

January 12, 2025

The Epiphany of Our Lord
Rev. Jonathan D. Meyer, Pastor
Pastor Meyer-(979) 540-7973
Our website – www.trinity-stjames.org

Color-WHITE [Holiness, innocence, and purity]
Our email address – lexington.fedor.lcms@gmail.com
Church-(979) 773-2634

HOLY TRINITY LUTHERAN CHURCH - FEDOR

The Elder-in-Charge – Jerry Falke
The Head Usher – Allan Urban
The Altar Guild – Nancy Newkirk, Cindy Terrell

The Organist – Daniel Krause

ST. JAMES LUTHERAN CHURCH - LEXINGTON

The Elder-in-Charge – Dwayne Cass
The Acolyte – Michael Norment
The Head Usher – Wesley Boriack

The Organist – Daniel Krause

The Finance Board – Rodney Exner, Ferman Iselt, Zachary Lay, Patrick Jatzlau, Wade Roitsch
The Altar Guild – Kelsi Otte, Teresa Exner, Peggy Raines
The Flowers – To the glory of God by Wesley Hobbs Family in loving remembrance of Wesley on his birthday (13).

TO OUR VISITORS - In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, we bid you welcome. May the Holy Spirit bless you, together with us, as we give our attention to the Word of God this morning. *** Please sign the GUEST REGISTER [*please also include your address*] in the NARTHEX as you leave the church.

HOLY COMMUNION STATEMENT AND POLICY: It is our expressed belief, confidence and joy that the true body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, present under the bread and wine, are distributed in the Lord’s Supper. All who commune at His altar are to be in complete confessional agreement with the other communicants. This practice of Closed Communion is an evangelical expression of our love for the communicant and for Christ’s Holy Supper. In accordance with the Word of God in 1 Corinthians 1:10; 11:27-29, we only permit members of this congregation, as well as members of fellow Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod congregations, to commune today. If your membership is with a different faith group, so that you have a belief which differs from our belief and confession on Holy Communion, then we kindly ask you in love to refrain from communing today and first speak with Pastor or an Elder. Members of our congregation who wish to commune are asked to sign the communion registration sheet in the Narthex.

OUR WORSHIP THIS MORNING

THE ORDER OF HOLY COMMUNION - PAGE 15 IN THE FRONT OF THE HYMNAL.
(Our visitors are asked to please read and honor our communion statement above.)

SILENT PRAYER upon entering the nave: Loving heavenly Father! I have come to hear Your Holy Word that makes the soul righteous. So then, put Your Holy Spirit in my heart that I may accept Your Gospel with awe and truly believe it. Amen.

**SUMMARY OF TODAY'S SCRIPTURE READINGS –
THE EPIPHANY OF OUR LORD**

The Lord God is Manifested in the Incarnate Son The Feast of the Epiphany centers on the visit of the Magi or Wisemen from the East. In this respect, it is a “Thirteenth Day” of Christmas; and yet, it also marks the beginning of a new liturgical Church Season. While Christmas has focused on the Incarnation of our Lord – God becoming flesh – the Season of Epiphany emphasizes the manifestation or self-revelation of God in that same flesh of Christ. For the Lord Himself has entered our darkness and rises upon us with the brightness of His true light. (*Isaiah 60:1-2*) He does so chiefly by His Word of the Gospel, which He causes to be preached within His Church on earth – not only to the Jews but also to Gentiles. (*Ephesians 3:8-10*) As the Magi were guided by the promises of Holy Scripture to find and worship the Christ Child with His mother in the house (*Matthew 2:5-11*), so does He call disciples from all nations by the preaching of His Word to find and worship Him within His Church. (*Isaiah 60:3-6*) With gold they confess His royalty; with incense, His deity; and with myrrh, His priestly sacrifice on the cross for us and our salvation. (*Matthew 2:11*) (*lcms.org/lectionary-summaries*)

READING FROM THE LUTHERAN CONFESSIONS

Summary: From ancient times, God revealed that His mercy is for all nations. After the birth of Jesus, God draws the first Gentiles – the Magi – to the promised Christ by the Nativity Star.

