

January 2021

Dear Friends,

It goes without saying that 2020 was nothing short of awful for many of us. We saw, and are now seeing, how fragile human beings can be. We are weak no matter how much we pretend to be otherwise. And we have had plenty to show us how weak we really are.

The Gospel speaks to us in our weaknesses and not a moment sooner. The sooner we realize this, the sooner we begin to understand the power and strength of our Lord. Even the worst of any pandemic doesn't compare to the power of the cross of Christ, which looks like weakness to us. But Scripture assures us that the cross, which is a display of God's weakness, is stronger than any human strength. The cross of Christ saves us from sin and even death. The resurrection of Jesus is the final seal of victory over death and human weakness!

So...be weak. Scripture calls this bearing the cross. We have been crucified with Christ in Baptism and raised with him in those same waters. In our human weakness, we love and serve our fellow weak humans with confidence and hope.

And...look forward to 2021. Though harm might come to us, pandemic or no pandemic, there is nothing that has the victory over us at the last. Through Jesus Christ, who loves us, we are more than conquerors!

I pray for an incredibly Happy and Joyous New Year for you and for us all!

In Christ,
Pastor Hoag



JANUARY 2021



We begin by saying thank you to so many.....



Thank You! Christmas services require the work of a lot of people. Some get their names in the bulletin. Many do not. We could try and list them, but inevitably, we would miss someone. So, whether you came and helped set up the tree, folded bulletins, swapped out candles, ushered, set up communion, cleaned up after communion, set up flowers, donated flowers, sang or played an instrument, a very warm and heartfelt THANK YOU! May the love that you showed be reflected back to you a thousand times over in the year to come.



The Chancel Guild would like to thank those who purchased poinsettias to help decorate the chancel area for the Christmas services. The flowers were beautiful!

Duncan & Allene Bachmann, Denise Buchanan, Jan Falk, Janet DeForest, Bill & Sally Jackson, Tom & Wendy Kaun, Paul & Robin Krol, Phil & Sharon MacFarlane, Jennifer Mudrock, Gary & Kay Purnell, Doug & Jan Schlak, Steve & Rita Tinker, Pat Fuerst, and Rex & Jan Toeple.

An update from Church Council President, Bob Blecke:

Be The Church

We have often observed that to members and non-members alike, the beauty of our Church is often remarked upon. We have devoted much to the preservation and improvement of that building and its functions, from utilities like roof, stairs, lifts, and kitchen to beautification such as stained glass, organ, and landscaping.

We have created a beautiful and functional place to conduct our worship, of which we can, even as Lutherans, have a certain pride.

If you look up the word “church” in today’s dictionaries, you will be confronted with multiple definitions and contexts in which it is used – the building; the clergy; the whole body of believers; a denomination; a congregation; the worship service; the clerical profession; and those are just its uses as a Noun. If you traced the word’s origins back to its appearance and form in the New Testament, you will find the Greek word ekklesia, and its use was much more specific (look up Acts 11:26, 1 Corinthians 15:9, or 1 Peter 2:9 for examples): specifically the assembly of believers who had been “called out of darkness into the light”. We number ourselves among those believers today. We are, in strictest Biblical sense, The Church, in its most central definition. As we celebrate Christmas, into the New Year, remember, you don’t just Go To Church; you are The Church, to your family, your friends, and your community. God’s blessings during Christmas and the coming New year.

Robert Blecke

2021 Church Council Officers



Bob Blecke, President; Kim Blecke, Secretary; Tammy Doerrer, Financial Secretary; Tim King, Treasurer; Mike Gardner, Director of Outreach; Dan Bay and Jeff Lorenz, Co-Directors of Property; Ed Tatro and Diane Sewing, Co-Directors of Spiritual Life; Judi Donovan, Director of Parish Education; Michelle Hoag, Director of Youth Ministry.



Annual Congregational Meeting:oin us on Sunday, January 31st , at 10:30 a.m. All members are invited to attend. Masks and social distancing will be required. The meeting will be held in the gym.

SCRIP GIFT CARDS

Thank you so very much to those of you who participate in the scrip card fundraiser. We greatly appreciate your support! There will be no Scrip Order placed in January. Next order will be February 2021. Any questions can be directed to Angie Minett at minett411@yahoo.com or [\(815\)467-2537](tel:8154672537). Also, check out shopwithscrip.com to learn more about this simple way to help the youth earn funds.



Looking for a College Scholarship?

My name is Josh Baggett and I am the Alumni Scholarship Chairman for the Alpha Alumni Chapter of Beta Sigma Psi - National Lutheran Fraternity. I'm contacting you to inform you of scholarship opportunities our organization has to offer Lutheran high school seniors. If you'd like to learn more about our organization, please check out <https://www.betasigmapsi.org/>.

