



## Teen Scene Newsletter

**Faith Lutheran Church**  
**935 S. Crystal Glen Drive**  
**Lecanto, FL 34461**  
**Office Phone: 352-527-3325**  
[cfaithlutheran@gmail.com](mailto:cfaithlutheran@gmail.com)  
<http://www.faithlecanato.com>

**4th Edition**

**January 2023**

**Prepared by: Marcia Pridgen**

**Hello and Happy New Year 2023**

This month starts a new year. People will be making resolutions...most of them will not be kept. I would like you to consider making a resolution that I pray you will keep. That is to try to attend church more often. Our topic for this month is "Why Attend Church? Read it and prayerfully consider getting up on Sundays, or attending Saturday evenings. At first it may seem like just one more demand on your busy lives, but I assure you, once you begin making it a regular part of your routine, it will be worth it!

In February we will have a very "**Hot Topic**" that your generation is dealing with. That is:

Transgenderism.

I admit I am learning about this and that is why I am putting it off until February so I can do some more research on this topic. So be sure to read it and comment back. Text me your thoughts (352) 263-0397.

### **THE CHURCH YEAR**

We are now entering the season of **The Epiphany of Our Lord!** The word Epiphany means revealing. In the Old Testament gentiles (non-Israelites) were not allowed to enter the inner courts of God's temple. They were not God's chosen people and were considered outsiders who didn't belong. Yet in Genesis 12:3 God told Abraham he'd be the father of many nations...not just Israel. When the Magi (often called the three kings or three wise men) came to worship

baby Jesus they revealed the truth. You see they were gentiles – not Israelites. They showed that Jesus came for ALL people. All people have access to God. Jesus is the new Temple. God in the Flesh. And He came for ALL people!

We celebrate Epiphany on January 6<sup>th</sup>. The following Sundays we continue this celebration until Lent. We have so much to be thankful for. For instance, we will be celebrating the Baptism of our Lord! (Matthew 3:11). Many wonder ‘if Jesus is God/man so why did He need to be baptized? After all, baptism is for repentance, for the remission of sin....’

Well...Jesus was baptized into our sins. He soaked up the sins of the world. In my mind I see Him as sort of a sponge soaking up the waters of the Jordan River representing Him soaking up the sins of the entire world, past, present, and future. This means our Baptism is into His death and resurrection for the forgiveness of sins! We are baptized with water and the power of His word for the remission of our sins. WOW! Jesus came to earth as a sinless man, was baptized into sin so that He could suffer and die for our sins and then rose victorious over sin, death, and the devil! AND He instituted the Sacrament of Baptism for our forgiveness and salvation!

The Gospel readings through Epiphany will focus on Jesus’ miracles. We will hear about how Jesus came to make things new again. We will hear in Luke 2:52 that Jesus grew in three ways:

1. Wisdom
2. Stature (size)
3. In favor with God and man.

As we attend church and fellowship with other believers, we too grow in these three ways.

Our worship during this season includes changing the colors in church from white to green as green represents growth.

On February 2<sup>nd</sup> we commemorate the Purification of Mary and Presentation of our Lord. It is 40 days after Christmas when we celebrate the “Feast of Jesus”, and the color for this day is white symbolizing the purity of Jesus.

Finally, the last Sunday of Epiphany and the week before Lent begins, we look at the Transfiguration of our Lord. This focuses on when Peter, James, and John are given a brief glimpse of Jesus’ Glory. We celebrate with the color white as on the Mount of Transfiguration Jesus’ garments shone white as light (Matthew 17:2). The Alleluias will be sung as part of our Divine worship for the last time until Easter (February Newsletter will have more on this).

### **OUR TOPIC FOR JANUARY IS:**

### **WHY SHOULD I GO TO CHURCH?**

I know setting aside time for Church often seems like just one more thing to add to a busy life. So much is expected of you like school, homework, chores, family time, sports, music, and so on. You must wonder when I get a day to “just sleep in”. I love God, I believe in Jesus, and that is enough. I understand how you feel. But please read on and consider how church life could benefit you.

