

JANUARY *newsletter*

NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTION: FAITH OVER FEAR

A long time ago, the focus for the New Year was pretty simple compared to today. We resolved to cut down on sweets and lose weight, to spend more time with our family, to get an educational degree, to get more involved in church, to read the Bible and pray regularly—all good things.

These days, our focus (no matter what our age) is to stay healthy and not get COVID or OMICRON or the next variant; to determine what's important and what's not and let go of the non-critical things; and focus on things that really matter...like family and friends. In other words, 2022—like 2021—is a wakeup call to more important things.

The motivation for this can vary. It may be fear: fear of getting sick and perhaps dying; the fear of separation from those we love and loneliness. The list of fears is lengthy. These fears need to be replaced by faith, and the good news is that they can be.

The best remedy is from God in his Word.

Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice! Let your gentleness be evident to all. The Lord is near. Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. Finally, brothers and sisters, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable—if anything is excellent or praiseworthy—think about such things. Whatever you have learned or received or heard from me, or seen in me—put it into practice. And the God of peace will be with you (Philippians 4:4-9).

This would be a great way to start every day in the New Year. It's a proven thing that this improves our spiritual health, as well as our physical and mental health. There is so much that is opposite of these great things, and too often they occupy our minds. Putting these things from Philippians 4 regularly at the forefront of our minds is a God-given blessing; one that we can latch on to.

Add daily prayer to this, and we are well into the New Year, and a new day throughout the year. Choose this faith perspective. Exercising these things makes us stronger and healthier all around, just like working out at home, the Y or the gym improves our bodies, our health and our outlook.

Granted, this is not easy. It not easy to keep on doing long after most New Year's resolutions evaporate. We need a committed discipline, and we need God to help us. Gratefully, we have God and his resources. That's the best way to keep our resolutions and live life to the fullest.

Take this on as a New Year's resolution and see what happens. You'll be glad you did!

THOUGHTS FROM PASTOR SHAWN

2021 was not the year that any of us expected. Early in the year, we had an emphasis on getting back to the way things were...and as we end the year, we are emphasizing that change is okay.

As Paul writes the church in Philippi, he ends his letters with these words (used in our Thanksgiving services):

Rejoice in the Lord always; again, I will say, rejoice. Let your reasonableness be known to everyone. The Lord is at hand; do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence, if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things. What you have learned and received and heard and seen in me—practice these things, and the God of peace will be with you (Philippians 4:4-9).

In all the change that has taken place, we find the things to celebrate and rejoice in. #1 is connecting to Jesus. Here are some others for me:

LOOKING BACK ON 2021

- 2 amazing Go and Serve Saturdays that saw us joining together in mission with our Partners in Ministry to impact our community
- 4 collections at church (diapers, VBS Supplies, food, and Christmas Giving Tree) that showed the generosity of our church as we care for those around us
- 6 families and 6 area ministries supported through our St. Michaels Soar campaign
- Shared opportunities with ESM to bless our partner in ministry, Bridge City Community in Chattanooga, TN
- 11 baptisms that included both children and adults, as well as 3 ESM students were baptized as a part of chapel services
- A successful VBS that saw a change in time and format to better meet the needs of our families
- 2 wedding celebrations
- 21 8th graders were confirmed in their faith
- 18 families blessed through the Christmas Giving Tree
- The blessing of being a part of an awesome team at St. Michael that strives to make disciples by connecting people to Jesus

LOOKING FORWARD TO 2022

We continue to lift up in prayer:

- The call committee seeking God's will as we search for our next Senior Pastor
- The ESM call committee as they continue their search for a principal
- The application process for a DCE Intern that will be turned in prior to February 1
- Strengthened relationships with our Partners in Ministry in our community, domestically and internationally
- Intentional ways to get more and more connected to Jesus in a way that we can live it out in our daily lives, being disciples of Jesus

Stay tuned for ways to be involved in blessing our community and world this year!

I would love to know what you are celebrating and what you are praying about. You can email me at pastordavis@stmfw.org or set up a time to meet for coffee or lunch: calendly.com/pastor_shawn.

NEWS FROM STEPHANIE

Is your New Year's Resolution to try out for one of St. Michael's music groups? Great! Now is a great time to join since we are starting fresh with new music!

Vocal groups will begin rehearsals on Wednesday, January 5. We have a TTBB men's group that sings once a month and SATB adult choir for high school - adults that sings about twice a month. We also have a SSA women's choir. Check out the schedule below for rehearsal times. We'd love to have you join us!

