

# LIFE IN CHRIST

Receiving God's Gifts — Sharing God's Gifts

*The Newsletter of Christ Lutheran Church, Jackson, MS*

+ End of the Church Year 2023 +

On the Cover:

*Armed Christ*

Viktor Vasnetsov

1887

Originally composed as part of triptych depicting the End Times, *Armed Christ* shows Jesus' Second Coming, this time not in humiliation, as in His Incarnation, but in power, as the Son of Man and the Son of God. The wickedness and chaos of the world is shown beneath the hooves of the horses which comprise the steeds of His angel host, showing how indeed God and His angel host will trample upon all the wickedness of this world in order to *submit all things to Himself*, that is, to bring in a good and righteous world, no longer enslaved to sin, death, and the devil, but to the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

*Life in Christ*

is the monthly publication of

**Christ Lutheran Church, LC-MS**

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Rev. George Fields  
Sr. Sara Fields



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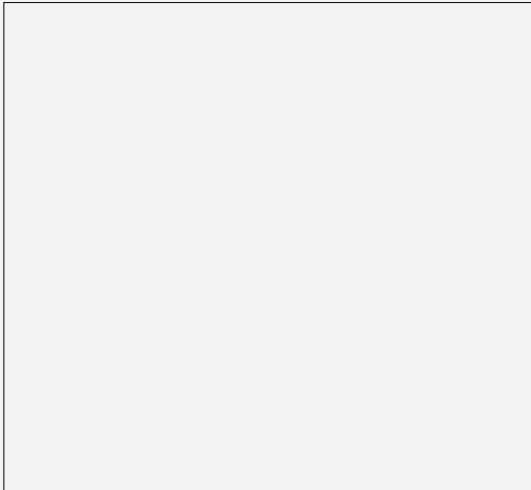
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the

# END

We are coming to the end of the Church Year, a time devoted to what is called in the Church ‘Eschatology,’ which in Greek means ‘the understanding of final things.’

When we think of ‘the End Times,’ we think of all the destruction and misery described by the St. John the Apostle and all the prophets. We think of wars and rumors of war, of plagues and beasts of the sea and of the earth; of dragons and the Whore of Babylon; we think of the number 666, and the cry of the martyrs. Even among faithless people, the word ‘apocalypse’ (the word used to name the book of Revelation in the original Greek) is synonymous with ‘something really bad.’

Yet this is completely backwards. All the talk of war and plague and oppression; of beasts and dragons and whatever else is mentioned in the Bible does not refer to the future—it refers to now.

It is *now* that man oppresses man, that sin reigns supreme, that the dragon devours the faithful, that the Church is devastated. It is *now* that we have war, that corruption grows like a cancer upon the Earth, that Satan reigns. All these descriptions that we think of as describing ‘the End Times’ do not describe our future, but our *present*.

So what does the Bible say about our future? What does it really say about the ‘End Times’? What does it say, as the Church would say, about the ‘Final Things’?

Well, it is simple. There is only one Final Thing, and that is Our Lord Jesus, the Christ, the Salvation of God, for it is written: ‘I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end.’





# of things

*Pastor Fields*

Christ alone will be the 'end' of all this world's existence, for all things were made by Him and through Him and to Him. For this reason, the Book of Revelation ends not with the destruction of creation, but of the glorification of all that was made in Genesis, for there will be a new heavens and a new earth, made perfect; that is, made complete, finished, by the blood of Christ.

It is proper that the End of the Church Year lead immediately into Advent, the season of the coming of Christ, and to Christmas, the day of the birth of Jesus, for the 'end of things' is nothing but Christ Himself, for whom all things were made. Let us therefore embrace this Apocalypse with joy, for in Him, all things are made whole. ■



Christ Lutheran

# Oktoberfest



October means...  
Oktoberfest!

Christ Lutheran gathered on October 14th to partake in the fourth Lutheran sacrament of brats and beer—boiled and brewed *pro te!* Prost!

But the fun didn't stop there...

Our children decorated pumpkins and played pin-the-bats-on-the-vampire.