First, let's remember that *the Church belongs to God* (1 Timothy 3:15 ESV). It is the household of God, the church of the living God, a pillar and buttress of truth!

Matthew 16:18 tells us the Gospel is needed so that not even the gates of hell can prevail against God's Church. By the way, the Gospel is read in every Church service.

In Ephesians 6: 10-18 we read about the armor of God. Hearing His word is an intricate part of preparing us for the challenges we face in the world.

Second, *The Church is the Body of Christ* (Ephesians 1:23 and Colossians 1:24). Christ is the Head of the Church, the authority. His word, scripture, is our guiding light that shows us His works and desires for us. His word tells us we have ministers, here referring to Paul, and also tells us "we are to continue in faith, stable and steadfast, not shifting from the hope of the Gospel that you heard, which has been proclaimed in all creation under heaven."

Where do we hear the Gospel? You will definitely hear it in church. What is something that can help us remain stable and steadfast? Fellowship with other Christians and attending church where the Gospel is read and taught. Other ways include studying the Bible and prayer.

Third, is *The Unity of the Church*. The following is quoted from my Lutheran Study Bible, Large Print edition, ESV, published by Concordia Publishing House, Copyright 2009.

"The unity of the church is given by God and not an achievement of human beings. In this sense it is not wrong to say that the unit of the church is a sacramental unit, created by the Holy Spirit through the washing of God's Word (Ephesians 5:26, a clear reference to baptism). As the Psalmist writes, "know that the Lord, He is God! It is He who made us, and we are His; we are His people, and the sheep of His pasture" (Psalm 100:3). This unity is a unity of faith; that is, faith is an object, namely Jesus Christ. The faith one professes is an agreement with the entire Christian church, as urged by the Apostle Paul in 1 Corinthians 1:10, "I appeal to you brothers...that there be no divisions among you, but that you will be united in the same mind and the same judgement." [ApVII/VII8]. ..

Christ joins His people, His children (John 11:52), together into one body, even His own body (Ephesians 1:23, 1 Corinthians 12:12-31). We are told in no uncertain terms that, as one body "[if] one member suffers, all suffer together" (1 Corinthians 12:26). To this body is given a multitude of gifts that are to be shared (1 Corinthians 12:27 -31). Among these gifts is the gift of the pastoral office which is given to ensure that the gospel is purely proclaimed among God's people. [ACV 1-2]...

What should first be noted is that since Christian unity is a gift from God, *we recognize* and do not *create it*...The basis of the faith is faith in Christ, a faith that comes to us as a gift and recognizes the voice of the Shepherd that comes to us through His word [SA III, XII 2].

Walter Obare Omwanza, "Choose Life" CTQ 69:3/4 (July/Oct 2005), 311-12."

I am leaving you to consider the importance of attending church. I know that in addition to the many commitments we mentioned earlier, church is filled with "Old" people, but if you come

that can change. We can start events and programs that meet your needs and encourage more young people to attend and hear God's Good News!

So think about it. Jesus came to earth for YOU! He became a man, suffered and was crucified in our place to pay the price of our sins.

What an awesome God we worship and serve! What a privilege to be a believer and follower of Christ, the Living God.

See you in church!

Praise be to God!

Pastor Griffin's notes in bulletin, Sunday, December 25, 2022

New Year's Eve/Day: "God's Time"

Epiphany Overall Theme: "A Season of Lights"

- January 7 & 8: "Rising and Shining"
- January 14 & 15: "Seeing and Pointing"
- January 21 & 22: "Following and Fishing"
- January 28 & 29: "Foolishness on the Move"
- February 4 & 5: "Salt and Light"
- February 11 & 12: "Planters and Waterers"
- February 18 & 19: "Eyewitnesses"

Resources for this newsletter include

The Lutheran Study Bible, Large Print Edition, ESV, Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis, Mo, copyright 2009

A Simple Explanation of the Church Year, Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis, Mo, copyright 2020