Handbells will begin rehearsal again on January 10. We currently have two groups for adults—Resound and Harmony Ringers. If you are interested in any of our bell groups, contact our bell director, Celine Newman at celine@stmfw.org.

Instrumental Music has several offerings! Our **orchestra** is made up of brass, woodwinds, percussion and string players. The orchestra is a great place for students who have had at least one year of band up to adults (even adults who have not played their instrument for a while). Please contact our orchestra director at denicebeights@gmail.com for more information. St. Michael's flute choir practices bi-weekly and plays about once a month. Contact our music director at stephanie@stmfw.org for more information.

St. Michael's **Blue Grass Band**, Jubilant Fields, provides another option for vocalists and instrumentalists who enjoy mandolin, banjo, harmonica, fiddle, washboard or spoons! This group meets to rehearse on Thursday evenings at 7:00p and leads Saturday worship about every other month.

Guitarist? Drummer? Piano player? Stephanie would love to talk to you and find out how we can get you plugged into music at St. Michael. Please contact her at stephanie@stmfw.org or 432-2033 for more info on how to get involved in one of our bands.

Tune in to **Worship Anew** on January 2 and January 30 to hear our adult choir sing. Worship Anew can be viewed online at worshipanew.org or on WISE Channel 33, WINM Channel 12 or DIRECTV Channel 377.

Vocal Groups (meet in the sanctuary)

Men's Choir (TTBB)

Women's Choir (SSA)

Adult Choir (SATB)

Wednesday 6:30p-7:00p

Wednesday 6:30p-7:00p

Wednesday 7:00p-8:00p

Bell Groups (meet in the sanctuary)

Harmony Ringers (high school - adult)

Resound (high school - adult)

Monday 6:00p-7:00p

Monday 7:00p-8:00p

Instrumental Groups

Orchestra

Flute Choir

Thursday 6:45p-7:45p

Sunday 9:00a-9:30a

Saturday Band Line-up

January 1 Keyboardist

January 8 Life Song

January 15 King's Strings

January 22 Jubilant Fields (blue grass band)

January 29 Life Song

BELONG BECOME BLESS

ACADEMY OF THE ARTS

We had over 40 students and their teachers participate in our Christmas recital on December 15. What a blessing to hear and see students use their gifts in music, dance and art! Semester II still has some openings for private lessons in piano, violin, voice, and woodwinds. Visit our website at <https://academy.stmfw.org/> to register.

Congratulations to our first Music Merit Scholarship awarded to Lucy Moll for her dedication to practice, exceptional musical growth, and service to the Lord with musical gifts. Lucy's name will be on a plaque in the music room, and we look forward to adding a new scholarship recipient each year!

Did you know that over half of our Academy students are not members of St. Michael? The Academy of the Arts is definitely an outreach into our community! Along with students who share their gifts at St. Michael, our students are also sharing and leading music in their home churches. What a blessing to be able to equip and encourage these students to share their musical gifts to the glory of God!

Time to register for St. Michael Academy of the Arts second semester classes!

- **New** Culinary Arts Group class starting in January! Learn about nutrition, food safety, budgeting a meal, and of course how to cook and bake!
- Academy private lessons and group classes begin January 10. Kindermusik classes resume Tuesday, January 11.
- **Register for new classes!** Sign up for music lessons by visiting our website at <https://academy.stmfw.org/> Classes for the second semester classes begin the week of January 11.

CALL COMMITTEE UPDATE

SENIOR PASTOR CALL COMMITTEE UPDATE

On December 15, the call committee received a list of three additional pastor names from the District. The committee has already made initial contact with these candidates with the goal of scheduling zoom interviews in mid-January. As these new candidates are considered, the pastoral candidates on the other lists received will continue to be considered. The call committee is working as quickly as possible with the hope that January will be a productive month in the call process. Please continue to pray for St. Michael and our call process, along with all of our pastoral candidates and their ministries. If you have any questions for the call committee, reach out to any of the committee members listed on the bulletin board outside the church office.



BLESS

Redemption House is a network of transition homes for women who desire to redeem their lives from past destructive behavior by developing a faith-based lifestyle and by gaining the skills necessary to achieve and maintain success. During a six-month residency at Redemption House, women work to develop job skills, find freedom from addictions, and mend broken relationships. As a Christian community, we grow together in faith and positive lifestyle choices.

