



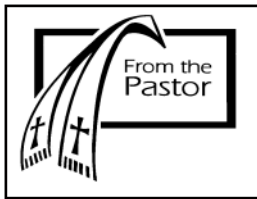
# The GOOD NEWSLETTER

of  
Saint Matthew Lutheran Church  
Springfield, Pennsylvania

Volume 69, Number 1

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Internet Web Site: [www.stmattspringfield.org](http://www.stmattspringfield.org)



## From Our Pastor

Connect  
Care  
eQuip  
Cultivate

**H**appy Anniversary! Happy Anniversary! 2017 is a significant year for Saint Matthew Lutheran Church. This year we will celebrate two significant anniversaries. The one is our 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary as a community of faith. We were started in 1942 by the efforts of Pr. Donald Doll to form a congregation in Springfield Township. We have grown over those years from a start-up congregation worshipping in the old firehouse, to the established ministry we are today with the lovely facilities we have for worship and service in Christ's name.

The second anniversary is the 500<sup>th</sup> year since the beginning of the Reformation. On October 31, 1517 Dr. Martin Luther (not Martin Luther King!) put his 95 theses, or points for debate, on the door of the Castle Church in Wittenberg, Germany. He invited people to come and discuss with him the very foundation of how we are forgiven and made right with God, and began a process of calling the Church back to the Gospel. This beginning led to the establishment of what we know as the Lutheran church today.

Often when we come to a new year we make resolutions to change and move forward. This is a good thing to do, but sometimes we need to look back at where we started to see if where we wish to go still matches with the hopes, dreams, and identity of who we have been. This is the case with this year, and anniversaries we will celebrate. We have a long history as a Church, and as a congregation, of living out the Gospel of Jesus. We have a longstanding practice of connecting with God and each other, caring for the needs of those who are hurting, forsaken, and in need, equipping people for a living faith in Jesus, and cultivating a generous spirit among those who call Jesus their Lord. Remembering from whence we come can be significant as we look to live out this faith into the new year and beyond.

As we go through 2017 we will have the chance to celebrate our history. But we are always looking for how God is calling us to be Jesus' people to those around us today. As we live faithfully in this time, supported by the witness and encouragement of those who went before us, we set the stage for the work of the Church and our congregation to continue well into the future. May God, our refuge and strength, lead us and guide us into the future God sees for us as we live in service to the Gospel today.

Pr. Karl M. Richard

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## The Vicar's View: Sin, Fresh Starts, and the Persistence of Love

**I**'m my own worst enemy." We've all heard people use this expression. Perhaps we've even said it ourselves. We all act against our own best interests sometimes, doing things that we know will be harmful to our mental or physical well-being or that of others. How often do we seek happiness and contentment in things that we know from experience will never really satisfy us? How many of our interpersonal relationships have we attempted to sabotage out of fear and insecurity, sometimes subconsciously? We turn away from God, or become angry when our lives don't go the way we planned. On top of all this, we often feel the need to punish ourselves for the mistakes we've made. We put up a barrier against self-forgiveness and mercy, a wall so strong and high that it feels like God couldn't even break through it.

In his letter to the Romans, the Apostle Paul expresses his frustration at his moral failings very simply: "For the good that I want to do, I do not do; but the evil I do not want to do, that is what I do" (7:19). This is not to say that we are incapable of doing anything good in the course of our lives. Nonetheless, I can sympathize with Paul here. Our flaws and weaknesses can sometimes make us feel like we are beyond the reach of God. It seems like a desperate, unsolvable situation.

How can God love us when we've made so many mistakes, when we know we've failed God and hurt other

people? Paul's response is what makes the good news of forgiveness in Jesus Christ so incredibly freeing. Nothing at all in God's creation, Paul concludes, "can separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Romans 8:39). Not death, angels, things in the present, things to come. And not our weaknesses, our regrets, or our past acts of cruelty to other people.

Whatever sins we've committed against God and neighbor in the last year, whoever we've hurt or treated without compassion, I pray that this coming year will give us new opportunities for reconciliation and healing. I pray that, throughout 2017, you will know that God's arms are always poised to wrap around you and welcome you back into the love that we were all made for. Amen.

Vicar Daniel Smith

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## New Monthly Discussion Forum on *The Living Lutheran*

Have you ever perused some of the articles and features of the ELCA's magazine *The Living Lutheran* and wanted to discuss some of them with your Saint Matthew friends? Well, here's your opportunity! On the fourth Sunday of each month, we will be having a casual discussion forum on some of the main articles in that month's issue. Facilitated by Vicar Dan, it will be held in the parlor after the 8:00 service. It'll be a great way to keep in touch with what's going on in the ELCA outside of our church, as well as to hear a variety of opinions on some important issues! If you have any questions, feel free to talk to Vicar Dan.

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## Annual Meeting

Our Annual Congregational Meeting will be held on Sunday, January 29, 2017, following the 10:15 a.m. service. A light luncheon will be served, followed by the meeting. Please mark your calendars and plan to be present.

The 2016 Annual Report will not be mailed. Copies will be available in the church by Sunday, January 22, the week before the meeting. If you are unable to get to the church and would like a copy of the report, please call Janice in the church office at 610-543-8700.

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## Christian Education

Happy New Year, everyone! Please note there will be no Sunday School classes on January 1, 2017!