And, of course, we had to end the night with the annual pinata. The kids clobbered our poor little ghost and were richly rewarded with a pre-Halloween swath of candy.





Decorating pumpkins!



Phoebe takes a swing at the pinata!



Waiting for their turn on the pinata, the kids in line start a game of Ring-Around-The-Rosy...



Westin teaches the ghost a lesson!

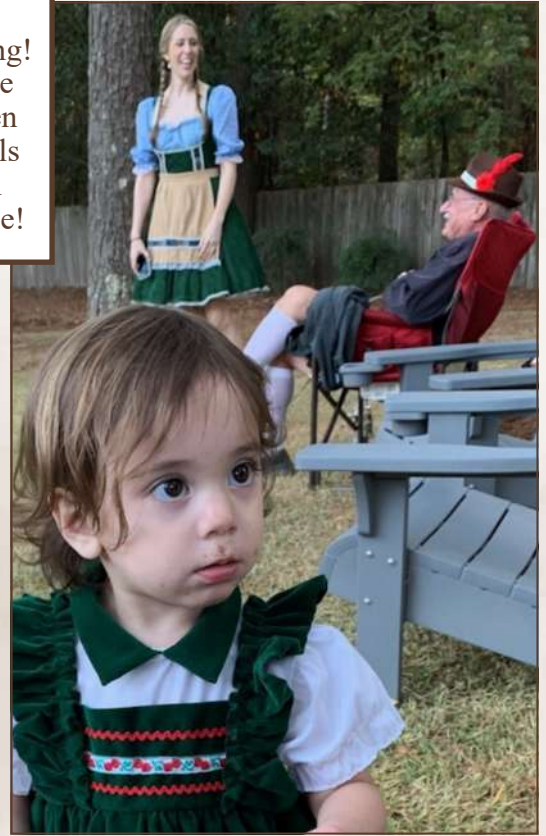




Asher makes a break for the candy!  
Someone's gotta eat it, right?

Thank-you to the Goodletts for hosting this festive evening! ■

The Germans are representing!  
Some fine lederhosen and dirndls made an appearance!

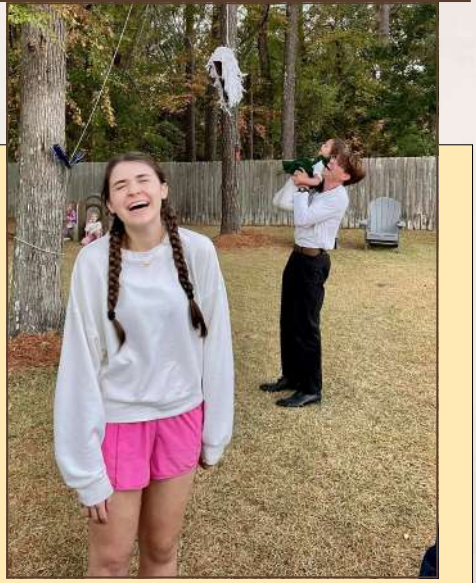


Hanging out at the dessert table. They know what they're doing.



Oktoberfest sweets leave their mark!

Troy showed Fifi the pinata, but she decided mid-air that she wasn't a fan. At least Emily got a kick.







A  
VERY QUILTY

*Christmas*

Christ Lutheran Quilters strike again! Our ladies have been busy making Christmas-themed children's quilts. Recently, they took seven quilts to Gateway Rescue here in Jackson, plus several to individuals they knew to be in need.

Many thanks to all who contributed, whether through time and talents, or contributions of fabric, or transporting these gifts to their destination!

If you are interested in helping with this project, please contact Nancy Teal, Eloise Springer, Michelle Miller, Mimi Bradley, or Sheila Pfaff.

Thank you, Quilters! ■



# Lust

—and other evils—

*Pastor Fields*

So far, as we continue to discuss what have been known as ‘The Seven Deadly Sins,’ we have spoken of the first two: Pride and Gluttony. Now we speak of the third: Lust.

