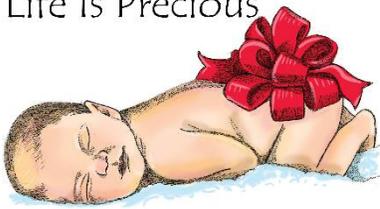
If we have incorrect information or have missed your special date, please contact the church office so we can correct our records.

GRACE FOOD PANTRY COLLECTION

All grocery donations to help the Grace Lutheran Food Pantry are appreciated! **The suggestion for January is powdered instant milk.** Donations may be placed in the shopping cart in the breezeway.



Life Is Precious



HELP FOR MOMS IN CRISIS... Circle of Peace is sponsoring a collection of **baby items and toiletries** for their **Sanctity of Life project, January 17 – February 7**. A display will be in the narthex with a list of suggested items to donate. *If you wish, you may "Let Us Do the Shopping" and place your monetary donations in a Special Gifts envelope and note: Crib Project.* Thank you!



BREAKFAST FOR THE CONGREGATION: In January, the youth will serve breakfast between services on the second Sunday of the month, January 10, rather than the first Sunday. Please plan accordingly!

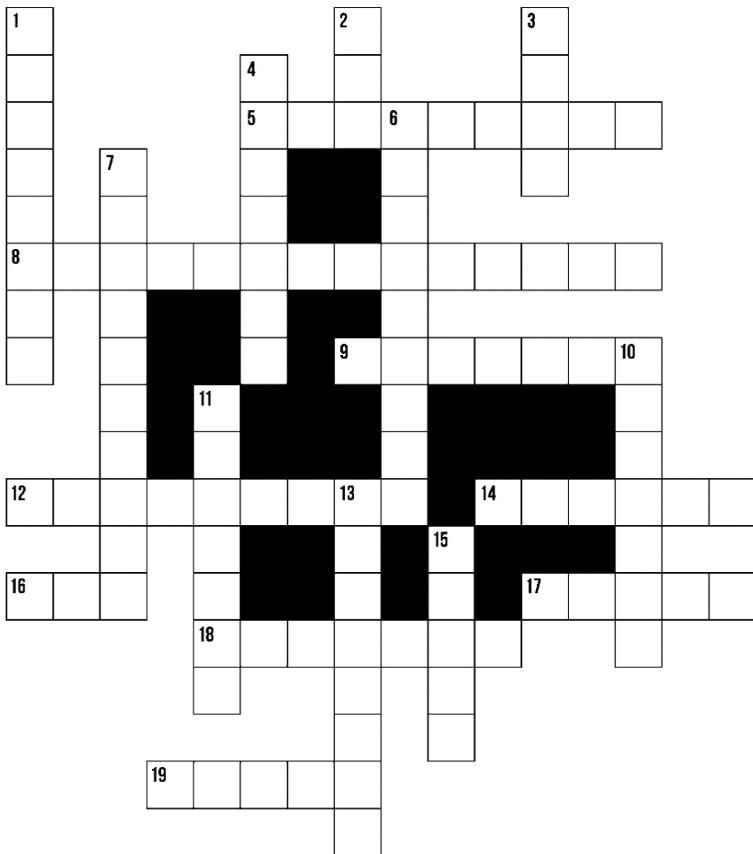




GET ON THE BUS!

Ride the Kansas LWML bus to Lexington, Kentucky for the LWML Convention -- June 24-27, 2021. The trip will start in Wichita on June 21. We will return to Kansas on June 29.

Plans are in the making for a day side trip to visit The Ark in Williamstown, Kentucky! If you're interested in riding the Kansas bus, please email Donna Burton at buschair@kansaslwml.org **Estimated pricing for the trip is:** 4/room \$704 | 3/room \$804 | 2/room \$1004 | 1/room \$1604. Cost includes bus ride, 8 nights lodging, and ticket for The Ark. The **non-refundable deposit** of \$100 to reserve your seat on the bus will be **due February 15, 2021**. Deposits will only be refunded if the bus trip or the convention is cancelled. Complete information about the trip and where to mail your reservation info and deposit is on the 2021 Convention page on LWML website. It's a great time to make new friends and rekindle old friendships. *Lexington, here we come!!* ~ Donna Burton, Convention Bus Chairman



Puzzle!

Psalm 19:1 says, "The heavens declare the glory of God." Complete this crossword that emphasizes the natural phenomena of God's created world.

- | | |
|--|--|
| 1. windy snowstorm | 12. mass of snow, earth or rocks sliding down a mountain |
| 2. thick, obscuring mist | 13. the degree of moisture in the air |
| 3. frozen rain pellets | 14. a spring that spews boiling water and steam |
| 4. an area's normal weather conditions | 15. condensed water vapor in the atmosphere |
| 5. sudden electrostatic discharge in the sky | 16. frozen water |
| 6. violent tropical storm | 17. deluge |
| 7. shaking of the earth's crust | 18. when day and night are of equal length |
| 8. northern lights | 19. frozen dew or vapor |
| 9. partial or full blockage of the sun or moon | |
| 10. wearing away of the soil | |
| 11. large mass of snow and ice | |

Answers: 1. blizzard, 2. fog, 3. hail, 4. climate, 5. lightning, 6. hurricane, 7. earthquake, 8. Aurora Borealis, 9. eclipse, 10. erosion, 11. glacier, 12. avalanche, 13. humidity, 14. geyser, 15. cloud, 16. ice, 17. flood, 18. equinox, 19. frost

JANUARY WORSHIP ASSISTANT SCHEDULE

ALTAR GUILD: Kim Powell

1st Service – 8:15AM	2nd Service – 10:45AM
<p><u>USHERS:</u></p> <p><u>January 3</u> Elder Tim Trapp Acolyte Noah Trapp</p> <p><u>January 10</u> Elders Duane Way Acolyte Zachary Forward Crucifer Dahkotta Forward</p> <p><u>January 17</u> Elder Tim Trapp Acolyte Addie Jensen</p> <p><u>January 24</u> Elders Duane Way Acolyte Brooke Forward Crucifer Chareity Forward</p> <p><u>January 31</u> Elders Tim Trapp Acolyte Addie Jensen Crucifer Haley Nelson</p>	<p><u>USHERS:</u> Gerry Faley</p> <p><u>January 3</u> Elder Max Ayers Acolyte Emmit Ohlde</p> <p><u>January 10</u> Elders Patrick DeWitt Acolyte Carter Wahlenmaier Crucifer Tim Johnson</p> <p><u>January 17</u> Elder Patrick DeWitt Acolyte Abby DeWitt</p> <p><u>January 24</u> Elders Max Ayers Acolyte Alivia White Crucifer Caris Johnson</p> <p><u>January 31</u> Elders Max Ayers Acolyte Troy Ohlde Crucifer Colton Ohlde</p>

