



Nate H	12/2
Kennedy W	12/2
Norman S	12/4
Jeremy K	12/5
Clair S	12/7
Pat H	12/8
Doris W	12/8
Lonny L	12/9
Dwight C	12/14
Shirley C	12/19
Adam D	12/24
Tammy U	12/27
Samantha B	12/29
Patrick R	12/31

Jacob & Jayne F	12/12
Dennis & Gloria D	12/19
Melvin & Marilyn S	12/28
Brad & Darlene K	12/30

Dec 4	Keaton H.	815am
	David A.	1045am
Dec 11	Olivia D.	815am
	Daisy A.	1045am
Dec 18	Jensen H.	815am
	Gavin v.	1045am
Dec 25	Hudson H.	900am



Jason K	12/1
Blake N	12/3
Hudson H	12/5
Keaton H	12/5
Logan P	12/5
Susan B	12/10
Roger L	12/10
Arlan K	12/13
Becky G	12/14
Shari Z	12/14
Clair S	12/15
Darlene K	12/21
Adam D	12/25
Jeremy K	12/27



**December 2022**

**1-15 Ken Purdy**  
**16-31 Kevin Olson**



**Support Our Ministries by Simply Being a Thrivent Member**  
**\*\*\* URGENT DEADLINE FOR 2022 IS DECEMBER 31, 2022 \*\*\***

Thrivent encourages people to live generously. Thrivent clients can use the Thrivent Action Team Grant to amplify their impact as they live generously in their communities.

**Description:** The Thrivent “Action Teams” program is an opportunity for Thrivent members to lead projects that provide service and outreach to the community. Thrivent Financial will provide \$250 for each project for startup and associated expenses.

**Requirements for Request:**  
You must be a Thrivent Benefit or Associate member (age 16 or older) to request approval for funds.  
Benefit members: Those with a qualifying Thrivent insurance or annuity product are eligible for two Action Team events per calendar year - every year.  
Associate members: Those paying an annual \$19.95 membership fee (includes all family members), purchasing a Thrivent investment product, or joining the Thrivent Federal Credit Union. Associate members are eligible for one event per calendar year (max. of three total events).  
Calendar year qualification eligibility is the application date.  
A Thrivent member must initiate the request (as stated above). There is no membership requirement for team volunteers.  
Only one Thrivent member may apply for an event. Separate but reoccurring events may have one application per event (e.g., Martin Luther School events, soup packing events, Church maintenance).  
You must apply online ([thrivent.com/actionteam](http://thrivent.com/actionteam)). You will need a Thrivent user code and password to log in. If you do not have an online computer, check with Michael (701-3001-9356) for help.

**Guidelines for Application of Project Approval (only takes 5 – 10 minutes!):**  
The requested project and the \$250 donation must support a Fundraiser, Service, or Education event.  
The requested project should aid individuals or local, national, or international non-profit organizations.  
The requested project may be currently in use, or you may create a new idea to meet the needs of others.  
The \$250 contribution from Thrivent is not a grant or gift to others. It is “seed” money for supplies, merchandise, materials, goods (including food), advertising, transportation, fees, and other costs for your project. Note: misuse of funds will jeopardize future projects.  
The event and the \$250 grant benefit those in need.  
Request for approval will require answering questions. **If unsure of any information, call the “contact person” listed on the sign-up sheet or members who have previously sponsored a project.**  
What is the date of the event? At least 14 days after the application date and not more than 120 days after the application date.  
What is the name and type of the project? A Fundraiser, Service, or Education event?  
How did you learn about Action Teams?  
Give a brief explanation of your project and goals.  
How will you use the money?  
What is the impact of the project? Check 1 or 2 choices.  
Do you have a church relationship? Yes – Shepherd of the Valley Lutheran Church  
Who will benefit from this project? Shepherd of the Valley or another organization/group of individuals?  
Number of volunteers involved (team size)?  
Do you want T-shirts, banners, invitations, cards, or name tags?  
Where to send the package?  
Be sure to click the box agreeing to all the conditions and then hit the send button.  
Expect an email approval in 1-2 days and mail delivery of the Action Team kit in 7-10 days.  
If Thrivent does not approve the grant request, not a problem, you will be able to apply for other future events.