When we think of lust, we think of the obvious: it is the lurid and shameful sensation one has when one looks upon a particularly attractive person of the opposite sex. It is that feeling that makes one smirk and lift his eyebrows a time or two and then let his imagination run wild.

Surely, this adulterous daydreaming is part of lust, but it is not all of what the sin of ‘lust’ entails. Let us look into what the Fathers meant when they said that ‘lust’ was a mortal sin.

The word we translate as ‘lust’ was originally in Latin the word *luxuria*, itself derived from the word *luxus*, from which we get the word ‘luxury.’

When we think of the word ‘luxury’ we think of things that not just everyone can have, or at least not very often; things like caviar, or top-shelf scotch, or a Ferrari.

But in Latin, this is not quite what the word meant. *Luxus* refers to all the desires for things that are unnecessary, or more so, unhelpful. It is the desire for things that, if you were to have them, they would degrade your soul, not benefit it. It is the desire for things that ultimately enslave you by making you unable to be content with what you have been properly given by God. This includes the desire for useless items, such as expensive cars, or harmful things, such as drugs, or destructive things, such as a woman other than your wife.

When an ad describes something as ‘luxurious,’ we tend to think that it is a good thing. But if someone who spoke Latin would hear that something was luxurious, he would think that it was a hateful thing: something that is the product of envy and discontent; something that erodes virtue and makes one into nothing more than an animal that seeks to satisfy irrational desires. It is lust, an appetite that lacks reason.

It is God’s will that we have every good and needful thing. The sin of ‘lust’ is to desire that which is not good, and that which is not needful. This the Scriptures condemn, for shall not God, who so beautifully clothes the flowers of the field, which are there today, and tomorrow are thrown into the oven, not more bountifully clothe you? He has dealt with us abundantly, for it is the gentile that asks ‘what shall we eat?’ and ‘what shall we wear?’ For they seek after such things.

But let the Christian be still, and let the Lord be his portion. ■





Luxuria.





# Hymn of the Month

*Sister Sara*

November—

Wake, Awake,  
for Night Is Flying

LSB 516

You may have heard of Philipp Nicolai; if not, you have certainly heard his music—in fact, we sing two of his hymns at our church every single year. But before we dig into the music, let’s meet the man...

Philipp Nicolai was a zealous Lutheran living in Westphalia (a region of northwestern Germany) during the second half of the 16th century. At this time, the Peace of Augsburg had been declared and the Council of Trent had just taken place; Philipp was 24 years old when the *Book of Concord* was finally published in 1580. Needless to say, he was born into a raucous religious context, and he happily dived in, defending orthodox Lutheranism throughout his life. In 1596, Nicolai was called to the Lutheran church in Unna (a town in Westphalia) specifically to fortify it against the Calvinists; however, a year into his call, the nature of the town’s needs tragically shifted: an epidemic struck the little town for about seven months, killing 1,400 of Unna’s 2,500 inhabitants. At times, Nicolai was burying upwards of thirty people a day.

It was in the turmoil of this epidemic that Unna’s pastor began writing a [much-needed] consolatory book, entitled *Mirror of the Joys of Eternal Life*. To Germans who were weary of sickness, war, and death, the book offered unassailable hope and Christian encouragement amidst the sufferings of this world. Included in the appendix were four hymns—three by Philipp and one by his younger brother Jeremias:

The first hymn, Nicolai described as “a spiritual bridal song of the believing soul concerning Jesus Christ her heavenly bridegroom.” This is our now much-beloved Epiphany hymn, “O Morning Star, How Fair and Bright” (LSB 395).

The second, our current hymn of the month, he said was “another concerning the voice at midnight and the wise

virgins who met their heavenly bridegroom.”

The third hymn bade farewell to this world, from the perspective of a soul bound for heaven.

The fourth hymn, written by Jeremias, pondered the joys of eternal life.

Taken together, these hymns plot the Christian experience! First, the Church/Christian yearns for her heavenly Bridegroom; second, she greets the Bridegroom, who is finally come to her in the wedding feast; third, she leaves these present sufferings for life everlasting; and fourth, she is given eternal consolation in the ineffable joys of paradise.