Daniel proclaims to Babylonian King Nebuchadnezzar many things about the one true God. He calls upon the king to have faith and to give alms. For we have the excellent confession of the king about the God of Israel: “*There is no other god who is able to rescue in this way.*” (*Daniel 3:29*) Therefore, Daniel’s sermon has two parts. One part gives a commandment about the new life and the works of the new life. In the second, Daniel promises the forgiveness of sins to the king. This promise of the forgiveness of sins is a truly prophetic and evangelical voice. Daniel certainly meant that the promise should be received in faith. For Daniel knew that the forgiveness of sins in Christ was promised not only to the Israelites, but also to all nations. For without God’s sure Word about His will, a person has no power to claim, especially when terrified by sin, that God ceases to be angry. Daniel speaks clearly about repentance and even more clearly brings out the promise, “*Break off your sins by practicing righteousness, and your iniquities by showing mercy to the oppressed.*” (*Daniel 4:27*) These words teach about repentance. They direct us in righteousness to do good works and to defend others against injustice. (*Apology, Article 5, Love and Fulfilling the Law*)

† IN THE NAME OF JESUS, GOD IN MAN MADE MANIFEST †

PRE-SERVICE MUSIC

RINGING OF THE BELL (CALL TO WORSHIP)

WELCOME/ANNOUNCEMENTS

OPENING HYMN: ♪ 131

**PREPATORY SERVICE OF CONFESSION & ABSOLUTION AND SERVICE OF THE WORD
[PAGE 15 TO 23/FRONT OF HYMNAL]**

INTROIT (ENTRANCE INTO THE SERVICE OF THE WORD)

PASTOR: Behold the Lord, the Ruler, has come,

CONGREGATION: and the kingdom and the power and the glory are in His hand.

P: In Your majesty [O God] ride out victoriously for the cause of truth and meekness and righteousness;

C: let Your right hand teach You awesome deeds! Your throne is forever and ever.

P: The scepter of Your Kingdom is a scepter of uprightness. Go forth to save us, O Lord our God,

C: and gather us from among the nations, that we may give thanks to Your Holy Name and glory in Your praise. (*Liturgical text; Psalm 45:4, 6; Psalm 106:47*)

♪ **Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Ghost, as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.**

COLLECT OF THE DAY

P: Lord God, heavenly Father, Who has caused Your dear Word – the true star that shows us the infant Jesus – to shine on us: we implore You to put Your Holy Spirit into our hearts, that we may receive that light and make salutary use of it, so that like the wisemen we may follow that star and let no toil or danger frighten us, but with our whole heart cling to Your Son, Christ Jesus, the only Savior, and dispose of our temporal possessions for the building up of Your poor Church and to Your glory in the Lord Jesus, Who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C:  Amen.

SCRIPTURE LESSONS: OLD TESTAMENT LESSON – ISAIAH 60:1-6

P: ^{60:1} Arise, shine, for your light has come, and the glory of the Lord has risen upon you. ²For behold, darkness shall cover the earth, and thick darkness the peoples; but the Lord will arise upon you, and His glory will be seen upon you. ³And nations shall come to your light, and kings to the brightness of your rising. ⁴Lift up your eyes all around, and see; they all gather together, they come to you; your sons shall come from afar, and your daughters shall be carried on the hip. ⁵Then you shall see and be radiant; your heart shall thrill and exult, because the abundance of the sea shall be turned to you, the wealth of the nations shall come to you. ⁶A multitude of camels shall cover you, the young camels of Midian and Ephah; all those from Sheba shall come. They shall bring gold and frankincense, and shall bring good news, the praises of the Lord.

P: This is the Word of the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God.

