



Shepherd of the Valley Sunday school presents their annual Christmas program, with the message "Peace Comes to Earth" on Wednesday December 20, 2023 at the 6:00 pm service. Please come and worship with us during this special presentation. Refreshments will be provided for fellowship afterwards.



Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod
North Dakota District

Unity in Christ Ephesians 4:1-16

FOR SUCH A TIME AS THIS

- LEARN WHY CHRISTIANS SHOULD ENGAGE WITH CULTURE.
- LEARN THE PRINCIPLES OF RELIGIOUS LIBERTY.
- DISCOVER HOW WE CAN INTERACT WITH CULTURE FOR ITS BENEFIT AND THE CHURCH'S MISSION.



DR. GREGORY SELTZ
Executive Director of
Lutheran Center for
Religious Liberty & Speaker
Emeritus for Lutheran
Hour Ministries

Conference

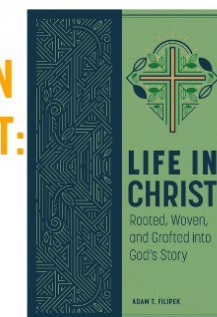
**FEBRUARY 10TH, 2024
9:00 TO 3:30**

ZION LUTHERAN CHURCH - BISMARCK, ND

DR. SELTZ WILL DISCUSS THE IMPORTANCE OF BEING DUAL KINGDOM CITIZENS AND EXPLORE WHY CREATING A NETWORK OF BELIEVERS AND CHURCHES IS CRUCIAL "FOR SUCH A TIME AS THIS."



**REV. DR. ADAM FILIPEK
WILL SHARE INSIGHTS ON
HIS BOOK, "LIFE IN CHRIST:
ROOTED, WOVEN, AND
GRAFTED INTO GOD'S
STORY**



**Registration Fee:
\$50/person
\$75/family**

Contact Tami Ulland:
for More Info:
lcms.nd.busman@gmail.com
(701) 360-1469

**MIDDLE SCHOOL
HIGH SCHOOL
BIBLE STUDY**

All Middle School and Highschool Students grade 5-12 are invited!
Where: We will meet at Shepherd of the Valley Sunday 12/17 at:
2:00 for Bible Study and Lunch. Following that we will be packing care packages for families of students at Wachter Middle School. Following this, at 4:00 we will be going Christmas Caroling for our shut-ins!

RSVP: Pastor Woodside Text: 951-217-3385





Shepherd of the Valley will host the Banquet at the Dream Center on Sunday, January 14. We will serve lunch from 11:45-1:00. We will also share Christ as we lead a worship service over the lunch hour for the roughly three hundred individuals as they enjoy the meal.

#WEGETTOSERVE The Dream Center is The Human Care Committee's 4th Quarter focus.

Happy Birthday!

December

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

Baptism BIRTHDAYS

December

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

December ANNIVERSARIES

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

Lay Leaders

December 2023

- 1-15 Lee Roath
- 16-31 Dick Dever



Savior Himself!

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 any-time at www.mainstreetliving.com – then click on the link identified as “Fargo / Bismarck”. Worship services from the five other MSL broadcast areas, as well as the weekly “This Is the Life” programs, are also available for viewing on the website.

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 2023:

Dec 3: Rev. Heath Trampe, Our Savior Lutheran Church, Minot, ND, presents the message: “Prepared for Christ!” based on Mark 13:24-27. “This Is the Life” program: “Stable Boy” - A manger scene comes to life and tells the story of the first Christmas.

Dec 10: Rev. Richard Jones, Dakota Boys and Girls Ranch, Minot, ND, presents the message: “Comfort Comfort for the People of God” based on Isaiah 40:1-11. “This Is the Life” program: “Red Boots for Christmas” - A shoemaker learns the true meaning of Christmas.