My Alumni Chapter is offering a \$3,000 scholarship given out to a Lutheran male freshman attending the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign in Fall 2021. There is no obligation to join Beta Sigma Psi or be related to a member of the fraternity to receive this award. Runner-ups may be eligible for \$500. Our scholarship application may be found online at <https://forms.gle/pJdPAff57oZHokDT9> or the attached application can be filled out and submitted to our PO box. All applications are due March 20th, 2021.

The Beta Sigma Psi Educational Foundation also offers additional scholarships and grant opportunities for members of the Lutheran community. These opportunities can be found here <https://www.betasigmapsi.org/scholarships-for-high-school-students/>

We would greatly appreciate it if you would share this opportunity (detailed in the newsletter attachment) with your congregation and youth in one form or another including sharing through your weekly bulletins, congregational newsletters, or Facebook page.

Please let me know if you have any questions about our scholarships or Beta Sigma Psi in general.

Thank you,
Josh Baggett

Adam Rusch
Chairman
Beta Sigma Psi Educational Foundation
<http://scholarships.betasigmapsi.org/>
Email: grants@betasigmapsi.org



ALTAR FLOWERS: Chancel Guild members would like to thank those who sponsored a weekend last year. We thank you for your flexibility considering the impact Covid-19 restrictions had on church attendance and our flower orders. We pray life will return back to normal in 2021. **A new 2021 Altar Flower Calendar has been posted.** You can find it in the glass case hanging on the wall across the old office. If you would like to reserve a weekend for **2021** in memory of a loved one, to commemorate a birthday, wedding anniversary, or in celebration of God's blessings, please fill out a sponsor sheet. Sponsor sheets are located on a hook attached to the glass case housing the calendar.

If you have any questions, please contact Kay Purnell at purnellk51@hotmail.com or (815) 485-9017

Flowers left in the refrigerator will be disposed of after 2 weeks.

Flowers for January are as follows:

January 3 - Ed & Judy Niemann-VanderVeen in Celebration of Betty Dunn's 99th Birthday

January 10 – Lois Dobbs in Memory of Jack, Agatha, Dick and Richard Dobbs

January 17 – Bruce Hasch in Memory of Joan Hasch

January 24 – Jan Falk in Memory of her husband Ernie Falk

January 31 – Paul & Robin Krol in Thanksgiving for Their Many Blessings



Our new meetings time is on the first Saturday of the month at 9:00 am with the exception of January, February, June, July and August. February, June, July and August will be months of no meetings. In January, we will meet on the 9th at 9:00 am to take down the Christmas decorations and have a short meeting.

Anyone who is looking for a way to be of service to our wonderful church is welcomed to come on January 9th to help us take the decorations down. Or if you would like to speak to someone first without committing to a meeting, please call Judi Donovan at 815-485-6973 or stop in the office.

Working on Chancel Guild is a great way to serve your church and it doesn't take a lot of time. We are a great group to work with and would love to have you as a member! Give us a try.

Chancel Schedule for January:

January 3 – Jennifer Mudrock/Debbie Crawford

January 10 – Debbie Crawford/Denise Buchanan

January 17 – Denise Buchanan/Robin Krol

January 24 – Robin Krol/Doris Bay

January 31 – Doris Bay/Kay Purnell



Choir is cancelled until further notice.



Member Updates:

Baptisms: Bradley Clinton O'Hara – December 20, 2020



St. Matthew's.

We are continuing to support St. Matthew's Lutheran church in Chicago by collecting donations of non-perishable food items, as well as household goods. Please place the food items in the collection box by the parking lot door. **The household items should be placed in the storage closet area located in the old bathroom by the lift.**



New Piano:

A new, slightly used baby grand piano has been donated to Trinity for our Sanctuary. It will enhance our worship services greatly.



Wednesday Morning Bible Class is held at 8:30 a.m. Please join this very interesting group.

Thursday Evening Bible Class is held at 7:00 p.m. Please join us!

Both Bible Classes are in person and online. If you wish to attend online, please contact Pastor Hoag and get the link to the classes.



TRINITY PRAYER CHAIN

PRAYER CHAIN: Share the love of God, faith and compassion with someone needing support in praying for health problems, sorrow, praise, thanksgiving. Receive a phone call; make a phone call, pray. Or would you like that kind of support for your prayer? All strictly confidential. Phone Pat Fuerst at 815-485-6441 or Ginny DeCarlo at 815-485-2001. You may also email Ginny at vdecarlo1952@gmail.com.



Wishing everyone a blessed and healthy 2021!

Church office hours: Monday, Wednesday and Friday, 9-1 pm