RESPONSIVE READING OF THE SMALL CATECHISM (SEE HALF-PAGE INSERT)

EPISTLE LESSON – EPHESIANS 3:1-12

P: ^{3:1} For this reason I, Paul, a prisoner of Christ Jesus on behalf of you Gentiles – ²assuming that you have heard of the stewardship of God’s grace that was given to me for you, ³how the mystery was made known to me by revelation, as I have written briefly. ⁴When you read this, you can perceive my insight into the mystery of Christ, ⁵which was not made known to the sons of men in other generations as it has now been revealed to His holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit. ⁶This mystery is that the Gentiles are fellow heirs, members of the same body, and partakers of the promise in Christ Jesus through the Gospel.

⁷Of this Gospel I was made a minister according to the gift of God’s grace, which was given me by the working of His power. ⁸To me, though I am the very least of all the saints, this grace was given, to preach to the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ, ⁹and to bring to light for everyone what is the plan of the mystery hidden for ages in God, Who created all things, ¹⁰so that through the Church the manifold wisdom of God might now be made known to the rulers and authorities in the heavenly places. ¹¹This was according to the eternal purpose that He has realized in Christ Jesus our Lord, ¹²in Whom we have boldness and access with confidence through our faith in Him.


P: This is the Word of the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God.

TRIPLE HALLELUJAH AND READING OF THE GOSPEL LESSON – MATTHEW 2:1-12

C:  Hallelujah! Hallelujah! Hallelujah!

P: The Holy Gospel according to St. Matthew, the 2nd chapter.

C:  Glory be to Thee, O Lord!

P: ^{2:1} Now after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod the king, behold, wise men from the east came to Jerusalem, ²saying, “Where is He Who has been born King of the Jews? For we saw His star when it rose and have come to worship Him.” ³When Herod the king heard this, he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him; ⁴and assembling all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Christ was to be born. ⁵They told him, “In Bethlehem of Judea, for so it is written by the prophet: ⁶‘And you, O Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, are by no means least among the rulers of Judah; for from you shall come a Ruler Who will shepherd My people Israel.’”

⁷Then Herod summoned the wise men secretly and ascertained from them what time the star had appeared.

⁸And he sent them to Bethlehem, saying, “Go and search diligently for the Child, and when you have found Him, bring me word, that I too may come and worship Him.” ⁹After listening to the king, they went on their way.

And behold, the star that they had seen when it rose went before them until it came to rest over the place where the Child was. ¹⁰ When they saw the star, they rejoiced exceedingly with great joy. ¹¹ And going into the house, they saw the Child with Mary His mother, and they fell down and worshiped Him. Then, opening their treasures, they offered Him gifts, gold and frankincense and myrrh. ¹² And being warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they departed to their own country by another way.

P: This is the Gospel of the Lord.

C: ♪ Praise be to Thee, O Christ!

NICENE CREED (CONFESSION OF FAITH) [PAGE 22]

HYMN OF THE DAY: ♪ 130

SERMON: TRUST IN GOD WHO LED THE MAGI TO JESUS BY HIS WORD AND A STAR – MATTHEW 2:1-12

“When they saw the star, they rejoiced exceedingly with great joy. And going into the house, they saw the Child with Mary His mother, and they fell down and worshiped Him.” (Mt. 2:10-11) Amen.

Grace and peace to you from God our Father and our Lord Jesus, God in man made manifest. Amen. Blessed Epiphany! Some time has passed since God’s own Son was born of His virgin mother. Joseph and Mary now have more suitable lodging for their family of three, and the little Lord Jesus is an infant – perhaps as old as two years. The scene before us today is every bit as iconic as the newborn Jesus lying in a manger, as well as the angels announcing the Holy Nativity of the Savior of the world to the shepherds.

The visit of the magi serves as a culmination of the Christmas story as well as the wider proclamation of the birth of God’s divine, eternal Son to the Gentile world – to everyone. At first Mary, Joseph and the shepherds are the ones who know that the Savior has been born. Then God the Holy Spirit reveals the wondrous birth of the Holy Son of God to the wisemen – and through them to King Herod, all Jerusalem and far beyond Israel’s borders, even. The Gospel of God goes global with the magi and also later with the outgrowth of the New Testament Church in the *Book of Acts*.