The original context in Nicolai’s book sums up the same Christian experience through which we traverse every year as the Church. But especially as we await our Bridegroom’s second coming in these latter days of the church year, “Wake, Awake,” reinvigorates our weary hearts with the joy of that final day.

Our hymn this month begins with a cry from the watchmen high atop the city walls: “Awake, Jerusalem, arise!” Against the black night, the watchmen can see a small light from miles away, and their shouts arouse the city from its slumber. Just as prophets, apostles, and in our own time, pastors, have seen *the* Light and proclaim His coming, even from afar off and until He finally arrives on the Last Day, their voice exhorts us to ready ourselves as a young bride longing for her Beloved’s appearance.

Drawing from the parable in Matthew 25:1-13, Nicolai continues to record the echoes through the city streets: “Oh, where are ye, ye virgins wise?” The Church in her vigilance has kept her lamp trimmed, and her many daughters, the unnumbered saints born of the font, cry out with joy the Easter exclamation: “Alleluia!” Let them arise with bridal care “to greet the Bridegroom, who is near.”

“For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us .”

—Romans 8:18



In the second stanza, curiously, the watchmen whose job it is to shout out the alarm are instead found *singing*! Some news is too joyous for mere speech—it must be sung! The Bride, who is the Church, Zion herself, arises from the gloom of this world’s dark night, for “all her heart with joy is springing”: her Bridegroom, radiant, strong, and victorious, full of grace and truth (John 1:17), has come from heaven to claim her. The second half of the stanza is the bride’s own words to her Beloved, “Now come, Thou Blessed One, Lord Jesus, God’s own Son, Hail! Hosanna! We enter all The wedding hall To eat the Supper at Thy call.” Not coincidentally, she praises Him with the very word shouted at His Triumphal Entry into Jerusalem on Palm Sunday (“hosanna”). And appropriately, our English translation capitalizes the word “supper,” for this is not just any meal, but the usual word which refers to the *Lord’s Supper*, and which here is the eternal Wedding Feast of the Lamb in His kingdom.

Nicolai concludes the parable with an ending that Jesus [at the time] did not: the end of the story! For it is, indeed, the ending that the Bride of Christ with all her wise virgins shall enjoy eternally. The Wedding Feast of the Lamb is the very thing that we now partake of at the Altar, here but as a foretaste, and there in all its fullness. The last stanza of our hymn assumes our portion at the heavenly banquet, focusing instead upon the celestial hymns of salvation: “Let saints and angels sing before Thee... Where, joining with the choir immortal, We gather round Thy radiant throne.” Our English reference to “one pearl each shining portal” is, in the German, rendered “of twelve pearls”—a clear allusion to Revelation 21:21: “And the twelve gates were twelve pearls.” The stanza goes on to reference Isaiah 64:4, but the ending is best summed up by Dr. Joseph Herl:

## About the Tune...

In the 1800’s, the tune of this month’s hymn was hailed as “the king of chorales.” You have probably heard it most famously in Bach’s setting “Wachet auf” (BWV 140), a cantata written specifically for the last Sunday of the church year. The first three notes of our hymn (C-E-G) is the sort of flourish one could imagine from a trumpeter in a royal hall, or in this context, with the watchmen upon the city walls, proclaiming the Bridegroom’s coming. Although the tune is long, it contains repetitions that make it highly singable. With its regal and joyful tone, it is surely the “king of chorales.”

At the end of the original hymn, the German language simply is not powerful enough to express the singer’s joy, so the singer lapses at first into stuttering: “Deß sind wir froh, io, io” (loosely, “Therefore we have joy, oy, oy”). Then a completely new, ecstatic, language breaks forth, not German, but Latin: “Ewig in dulci júbilo” (“eternally in sweetest jubilation”), a reference to the macaronic (Latin and German) hymn “In dulci júbilo, nun singer und seid froh” (“Now sing we, now rejoice,” *LSB* 386).

