



# *The Eternal Light*

Eternal Savior Lutheran Church  
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Lafayette, CO 80026  
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**From the Intentional Interim Pastor  
January 2023**

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## **A Truly Happy New Year Rejoice Always. 1 Thessalonians 5:16**

Happy New Year! Happiness seems to be a fleeting concept these days, doesn't it? With all of the serious problems facing us, our society (economic problems, rising unemployment, political leaders involved in criminal activity, sicknesses etc., etc., etc.) who can be happy in times like these? Well, Saint Paul says we can! As Christians we have every reason in the world (*and beyond, for that matter*) to be the happiest people on earth. And that is what the Apostle Paul is getting at in this passage quoted above. Paul was writing to a world very similar to the one we live in today; where Christians were under political, physical and spiritual persecution for their beliefs and lived in very uncertain times. It would seem to anyone looking in that this ragtag group of people calling themselves followers of Christ should be the most miserable people around. Not so! Paul calls them to rejoice. And Rejoice Always! Why? Because the faith they had in Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior is the same faith which gave them a complete and total victory over the world that was persecuting them! I love the way Paul speaks to them in this letter because it is one of such encouragement for people living in uncertain times. Just like us. And I know I sound like a broken record (*or should I say, given the time we live in, skipped a cd?*) when I say that the Word of God isn't just some crusty old Jewish fable that has no bearing on our lives today, but that statement can't be said enough. God's promises are applicable to our lives no matter where and when we live. And so that is my prayer for us this year. That we would take hold of the salvation we have in Jesus Christ as if our lives depend on it (*because they do*) and live in a way that reflects the reality of eternal life that we have in Jesus Christ. Through faith and the eternal life that we possess right now, we can live a life of joyfully knowing that what God has promised us is far greater than any difficulty we might be facing here on earth! We might experience financial poverty here on earth but in Christ, we have riches beyond belief. Even though we live in an uncertain present, through faith our eternal future is absolutely guaranteed! If our salvation isn't reason enough to have a Happy New Year, I don't know what is! May God bless and keep us all in a joyful frame of mind in 2023 and far beyond!



## **The Season of Epiphany**

The Christian Church has observed the season of Epiphany since the third century, A.D. The day of Epiphany always falls on January 6th, but it is generally celebrated on the first Sunday of the New Year. As Christmas marks the appearance of God to the human family in the person of Jesus Christ, the presence of the foreign Magi is symbolic that the one whom they sought as "King of the Jews" was "King of the Gentiles" as well. The visit of the wise men clearly indicates that it was the Gentiles who were ultimately to receive the Gospel.

Little is written in Scripture about the Magi. The only account of their visit can be found in the second chapter of Matthew's Gospel. However, much tradition has surrounded them. Matthew does not give us their names and does not even specify how many there were. The number three has evolved because they bore three gifts.

It took some time for the early church to accept the fact that Jesus was not sent to the Jews exclusively—But once the church, at Paul’s urging, understood the universal intention of God, it set into motion a mighty missionary effort which reached throughout the Roman Empire.

The Good News which was shared with the Magi also extends to people of all nations, languages and colors. In the midst of yet another Epiphany season, we are made starkly aware that the missionary task of the church remains unfinished. Despite centuries of history, there are people near and far who still await the bright light of Jesus Christ to break the darkness of their lives.

## **Break a Resolution by Creating a Habit**



The year 2023 is here! The start of a New Year is a time to take stock of our lives and how to make them better. Ah yes! the infamous New Year’s Resolutions. Our new year’s resolutions often revolve around health and our physical bodies, but they can also involve relationships, work, home, children or a whole host of other areas. Here’s a New Year’s resolution for all of us. Try changing your thinking from “resolution” to “habit.” Often when we talk about habits, we think of negatives. Most of us have bad habits we’ve tried to break at one time or another. But the very nature of a habit is why I think this might be a better way

to think of change.

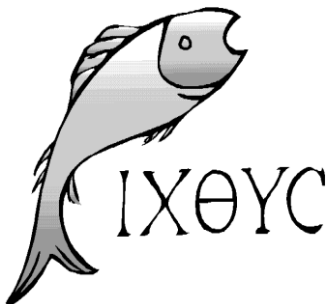
A resolution, as we often joke about, seems to be easily broken. Why? A resolution is only words. To make change we need action. This is where habit comes in. If we want to make lasting change, it needs to become part of our lives, and it needs to become a habit. Research shows us it takes 30-60 days of repeated action for something to become a habit. It takes a conscious effort for a period of time before the change takes root. Most resolutions fail 30-60 days after they have been made. The reason for this failure is because a conscious effort has not been made to make something a good habit.



