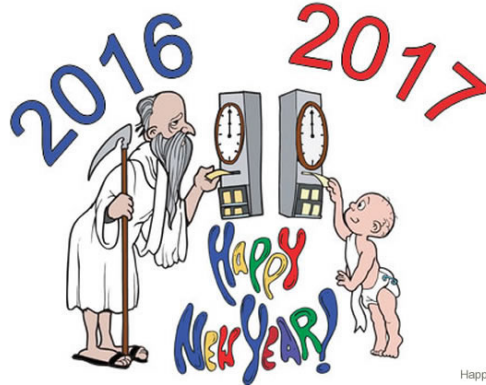


MESSENGER

From the Desk of Pastor

Happy New Year 2017!



What the New Year will bring only the Lord knows. We are in His hands and at his mercy. May grace and truth follow you wherever you may journey.

One of the many symbols for ringing in the New Year is an image of an old man and a baby. One which symbolizes 2016 for my family and I. Something old passes away something new comes forth. The passing away of my father and the birth of a new grandchild both in December. (As I am writing this letter my daughter-in-law is giving birth.)

I'm sure that I am not the only one who has experienced life and death around the New Year but it does make one reflect on the nature of the old man and a new birth of a child. It especially affects a Christian who knows that in death new life is promised by Christ in baptism, and in life death is promised due to sin. Both awake our senses that Christ is preeminent and necessary for the old and very young. I am led to think that is why my son and daughter-in-law want their baby baptized in the hospital. (birth, death, rebirth all the same day, birthday celebrations will never be the same, for both will be remembered on the same day.) So as I am waiting the news of a grandchild born in

California, I would wish a new year to all of you in St. Louis. As we get older and clock out, the old nature can ring in the new life in Christ. Stay young in heart and mind. New Years gives us an opportunity to remember the child that you are in Christ Jesus.



*Grandma holding
Alice Catherine Tanney*

Romans 8:21 The creation itself will be set free from its bondage to corruption and obtain the freedom of the glory of the children of God.

"A New Year has tiptoed in. Let's go forward to meet it. Let's welcome the 365 days it brings. Let's live well with love in our hearts towards God and all people. Let's walk through its corridors with praise songs on our lips."

Anusha Atukoraia

A NEW LEAF?

A Joyful 'toon by Mike Waters



We were therefore buried with him through baptism into death in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life.

— ROMANS 6:4 NIV

Evangelism



The Compass children shared the Christmas story on December 14, during our evening advent service. It was well attended with over 150 worshipers. After the service the children were given a bag of treats which included a candy cane pin which explained the story of it's connection with JESUS.

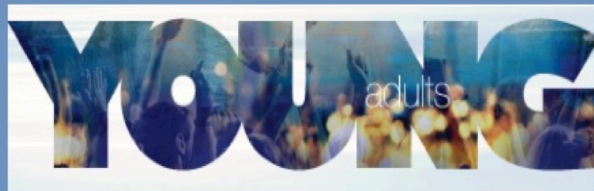


Social Ministry

Thanks to everyone who contributed gifts to the "Giving Tree". Christmas gifts were received from Christ Memorial. Thank you to Eileen for picking them up and delivering all of them safely. Christmas presents were given to our food pantry clients on December 17th.

God has blessed us with monetary donations from outside sources CPH, Czech Society and monthly donations from Epiphany, which definitely assists us in weekly purchases of groceries.

Thanks to everyone for stepping up and assisting us in the absence of Karl, especially to Sandy and Craig who has come at 6:00 A.M., on Saturdays, to help unlock the building for the clients. Each and every one of you is so very much appreciated. God has blessed us with such willing workers.



BIBLE STUDY
THURSDAYS @ 6:30 PM
CALL CHURCH OFFICE
FOR INFORMATION
314-773-0126

*Young Adult Bible Study will resume
Thursday, January 5.*

As we look forward to another year, we are amazed that God continues to bless us so abundantly, and because of Him we are able to continue with this food pantry.

May God bless each of you in the New Year as He has blessed our food pantry.

Worship Attendance Report

Sunday Worship

2015 Average 50 (50 Services)

2016 Average 52 (52 Services)

Lent Worship

2015 Average 34

2016 Average 25

Easter

2015 125

2016 100

Thanksgiving

2015 43

2016 51

Advent Worship

2015 Average 45

2016 Average 89

Christmas Eve

2015 56

2016 55

Christmas Day

2015 30

2016 46



Shayna Bohannon	1/22
Tiffany Bohannon	1/22
Terry Hartz	1/30
Carmen Hobson	1/8
Ethelmae Leuther	1/25
Ginny Turner	1/25
Karen Vineyard	1/2

