

# ST. PETER COMMUNICATOR

43 N 3rd St., Hilbert, WI 54129

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January 2024

## From the desk of Pastor Peterson

Grace, mercy, and God's peace to each and every one of you. Merry Christmas and Happy New Year. The new year is a time when we can make New Year's resolutions. People make all kinds of resolutions to make their lives better and to have a productive New Year. I am not one to put a lot of stock in New Year's resolutions because, mainly, I have trouble keeping them. But still it is important to set goals and to meet them. In setting goals and meeting them, I want to share with you where we are at Saint Peter and Saint Luke Lutheran Churches.

First off, I am very thankful that both churches are finding a way to work with each other. For example, combining our Sunday School curriculum and having the children from both churches sing at our services. Sitting with the joint/dual parish meetings on a quarterly basis and talking through the challenges that we face and trying to figure out how to better work together is a great thing. For example, we are discussing a 4th of July float for the Hilbert parade that would feature both churches. There are many other ways in which we can work together as well. Bible studies at Terra Verde and at Saint Peter have been attended by members of both churches and that is a great thing.

Secondly, I also would encourage each person to attend the other church on a Sunday, or when we have Mid-week Advent and Lenten Services. Sometimes it is good to stretch our wings so to speak. Both churches offer many opportunities to worship together. For example, if you just cannot make the 8:30 am Worship at Saint Peter, join us at Saint Luke at 10:30 am. And the reverse works the same way. If you have plans on a Sunday that would normally conflict with Saint Luke worship times, then join us at 8:30 am. In addition, we will be starting a new bible study at St. Peter on January 9th at 7:00 PM. This study will focus on Messianic Prophecies. This study will take about 2 months or so, and then we will dive into other topics as well, such as books of the bible. Also, we meet at 10:00 AM at Terra Verde Coffee Shop on Fridays where we are studying God's Word in the Psalms. So, if you love coffee, fellowship, and great conversations, please join us. There are no costs for both bible studies, just a time to study God's Word and fellowship with each other!!

The fact that we are a joint/dual parish is good, but there are some important things to remember. For example, both churches have a rich history and heritage that are unique to each other. I can promise you as your pastor and as the joint committee has talked about, that the identity of each church is paramount and should never be changed to suit the needs of the other church. This will not happen on my watch. I, for one, appreciate the subtle and not so subtle differences between the two churches. These differences make for a stimulating and rich environment for my own spiritual growth.

So, in the light of New Years resolutions and goals for the upcoming year, I would encourage each and every one of you to pray about joint opportunities, to worship at the other church, and become more involved in our own churches. Most importantly, invite people that you know who do not have a church or are looking for a church to attend church with us. As I have mentioned before, when you invite someone to church, they are more receptive to your invitation. If you invited 5 people to church and only 1 responded, that would fill the church. If 2 responded that would also fill the church as well. If enough people responded and became members of St. Peter and St. Luke, think of all the outreach we could do in the community, the state of Wisconsin, and the world as a whole.

I believe that we are in a good place spiritually at both churches, but as always, we should never be complacent. So, in the spirit of Christian love and fellowship let us find ways to work together, to join together in proclaiming the love of God to all who need it. It may take a while, and it may take persistence, but in the end it is worth it.

So, Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!!!

In His Grip,



Pastor Peterson

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LUTHERAN WOMEN IN MISSION

### January Meeting and Bible study:

It's a new year, and we will resume our monthly Bible study and planning meetings on January 9 at 1:00. Our Bible studies are found in the Quarterlies, and this month we will be using the Winter 2023 Quarterly. Join us for study and discussion. If you can't find your Quarterly, come and we'll be happy to share. After our Bible study, we'll review our plans for 2024 and decide if we want to make any additions or changes. One of our discussion items will be Lenten lunches. If you enjoyed the Advent lunches, let us know as that will help us decide if we would like to schedule lunches after our Lenten services.

### Winter Getaway:

Our annual Winter Getaway will be held at the Marriott West in Waukesha on February 2-3. The theme is Growing Together, and we have two connecting rooms reserved for our St. Peter ladies. If we have more than eight attending, we'll just add another room! One of the fun activities will be a Crazy Winter Hat contest. Design your crazy hat – it must depict Winter and somehow incorporate the theme Growing Together – and see if you can

be a contest winner! The program starts on Friday at 6:30 and will conclude at 3:30 on Saturday.

Our Gifts of Love will be care packages for female students and church workers at Concordia – Wisconsin. Items to include in a quart size zip lock bag are socks, facial items, lip gloss, chocolate Kisses or Hugs, devotions and Mustard Seeds.