Let’s journey with the wisemen to Jerusalem and to the house where our beloved Savior dwells. Let’s see how they learned of Jesus’ blessed birth and what moved them to travel to and to worship the God of our salvation. And let’s look at how God – by the working of His might – creates living, saving faith in our hearts too, so that we, like the magi, can be absolutely certain of eternal life in the Holy Child of Bethlehem. And so that we can also enter into His holy House, worship Him as our God and Redeemer and profess Him as Lord of all creation.

The story of the magi actually begins centuries before their journey to Bethlehem of Judea. Isaiah the Prophet – as we saw in our Old Testament lesson – prophecies about the coming of Christ the Lord into the world which He created and to people whom He formed. Isaiah describes all inhabitants of the world as being shrouded in deep darkness. But then Israel is summoned by God to *“arise, shine, for your Light has come, and the glory of the Lord has risen upon you.” (Is. 60:1)* For Christ the true-and-only Light, *Who “gives light to everyone, [is] coming into the world.” (Jn. 1:9)* In writing that all *“nations shall come to your Light,” (Is. 60:3a)* Isaiah is speaking to Israel. Why to Israel and not to the Lord Jesus Himself? Well, the Light of Israel is Christ the Lord of glory, the King of Israel! As our Lord Himself says, *“Salvation is from the Jews,” (Jn. 4:22)* so that God’s people Israel, kings and all peoples are to come to their one true King for life and salvation in Him alone.

That kings will come to the brightness of Israel’s rising (*see Is. 60:3b*) means that great and noble men will flock to the eternal Light of Israel: the only Son from heaven! These men of renown are the wisemen who’ll travel from the east to visit the Lord Jesus – to worship Him as their God and Lord and to give Him precious gifts fit for a king. Yet they are far from the only ones who’ll be gathered by God to His Son. Many shall come to Him from afar; they shall see Him and be radiant, and their hearts shall thrill in the Lord and exult in Him. (*See Is. 60:5*)

“A multitude of camels shall cover [the land of Israel,] the young camels of Midian and Ephah; all those from Sheba shall come. They shall bring gold and frankincense, and shall bring good news, the praises of the Lord.” (Is. 60:6) What a crystal-clear prophecy of the magi’s journey to the house of their Savior! Their camels shall be found in Israel; they shall bring gold and frankincense for Him. And the good news that they’ll bring is that their God and King has been born for them and for all – He Who is to be worshiped and glorified forever!

And so the message of Isaiah 60 and of Matthew 2 is that the wisemen – and countless many besides them, including you! – are drawn by the Spirit of Christ to Him – the Light of the world – so that you and they may come

to Him in true faith and devotion as those saved, delivered unto God by Christ, your true and only Light. (See TLH 512)

The visit of the magi to their infant Lord God seems so improbable, so unlikely. How in the world could men of distant countries know to travel to the land of Israel to behold their newborn King? The Bible doesn't fill in all the details here as we might like it to, yet we can gather from Holy Scripture that a unique, never-before-seen star appeared in the heavens and drew the wisemen to Israel – moving in the sky in a way that no other star, planet or anything else in the heavens ever could or did move before. These wisemen were almost certainly ancient astronomers – experts on the motion of the stars, so that this one-of-a-kind star signaled the arrival of a very important person indeed!

It's also highly probable that the magi had the Old Testament Scriptures in their possession since the Assyrian conquest of the Northern Kingdom of Israel in the 6th-century BC and the Babylonian captivity of the Southern Kingdom of Israel in the 5th-century BC scattered many Israelites all over the Middle East – and with them the Torah: God's Holy Word. So the wisemen likely would've known about the promised coming of the Messiah and King of Israel from God's Word.