**The final decision to approve or deny a request is strictly up to Thrivent. Guidelines, requirements, and conditions may change at any time – please read your applications and mailings carefully to ensure full compliance.**

**After Receiving the Action Team Package:**  
Open and check the box contents (if you ordered supplies) and remove the Action Team Folder.  
The \$250 debit card is in the folder - follow the instructions to activate the card and then sign the back. You are solely responsible for using the card to make purchases (max. amount is \$250). Use the card within 90 days after the project start date to avoid card expiration.  
Coordinate and keep records of the project and volunteer activity - you will need this information for the follow-up report. Retain all receipts for up to one year.

announcements. Call the church office (701-258-4231) for help.  
Take pictures for SOTV publications and feedback for Thrivent (use the Thrivent T-shirts if available).

#### Follow-up of the project:

If you used SOTV (or other locations) facilities, please clean up and return everything to its original location.  
Respond to the “Report on Completed Project” to Thrivent online. If you do not report timely, they will send you a message to request the information. You will not be eligible for your next project until you complete the report.  
The message from Thrivent will include questions about the project and its success. Be ready to provide information about the impact it made, the hours involved, and the number of volunteers that participated (they do not require personal information about the volunteers).  
If pictures are available, download photos to Thrivent for their records (this step is optional).  
Follow up with a brief message (and any pictures) to SOTV to include in our publications.

**Additional Information:** SOTV has created a list of activities at SOTV for possible Action Team funds. The display is on the bulletin board in the main entryway. Use the sheet with blue trim to sign-up for the project for which you want to apply for an Action Grant. The list covers projects arranged according to the start date. We will update information on a timely basis, allowing Thrivent members time to plan and apply for a project within the 2-week requirement. The advance sign-up will also eliminate the double request of any event and allow you to sign-up for your favorite projects year after year. If necessary, check with the church office for the latest information before applying.

**We ask All SOTV members** to look over the list and add any additional projects that you think would qualify. Just fill in all the information requested on the sheet with red trim. If you are not a Thrivent member, we will attempt to find a member to sponsor the project. Also, you can become a Thrivent Associate member for \$19.95/year and lead three events with \$250 seed money for each project (1 project/year for three years.)  
We can use our creative talents and have fun doing it. SOTV will continue to use and find new ways to reach out and help those in need.

SOTV goal for 2022 is approval for ten projects to receive the \$250 donation. If we reach the goal, SOTV can direct \$2,500 of Thrivent’s money in SOTV’s name to share our service and mission projects with a generous commitment to reach out to others.

If you have questions about your current Thrivent membership status, call your Thrivent representative or the local Thrivent office (<https://local.thrivent.com/directory/nd/bismarck>.)

**If you have any suggestions, comments, or questions about this process, please contact a Human Care Committee member (Jim Barrett, Dorrie Bergstrom, Dick Dever, Michael Henke, Korri Lang, Lonny Lang, and Pastor Wolfram.)** THANK YOU for taking the time to help support the ministry work of Shepherd of the Valley. Your participation means a great deal to build events and moments where people can experience the transformational change that happens when Christ is present in life together. This effort will be completely worth it.

#### Thrivent Action Grant Dollar Ideas:

- \* Little Free Pantry
- \* Wachter Snacks
- \* Soup Packing
- \* Wachter Christmas Bags
- \* Vacation Bible School
- \* Volunteer appreciation
- \* Tie Blankets with youth
- \* Martin Luther School (Thank you to Volunteers, Giving Hearts Day)



Please continue to share information about our LCMS “Main Street Living” media ministry with others. In addition to being broadcast each Sunday morning, you can view archived programs anytime at [www.mainstreetliving.com](http://www.mainstreetliving.com) – then click on the link under the picture identified as “**Fargo.**”

Thank you for your needed financial support! Checks may be sent to “Main Street Living NORTH,” 821-5th Ave S, Fargo, ND 58103, or donate by Credit Card or your PayPal account on the website. God’s blessing in Christ!