Thank you to the St. Michael Foundation for their grant to purchase Target gift cards. They were included in the Christmas gift bags given to each resident in the houses and were gratefully received!

St. Michael will support the residents with meals at Wayne Street on February 6 and March 6; and Fairfield Avenue on January 16, February 20 and March 20. Please call or text Candi Luchnenko at 302-2909 to help!

THOUGHTS FROM CELINE



Welcome to 2022! As the saying often goes, we don't know what this year will hold, but we do know who holds this year. What a great promise that is for us!

The beginning of the year often brings us into a place of taking a chance to start fresh and new. We may be a person who has New Year's resolutions, or we may try our best to resist the whole idea. Yet, it seems to exist all around us. Phrases such as, "This year I will..." or "I would like to start..." are heard more often. We see all the promotions that seem to preach to us "New year - New you!" I will admit the idea of a new and renewed me is enticing.

That is where there is some really good Gospel news for us! You are new—every day, every breath, every moment. *"You've gotten rid of the person you used to be and the life you used to live, and you've become a new person. This new person is continually renewed in knowledge to be like its Creator. Where this happens, there is no Greek or Jew, circumcised or uncircumcised, barbarian, uncivilized person, slave, or free person. Instead, Christ is everything and in everything"* (Colossians 3:10-11). You see, Christ didn't just redeem our sins so that we could have eternal life. He also *continually* gives us renewal.

With this amazing good news in our heads and in our hearts, I would like to invite you into a journey and a process with me. I am going to take each month to focus on different practices that God lays before us in scripture. These practices will not be something that we can check off and move on from. There is no guilt or shame if you don't "succeed" in them. They are intended to foster the continuous growth we are going through, and they invite us into regular relationships with God and his family. When we mess up, we will simply try again trusting in the knowledge that because of Jesus we are renewed yet again.

Here are the practices I hope to focus on this year.

Rest * Sabbath * Community * Prayer * Stillness * Forgiveness * Fasting
Listening * Thankfulness * Obedience * Generosity * Simplicity



This month as we begin the practice of rest, I will simply offer these two challenges:

- 1) Get one more hour of sleep a day. Most of us, and that is truly a vast majority, do not get enough sleep. Start by adding in 15 minutes and work up to an hour or more. The true goal is 6-8 hours a day.
- 2) Begin to spend time each day, yes each day, to rest.



R—Recover E—Exhale/Inhale S—Stillness T—Transformative

On days that you are able to practice rest ask yourself, "How am I changed when I practice rest?" On days that you don't get the practice in, ask yourself, "How am I affected when I don't rest?"

Here are a couple outside sources for you to explore:

<https://runhardrestwell.org/2-price-tag/> <https://blog.rescuetime.com/rest/> <https://practictheway.org/teaching/rest-for-your-soul>

Thanks for considering going through these practices with me. There is a great depth to each one of these practices, and we could spend hours learning about each one. This is just a jumping off point. If you have thoughts or stories, I would love for us to be able to share our learnings, successes, and struggles. You are invited to share with people around you, stop me on a weekend or send me a message throughout the week.

"Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls.

For my yoke is easy and my burden is light."

Matthew 11:28-30

BELONG BECOME BLESS

BOOK CLUB

Book club will meet the second Thursday of the month (January 13) in the conference room. Enjoy *The Stranger in the Lifeboat* by Mitch Albom. February's selection is *The Wish* by Nicholas Sparks.



J.O.Y. GROUP

JANUARY 13 NOON-LUTHER HALL

JASON SIMS will be joining us once again for a refresher course on balance issues, falling (how do I get up?) and the natural aging process. LUNCH: Bring a Soup Day! (Let Penny know when making your reservations at 580-8730 what soup or side you would like to bring!)

JANUARY 25 10:00a LUTHER HALL

BIBLE STUDY with Pastor Karl, "Nain and Pain, Loss and Life," Luke 7:11-17
Coffee and treats provided.

COFFEE BREAK WOMEN'S STUDY—January 12



New members welcome! We will meet from 9:15a-10:45a in Luther Hall to continue our study of "Rediscover Jesus" as well as color postcards for shut-ins. We will meet every second and fourth Wednesday. Please contact Janet Olson at jmo11434@gmail.com for information.



Rejoice with us!