Dec 17: Rev. Timothy Stout, St. Peter’s Lutheran Church, Sawyer, ND, St. Martin Lutheran Church, Anamoose, ND, and St. John Lutheran Church, Kongsberg, ND, presents the message: “The Lord Comes” based on John 1:6-8, 19-28. “This Is the Life” program: “Christmas Is” - The shepherd in a Christmas play learns the importance of Christmas.

Dec 24: Rev. Matthew Harrison, President of the Lutheran Church Missouri Synod, presents the Christmas message. More information at www.MainStreetLiving.com. “This Is the Life” program: “Christmas on Main Street” - The Christmas message at a mission brings a grandson and his grandfather together.

Dec 31: Rev. Philip Beyersdorf, St. Mark’s Lutheran Church, Minot, ND, presents the message: “Impatient Assumptions” based on Luke 2:22-40. “This Is the Life” program: “Burden Made Light” - The housekeeper helps a family through the struggle of an increasingly sick child.



Dec. 3	Madison G.
Dec. 10	Mackenzie G.
Dec. 17	Abby Z.
Dec. 24	Olivia D.
Dec. 31	David A.

ELDER GROUP VISITS

The Board of Elders is looking forward to meeting with the members of their group in January. You have been assigned an elder whose responsibility it is to assist Pastor Wolfgram and Pastor Woodside in caring for you. We will be offering three Elder group visit evenings to present current ministry goals and opportunities and to address any questions or concerns that you may have. The meetings will be held January 10, 16, and 17 starting at 7:15. We plan to meet for less than an hour. You will receive an invitation from your elder in the coming weeks.



At Your Service:
Counselors Now
Available!



CHRISTMAS SCHEDULE

Shepherd of the Valley will offer three services on December 24 and 25 as we celebrate the birth of Jesus. We will have our regular morning worship at 9:00 am on December 24. We will also have a special Christmas Eve service at 6:00 pm on the 24th. Christmas Day Service will take place at 9:00 am on December 25 and will include the Lord's Supper.



If you need care, please call for an appointment. To schedule an appointment via telehealth with either Lindy or Dave, call 701-532-0996.

The Measure of Our Generosity

If you open up the Small Catechism, you'll find a shortened version of the Third Commandment: "Remember the Sabbath day by keeping it holy." But if you look up the list of the Ten Commandments in Exodus, you'll find the full version:

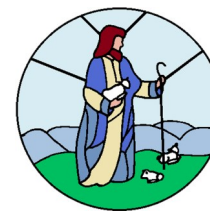
Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days you shall labor, and do all your work, but the seventh day is a Sabbath to the LORD your God. On it you shall not do any work, you, or your son, or your daughter, your male servant, or your female servant, or your livestock, or the sojourner who is within your gates. For in six days the LORD made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that is in them, and rested on the seventh day. Therefore the LORD blessed the Sabbath day and made it holy. (Ex. 20:8–11)

Why did Luther shorten this commandment for the Small Catechism? Was it so that the kids wouldn't have so much to memorize? No, it was because Luther knew that all the details of the Third Commandment were part of the "shadow" of the Old Testament (Col. 2:16). Or as St. Paul puts it, there is "letter" in the Old Testament law and "spirit" (2 Cor. 3:6). The details of not working on Saturday were fulfilled by Christ. That part of the Sabbath regulation no longer applies. But the spirit of the law does remain: We need to dedicate sufficient time each week to hearing God's Word and giving it honor and respect. Or as Luther sums it up in the Small Catechism's explanation to the Third Commandment: "We should fear and love God so that we do not despise preaching and His Word but hold it sacred and gladly hear and learn it."

The same sort of analysis applies to our giving. In the Old Testament, God commanded the Israelites to give a tenth of their income to the Levites so that those men could dedicate their lives to serving in God's house, teaching the people, conducting worship, etc. In the New Testament, there is a rigid requirement listed about handing in your tax forms to church to make sure you've given enough. But the mandate to have a full-time ministry, which is the spirit of that law concerning tithing to the Levites, is right there in 1 Corinthians 9:14: "The Lord has ordained that those who preach the Gospel should make their living from the Gospel."