-Ken Koehler / MSL North Volunteer Coordinator

#### **“MSL North” Programs for December 2022:**

**Dec 4<sup>th</sup>:** **Rev. Heath Trampe**, Our Savior Lutheran Church, Minot, ND, presents the message: “**Peace? Are you kidding me?**” based on Matthew 3:1-12. *Lutheran Hour seasonal program: “**Stable Boy**” - A manger scene comes to life and tells the story of the first Christmas.*

**Dec 11<sup>th</sup>:** **Rev. Philip Beyersdorf**, St. Mark’s Lutheran Church, Minot, ND, presents the message: “**The Work of the Great Physician**” based on Matthew 11:2-11. *Lutheran Hours seasonal program: “**Red Boots for Christmas**” - A shoemaker learns the true meaning of Christmas.*

**Dec 18<sup>th</sup>:** **Rev. Craig Fenske**, Immanuel Lutheran Church, Grand Forks, ND, (message to be announced). *Lutheran Hour seasonal program: “**Christmas Is**” - The shepherd in a Christmas play learns the importance of Christmas.*

**Dec 25<sup>th</sup>:** **Rev. Matthew Harrison, LCMS President**, presents the Christmas message. *Lutheran Hour seasonal program: “**Christmas on Main Street**” – The Christmas message at a mission brings a grandson and his grandfather together.“*

**MAIN STREET LIVING**” is a locally produced TV program that includes a 30-minute worship service led by participating pastors of the Minnesota North and North Dakota Districts of our LCMS, along with a 30-minute Lutheran Hour program (normally “**This Is The Life,**” along with occasional church-season specials). Programs are broadcast starting **at 10:00 am Central Time** Bismarck/Dickinson: KBMY Xtra Channel 17.3



Jesus, in His Sermon on the Mount, teaches those who follow Him that worrying about the necessities of life is idolatry: worshipping a false god. Worry and anxiety show what we care about. Our anxiety reveals what we love and what we’re devoted to. It reveals what we trust in.

This is why our Lord begins this section with an overarching principle: “No one can serve two masters, for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and money” (Matt. 6:24).

But you say: “I must eat and drink. I must have clothing to wear and have a home in which to dwell.” Yes, all these things you need. And Jesus says that your Father in heaven will ensure that you have them. He demonstrates this with a simple argument: your Father in heaven feeds the birds of the air, who neither sow, nor reap, nor gather into barns. He clothes the lilies of the field, who neither toil nor spin but are arrayed more luxuriously than Solomon in all his glory. If, then, your Father in heaven feeds the birds, if He clothes the lilies, how will He not also feed and clothe you, when you are worth more than they are? (Matt 6:25–33).

Do you know that you are worth more than them? You are worth infinitely more. You are worth the price of the eternal Son of God. Did the Son of God come down from heaven and become a lily? Did he descend and take on the form of a bird? No! He came down from heaven and became a man: flesh of our flesh and bone of our bone (Gen. 2:23). He is one of us, our brother. And what did He do when He became flesh to dwell among us? He gave His holy, precious blood, through His innocent suffering and death, that you might be His own and live under Him in His kingdom forever.

God became man in Christ Jesus. He lived the life we failed to live, and He died the death we deserved. He was raised again on the third day overcoming sin and death ... for us. He was crucified for our transgressions and raised for our justification. So, if your Father in heaven has given His Son to die for us in order that we might live with Him eternally, how will He not also give us all things to support this body and life?

To be anxious about the necessities of life, to devote yourself to food and clothing, to care about these things and find security in them, is to serve another god. It is to deny that you will live forever because Jesus, the Son of God, is risen from the dead and lives and reigns for all eternity. It is to believe that the God who created you, redeemed you by the death and resurrection of His Son and sanctified you by His Spirit, will not keep His promise to sustain you in this life.

Jesus says, “Seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness” (Matt. 6:33). God’s kingdom is His rule among us. His rule among us comes when our Father in heaven gives us His Holy Spirit, so that by His grace we believe His Holy Word and lead godly lives here in time and there in eternity. This is what we ask God to do for us in the prayer that Jesus taught us.