Stephanie Maxson's
25th Anniversary
Celebration

Sunday, February 6
12:30p

please sign up by
January 26 at
stmfw.org

EMMANUEL-ST. MICHAEL

IN ALL GENERATIONS

In 2022, Emmanuel Lutheran Church will begin a long-needed process to renovate and improve the Union Street school building. The renovation will impact every inch of the school building. In addition to outfitting our classrooms with new flooring, paint, windows, and a more robust technology infrastructure, we will also update our electrical service, install new restrooms, and make upgrades to our HVAC system. Improvements will also be made to the exterior including tuck-pointing of the brick façade, refurbishment of the roofing, and a covered entrance to the building on Union Street. The plan to renovate the school building is an investment in our children, grandchildren, and the generations who will follow them. Improvements to the Union Street Campus will enable our physical building to mirror the educational excellence that occurs inside its walls and will create a lasting impact upon our students IN ALL GENERATIONS. Learn more at <https://www.emmanuel Lutheran.org/campaign-overview>.

ESM PRINCIPAL CALL

It is with great joy that the Interparish School Board announces that a divine Call to serve as Principal has been extended to Dr. Benjamin Stellwagen. Ben currently serves as the Director of Dual Credit Programs and Director of School Partnerships at Concordia University, Nebraska (2018-current). He and his wife, Laurie, live in Seward, Nebraska, with their four children. Ben was born and raised in Hinsdale, Illinois, where he attended Lutheran schools growing up. He is fully committed to the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod doctrine and believes that the church’s mission is “to make disciples and make them stronger.” Ben was able to make a short visit to Fort Wayne during the week of December 20, and he and his family will be visiting in January as well. Please continue to pray for the Stellwagens as this Call is considered to serve as Principal at ESM. “He is before all things, and in Him all things hold together” (Colossians 1:17).

KINDERGARTEN Information and Enrollment Sessions:

Wednesday, January 19 OR Wednesday, February 16
6:30p - 8:00p | Getz Road Campus - 2131 Getz Road

PRESCHOOL Information and Enrollment Sessions:

Tuesday, February 1 | Getz Road Campus - 2131 Getz Road
Thursday, February 3 | Union Street Campus - 1123 Union Street
6:30p - 7:30p
Information session for parents



Register at www.esmeagles.com. Questions? Contact Erin Clark, director of admissions at 422-6712 or eclark@esmeagles.com

CLHS

CLHS PROVIDES GIFTS FOR FAMILIES IN NEED THIS SEASON

245 boxes of gifts; **7** bikes; **83** individuals through 16 families helped. One very special Christmas. For more than 40 years, Concordia Lutheran High School has been gathering and donating gifts to the Christmas Bureau for children in need. This year, 16 families will benefit from the many donations from students, faculty and staff. The students spent the morning wrapping and packaging gifts to be delivered to the families. A truck was then packed up and taken to the mall for distribution through the Christmas Bureau. Christmas cheer was felt by all!

YOUTH

We are very excited to be heading to Houston, Texas, in July with 38 participants—32 youth and six adult chaperones. The theme for this year's gathering is In All Things, based on Colossians 1:15-20. We have continually seen God at work through conversations, serving, and your generosity! So far with service projects, our chicken dinner fundraiser, and your generosity, we have raised \$12,300 and are over half way towards our goal of \$21,000! Wow! This is amazing! Our youth are committed to continuing to serve through the rest of the year, so if you have a project, please email Stephanie at stephanie@stmfw.org.

UPCOMING FUNDRAISERS FOR THE NYG

PARENTS NIGHT OUT! Friday, February 11. Register your children at stmfw.org!

EASTER PIES! Look for more information in March.



Thank you for partnering with us to offer this opportunity for spiritual growth, fellowship, and service to our youth!

YOUTH NIGHTS IN JANUARY

High school youth only (grades 9-12) January 9 6:00p-8:00p

Middle (grades 6-8) and high school youth January 23

Bible Study / Luther Hall led by NYG students January 23 5:30p

JANUARY CONFIRMATION FOCUS

Sunday	Monday Zoom
2 (no Sunday School)	3
9	no class
16	17
23	no class
30	no class



FAMILY MINISTRY FROM CARRIE

Thank you to all the Sunday school students, parents and teachers in grades preschool-5th grade for this year's Christmas service called *One Starry Night!* We give special appreciation to Ali Raney for her direction!

Remember there is no Sunday school on January 2. Classes will resume on January 9. Grade 3 Sunday school children will join grades 1 and 2 in room 11, and grade 4 students will join grade 5 in room 20.