*LSB Companion to the Hymns,  
Volume I* ■



# I Trust When Dark My Road

## *A Lutheran View of Depression*

Lutherans know that suffering is real, even for Christians. Depression and other mental illnesses can shake us to our core, but we are not alone. Christ is with us in the darkest places, for He is the light of the world, the light no darkness can overcome (*Lutheran Service Book*, P. 243). If you or anyone you know is dealing with these challenges, we pray you will find these resources helpful.

*I Trust When Dark My Road: A Lutheran View of Depression*, by Todd A. Peperkorn, offers a rare glimpse into one LCMS pastor's personal journey through depression while remaining reliant upon God's grace.

— The LCMS Resources webpage  
[Resources.LCMS.org](http://Resources.LCMS.org)

This book is available for free download (print or audio) through [LCMS.org](http://LCMS.org) and [IssuesEtc.org](http://IssuesEtc.org). Email [sistersara@christlutheranjacksonms.org](mailto:sistersara@christlutheranjacksonms.org) for more details. ■

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THE  
LUTHERAN CHURCH  
Missouri Synod



Meet Our New Member!

# Troy Baugh



On Sunday, September 24th, during the Feast of St. Michael and All Angels, the Troy Baugh was baptized into Christ!

A native Alabaman, he is a son of the South, his family having been here since America's infancy. Troy first came to Christ Lutheran after a long period of churchlessness, desiring God and a firm Christian foundation. Attracted by the architecture and traditional liturgy of the Lutheran church, he felt at home amidst the sincere and reverent conduct of the service. After catechesis, he was duly baptized into the Body of Christ and the fellowship of this congregation.



welcome

If you enjoy a refreshing Coca-Cola, you can thank Troy for packing your drinks, as he is currently working in packing and shipping America's favorite beverage. That said, in his free time, he enjoys a broad range of pastimes—everything from reading H.P. Lovecraft, to watching old Westerns, to taking a peaceful stroll through nature.

If you haven't yet, shake his hand after church and welcome Troy to our Christ Lutheran family. We are blessed to have time in our number! ■

“Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!”

*Psalm 133:1*



# The Decalogue

the path of life

*Pastor Fields*

## *Thou Shalt Remember the Sabbath Day, and Keep It Holy*

Now that we have discussed the first two commandments, we come to the third, to keep the Sabbath.

Sabbath literally means simply ‘to cease’ or ‘to stop.’ When God rested of the Seventh Day, He ‘ceased working.’ For this reason, we call it ‘a day of rest,’ not in the sense of ‘rest and relaxation’ but in the sense of ‘stopping what we are doing or concerned with,’ to cease the continual traffic in the highway of our mind that thinks of ten thousand worries, so that our soul may focus on the only thing of importance, which is the Lord.

The Jews have taken this commandment to mean that men may do no labor of any kind, whether working or cooking or even walking long distances, on the Sabbath Day, which for them is Saturday. Though this is not actually commanded in the Bible, they are more right than wrong, for they understand that when we are concerned with things of this world, whether it be our jobs of our house or anything else, we are distracted from the things of God: His word, His works, and His glory.

Six days a week, we are allowed to concern ourselves with the things of this physical creation, but one day, and only one day, we are asked to concern ourselves with the Creator.

As St. Bonaventure put it, six days the body labors, on the seventh, the soul labors, that is, the soul works, and produces what is good for the soul, even as when the body works, it works for what is good for the body.

In practice, this commandment is simplified into meaning simply that once a week, we should devote ourselves to preaching and the word, to the Sacraments and to singing the praises of God. Or to put it even more simply, once a week, we should go to church.

Yet, even though theologians as mighty as Aquinas and Luther and Johann Gerhard describe the Third Commandment this way in order to be understood by the common people, there is much more to this commandment than merely ‘going to church.’