Your Father in heaven knows what you need — food and clothing, house and home — and He promises to give it to you. Chief of the things you need is His grace and mercy in His Son, Jesus Christ. So, seek after that. And those who seek will find. And all the necessities of life, our Lord says, will be added to you.

**– LCMS Stewardship Ministry: [lcms.org/stewardship](https://lcms.org/stewardship)**



*“GLORY TO GOD in the highest heaven, and on earth peace to those on whom his favor rests.” Luke 2:14*

There doesn’t seem to be much peace on earth these days. As I write this article in mid-November, Russia continues to rain down missiles throughout the Ukraine, tensions are growing with North Korea, as well as with China, and the recent mid-term elections seem to indicate an ever-deepening split in our own nation regarding who should govern. And sadly, I could list many more examples of a lack of peace. BUT there IS PEACE between God and those of us who believe in Him! This PEACE has been made possible by the Jesus we celebrate especially at this time of the year we call CHRISTmas!

We Are Here For You!

Our human care committee at Shepherd of the Valley has been a tremendous blessing to our congregation and community as we have brought food and financial resources to people in need. This also includes our quarterly 1% donation that is given to a selected ministry or charity. The group has also coordinated efforts to fill the Little Free Pantry through requests, purchases, and the packing of various soups.

While we certainly want to help those in our community who find themselves in need financially or physically, please know that a primary aim is to care for members of Shepherd of the Valley. If you, or someone that you know, has fallen on hard times financially or is in need of vital repairs on their home, please let us know so that we might assist you. We are the Body of Christ in this place and have been called to bear one another’s burdens and to care for one another. Do not hesitate to contact Pastor Woodside, Pastor Wolfgram, or a member of the Human Care committee including James Barrett, Dorrie Burkhardsmeyer, Micheal Henke, or Lonny and Kori Lang.




Bethel Lutheran Church is presenting their Christmas Cantata on Wednesday, December 7, 6:00 pm and on Sunday, December 11, 2:00 pm.

The Shepherd of the Valley Children’s Christmas Service will take place on Wednesday, December 21st, 6:00 PM.

Christmas Eve Service will take place at 6:00 pm on Saturday, December 24th.

Christmas Day Service will take place at 9:00 am on Sunday, December 25th.

All women of Bethel and Shepherd of the Valley are invited to a cozy night of fellowship, fun, and of course some tasty Christmas treats! Bethel's LWML would love to welcome you to their December meeting on Monday, December 12, at 6:30 p.m. at Bethel. If you have a traditional family treat that you make during the holidays, please bring a sample to share as well as the recipe. We may go home with a new family favorite!



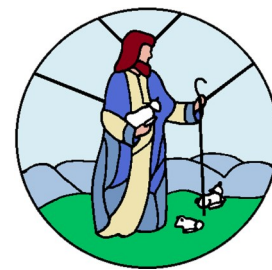


Christmas Caroling will take place on Sunday, December 11. We will meet at Shepherd of the Valley following the Bethel Christmas Cantata. You are welcome to bring a snack for fellowship back at the church after caroling.

# December 2022

Sun Mon T Wed Thu Fr Sat

				1	2	3 <b>9:30am:</b> Christmas Tree Set Up
4 <b>8:15am:</b> Divine Service <b>9:30am:</b> Education Hour <b>10:45am:</b> Divine Service <b>7:00pm:</b> Council	5 <b>9:30am:</b> Southwest Circuit Pastoral Conference	6	7 <b>6:00pm:</b> Worship <b>6:00pm:</b> Catechism Instruction @ Bethel <b>6:00pm:</b> Hand Chimes <b>7:00pm:</b> Choir Rehearsal	8	9	10 <b>8:30am:</b> Board of Education
11 <b>8:15am:</b> Divine Service <b>9:30am:</b> Voter's Meeting <b>10:45am:</b> Divine Service <b>2:00pm:</b> Bethel Christmas Cantata	12	13	14 <b>6:00pm:</b> Worship <b>6:00pm:</b> Catechism Instruction @ Bethel <b>6:00pm:</b> Hand Chimes <b>7:00pm:</b> Choir Rehearsal	15	16	17 <b>8:00am:</b> Men's Network @ SOTV
18 <b>8:15am:</b> Divine Service <b>9:30am:</b> Education Hour <b>10:45am:</b> Divine Service	19	20	21 <b>6:00pm:</b> Children's Christmas Program <b>6:00pm:</b> Catechism Instruction @ Bethel	22	23	24 <b>6:00pm:</b> Christmas Eve Service
25 <b>9:00am:</b> Christmas Day Service	26	27	28 <b>6:00pm:</b> Worship <b>6:00pm:</b> Catechism Instruction @ Bethel <b>6:00pm:</b> Hand Chimes <b>7:00pm:</b> Choir Rehearsal	29	30	31