For a registration form, see the LWML-SWD website under events or ask Judy Paulson. Registration is \$70 and the deadline is January 19<sup>th</sup>.

### Zone Prayer Service:

Our Zone Prayer Service will be held on Wednesday, February 7, at 1:00 at Zion, New Holstein. Mark your calendar.

### New Holstein WIM Women's Day:

This annual event will take place on Saturday, April 6<sup>th</sup>. The speaker will be Roberta Hilgendorf who will tell us about her and her husband's experiences as missionaries in Alaska. Stay tuned for more information!

### Souper Bowl Gifts from the Heart:

Our annual ingathering of items for the Bread of Life Food Pantry in Chilton is now underway. See the display in the Narthex for ideas, but in general, any items which are non-perishable are appreciated.



## Mission Matters

2023–2025 MISSION GRANT NO. 3

**SERVING GOD'S CHILDREN  
WITH SPECIAL NEEDS**

**JOURNEYS LUTHERAN SCHOOL**

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*But Jesus called them to him, saying, "Let the children come to me, and do not hinder them, for to such belongs the kingdom of God" (Luke 18:16).*

For 60 years, the distinctive ministry of Journeys Lutheran School has been to serve God's children with special needs such as attention deficit hyperactivity disorder, learning disabilities, attention deficit disorder, autism, anxiety, trauma, emotional

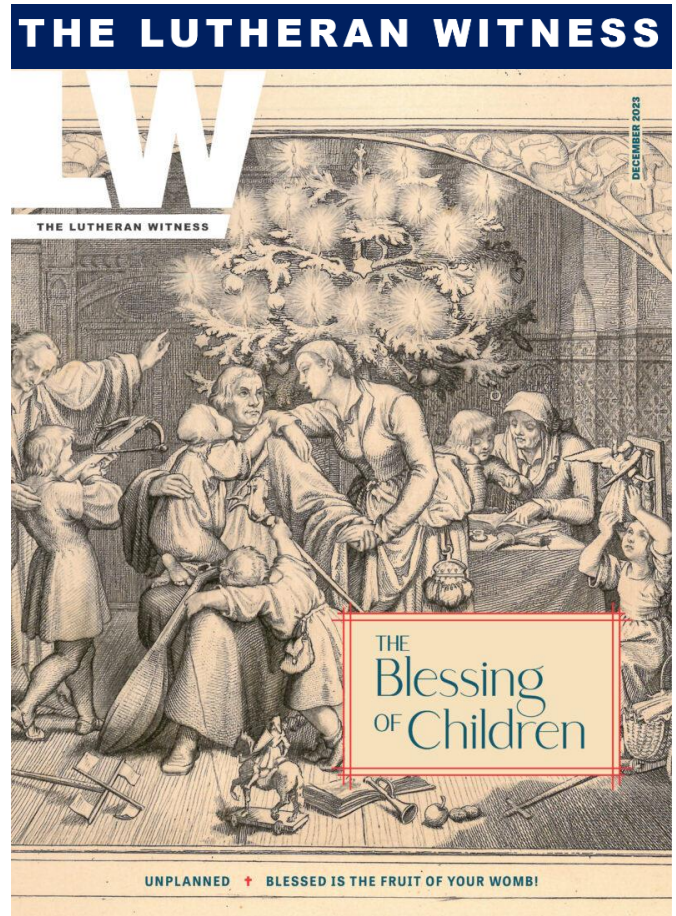
behavior disorder, and obsessive-compulsive disorders. Families choose Journeys Lutheran School for a variety of reasons, including emotional and spiritual growth, a Christian worldview, an educational approach that works best for their unique student, or a more therapeutic approach to education.

We are all God's children despite our differences, challenges, or experiences. Journeys Lutheran School prepares students in Grades 3–12 with unique learning challenges to maximize their God-given spiritual, academic, physical, emotional, and social potential. The resources and experience of Journeys provides academic help to students and provides an opportunity for their lives to be touched by the Holy Spirit through devotions, prayer, Christian counseling, religion classes, and personal witness.

Grant funds will purchase two 15-passenger vans. The vans will allow Journeys to reach and teach more students and meet their academic and spiritual needs. In addition to the school bus already in use, the vans will provide alternative means to reach students in areas outside of Milwaukee. Additionally, the vans will transport youth to Martin Luther High School, a ministry partner, so that Journeys students can take elective classes in a Christian mainstream environment. This will enable Journeys students to earn a high school diploma, not just a certificate of completion. The vans will also transport students to potential school-to-work internship opportunities and to transport students to cultural, historical, and spiritual learning experiences without needing to use the full-size school bus.

