

The St. John Lutheran Church

Volume 26 – Number 2

February 2026 Jottings

“We lift up Jesus Christ in our lives, our church, and our community.”



Pastor Michael's Musings

February 2026

And now I will show you the most excellent way. If I speak in the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I am only a resounding gong or a clanging cymbal. If I have the gift of prophecy and can fathom all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have a faith that can move mountains, but have not love, I am nothing. If I give all I possess to the poor and surrender my body to the flames, but have not love, I gain nothing. Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. It is not rude, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres. Love never fails. --- 1 Corinthians 12: 31b – 13: 8a

February brings Valentines Day, and with Valentine's Day comes the discussion of love. Traditionally, we have given Valentines to the people we care about. These little cards have all sorts of sayings on them, but usually they drift in the direction of the "romantic" way of thinking. Sweetheart, Be Mine, Kiss Me, and more such things I remember being stamped on the valentines Day cards we used to give to friends in grade school. It was pretty funny! We were so young back then (Kindergarten through 2nd grade) and thought the opposite sex was yucky and had cooties. The thought of kissing someone created a wrenching-feeling in the gut! I always thought it was funny that they made us give those cards back and forth to people we were disgusted with. The "romantic" wording on the cards and the candy hearts didn't help. It wasn't until we got older that we started to realize the interesting nature of the opposite sex.

I printed a healthy chunk of 1 Corinthians 13, above, because Paul gets us thinking on the right track about a more proper way of thinking about love. Oftentimes, we confuse love with infatuation over the physical body. If we elevate our thinking a little higher, we might even confuse friendship, or camaraderie, with the kind of love Paul is writing about. Paul is writing about Agape love (pronounced Ahh-Gopp-Ayy) which is the kind of love that God has for us, especially through Jesus Christ. It is a sacrificial kind of love in which we are called to put the interests of other people first. Touching on the realm of the spiritual, Agape love lifts us up above and beyond what we might naturally settle for. Our human nature is always pulling us in the direction of a kind of love that is ultimately selfish in nature. "I'll do this for you if you do that for me..." In a worldly way of thinking about love, we might be interested in being in someone's life as long as we are getting something out of them. As soon as they no longer "produce" we might be tempted to cast them aside and move onto someone, or something, else. Hollywood tabloids, anyone?

1 Corinthians 12:13 reminds us that there is a better way to live. The Agape love held in the conversation of the text calls us to try to think and act as God would have us think and act. As Christ looked out over the ragged landscape of human relationships and emotions in his day, so would he, through the words of Paul, have us survey the societal and familial landscape around us. In other words, are you willing to treat others as you yourself would like to be treated? Are you willing to temper your acting out of love in accordance with Jesus's Golden Rule? Jesus's Golden Rule echoes with the sentiment of the type of love described in 1 Corinthians printed above, and in actuality is the backbone of Paul's message. Valentine's Day is a special day of celebration! Go forth and love according to the model of Agape love; the love that God has shown us and continues to show us through the blessed Savior!

Happy
Valentine's
Day



Beam me up Scottie!

Well, here we are, roughly half-way between Christmas and Lent. The Epiphany season (which started on January 6th) lasts until the start of LENT, which in 2026 will be February 18th. The last Sunday before Lent starts is an unusual day...it's called the "Transfiguration of our Lord", and it's a remembrance of the event detailed in two of the gospels: Matthew 17 and Mark 9. In the previous chapters, Jesus had just finished trying to explain to his followers and his skeptics who he was and why he came. If they didn't grasp it at that point, this certainly should have made it clear:

¹ Six days later, Jesus took with him Peter and James and his brother John and led them up a high mountain, by themselves. ² And he was transfigured before them, and his face shone like the sun, and his clothes became dazzling white. ³ Suddenly there appeared to them Moses and Elijah, talking with him. ⁴ Then Peter said to Jesus, "Lord, it is good for us to be here...While he was still speaking, suddenly a bright cloud overshadowed them, and from the cloud a voice said, "This is my Son, the Beloved; with him I am well pleased; listen to him!"

What does TRANSFIGURED mean? Merriam Webster defines it like this: *transitive verb: to give a new and typically exalted or spiritual appearance to : transform outwardly and usually for the better.*

As humans, it's rather hard to imagine what that was like. For me, being a LONG time Star Trek fan, I am reminded of the famous "Transporter" on Star Ships that managed to "dissolve" people into energy and re-create them in a new location. During that process, they "sparkled" as they disappeared in the Star Trek transporter and re-appeared on a planet and vice-versa. The special effects on a 1960's TV show were quite impressive for their day, but imagine seeing something like that 2000 years ago! No wonder those guys were amazed! Then, to see Moses and Elijah "beamed" in to stand with Jesus...WOW...makes me wonder if perhaps those verses somehow influenced the imagination of Gene Roddenbery as he was developing Star Trek. In any case, the word TRANSFIGURED only appears twice

in the Bible, in the two reports of that event, which we remember on February 15th this year.