There is an area of our lives in which I would like all of us to create new habits – getting into God’s Word. Each Sunday, in the bulletin, are Scripture readings for each day of the week. This will help us to get into God’s Word and become familiar with all the promises that God has for us. These readings will help us get through the Bible in a year. We also offer Bible class / instruct every Sunday Morning. Please come and join us. Make it a habit. The Bible is the very source of life for us and it is an important book for us to “read, mark, learn and inwardly digest” (Martin Luther). But the Bible can be overwhelming. Sixty-six different books, strange stories from foreign cultures, sections that just seem so hard to read through (not like a popular novel or magazine). How can we ever make studying God’s Word a habit? The answer is little by little.

Make Bible study a habit –do it consistently and often enough that it will become more natural in your daily life. At Eternal Savior Lutheran Church we have many opportunities. So no excuses! No empty promises! No broken resolutions! Make 2023 the year when the daily Bible readings and Bible Class becomes a habit. Hope to see you there! God Bless and Happy New Year!

## **Ichthys: The Creed in Brief**



The fish, *ichthys* in Greek, is the symbol for the Savior Jesus Christ. It is so used already in the first century, not primarily because fish played a part in Jesus’ life or because He appointed His apostles to be spiritual fishermen using the net of the Gospel, but because *ichthys* could be used as a rebus from which one could derive a statement of faith. The word consists of these five letters of the Greek alphabet: i-ch-th-y-s. When these five letters are regarded as initials for five words, we obtain this Christian declaration: *Iesus Christos Theou Yios Soter*. These words say:

*Jesus Christ, God’s Son, Savior.* Very likely the *ichthys* symbol was used as a sign by which early Christians

found and identified one another, especially in times of persecution. When scrawled on a wall or on the ground in the marketplace or near a fountain where people congregated, it let wandering Christians know that others of their faith had come to this community. A scene in a religious movie shows a man introducing himself to another by scratching the fish symbol into the sand before him. The *ichthys* concept as explained is the Christian creed in brief: Jesus Christ is the Son of God and Savior of the world. St. John writes in his First Epistle: “We have seen and testify that the Father has sent His Son as the Savior of the world.” We can testify to our Christian faith today through the symbol of the *ichthys*, perhaps wearing it as a piece of jewelry or posting it as a door plate. When people ask what the picture of the fish means, we have a golden opportunity to explain who Jesus Christ is and what He means to us and what he has done for us.

Pastor Schultz

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### **OFFERING REPORT**

Offerings for the month of December were:

December 4	\$7,264
December 11	\$5,298
December 18	\$4,441
December 24	\$2,289
December 25	\$7,927

This weekly average (\$6,804) compares to our 2022 weekly budget needs of **\$4,369**.

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### **COUNTER SCHEDULE**

If you have a conflict on a day you are scheduled, please arrange with another counter to cover that day.

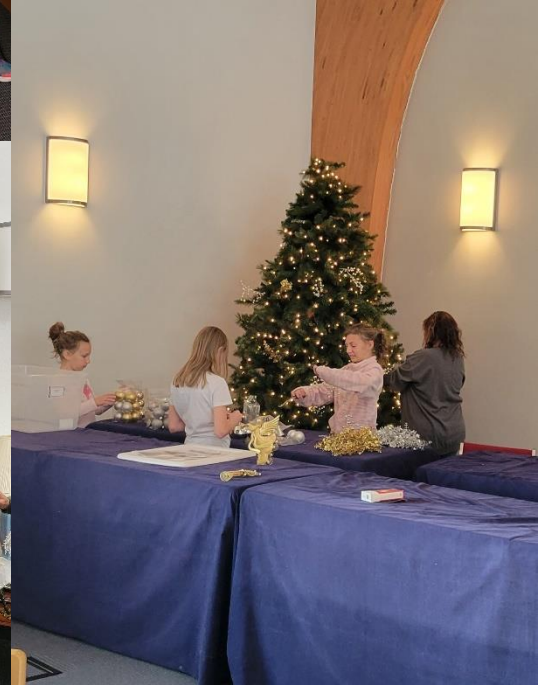
January 1 – Mark and Mary Bunge	February 5 – Mark and Mary Bunge
January 8 – Marc and Jan Ertle	February 12 - Mark and Mary Bunge
January 15 - Marc and Jan Ertle	February 19 - Sam and Lynn Kelley
January 22 - Polly Cowley and Katherine Crane	February 26 - Sam and Lynn Kelley
January 29 - Polly Cowley and Katherine Crane	

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# Christmas Decorating

10 members joined together to decorate the church for Christmas. Fun was had by all to see the church transform for the Christmas season. Thank you to everyone who helped.