Journeys children deserve the same educational and spiritual opportunities that other children enjoy. The van will help them experience the fullness of God's creation by opening the world and all its possibilities and opportunities to them.

*Train up a child in the way he should go; even when he is old he will not depart from it (Proverbs 22:6).*



Letter From the Editor

## The Blessing of Children

by Roy S. Askins

When Jesus came to earth, He did not descend as a fully formed man. Rather, He took on flesh in the womb of the Virgin Mary. He became a lowly embryo, a constantly multiplying package of cells that grew for months in Mary's womb until He was born at the right time.

When Mary — pregnant with God incarnate — visited her cousin, Elizabeth, she heard Elizabeth say: "Blessed is the fruit of your womb!" (Luke 1:42). Elizabeth felt John leap in her womb, his confession of Jesus' divinity. And, indeed, no greater child has ever been born.

Jesus is the Gift of gifts, the reason we celebrate Christmas by giving gifts to our own children and one another. God sent us this Gift to redeem children of every age, that we might become like little children, dependent upon and receiving from Him.

In His birth, He also makes all births into blessings. Every child born of woman is now a blessed fruit, a

gracious gift of God. No asterisks or footnotes. Every child is a blessing, even if that blessing is an opportunity for parents to learn self-sacrifice — and even if that blessing is, in the eyes of the world, one too many.

So our issue this month takes up the twin topics of Christmas and the blessing of children, for the two are inextricably tied together. Christ makes all children gifts, and He gives those gifts to us as unplanned surprises — see Jeffrey Hemmer’s article — and blessed fruit of every womb — see Josh Pauling’s article.

Not only are we blessed by our children, but we also have opportunities to bless them. Christopher Nuttelman provides the biblical foundation of such blessings along with examples of how parents can bless those children in their daily lives. Sarah Reinsel digs deep into Jesus’ admonition to become like little children, exploring what it means for God’s people to depend on Him.

Let me briefly address a potential concern: This issue is not about the morality of birth control or related technologies. It is possible to hold up every child as a great and wonderful blessing of the Lord without commenting on those things.

In other words, this issue is not an indictment of folks who have one or two children any more than it is an endorsement of those who have 12. Rather, we want to hold up all children as good and gracious blessings and gifts of God, as indeed they are.

Blessed by God,

Roy S. Askins

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Print Feature

## **‘Blessed Is the Fruit of Your Womb!’**

### ***How Christ’s birth hallows all births and all of bodily life***

*by Josh Pauling*

The Bible is an earthy, fleshy book. God forms Adam from dirt. He fashions Eve from Adam’s rib. They eat forbidden fruit and use animal skin for covering. There are pillars of smoke and fire, roasted lambs and bitter herbs, bloody sacrifices and clouds of temple incense. And not only in the Old Testament — the New Testament continues with such physicality. Jesus heals with spit and dirt, fingers in ears, and caskets touched. A bloody cross culminates in bodily

resurrection. Finally, He promises the resurrection of our bodies and a renewed physical earth.

Biblical salvation is not an offer to escape the body into some disembodied realm, whether platonic, gnostic, Eastern, transhumanist or anything else. Rather, the Bible deeply anchors redemption itself to the body. God carries out His redemptive deliverance through intense bodily realities from creation to consummation.

The Christmas story is also grounded in physicality: a pregnancy. There is not much that is more utterly human than giving birth and being born. This fact — that God has taken on flesh in the virgin’s womb — is like a diamond held up to the light. The more you behold its mysteries, the more facets of beauty and wonder you perceive, and the more implications for life emerge in the blessings of birth and embodiment. The Christmas story reflects the subversive and compelling role for the church and the family in a society that has forgotten what it means to be human.

### **The Visitation: The Wombs of Elizabeth and Mary**

The meeting of Mary and Elizabeth overflows with the physicality and joyful anticipation of birth. Echoing an Old Testament theme with women like Sarah, aging Elizabeth — who is beyond childbearing age — nevertheless bears John, the man who would plunge Christ into the waters of the Jordan. Then there is young Mary, the virgin, who bears Jesus, the God-man who came to plunge people into His life-giving kingdom waters. These bookends of maternity — the elderly mother of the greatest born of women under the old covenant, and the virgin mother of the incarnate mystery of the ages — embed the great acts of redemption in the family, much like God’s promise to Abraham that through his offspring “shall all the nations of the earth be blessed” (Gen. 22:18).