FINANCIAL UPDATE

	November 2021	January to November 2021	November 2020
Offerings & Other Income	\$138,609	\$1,355,247	\$135,044
Ministry Expenses	\$137,270	\$1,283,623	\$122,003
Income over Expenses	\$1,339	\$71,624	\$13,040
Future Expansion	\$983	\$10,695	



Automated Giving

St. Michael offers electronic giving for members who want to have offerings transferred electronically to the church’s account. Visit our website and click on “Giving.”

WOMEN’S RETREAT 2022 at Camp Lutherhaven



What if...we believed God is who he says he is? What if...we believed we are who God says we are? What if...we did what God asked us to do? At Camp Lutherhaven’s January Women’s retreat we will explore the truth of who God is, the truth of who we are, and the life that God calls us to live. This New Year’s retreat promises to be an intentional and encouraging time with others and with Jesus.

This powerful, inspirational getaway has become a treasured event for over 25 years and is designed to be restful, reflective, and empowering, yet fun and full of fellowship with other women who share similar joys and challenges as followers of Jesus. *As the impact of Covid-19 continues to unfold, we will be watching the next two months closely and adapting as necessary. Spaces will be limited to ensure current social distancing measures and thorough cleaning procedures.*

Passionate about sharing God’s love with those around her, this year’s keynote speaker is Stacey Dumbacher. To “truly live” for Stacey is to fully love those in her life, encourage them to see who they are in Christ and then grow in that truth. A wife of 21 years to Bill and a mother to two beautiful daughters, Ana 21, and Kennedy 13. Also, a “bonus mom” to another beautiful daughter Miranda, who is 23. The joys and challenges of parenting have been an amazing opportunity for personal growth for her and her husband. The greatest joy as a mother for Stacey comes when she sees her girls serve others above themselves. You can often find her in the midst of the Broadway Christian Youth Group (Entourage) where she serves as a leader. She delights in the more than 35 students at Entourage who call her “Mama Stacey.”

Event Details

The retreat begins on Friday night with registration beginning at 7:00p. It will conclude on Sunday afternoon about 1:00p. Committed to making this retreat a refreshing and safe getaway for all women, Camp Lutherhaven offers overnight and “Saturday only” retreat options, as well as a [personal retreat option](#) during the day on Friday beginning at 1:00p. Choose the option that works best for you.

For more information, please contact Lutherhaven’s office at 260-636-7101 or e-mail camp@lutherhaven.org. If you would enjoy hotel accommodations instead, consider staying at the new Holiday Inn Express in Columbia City, only 20 minutes away from Camp.

Serving in January 2021

	Dates	Saturday	Sunday	
			8:00	10:00
Altar Guild	January	Judy Piper, Sue Baker, Mary Bear, Sharon McGlothlin		
Elders	January	John Baker	Mark Muntzinger/John Hein	Bob Kaiser
	1/2	Aaron and Reid McDonald	Open	Elliot Yoder
	8/9	Aaron Lyttle	Open	Taylor Klein/Luke Bilos
	15/16	Open	Gus Allyn	Elliot Yoder
	22/23	Aaron and Reid McDonald	Gus Allyn	Nolan Nutter
	29/30	Aaron Lyttle	Open	Luke Bilos

JANUARY WEDDING ANNIVERSARIES

	date	years		date	years
Michael and Amee Augenstein	1/4	21	John and Carol Olry	1/13	54
Zach and Nicole Evans	1/6	21	Walt and Diane Hess	1/21	26
Steve and Anni Rhodes	1/8	40	Jim and Pat Williams	1/21	55
Paul and Jane Sieber	1/11	47	Bill and Mary Davis	1/21	55
			Marty and Paula Cole	1/26	31

BAPTISM BIRTHDAYS

Please celebrate these children with us on January 15/16: Jack Bains, Anora Bornheimer; Joey Brooks; Bruce Lincoln; Jack Burgess; Haidyn Faux; Sophia Fieldhouse; Elijah Jomo; Franklin and Ben Mendenhall; Evan Meyer; Austin Panning; and Aubrey Peterson.

GAP MINISTRY

GAP members will be available on January 15/16 after the worship services in the conference room.

STEPHEN MINISTRY

"Please Keep This Confidential..."

When you say these words to your Stephen Minister, you can be assured your Stephen Minister will keep quiet about what you share. Confidentiality is a cornerstone of Stephen Ministry. Stephen Ministers don't reveal anything their care receiver says, and we don't tell anyone who their care receiver is. Please call Linda Kraus at 446-4347 for more information.

*Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other,
just as in Christ God forgave you. Ephesians 4:32*