As for us mere mortals, the Bible doesn't promise us Transfiguration, but it does promise us Transformation:

*...our citizenship is in heaven, and it is from there that we are expecting a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ. He will **transform** the body of our humiliation that it may be conformed to the body of his glory, by the power that also enables him to make all things subject to himself.* Philippians 3:20-21 (NRSV)

I'm seeing commentaries saying that this is describing how we will be changed when we get to heaven: our "humiliated" bodies (racked with sin and pain and disease) will become something glorious, described in words we Earthlings can understand. Only the future will make that clear for each of us.

So, be sure to bring your "humiliated bodies" to church each week and learn more about what the future holds for us, and be ready to shout "Beam me up Scottie". I'm sure Jesus will know what we mean



LENT starts Feb. 18th

LENT—the 40 days (not including Sundays) leading us to Easter, begins on Ash Wednesday, February 18th this year. We will have TWO opportunities to worship: 10:30 am and 7 pm. The imposition of Ashes is an important part of the service, reminding us that we are part of the "ashes to ashes, dust to dust" cycle of life.

Our Midweek Lenten services will be based on the familiar words of Philippians 2:5-11, which starts "*Christ humbled Himself, and became obedient unto death...even death on the cross.*" These non-communion services give us a chance to reflect on the Lenten texts, and each Wednesday (except Ash Wednesday) will include a nice soup & sandwich supper at 5:45. Please make every effort to come and join us. You will be blessed!

Until Next Month...

The text for the Lenten Services includes these words to challenge us:

...at the name of Jesus every knee should bend, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father. Phil: 2:10-11 (NRSV)

Soli Deo Gloria (To God alone be the Glory)

Donald L. Bauer Director of Music

Readers:

Feb. 01 Tom Tate
Feb. 08 Marilyn Hartseil
Feb. 15 Mike Wabel
Feb. 22 Pat McGrew

Ushers:

Feb. 01 8:00 am Tim & LaVonne Sammis
10:30 am Shirley Schmitt
Feb. 08 8:00 am Bill (Skeeter) & Jodi Miller
10:30 am Alex Heuermann
Feb. 15 8:00 am Dan & Deb Sammis
10:30 am Nick Bruketta
Feb. 18 10:30 am Pepper Bauer
7:00 pm Sheryl Bruninga
Feb. 22 8:00 am Roger Shafer
10:30 am Tom Anderson
Feb. 25 7:00 pm Tim & LaVonne Sammis



Greeters:

Feb. 01 8:00 am LaVonne Sammis
10:30 am Tom Anderson & Tricia Kobler
Feb. 08 8:00 am Levi Miller
10:30 am Brenda Heuermann
Feb. 15 8:00 am Deb Sammis
10:30 am Pat & Sally McGrew
Feb. 18 10:30 am Open
7:00 pm Sheryl Bruninga
Feb. 22 8:00 am Elaine Shafer
10:30 am Tricia Kobler
Feb. 25 7:00 pm LaVonne Sammis



ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Ash Wednesday: Just a reminder that February 18th is Ash Wednesday. There will be 2 services; 10:30 am and 7:00 pm. The imposition of Ashes will be at both services, remembering Genesis 3:19 you are dust, and to dust you shall return.

Lenten Services: Please join us on Wednesday nights, starting on February 25th thru March 25th, for soup and sandwiches starting at 5:45 pm followed with a service at 7:00 pm. There are sign up sheets available for each Wednesday night dinner.

Thank you: I offer a sincere THANK YOU to all who so generously donated for a Christmas Bonus and those who also sent beautiful Christmas Cards and gifts to us over the Christmas holiday. It means a lot to feel appreciated and to feel your support and enjoyment of our musical offerings. May God Bless you as we travel 2026 together.
Don Bauer

Jottings Articles: Jotting articles are due to the office by February 18th. This gives us time to prepare the jottings for the women to get the ready to mail on February 24th.

Vacation: Marla Kumpf (Church Secretary) will be going out of town from February 25th through March 7th. Please keep those dates in mind when trying to reach someone at the church office. I will have the bulletins prepared before I leave. If you know anything that will need to be in the bulletins before then please let me know as soon as you can. Pastor can also add to the announcements before church.