The bodily realities of birth are central to the redemptive work of God in Christ. The forerunner and the King both await their destinies as helpless babes in the watery wombs of their mothers. The greatest of the old age and the Ancient of Days meet from inside the bodies of another in a mystery that is visceral and real, enchanting and wonderful. No wonder John leapt for joy. No wonder Elizabeth exclaimed, “Blessed is the fruit of your womb!” (Luke 1:42). And no wonder Mary magnified the Lord (Luke 1:46–56).

John and Jesus are not isolated bodies, but bodies in relation to other bodies — bodies situated in family

structures. Elizabeth and Zechariah and Mary and Joseph nurture and raise John and Jesus, as we see the complementarity of men and women in the blessed Trinity's work of redemption. Christ's coming in this specific way — birthed through the waters of Mary, nursed at her breast, raised in a family, trained as a craftsman by Joseph — elevates and sanctifies all births and all aspects of life.

### **The Purification: Firstborn of Mary, Firstborn of All Creation**

The purification of Mary also deserves our contemplation. Luke recounts that “when the time came for their purification according to the Law of Moses, they brought him up to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord” (Luke 2:22). Then Luke hearkens back to the Exodus command that “every male who first opens the womb shall be called holy to the Lord” (Luke 2:23). “Whatever is the first to open the womb,” Yahweh said to Moses, “is mine” (Ex. 13:2). This sanctifying of the firstborn served as both a firstfruits offering and a re-participation in God's deliverance from Egypt in the final plague of the firstborn, from which the Israelites were protected through the blood of a sacrificial lamb. Jesus, as the first to open Mary's virgin womb, is the reality to which the firstfruits offering to the Lord pointed and the true sacrificial lamb portrayed in type and shadow in the Exodus Passover.

The firstborn of Mary is the firstborn of all creation, who ushers in a new creation. The language of Christ as *firstborn* and *firstfruits* permeates the New Testament. In His birth not only is Christ set apart as Mary's firstborn, He, as the firstborn of all creation, brings others in His train. The firstborn of all creation is the “firstborn from the dead” who will “reconcile to himself all things” (Col. 1:18, 20; see also vv. 15–19). Christ, the incarnate and now resurrected one, is “the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep” (1 Cor. 15:20). Christ is “the firstborn among many brothers” (Rom. 8:29) who gives us “the firstfruits of the Spirit” (Rom. 8:23) as we and all creation wait “with eager longing for the revealing of the sons of God” (Rom. 8:19; see also vv. 18–30). All of human life is folded into His life and remade in Him. This is a hallowing act — a hallowing of birth, of life, of children. A new creation story has begun. The firstborn of all creation — the One who is begotten, not made — is somehow born, lives, dies, rises and now brings us with Him into His divine life.

### **What This All Means: How the Nativity Subverts the Spirit of the Age**

The wonder of the Incarnation never runs dry. It is indeed the mystery “hidden for ages and generations but now revealed to his saints” (Col. 1:26). These are the “things into which angels long to look” (1 Peter 1:12). But the nativity narrative does more than announce the Messiah's arrival or reveal the mystery of the ages. It inaugurates a new way of being that subverts the powers that be; it upends cultural narratives and turns conventional life scripts on their heads — then and now. I offer here a few of the ways that Christ's birth provides a beautiful archetype of life in our culture of death.

#### **1. Christ's birth subverts the autonomous individualism of our age.**

We live in a society driven by the drumbeat of self-creation and expressive individualism that echoes in our ears nonstop: “Be yourself. Express yourself. Live your truth.” The nativity stops the music. God's descent to us in the form of a dependent little baby sets a completely different tune that marches to a different drummer.

The nativity's subversive drumbeat tells us, “We are not our own. We cannot save ourselves. We are dependent on another.” This is good news. Self-creation is exhausting and ultimately impossible. For anyone who takes life the least bit seriously, self-creation easily morphs into an anxiety-inducing burden bigger than our shoulders are designed to bear. Christ's birth into real history tells us that we must be re-created and remade in Christ, who stakes a claim on us and reorients our identity around the patterns and rhythms of His body, His life, His work. We are given the ultimate identity-makers of Word and Sacrament, which unite us to Him and His perfect life, death and resurrection, and plant us deep in His Body, the church, with many members with different gifts.