We are planning on taking down the decorations on Saturday, January 7 at 9:00 a.m. Many hands will make the work go quickly. Please join us!

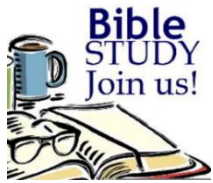
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## Intentional Interim Taskforce Team

Members of the team include: Laura Raben, Tom Stahly, Bob Vieyra, Melisa Anderson, Roger Landowski, Jan Ertle, Marc Ertle, Linda Thompson, Diane Oehlkers, Robin Warnken, Keith Cowley and Mary Bunge. Pastor Schultz is guiding us through this process.

The team will be meeting in January to begin the process of calling our next pastor. There are multiple steps involved. The next step of determining the characteristics we would like in our new pastor. As always, if you have any questions regarding the taskforce team and their tasks please contact any member of the team.

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**Sunday Morning Bible Study!** – Grab a cup of coffee and please join us each Sunday at 10:40AM in the Fellowship Hall!

**Wednesday Morning Bible Study!** – Please join us for Wednesday Morning Bible Class – we will study the pericopes (*readings*) for the upcoming Sunday. Please join us.

**Wednesday Night Bible Study** - The Wednesday night Bible study hears from Prof. Joel Biermann (Concordia Theological Seminary) cover and unpack the Book of Philippians, and there will be time for brief discussion after his presentation. Who knows, there might even be light refreshments. Please consider joining us Wednesday evenings at 7:00 pm. We will meet in the Fireside Room, and a Zoom link will be available to anyone who would prefer to attend remotely (please email Jeff Reuer, [jeff.reuer@gmail.com](mailto:jeff.reuer@gmail.com), or call 720-600-5997).

**Sunday School!** We are studying the “Enduring Faith” curriculum, Unit 8. Sunday School opening is at 10:30AM in the Fellowship Hall. All children are encouraged to join us!

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**Reredos Committee** – The artist will begin working on the mural on the Reredos wall February 6. We are looking for help on Sunday, February 5 after service to help move furniture of the chancel and help cover areas to enable the artist to begin work. If you are available please help, the more hands we have the easier the work will be.

We are getting very excited for the changes to our reredos wall. If you have any questions or comments please contact a member of the reredos committee.

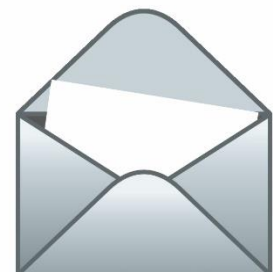
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**Offering Envelopes** – Due to unfortunate issues with our supplier, we will not have new envelopes for 2023 for our members until early to mid-February, at best. Our dedicated group of offering counters and our Financial Secretary are aware that their tasks will be a bit more complicated for several weeks.

For our members we suggest using one of the following options: (for all options it is not necessary to indicate your old envelope number)

1) Place your check directly into the offering plate - If you wish to divide your contribution between various funds, clearly mark that in the memo line.

2) If you are donating cash, or if you prefer, place your cash/check into a standard envelope. Write your name and if you wish to divide your contributions between various funds on the outside.





3) You can use one of our two electronic contribution options, as well. If you need help with this let Mary know and we will assist.

Any contribution not identified for distribution into a special fund will be placed into our General Fund, as it is now.

We will have a stack of standard envelopes available for your use on the table near the guest book. Once we get back to our normal numbered envelopes the Financial Secretary will transfer your giving data for this period into your numbered account. The envelopes will be put in mailboxes as soon as we get them. If you need your envelopes mailed to you please let Mary know.

Sorry for the inconvenience.

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## Christmas Service

We had a wonderful Christmas Eve service that combined the children's narrative and the candlelight service. It was so nice to see so many in church for the celebrations.