And so the Holy Spirit – by-way-of His Word and a star in the heavens – leads and guides the wisemen to travel from a distance and to be the first of innumerable Gentiles to behold and worship Christ the Lord! They – and we with them – are proof-positive that the birth of the world's lone Savior is *"for all the people!"* (Lk. 2:10)

The nativity star – put in the heavens and directed by almighty God – leads the magi as far as Jerusalem. It's there that the Word of the Lord – as always – points to Christ the Son of the living God! For those wishing to see the Lord Jesus, Holy Scripture always goes before us and leads and brings us to Him and His full glory as God revealed to us in His dear flesh!

And so the Prophet Micah's words – spoken 700 years before Jesus' blessed birth – direct the wisemen to the city of David where Israel's and the world's almighty King has been born. *"And you, O Bethlehem, in the land of Judah...from you shall come a Ruler Who will shepherd My people Israel."* (Mt. 2:6)

Trust with all your heart that, by the working of the Holy Spirit through His enlivening Word, especially the words of Micah 5:2, and by His guiding star, God the Father brings the magi all the way to their God and Savior – not only to worship Him in person, but also to believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and so to be saved forever by Him! (See Acts 16:31) For to believe in the precious Son of God is also to worship Him in spirit and in truth, and vice versa. The faithful people of God always worship Jesus Christ and trust in Him with a whole heart. His dear saints will forever believe in He Who is *"worthy... to receive power and wealth and wisdom and might and honor and glory and blessing!"* (Rev. 5:12)

Why is the Lord Jesus *"worthy...to receive glory and honor and power?"* (Rev. 4:11) Because He is the precious Lamb of God Who was slain, and Who has ransomed and *"redeemed people for God from every tribe and language...and nation."* (Rev. 5:9)

We've also been redeemed by Christ the crucified. We've been purchased and won back to God from our sins, our death and eternal judgment in hell by our Savior's shed blood. And my are we guilty as-can-be of so many serious and deadly offenses against God and others – wrongdoings that demean both God and man! What can we do about this but seek God's face with contrite, penitent hearts – with weeping and mourning over our dark misdeeds! For how can God forgive us if we enter His House unconcerned about our evil deeds? Mouthing the words of the Confession to Him, but not really caring about them or meaning them? So repent before Him honestly and earnestly! Tear your hearts in genuine contrition and not your garments in a fake show of remorse! (See Joel 2:13) *"Draw near to God and He will draw near to you."* (James 4:8) *"Confess [your] transgressions to the Lord,"* and for the sake of His own dear Son, He will always forgive *"the iniquity of [your] sin!"* (Ps. 32:5)

The wisemen from the east are redeemed unto God the Father and forgiven before Him by God the Son enfleshed for them and for all people. They're saved that day and forever after by God their Savior to Whom they so fittingly bow down and worship! Just like you are, they're justified or declared righteous by God through faith alone in His Son, and so have *"peace with God through the Lord Jesus Christ"* (Rom. 5:1) – just like you do!

Like the shepherds did after seeing their newborn Savior, the wisemen no doubt return to their homes *"glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them."* (Lk. 2:20) You also, after having been absolved of all your sins by the sure-Word of Jesus your Savior; after having heard that there's *"now no condemnation for [you] who are*

in Christ Jesus,” (Rom. 8:1) Who “died for [you] and gave His life for [you,]” (Gal. 2:20) go home rejoicing in the Lord; confessing to others that Jesus Christ is your Lord and your God and their God and their Lord too! The Savior of all nations. Amen. The peace of God, which passes all understanding, keep your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus. Amen.

OFFERTORY (ANTHEM PRECEDING THE OFFERING OF TITHES) [PAGES 22-23]

OFFERING

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH – LITANY FOR THE EPIPHANY OF OUR LORD

P: God the Father in heaven: **C: Have mercy on us.**

P: God the Son, Redeemer of the world: **C: Have mercy on us.**

P: God the Holy Spirit: **C: Have mercy on us.**

P: Be gracious to us. **C: Spare us, good Lord.**

P: Be gracious to us. **C: Help us, good Lord.**

P: From all evil; from all error; from all sin. From the crafts and assaults of the devil; from sudden and evil death; from disease and famine; from war and bloodshed; from sedition and from rebellion; from lightning and storm; from all calamity by fire and water; and from everlasting death,

C: O Jesus, deliver us.