#### **2. Christ's birth subverts the power dynamics of our age.**

The world is consumed with power. Political parties seek power over principle. Institutions leverage power to cover up scandal. Churches and ministry leaders are also not immune to misuses of power. But it also hits much closer to home when we are honest with our own twisted hearts. We, too, misuse power in our personal lives, in our homes and in the workplace when we exercise even the small bits of authority we have for our own self-interest and personal gain. With



such perennial temptations to misuse authority it is easy to view everything through the lens of power dynamics. Race relations, gender roles, economic disparities, religion itself — all are mere power plays. Every relationship is one of victim and victimizer, oppressed and oppressor. While this may be a tidy way to view the world, it is not God's way.

As an alternative to today's irredeemable power dynamics, there is an astonishing paradigm God orchestrates throughout the Scriptures — a real, historical story that is about not the accumulation of power but the willing relinquishment of it. Even God Himself takes “the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men” (Phil. 2:7). The flow of redemptive history from Genesis to Revelation consistently upends our expectations of power and privilege revealing how “the foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the weakness of God is stronger than men” (1 Cor. 1:25). Even in this jaded age there remains a jolt of hope, a flash of something unexpected, unlikely and shockingly wonderful: the powerless babe in a manger, the stripped Christ on a cross, the victorious yet slaughtered Lamb — the God who wins by losing. These are God's power dynamics — the upside-down and paradoxical kingdom of Christ the Crucified, where weak things shame the strong, where least becomes greatest, where Word becomes flesh. The Messiah rules and reigns not from a glorious throne of political pomp and military circumstance, but as He overturns and inverts the spirit of the age with the powerlessness of His manger; the foolishness of His cross; and His mundane means of Baptism, Word and Supper.

### **3. Christ's birth hallows the family estate.**

According to a 2023 Pew Research parenting study, nearly 90% of parents surveyed found it extremely important that their children be financially independent and have careers they enjoy, while only 20% said it was important that their children marry and have children. Furthermore, just 35% of parents found it very important that their children have similar religious beliefs to their own.<sup>[1]</sup> Declining birth and marriage rates and high de-churching rates are further evidence that we have been catechized all too well into the American creed of careerism, consumerism, personal fulfillment and the pursuit of happiness.

The nativity breaks through with a claim that is countercultural to its core — that God became man within a family. Though born of a virgin, Jesus was not an isolated individual on a journey of self-

fulfillment. As part of a family, He grew “in wisdom and in stature and in favor with God and man” (Luke 2:52). The family is one of God's primary frameworks for human flourishing. In the family God grants us the privilege to witness His miraculous workings of creation and redemption through natural birth and spiritual rebirth. The creational order of family is not only upheld and honored in the nativity but is elevated in Christ, who unites around Himself the eschatological family, where we are made children of God. We are birthed through the waters of our mother, the church, into new life in Christ, our elder brother, who shares with us His communion with the Father through the Spirit.

### **4. Christ's birth hallows embodiment.**

Contemporary culture is not quite sure what to do with the body. For some, it is a shell to be discarded (i.e., refusing the honor of burial, human composting). For others, it is something to be molded and modified in accord with the internal self and personal will (i.e., transhumanism, transgenderism) or sexualized and objectified (i.e., pornography, fitness obsession). Then there are those for whom the body is solely biological matter whose value is determined by ability or status (i.e., abortion, euthanasia). Since its earliest days, the church has faced similar challenges to the centrality of embodiment, whether from docetists claiming Christ only seemed to have a body or from gnostics seeking liberation from the body. The church has always grounded its responses in the Incarnation.

God in the feeding trough is a breathtaking confession of the goodness of the body. Embodiment is a gift and is central to how God reveals Himself to us and how we reflect God's image to one another. Christ's birth elevates the messy realities of embodied life into a high calling. Even the often challenging yet rewarding roles of caring for young children or elderly parents or the long, agonizing hours of inefficient conversation and presence required to walk with someone through grief or depression are deeply human and beautiful expressions of belonging to Christ and His Body.

### **Merry Subversive Christmas**

As we journey through Advent and into another Christmas season, may we never lose the mystery and wonder of God made man. May we also appreciate afresh how countercultural the Incarnation is — how it subverts, upends and inverts the spirit of the age, empowering us to live out what it means to be fully human. Nearly 1,800 years ago, St. Irenaeus of Lyon said, “The glory of God is a living man; and the life of

man consists in beholding God.”[2] In our families, churches and communities, this grand picture of humanity fully alive in Christ and in families offers a compelling and enchanting alternative. For Christ did not come to offer an escape from the body but to redeem our bodies. In His body, He inaugurates a new body paradigm that ends not with death but in the glorification and elevation of humanity to the state for which it always was designed: full communion with God and with one another in a renewed creation, with revived and perfected bodies — all flowing from the last Adam, the firstborn of Mary. The creational order of family is not only upheld and honored in the nativity but is elevated in Christ, who unites around Himself the eschatological family, where we are made children of God.