Fundamentally, this commandment is not about merely going to church, or even coming early for Sunday School. It is ultimately about the imitation of God, for we are told by Christ, be perfect, even as your Father in heaven is perfect. For even as God worked for six days in the beginning, then to stop on the seventh, to cease from His labors in order to enjoy and contemplate His creation, so should we work for the good of creation for six days in order to cease, and enjoy not only the work of our hands and of God’s hands, but contemplate and enjoy the creator Himself.

Yes, this is done by going to church, listening to the sermon, and receiving the Body and Blood of Christ. But it should also be done daily, in the recognition that all that God has given us is good, and that God Himself, the giver, is good, the only good, the source of all goodness, and the object of all thanksgiving, for he is great, and greatly to be praised.

To keep the Sabbath is to live in constant awareness of the ‘givenness’ of the world, that is, that everything we have and enjoy is a gift from God, for which we should live in a gratitude that envelopes our hearts, fills our minds, and consumes our soul. For this reason, the Scriptures command: ‘be still and know that I am God.’ ■



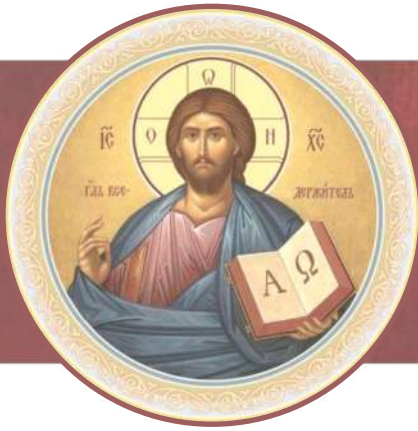
# Ladies Night Out



Our ladies had a tasty night out at Bulldog Burger in October! Truly, food and fellowship are the things of God.

If you would like to “host” Ladies’ Night Out (i.e., pick a restaurant and book a reservation), sign up in the Fellowship Hall! All [ladies] are welcome to join us! ■





# THIS MONTH

*At Christ Lutheran*



**THE FEAST OF ALL SAINTS**  
+ Observed November 5 +



**LAST SUNDAY OF THE CHURCH YEAR**  
+ November 26 +



Christ Lutheran  
Christmastide  
Recital  
January 6

*Adventide*  
December 3

**VOTERS' MEETING**  
**December 3**  
The regular bi-annual Congregation Voter's Assembly will convene immediately following the worship service **Sunday, December 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2023** to approve the 2024 Budget Work-plan. All members are encouraged to attend.



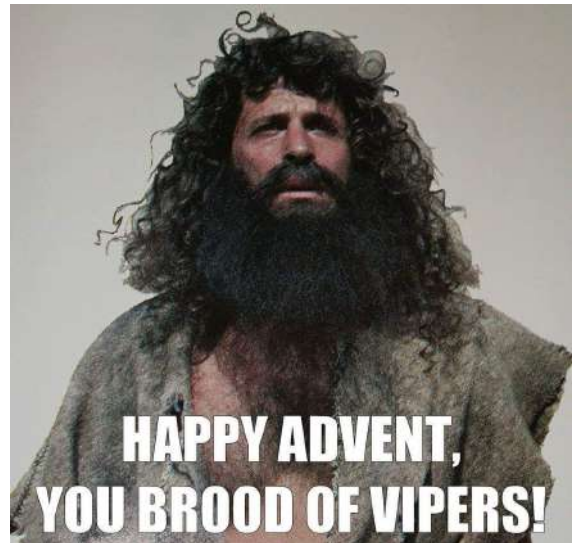


# Christmas Choir

Wednesdays  
7pm



HAPPY NEW YEAR  
DECEMBER 3



**ACTSEFW**  
CONCORDIA THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY  
FORT WAYNE, INDIANA



## Symposia Series 2024

**39th Annual Symposium on Exegetical Theology**

*Courage and Encouragement: Exhortation  
from the Prophets and Apostles*

January 16–17, 2024

**47th Annual Symposium on the Lutheran Confessions**

*Seminex at the Half-Century*

January 17–19, 2024



## Saints' Days in November

- 1 All Saints Day
- 7 St. Willibrord, Bishop
- 8 St. Johannes von Staupitz, Abbot
- 9 St. Martin Chemnitz, Confessor
- 11 St. Martin of Tours, Bishop & Confessor
- 12 St. Jonah, Prophet
- 14 Emperor Justinian, Christian Ruler & Confessor
- 15 St. Albertus Magnus, Bishop
- 19 St. Elizabeth of Hungary
- 22 St. Cecilia, Martyr
- 23 St. Clement of Rome, Bishop & Martyr
- 29 St. Noah, Patriarch
- 30 St. Andrew, Apostle