P: By the mystery of Your Incarnation; By Your Nativity; By Your revelation to the Magi as God in man made manifest; By Your Baptism in the Jordan River; By Your changing water into wine; By Your healing the sick and infirm; By Your crushing the devil’s might; By Your most holy life and conversation; By Your glorious Transfiguration with Moses and Elijah; By Your cross and passion; by Your precious death and burial; By Your glorious resurrection and ascension; and by the coming of the Holy Spirit, the Comforter: **C: O Jesus, deliver us.**

P: In all time of our tribulation; in all time of our prosperity; in the hour of death; and in the day of judgment:

C: Help us, Lord Jesus.

P: We poor sinners implore You **C: to hear us, Lord Jesus.**

P: To rule and govern Your holy Christian Church; to preserve all pastors and ministers of Your Church in the true knowledge and understanding of Your wholesome Word and to sustain them in holy living; To put an end to all schisms and causes of offense; to bring into the way of truth all who have erred and are deceived; To beat down Satan under our feet; to send faithful laborers into Your harvest; and to accompany Your Word with Your grace and Spirit:

C: We implore You to hear us, good Lord.

P: To raise those who fall and to strengthen those who stand; and to comfort and help the weakhearted and the distressed: **C: We implore You to hear us, good Lord.**

P: To give to all peoples concord and peace; to preserve our land from discord and strife; to give our country Your protection in every time of need; To direct and defend our president and all in authority; to bless and protect our magistrates and all our people; To watch over and help all who are in danger, necessity, and tribulation; to protect and guide all who travel; To grant all women with child, and all mothers with infant children, increasing happiness in their blessings; to defend all orphans and widows and provide for them; To strengthen and keep all who are ill and recovering: _____; To set free all who are innocently imprisoned; To keep all who are suffering for Your Name’s sake; And to have mercy upon all people: **C: We implore You to hear us, good Lord.**

P: To forgive our enemies, persecutors, and slanderers, and to turn their hearts; To give and preserve for our use the fruits of the earth; and graciously to hear our prayers: **C: We implore You to hear us, good Lord.**

P: Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, **C: we implore You to hear us and grant us peace. Amen.**

SERVICE OF THE SACRAMENT OF THE ALTAR [PAGES 24-31]

PROPER PREFACE (LORD’S SUPPER OPENING PRAYER) FOR EPIPHANY

P: It is truly, good, right, and salutary that we should at all times and places give thanks to You, holy Lord, almighty Father everlasting God, through Jesus Christ, our Lord; for what had been hidden from before the foundation of the world You have made known to the nations in Your Son. In Him, being found in the substance of our mortal nature, You have manifested the fullness of Your glory. Therefore with angels and archangels and with the company of heaven we laud and magnify Your glorious Name, evermore praising You and saying:

COMMUNION HYMNS: ♪ 305 & 352

CLOSING HYMN: ♪ 127

† TO GOD ALONE BE THE GLORY †

OUR ATTENDANCE FROM LAST SUNDAY

	Worship	Comm.	S.S. & B.C.	Offerings
Trinity	44	40	10	\$2,710.00
St. James	47	40	4 9	\$1,808.00

Sunday Offerings—Trinity, Fedor

	Operating	Building	Missions	Cemetery	Week
Goal	1,489.00				
Actual	4,885.00		435.00		1
Last Week	4,885.00		435.00		

Sunday Offerings—St. James, Lexington

	Operating	Mission	Future Development	Total	Week
Goal	2,723.00			2,723.00	
Actual	1,803.00	5.00		1,808.00	1
Last Week	1,803.00	5.00		1,808.00	

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THIS WEEK

TODAY

*Elders (at Holy Trinity and at St. James) following the services
11:00AM: Taking down of the Christmas tree, etc. ALL HELP is appreciated!