[1] Rachel Minkin and Juliana Menasce Horowitz, “Parenting in America Today,” Pew Research Center, Jan. 24, 2023, [pewresearch.org/social-trends/2023/01/24/parenting-in-america-today](https://www.pewresearch.org/social-trends/2023/01/24/parenting-in-america-today).

[2] Irenaeus, *Against Heresies in The Ante-Nicene Fathers*, ed. Alexander Roberts and James Donaldson, vol. 1 (1885–1887; repr., Peabody: Hendrickson, 1994), 490.



*Happy Birthday*

### January

- |    |                 |
|----|-----------------|
| 7  | Ron Ott Jr.     |
| 8  | Dan Bergelin    |
|    | Brian Price     |
| 10 | Chad Roehrig    |
| 21 | Elliana Mueller |
| 22 | Jenny Peters    |
| 25 | Mark Menge      |
| 26 | Amanda Pompa    |
| 29 | Ellen Niemann   |
| 31 | Cindy Koffarnus |



## From our table to yours: Reporter staff shares favorite recipes

by Cheryl Magness

The staff of *Reporter* shares their favorite holiday recipes. Merry Christmas!

**Note: All temperatures are in Fahrenheit.**

### Ochsenaugen (“Ox Eye”) Cookies

#### Shortbread

- 2-1/2 cups flour
- 1 tsp. baking powder
- 1/2 cup sugar
- 1 tsp. vanilla extract
- Pinch salt
- 1 egg
- 2 egg yolks
- 12 tbsp. unsalted butter, cold and cubed

#### Marzipan mixture

- 250 g. marzipan
- 2 egg whites

#### Jam filling

- 1 cup seedless raspberry, red currant or apricot jelly

#### Shortbread dough

- Stir together flour, baking powder, sugar, vanilla and salt in a medium bowl or a stand mixer.
- Add egg, egg yolks (save the whites for later) and cubed butter.
- Beat with stand mixer or knead with hands until it comes together into a shortbread dough.
- Cover dough and put in the fridge while you work on the next step.

#### Marzipan mixture

- Cut marzipan into cubes and place in a medium bowl or a stand mixer.
- Add egg whites and beat mixture on high until all chunks of marzipan (or as many as possible) are dissolved. If the mixture will not come together, another egg white can be added, though this may make the mixture lose its shape during baking.

## Assembly and baking

- Preheat the oven to 350°.
- On a lightly floured surface, roll out the shortbread dough to about ¼ inch thick. Cut out round cookies about 7 cm (2-¾ inch) across with a biscuit cutter or a glass. Place on a parchment-lined baking sheet.
- Fit a piping bag with a medium-sized star shaped tip (or cut a small hole in the corner of a freezer bag). Spoon the marzipan mixture into the bag. Pipe the marzipan in a ring around the outer edge of each cookie.
- Bake the cookies at 350° for about 13 minutes, or until the marzipan mixture is just beginning to brown.
- While the cookies bake, place the jam into a small saucepan and heat over medium heat, stirring constantly, until it begins to boil. Continue to stir for 1–2 minutes until jam is slightly thickened.
- Spoon some jelly into the center of each baked cookie, spreading it around to fill the top of the cookie. Cool and enjoy!

*“I tried one of these cookies at a German Christmas market a few years ago, and have been trying to decipher and perfect the one recipe I could find online (in German, a language I do not know) ever since. If anyone has a better recipe for these (in English units and with ingredients available in America), please send it my way!” — Stacey Egger, staff writer*

## Honey Cookies

### Ingredients

- 1 lb. brown sugar
- 2 cups honey
- 8 cups sifted flour
- 1-1/2 cups chopped nuts (optional)
- 1 tbsp. baking soda dissolved in 1/8 cup of water
- 3 eggs
- 1-1/2 tsp. salt
- 1-1/2 tsp. cinnamon
- 1-1/2 tsp. nutmeg

### Directions

- Beat eggs very well in a large bowl. Then beat in sugar. Beat in honey, and fold in the rest of the ingredients. Let the mixture stand overnight.

- Roll out the dough in a single layer, about ¼ of an inch thick. Don't roll it too thin! Cut into rectangles and bake in a slow oven (375 degrees) for 10 minutes.