*Carmen Hobson
4443 Delta Queen LN
Godfrey, IL 62035*

*Virginia Turner
400 S. Station Rd., Rm 502
Glen Carbon, IL 62034*

**Look for the
Voter and Executive Council
meetings schedule in our next
bulletin announcements!**

January 2017						
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1 9:00am Worship 10:30am Bible Class	2 Church Office Closed 7:00pm Elders	3 2:00pm Nepalese Bible Study 3:30pm Compass 7:00pm Adult Confirmation	4 10:00am Confirmation 3:30pm Compass 6:30pm Choir 6:30pm ESOL	5 2:00pm Home Bible Study 3:30pm Compass	6 8:00am Bible Study 1:00pm Compass	7 8:00am Social Ministry 8:30am Food Pantry
8 9:00am Worship w/ Communion 10:30am Bible Class	9 3:30pm Compass 6:30PM WOW	10 2:00pm Nepalese Bible Study 3:30pm Compass 7:00pm Adult Confirmation	11 8:00am Eagle Coffee and Conversation 10:30am Avalon Bible Study 3:30pm Compass 6:30pm Choir 6:30pm ESOL	12 2:00pm Home Bible Study 3:30pm Compass	13 8:00am Bible Study 1:00pm Compass	14 8:30am Food Pantry
15 9:00am Worship 10:30am Bible Class	16 Eagle Closed Church Office Closed 6:30pm Evangelism	17 2:00pm Nepalese Bible Study 3:30pm Compass 7:00pm Adult Confirmation	18 3:30pm Compass 6:30pm ESOL	19 2:00pm Home Bible Study 3:30pm Compass	20 8:00am Bible Study 1:00pm Compass	21 8:30am Food Pantry
22 9:00am Worship w/ Communion 10:30am Bible Class	23 3:30pm Compass 6:00pm Boy Scouts 7:00pm Ushers	24 2:00pm Nepalese Bible Study 3:30pm Compass 7:00pm Adult Confirmation	25 3:30pm Choir 6:30pm ESOL	26 2:00pm Home Bible Study 3:30pm Compass	27 8:00am Bible Study 1:00pm Compass	28 8:30am Food Pantry
29 9:00am Worship 10:30am Bible Class	30 3:30pm Compass	31 2:00pm Nepalese Bible Study 3:30pm Compass 7:00pm Adult Confirmation	Notes:			

Stewardship

Celebrating New Years is a celebration of the past and the future. We take stock of the past with thanksgiving and sometimes even relief (that it's over), and we look to the future in the hope and anticipation and perhaps even worry of what it holds.

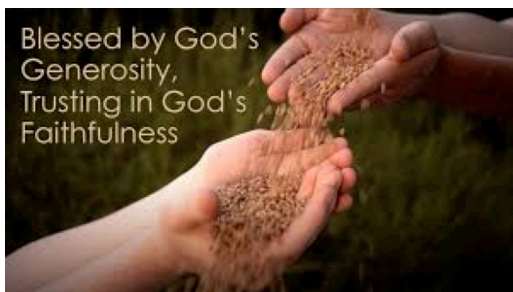
The point is that New Year's celebrations remind us of who we are as opposed to who we would like to be; what we have done in comparison to what we want to do. It reminds us of our accomplishments, but mostly it reminds us of our failures. What we've lost. Who we've lost.

New Years is our own version of Dickens' classic *A Christmas Carol*. And we all play Scrooge.

We are visited by the ghosts of our pasts, presents, and futures.



St. Paul writes: "The point is this: whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows



bountifully will also reap bountifully. Each one must give as he has made up his mind, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver. And God is able to make all grace abound to you, so

that having all sufficiency in all things at all times, you may **abound** in every good work. As it is written, 'He has distributed freely, he has given to the poor; his righteousness endures forever.' He who supplies seed to the sower and bread for food will supply and multiply your seed for sowing and increase the harvest of your righteousness. You will be enriched in every way for all your generosity, which through us will produce thanksgiving to God" (2 Cor 9:6–15).

St. Paul tells us that the Lord of all will both supply and increase what you need to give to the church for its work in and for the world. He tells us that this work that God is doing in us will enrich and bless us in every way and through this it will produce thanksgiving to God. With this in mind, here is some practical advice to help you take stock of your giving of years past, which will help you to change what needs to be changed, improved, or done away with altogether.



First, attend the Divine Service to receive God's gifts of forgiveness, life, and salvation. If you've not been faithful in attending worship to hear the preaching of God's Word, to receive forgiveness, and feast of the rich food of our Lord's body and blood for the eternal benefit of your body and soul, then repent and come to receive the gifts God freely gives. God doesn't want your money. He wants you—all of you (Matt 22:20–22).



Second, pray for the Lord's help. Your right as a Christian is to speak with your Father, the King of all creation, freely through His Son, our Lord, Jesus Christ. Go to the throne of grace and ask for strength and wisdom to follow His bidding faithfully (John 15:1–16).

Third, consider what the Church is and what the Church does. The Church is a mercy place. It inhales the mercy of the Father by the death, resurrection, and ascension of His Son through the preaching of the Gospel and the Sacraments. It exhales this mercy in love toward the neighbor. You are a member of the Church, of God's family. Thus, you are not only a recipient of God's mercy, but a bearer of that mercy for the life of the world. You spread that mercy in showing mercy through the generous giving of your income to support the work of the Church in and for the world, as the Israelites did in the Old Testament (Lev 27:1–34).

Fourth, take stock of your current giving in light of the New Testament's teaching on supporting the work of the Church. Are you giving of your first fruits, taking it out of your paycheck first, or does God get what's left over? Are you giving voluntarily and cheerfully? Are you giving proportionally and



generously? The Old Testament required a tithe, ten percent. The New Testament gives freedom to be generous, to give more for the Church's work. Are you relying on God's promise to provide and increase what you need to do His work? If your answer is no to any of these, repent. If God gave you His only Son, will He not provide for you all things, even physical things? Trust Him, His Word, and heed it.

So, don't let your past define your future. Rather, commit for the year a generous proportion of your income, which is God's gift

MESSENGER

St. Johns Lutheran Church
3738 Morgan Ford Rd.
St. Louis, MO 63116