2:30PM: VOTERS (at Holy Trinity)

6:30PM: VOTERS (at St. James)

TUESDAY

6:30PM: Ladies Aid (Holy Trinity)

WEDNESDAY

9:00AM: LWML Quilting (St. James)

3:40PM: Week Day School

THURSDAY

10:00AM: Joint Bible Study (at St. James)

FRIDAY

+Pastor's Day Off

FOR YOUR INFORMATION

+++We remember in our prayers:...at Holy Trinity...*Dorothy Schimank, Tim Faske, Eldor Brade, Monroe Brade, Carolyn Nitsche*;...at St. James...*Charles Hartfiel, Guy Latimer, Ferman Iselt Jr., Della Biehle, Bernice Lay, Lois Turner, Darvin Drosche, Lillie Mae Boettcher, Tom Kleinschmidt, Ronnie Iselt, Egor Raines, Genell Boettcher, David Roensch, Ernest Biehle, Charles Kaiser, Ginger Clifford, Walter Dube Jr., Lorine Lerche, Zachary Hartfiel* [nephew of Charles Hartfiel], *Tim Faske* [relative and friend of St. James members], *JoAnne Meyer* [mother of Pastor Meyer], *Carole Heller* [mother of Juanita Clifford (St. James)], and *all of our sick and shut-ins*.

***HOLY TRINITY...TODAY...we will be taking down our Christmas tree and decorations beginning at 11am. Your HELP would be greatly appreciated!!!

+++**St. James Finance Board**...is divided into 2 groups serving every other month...(January, March, etc.) are: Rodney Exner, Ferman Iselt, Zachary Lay, Patrick Jatzlau, Wade Roitsch...(February, April, etc.) are: Ryan Brockenbush, Jeremy Brown, Tom Kleinschmidt, Clyde Lay, Curtis Yurk, Victor Yurk. Thanks!

*****THANK YOUS...***from Pastor and Ruth*-We would like to thank both congregations, St. James' LWML and Holy Trinity's Ladies Aid for their Christmas gifts as well as all members who gave us cards and presents this Christmas Season. We deeply appreciate you and thankful for your kindness and generous support, and we rejoice with you in the birth of our newborn King!...*from the janitor*-My sincere thanks to St. James congregation for the Christmas gift and appreciated the thoughtfulness in remembering me at this special time!...*from the organists*-We express our sincere thanks and appreciation for the Christmas gift from the congregation. Your generosity and thoughtfulness means so much!...*from the secretary*-I truly thank both congregations, the LWML, and the Ladies Aid for their kindness, thoughtfulness, and generosity of the Christmas gifts that were given to me. It is a blessing and joy to work for you and be a part of our churches. May God bless each of you with His unending love always!-Sandy

+++**CHRISTMAS POINSETTIAS**...we **THANK** everyone that placed poinsettia to grace our chancel area for our Christmas services!!! **Please be sure to pick up your poinsettia(s) following the service this morning!!!**

*****St. James**...we have a variety of cards...available individually or by the box...see either Ruth Meyer or Sandra Lay!

+++**SUNDAY MORNING BIBLE CLASS AND THURSDAY BIBLE STUDY**...Our Sunday morning Bible study is on original sin as well as free will/the human nature. Our Thursday morning Bible study is concluding the Gospel according to St. Luke. All are welcome to attend.

***Devotional book available: Copies are available in the office of Ruth Meyer's "**Truth Notes.**" This devotional is based on her past blog post and point to God's timeless truths in a changing world. Books are \$15 each. See either Sandra Lay or Ruth Meyer to purchase yours!

+++**QUILTING**...St. James LWML will be quilting every 3rd Wednesday of the month from 9-12!!!

*****BIRTHDAYS THIS WEEK**...Holy Trinity-Stephanie Ender, today; Nancy Urbanovsky, 17; Scott Handrick, 18;...St. James-Abby Beard, today; Krista Brockenbush, today; Victor Yurk, today; Shelia Medack, 13; Lois Turner, 13; Artis Brown, 15; Scott Norment, 16.