*“My aunt, Rebecca Schilling, shared this heirloom recipe with me. She remembers eating these as a little girl and loving them. My great grandma, Clara Maassel, was a pastor's wife and mother of nine, so naturally, the original recipe made 16 dozen cookies! I halved the recipe for ease of mixing and baking.” — Sarah Reinsel, staff writer*

## Goosey Butter Cookies

### Ingredients (makes 60)

- 1/2 cup butter, softened
- 1/4 tsp. vanilla
- 1 egg
- 8 oz. cream cheese, softened
- 1 box yellow cake mix
- 1/2 cup powdered sugar

### Directions

- Beat first four ingredients until fluffy. Mix in cake mix. Chill dough for 30 minutes. Form into teaspoon-sized balls (batter is very gooey). Roll balls in powdered sugar.
- Bake on greased cookie sheets at 350° for 12 minutes.

*“Goosey butter cake is a St. Louis tradition, and these bite-size versions always graced my Grandma's amazing Christmas cookie platters.” — Megan K. Mertz, chief copy editor*

## Burnt Offerings

### Ingredients

- Sliced white bread
- 2 tbsp. butter, melted
- 2 egg whites, beaten stiff
- 1-1/4 cups Swiss cheese, coarsely grated
- 2/3 cup green pepper, finely chopped
- 1 tsp. parsley, chopped
- 1/2 tsp. salt
- 5 slices bacon, finely diced
- Dash of pepper

### Directions

- Cut bread rounds or trim crusts, then quarter bread slices. Toast on one side; brush untoasted side with melted butter.
- Fold cheese, green pepper, parsley, salt and pepper into egg whites. Spoon on buttered



side of bread. Sprinkle bacon over top of each. Place on cookie sheet.

- Broil 4" or 5" from heat for 10 minutes or until bacon browns and cheese melts.

*"These are called 'burnt offerings' because the family friend who first prepared them for us could never get it quite right ... always 'burned' the 'offerings.'" — Bonnie Parker, office and business coordinator*

## Roast Turducken

- Purchase a turducken from your local Cajun butcher.
- Cook according to the butcher's instruction.

*"While turducken is not a traditional dish, it brings a new flavor and a spicy respite from the same, old recipes you have every year. Enjoy this Cajun take on a traditional holiday meat. For even more flavor, add a bacon weave over the top." — Roy S. Askins, director of Editorial*

## Buttermilk Pie

### Ingredients

- 2 cups sugar
- 3 tbsp. flour
- 3 eggs
- 1 cup buttermilk
- 1/2 cup butter (1 stick)
- 1/2 tsp. lemon extract
- 1/2 tsp. vanilla extract

### Directions

- Mix sugar and flour.
- Beat eggs on low until fairly thick (not foamy).
- Stir buttermilk into eggs.
- Mix together sugar and egg mixtures; beat thoroughly.
- Add lemon and vanilla.
- Pour into unbaked pie shell.
- Bake 10 minutes at 400°, then about 45 minutes at 350°. Check for doneness by inserting a knife in middle of pie. This recipe makes one large, deep-dish pie but can be divided to make two smaller pies.

*"Buttermilk pie is a Southern tradition, a member of the category of pies known as 'desperation pies' because of their simple, economical ingredients. This is my mother's recipe." — Cheryl Magness, managing editor*

## The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod LCMS Stewardship Ministry Newsletter article – January 2024

### *The Chief Stewards of Humanity: Mom and Dad*

St. Paul tells the Ephesians that the first commandment with a specific promise attached to it is, "Honor your father and mother so that it may go well with you, and you may live long in the land" (Eph. 6:2). This promise is one indication of the importance of this commandment. The other thing that highlights the special nature of this commandment is its placement within the Ten Commandments.

The Ten Commandments are clearly organized in two big categories. The first three commandments deal with our relationship with God. This category is called the First Table of the Law. The last seven commandments, the Second Table of the Law, tell us how we should relate to other people. These two tables correspond to what Jesus calls the two greatest commandments: "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind," and "You shall love your neighbor as yourself" (Matt. 22:37–39).

The order of the Second Table of the Law is also important. Murder is a greater sin than adultery, which is a greater sin than stealing, or lying, or coveting. But why is the Fourth Commandment first in the Second Table, ahead of "you shall not murder"? Is disobeying your parents really worse than murder? Or maybe we should give up on thinking these commandments are ordered?

The overall effect of this order is to get us to see our parents as a connection point between our neighbors and our God. Throughout our upbringing our father and mother stand between us and God and deliver His gifts to us: God clothes us, feeds us, protects us and teaches His Word to us through our parents.