## Decoration Day!

Decorate the church with us on Saturday, December 9 8:00 a.m.



Join us for a

# COMMUNIO CHRISTMAS

Sunday  
December 10  
Held Home

Come for supper and bring a gift for a game of Unsanctified Santa!



### Artwork in This Issue:

Cover: *Armed Christ*, Viktor Vasnetsov, 1887.

Page 4: *The Last Judgment*, John Martin, 1853.

Page 10: *Lust*, Jacques Callot, c. 1621.

Page 12: *Design for an Organ*, Johann Georg Dirr, 1700s.

Page 18: *Moses Showing the Ten Commandments*, Gustave Dore, 1865.

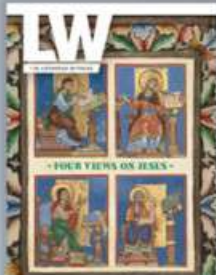
## Christmas Work Day



Help us spruce up the church grounds as Christmas draws near!

Come ready for coffee, cocoa, and Christmas cheer!


**Work Day**  
**Saturday, December 9**  
**8:00 a.m.**



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# November 2023

PRAYER FAMILIES and BIRTHDAYS	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<b>Barbara Glenn</b> 4—Bobbie Mutter	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 10px;"> <p><b>Serving this month:</b>            Elder—Gary Atchley            Ushers—Bruce Bodkin, Mark Ochs</p> </div>						
<b>Allen &amp; Sabrina Goodlett</b> 6—Christopher Martin 10—Jonathan Kettler 10—Steve Jeffcoat 11—Nancy Tatum 11—Phoebe Gallarno	<b>5</b> <b>FEAST OF ALL SAINTS</b> (OBSERVED) 9:00 a.m. Sunday School 10:30 a.m. Divine Service 	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b> <i>St. Willibrord</i> 6:15 p.m. Elders Mtg.	<b>8</b> <i>St. Johannes von Staupitz</i> 7:00 p.m. Choir	<b>9</b> <i>St. Martin Chemnitz</i>	<b>10</b> 6:30 a.m. Bible Study	<b>11</b> <i>St. Martin of Tours</i>
<b>Haines Family</b> 14—Kim Bowman 18—Hazel Kettler	<b>12</b> <b>PENTECOST XXIII</b> 9:00 a.m. Sunday School 10:30 a.m. Divine Service <i>St. Jonah</i>	<b>13</b>	<b>14</b> <i>Emperor Justinian</i> 6:15 p.m. Council Mtg.	<b>15</b> <i>St. Albertus Magnus</i> 7:00 p.m. Choir	<b>16</b>	<b>17</b> 6:30 a.m. Bible Study	<b>18</b>
<b>Merina Hansen</b> 23—Leonard Watson	<b>19</b> <b>PENTECOST XXIV</b> 9:00 a.m. Sunday School 10:30 a.m. Divine Service <i>St. Elizabeth of Hungary</i>	<b>20</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>22</b> <i>St. Cecilia</i> (No Choir)	<b>23</b> Thanksgiving Day <i>St. Clement of Rome</i>	<b>24</b>	<b>25</b>
<b>Hansford Family</b> 28—Mark Ochs	<b>26</b> <b>LAST SUNDAY</b> <b>OF THE CHURCH YEAR</b> 9:00 a.m. Sunday School 10:30 a.m. Divine Service	<b>27</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>29</b> <i>St. Noah</i> 7:00 p.m. Choir	<b>30</b> <i>St. Andrew</i>		