Shepherd of the Valley Lutheran Church

"A church family that shares, nurtures, and lives our faith in Christ"

December 2022, Newsletter

## Why I Am a Lutheran: Part 2

### Who Does the Verbs?

How is a person to be saved? How can I be sure that I am going to heaven? These are very important questions. In my younger days I was taught that a person becomes a Christian by accepting Jesus as one's personal savior and asking Jesus into one's heart by *sincerely* praying the "Sinner's Prayer." What is the sinner's prayer, then? Well there are different versions of it, but essentially it goes something like this: *Dear Jesus. I confess that I am a sinner in need of forgiveness. Thank you for dying for my sins and rising from the dead. Please forgive me and come into my heart to be my Lord and Savior. Amen*

Now at first glance there doesn't seem to be anything wrong with this. The prayer confesses Jesus as Lord. It confesses His death and resurrection! What's wrong with asking Jesus into my heart? Nothing is obviously wrong with it. But when one squares this teaching up with scripture it doesn't hold up. First of all, this prayer is not found in scripture. The only prayer that Jesus explicitly taught is the Lord's Prayer! Not only that, but we read in John that one becomes a child of God, "**not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God.**" (John 1:13b, ESV) We do not choose Jesus, He chooses us!

In the churches of my youth, if I were to ask a Pastor how I can be saved, he would have told me to sincerely say this prayer. But what does Peter say after his Pentecost sermon when asked this question? Does he direct them to accept Jesus? No. What does he say? Let's look at the passage:

**"Now when they heard this they were cut to the heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, 'Brothers, what shall we do?' And Peter said to them, 'Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.'" (Acts 2:37-38, ESV)**

He directs them to repent and be baptized. So why do so many churches ignore Peter's words? They do so to their own peril.

Reading this, you may find yourself wondering if Pastor Woodside is just being too nit-picky. Understand, first of all, that I am not saying that people who believe this false doctrine are not saved. I believe that many of them are. I believe that I was a Christian prior to becoming Lutheran! But I will tell you from experience that there is something spiritually dangerous about this "decision theology." The biggest issue is that it puts the responsibility for my salvation *in my own hands*. *Did I say the sinner's prayer correctly* (something that is difficult to know since it is not in scripture)? *Was I really sincere when I said it? If not, should I say it again just in case?*

Bearing the responsibility for my own salvation is not only unbiblical, but it is a crushing load. It is unbiblical because we know that our salvation is based on what Jesus has done, not on what I do (even if it is saying a simple prayer!) It crushes the spirit because I always find myself asking, "How can I ever be certain that I am saved?" When my eternal life is based on how sincerely I said it, I will always question that sincerity.

In Baptism we have an objective moment in which we are saved. Baptism is not, unlike the sinner's prayer, a work done by us. I may well have said the sinner's prayer hundreds of times, never being sure if it "took." But we need not question whether our baptism was done properly since it is done *to us* by God Himself and He cannot possibly do it *wrong*. We only need to be baptized once. With baptism we need not question our sincerity, since God is sincere *for* us. There is so much comfort and security in the true, biblical teaching on this issue, for through it we remember that Jesus bore the crushing load for us on the cross!

There is much more I could say in regards to this topic, but there isn't time or space in this newsletter. If you have any questions, feel free to email me.

In Christ,

Pastor Woodside