So, parents have a very high calling from God. They are called to be stewards of the greatest gift: the gift of life.

Parenting thus gives us a keen insight into all our stewardship. Parents know that they have been given a great treasure in their children, a treasure that does not belong to them, yet for which they feel a great deal of responsibility. Truth be told, every gift we have been given is like this, because everything we have — whether our own personal skills and powers or our wealth and time — is all from God. He entrusts it all to us so that we can use it all and take care of it all for His great purposes.

## THE LUTHERAN COOKIE

With Christmas around the corner, it is time to discuss a Lutheran tradition you never read about. It is time to set the record straight on some erroneous ideas about the role of this tradition in the church, today.

I am speaking about cookies, Lutheran cookies to be explicit. A new member might ask, "What is the Lutheran church's stand on cookies?" The history of the Lutheran cookie is obscure, though it may have stemmed from the ancient culture of the Chinese fortune cookie. Certainly everyone knows that the Chinese invented gunpowder, and the Christian era has been the use of an awful lot of that, so perhaps that is where we got the cookie.

Do you really have to be a cookie-baker to be a Lutheran? Of course not, but it helps. The Lutheran cookie calendar runs on a parallel with the church calendar, beginning with Advent. Cookies are baked for the Sunday School Christmas Program. They are served to participants in the Christmas Nativity Scene, churchwomen's meetings, new member receptions and at points in between. For these reasons a Lutheran cookie must be durable, for cookies left over from one occasion are frozen until the next. Let me explain. Cookies were served at a fellowship hour last Sunday. Those not consumed are now lying in state awaiting the Christmas party. It is not beyond the realm of possibility that some of these cookies, the least attractive of them, may find their way to the Easter breakfast. Why, I once knew a Lutheran woman who ate a cookie at her wedding reception that she had herself baked on the occasion of her confirmation.

Some say there is too much emphasis placed on cookie-baking in the church today. To refute this idea, I need to squelch certain rumors about Lutheran cookies:

1) Several years ago there was a small fire at the church. When Mrs. Smith heard about it, it is not true that she said, "Oh, dear, how many cookies should I bake?"  
2) it is not true that women who do not bake cookies are ineligible for membership in Lutheran Church Women. 3) it is not true (at least I don't think so) that German-born Lutherans start baking next Christmas's cookies right after the Rose Bowl Parade.

You can tell a lot about a Lutheran woman by the cookies she bakes. Those who are hip to the social graces bake cookies too pretty to eat. Married housewives bake oatmeal cookies. Good mothers bake their children's favorite cookies, even though that means they will be eaten up the quickest. Then there are the ones who stay up all night printing N A B I S C O on each cookie.

The Lutheran cookie is an important tool in the fellowship of the church. Unlike some of our other traditions, its future seems secure, women's lib notwithstanding.

God bless our cookie-bakers and all who eat their cookies. But please, darling children, don't take more than ten cookies the first time you go through the reception line.

Lenore Mannon *Our Redeemer, Ironwood, MI*



# January 2024

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<b>Altar Guild:</b> Dan & Cindy Koffarnus	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6 Epiphany</b>
	←----- Pastor Away -----					
	<b>New Year's Day</b>					
<b>7 The Baptism of Our Lord</b> <i>White</i>  8:30 Divine Service 9:30 Sunday School	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b>  1:00p WIM Meeting & Bible Study  7:00p Bible Study	<b>10</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>12</b>  <i>10:00 Bible Study @            Terra Verde, Chilton</i>	<b>13</b>
<b>14 Second Sunday after the Epiphany</b> <i>Green</i>  8:30 Divine Service (NC) Fellowship 9:30 Sunday School	<b>15</b>   <b>MLK Jr. Day</b>	<b>16</b>  7:00p Bible Study	<b>17</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>19</b>  <i>10:00 Bible Study @            Terra Verde, Chilton</i>	<b>20</b>
<b>21 Third Sunday after the Epiphany</b> <i>Green</i>  8:30 Divine Service 9:30 Sunday School	<b>22</b>  <i>Newsletter Articles Due</i>	<b>23</b>  7:00p Bible Study	<b>24</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>26</b>  <i>10:00 Bible Study @            Terra Verde, Chilton</i>	<b>27</b>
<b>28 Fourth Sunday after the Epiphany</b> <i>Green</i>  8:30 Divine Service (NC) 9:30 Sunday School  <b>Voters Meeting</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>30</b>  7:00p Bible Study	<b>31</b>			

Divine Services marked (NC) will not have Holy Communion