Offering: If you are interested there is an authorization form in the back of the church for electronic giving. Money would be withdrawn (your choice) weekly (Monday), semi-monthly (1st and 15th), or monthly (either 1st or the 15th). Please fill it out and give to either Patti Thornton or Marla Kumpf.

Adult Sunday School: We are study the Book of Psalms. Please feel free to join us every Sunday in the Conference room from 9:30 - 10:15. Jane Rosenbohm is our leader.

Adult Bible Study: The dates for the next Bible Studies are February 11th and April 8th from 6-7:00 p.m. We are studying Ezekiel. They will be held at Jane Rosenbohm's home @ 14628 W. Farmington Rd. Hanna City. All are welcome.(309) 645-9009
- Jane Rosenbohm

Food Pantry: The Peoria Area Association of Realtors (PAAR) donated 50 \$10.00 Kroger gift card to our food pantry in November...just in time for Thanksgiving. A very special thank you to them! A very special thank you to Peacocks Pub for the huge amount of toys donated for our Tiny Tim ministry.

PACK-A-SACK SUNDAY! The need for food from our food pantry has increased greatly! You can help fill our shelves by bringing a sack of NON-PERISHABLE food on the 1st Sunday of the month! Cash donations are also helpful, or checks can be written to the "St John Lutheran Food Pantry". Thanks to everyone for helping support this vital out reach ministry.



Look what is happening in Sunday School.

3 years old-PreK	Kathy Ellis/Becca Smith
Kindergarten-3rd grade	Becky & Shannon Sanders
4th-6th	Patti Riley
8th – High School	Fred Rosenbohm
Adult	Jane Rosenbohm

Starting Sunday, February 22nd and throughout the late winter/spring months, our lessons will follow the Year A Lectionary to connect with Pastor's sermon.

February 22nd	The First Sin
March 1st	Abram's Call
March 8th	Woman at the Well
March 15th	Pool of Siloam
March 22nd	Lazarus
March 29th	Holy Week-Palm Sunday
April 5th	The Empty Tomb-Easter Sunday
April 12th	Doubting Thomas
April 19th	The Road to Emmaus
April 26th	Early Believers
May 3rd	God's House
May 10th	The Promise of the Holy Spirit
May 17th	The Ascension
May 24th	The Holy Spirit
May 31st	Creation

The Adult Sunday School class is currently studying "Psalms-Hymns for God's People". All adults are welcome to attend, and if you would like more information, please reach out to Jane Rosenbohm.

As always, all Sunday School age children are welcome to join. If interested, please contact me to register your child.

John E. Wetterauer
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309-678-1736

Nadine Bartell	2705 S. Hilton Ln. Bartonville, Il 61607	Debra Look	Timber Ridge 2125 Veterans Rd. Morton, Il 61550
Art Campen	C/O Carrie Campen 4169 King St. Denver, Co. 80211	Jo Ann Lambie	C/O Pepper Bauer Lutheran Hillside Village 5220 S. Cameron Ln. Mapleton, Il 61547
Jeffrey Campen	Lennox Guest House 2875 W. 33 rd Ave. Denver, Co. 80211	Jane Look	Heartis Village Peoria 8201 N. Il. Route 91 Peoria, Il 61615
Millie Carlson	Villas of Holly Brook 5301 W. Dirksen Pkwy Apt. 48 Peoria, Il 61607	Jerry Pitzer	Independence Village 1201 N. Northmoor Rd. Apt. 334 Peoria, Il 61614
Sally Catterall	Villas of Holly Brook 5301 W. Dirksen Pkwy. Apt. MC3 Peoria, Il 61607	Sharon Resler	Arcadia Care 190 E. Queenwood Room 43 Morton, IL 61550
Barb Dickerson	2422 S. Daycor Divide Bartonville, Il 61607	Eilynn Resler	Arcadia Care 190 E. Queenwood Room 43 Morton, IL 61550
Pat Janssen	12615 Lancaster Rd. Hanna City, Il 61536	Shirley Cramer	7815 W. Plank Rd. Peoria, IL 61604
Joyce Jones	Villas of Holly Brook 5301 W. Dirksen Pkwy. Apt. 24 Peoria, Il 61607	Ernie & Karen Williams	5907 S. Madison Bartonville, IL 61607
		Debra Look	Apostolic Christian Home 2125 Veterans Rd. Morton, IL 61550