## REMINDERS

**The Deacon's Fund** supports Emergency Family Assistance, ULC, and other charities as well. All of these funds will be used to alleviate the needs of people who are in very vulnerable circumstances. The agencies have expressed great gratitude. We are only able to do this because of the generous and faithful contributions of you, our dear members, to the Deacon's Fund! Please consider contributing via your offering envelopes or in the Deacons' Fund collector in the Narthex! Thanks!!!

**Please be responsible!!!** For everyone who has access to the church building, it is your responsibility when you leave to make sure that all lights are off, the heat/air-conditioning/fans are turned back or off and all of the **doors are locked and secure!!** Please do double checks before you leave.

**We ask that all members of the congregation please be conscious of protecting their valuables while at church. Many times, the doors are left unlocked, and people are downstairs. This gives easy access to someone who may not be a member. We will try to remember to lock the doors after service.**

**Sign Up to Receive Text Messages** - Eternal Savior is building a text message list for urgent communications. i.e. Service is cancelled due to a blizzard. If you would like to receive notifications like that via text message, please text **ETERNALSAVIOR** (one word, no space) to 84576. Contact Laura Raben if you need help signing up.

The **2023 Flower Chart** is now available on the bulletin board. Please look to see if there is a service you would like to provide flowers. Also include if the flowers are for a special occasion.

**Prayer request cards** are available on a table in the narthex. If you would like to include a prayer request in Sunday's prayers, please email the secretary at [secretary@eternalsavior-lutheran.org](mailto:secretary@eternalsavior-lutheran.org)

**Parking spaces** in front of the church should be reserved for those members and visitors that need to park close to the building due to health concerns or weather. Please be considerate and leave these spaces to those who need them most.

**Large print worship** service folders and assisted listening devices are available. Please ask an usher if needed.

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## SERVING IN JANUARY

### **Sunday, January 1**

Organist /Pianist	Connie Howes
Acolyte	Mikayla Richardson
Usher(s)	Roger Landowski, Ryan Lambrecht
Greeter(s)	Sam and Lynn Kelley
Counter(s)	Mark and Mary Bunge
Elder(s)	Kirk Anderson, Jeff Reuer
Altar	Polly Cowley
A/V Booth	Tom Stahly
Snow	Kirk Anderson
Flowers	OPEN

### **Sunday, January 8**

Organist /Pianist	Linda Thompson
Cantor	Pam Mayer
Acolyte	Levi Hinrichs
Usher(s)	Roger Landowski, Ryan Lambrecht
Greeter(s)	Larissa and Jeff Reuer
Counter(s)	Marc and Jan Ertle
Elder(s)	Keith Cowley (r), Dave Sherrets
Altar	Polly Cowley
A/V Booth	Kirk Anderson
Snow	Kirk Anderson
Flowers	Oehlkers

### **Sunday, January 15**

Organist/Pianist	Linda Thompson
Acolyte	Micah Anderson
Usher(s)	Keith Cowley, Tom Stahly
Greeter(s)	Kirk and Melisa Anderson
Counter(s)	Marc and Jan Ertle
Elder(s)	Wayne Thomas, Kirk Anderson
Altar	Polly Cowley
A/V Booth	Larissa and Katie Reuer
Snow	Dave Sherrets
Flowers	OPEN

### **Sunday, January 22**

Organist/Pianist	Linda Innes
Cantor	Karen Sherrets
Acolyte	Mikayla Richardson
Usher(s)	Keith Cowley, Tom Stahly
Greeter(s)	Bob and Brenda Vieyra
Counter(s)	Polly Cowley and Katherine Crane
Elder(s)	Wayne Thomas (r), Ryan Lambrecht
Altar	Polly Cowley
A/V Booth	Marc Ertle
Snow	Dave Sherrets
Flowers	Bunge

### **Sunday, January 29**

Organist/Pianist	Linda Innes
Acolyte	Levi Hinrichs
Usher(s)	Kirk Anderson, Marc Ertle
Greeter(s)	Keith and Polly Cowley
Counter(s)	Polly Cowley and Katherine Crane
Elder(s)	Dave Sherrets, Keith Cowley
Altar	Polly Cowley
A/V Booth	Dave Sherrets
Snow	Dave Sherrets
Flowers	OPEN

We have many ways in which our members can share their gifts with others each Sunday. Some of those are Greeters, Offering Counters, Ushers, Livestream and Audio Engineers, Lawn Mowing/Snow Removal. These are all listed on the Servant Calendar on our web site. Please reach out to Mary at the church office if you can serve. We so appreciate and thank God for your service!