The New Testament church's job is significantly larger than the job of Old Testament Israel. We are commanded to preach the Gospel to all nations. There was only the temple to maintain in the Old Testament, but we have churches, schools, universities and seminaries, plus missionaries everywhere. So you tell me: Can we really undertake the work of the ministry if our giving doesn't even measure up to Old Testament levels of generosity?

S	M	T	W	TH	F	S
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
<u>9:00am</u> Divine Service			<u>6:00pm</u> Confirmation			<u>8:30am</u> Board of Ed
<u>10:30am</u> Education Hour			<u>6:00pm</u> Worship			
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
<u>9:00am</u> Divine Service		<u>4:30pm</u> Human Care	<u>6:00pm</u> Confirmation	<u>7:30pm</u> Elders		<u>8:00am</u> Men's
<u>10:30am</u> Education Hour			<u>6:00pm</u> Worship			Network <u>4:30pm</u> Hang Out
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
<u>9:00am</u> Divine Service			<u>6:00pm</u> Children's Christmas Program			
<u>10:30am</u> Education Hour						
<u>1:00pm</u> Wachter Gift Bags						
<u>3:45pm</u> Christmas Caroling						
<u>7:00pm</u> Council						
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
<u>9:00am</u> Divine Service						
<u>6:00pm</u> Christmas Eve Service						
31						
<u>9:00am</u> Divine Service						
<u>10:30am</u> Education Hour						



Shepherd of the Valley Lutheran Church
"A church family that shares, nurtures, and lives our faith in Christ"
 December 2023, Newsletter

Thoughts on Lutheran Worship - Part I

Worship is Primarily About God Serving Man

I. Who is Serving Who?

In the English language the German word Gottesdienst is translated as "God's service". It is interesting to note that the meaning is somewhat ambiguous. It can be understood either to indicate God's service toward man, or it can be taken to mean man's service toward God. Lutheranism, or rather, Christianity, is often a theology of paradoxes. Once again, as with so many theological issues, Lutheran Theology appears to be walking the fence; refusing to settle on one side. However, unlike many of these doctrines which we hold in tension (e.g. Law and Gospel, Freewill and Election, to name a few), worship should be seen primarily as God's service toward mankind, with the following response being mankind's praise toward God and service to our neighbor. Although this may at first appear egocentric, it is actually Christocentric. Our Lutheran theology of worship glorifies Christ as He is revealed through His sacrificial death and resurrection for our sins. It does this implicitly and continually in each part of the Divine Service.

II. Is This Selfish?

To many ears it may sound self-aggrandizing or even blasphemous to suggest that one ought to go to church in order that God might serve *him*. It seems axiomatic that church ought to be where *we go to worship and serve our God*. However, it is clear from Scripture, and even from rational sense, that there really isn't anything that we could possibly give to God that He doesn't already have. As it says in Acts, **"The God who made the world and everything in it, being Lord of heaven and earth, does not live in temples made by man, nor is he served by human hands, as though He needed anything, since He Himself gives to all mankind life and breath and everything"** (Acts 17:24-25).

III. It is the Only Way

Despite this, something inside of us screams against it. That's so selfish! We go to church for *ourselves*? Certainly something akin to this objection is what was running through Peter's mind when the Lord attempted to wash his feet on that Maundy Thursday when he said, **"You shall never wash my feet"** (John 13:8). However, the Lord did not commend Peter for his humility and reverence, rather, He insisted, saying that **"If I do not wash you, you have no share with me"** (John 13:8). In Mark's Gospel we also read that the **"Son of Man came not be served but to serve, and to give His life as a ransom for many"** (Mark 10:45).

Certainly, Christ's sacrifice on the cross is the ultimate example of serving His people. In the next article we will further examine how we receive His gifts when the Lord serves us in the Divine Service.

In Christ,
 Pastor Woodside