The Hanging of the Greens was a special time together as a congregation. So many volunteers helped to make our church look beautiful from cleaning the chandeliers to decorating the church. The cooks prepared a delicious chicken dinner for us to enjoy. The instrumentalists played wonderfully while the youth

entertained us with a skit entitled "The Backwards Christmas Pageant". We lifted our voices singing carols in the sanctuary and ate delectable cookies. Thank you one and all for keeping this delightful and meaningful tradition alive at Saint Matthew.

Our next project will be to support the Souper Bowl of Caring event in our community. We will encourage our families to participate in any way they can. Be sure to look for flyers advertising the details of this event soon.

Carol Penjuke

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## Bible Study Resumes

Wednesday Bible Study will resume on January 8. We will meet at 6:30 a.m. in the Library or noon in the Parlor. Watch for further details in the Sunday bulletin announcements.

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## Altar Flowers and Worship Folders

Each Sunday you have the opportunity to dedicate altar flowers or worship folders in memory of someone, in honor of a special occasion, in thanksgiving for blessings received, or any other dedication you would like to make. Effective January 1, 2017, the cost of altar flowers and worship folders will be \$20 per dedication. There are sign-up sheets and envelopes in the narthex.

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## Children's Corner

### Dear Children,

*"Ask, and it will be given to you." Matthew 7:7.*

Looking at this verse as a young child, I always felt special because I thought that I could ask God for a new doll, a perfect spelling paper, nice weather for our 7th grade picnic, etc.--I now call these prayers "red bicycle prayers." Now as an adult, I feel that God wants us to have an ongoing dialogue with Him where we can always share our frustrations and desires--He will eventually decide what He thinks is best for us. While growing older, I have steered away from "red bicycle prayers" (although I have on occasion asked for sunny weather) and have tried to broaden my circle of thought and ask for prayers of healing, and alleviating hunger, homelessness, and violence. I suppose some of us hesitate in asking for help because we pride ourselves on our own resourcefulness--"We can do it and don't need any help!" Just when we are feeling real independent, we need to remember that God is **always** there and is bending his ear down to hear all our little conversations with Him. He wants to know our fears, our needs, our joys, our sadness, and our blessings. Although prayers may not always be answered in our favor, they are usually answered in some unique way. Several years ago, in our 6:30 a.m. Bible Study, we were deep into this discussion (Matthew 7:7) and I mentioned the term "red bicycle prayers" and went on to say that I try not to ask for "things" like that any more as I now feel that they are selfish. Well, about two weeks

later a small white box came in the mail addressed to me--no return address! When I opened the box--**guess what?** At the bottom of the box nestled in white tissue paper was a shiny little red bicycle! I was flabbergasted! And--of course, I tried for about a year to nail down the sender, but I had no luck. It had to be someone in that early morning class! I had always wondered who took the time to remind me that God loves me and wanted to tell me that He is always there for me. Well, about two years ago, I ran into an old friend who was in that Bible Study, but had moved out of our area. As we were chatting, I asked him if he knew anything about my red bicycle. He threw his head back and laughed and said, "Why, Sylvia, yes it was me,--I just wanted to remind you that God wants to help us and often His help comes even when we don't ask."

#### Dear Parents:

This reading from Matthew is surely inspiring and you might want to read chapters 5-7 as they contain wonderful wisdom and insight for all of us.

Sylvia Yost

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#### Worship and Music Notes

**T**hank you to all the musicians who made the Advent and Christmas season so meaningful and special. This includes all the members of the regular choir, the Praise Band, the bell choir, and the instrumental ensemble. Many of our musicians are in more than one ensemble which means more than one weekly practice at a very busy time of the year. Our worship life at Saint Matthew would not be nearly so complete without the musical participation of each and every one of you! We are blessed and I thank you from the bottom of my heart!

Pat McHugh

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#### A Frost on the Pumpkin Date Saver

**F**ormal preparations for the Souper Bowl of Caring, 2017, have not yet begun but please think ahead! The Super Bowl will be on Sunday, February 5, with Souper Bowl of Caring events the weekend and day before.

Natalie Rees Berry  
natberry@rcn.com

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#### Nursery School

**H**appy New Year from the Nursery School staff and children. We will return to school on Monday, January 2, 2017. The new year will be filled with wonderful activities, continuation of alphabet recognition, printing skills and enjoying friends. School will be closed on Monday, January 16, for the celebration of Martin Luther King, Jr. Parent-teacher talks will take place January 23 to January 26. School will remain open during conferences with substitutes in place. Registration for 2017 for our in-house students returning in September will take place at

this time. Any prospective families who are interested to have their child attend our school in the fall of 2017, please contact the Nursery School office at 610-543-5589.

We wish you many blessings in the coming year!.

Linda M. Maylie, Director

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#### Silver Springs Christmas Gifts

**T**hank you to everyone who so generously donated Christmas gifts to the 72 children who live in the residential treatment program at Silver Springs. I was able to deliver two car loads of gifts. Included were:

- 2 large baby doll sets
- 3 Barbie doll styling heads
- 8 Barbie doll sets
- 2 Barbie doll outfits
- 6 basketballs
- 2 footballs
- 1 sport ball
- 1 3-piece ball set
- 1 soccer ball
- 2 packages D batteries
- 1 36-package AA batteries
- 1 teddy bear
- 21 Berenstain Bear books
- 5 Dr. Seuss books
- 1 bath set
- 1 shower gel
- 4 card games
- 6 coloring books
- 2 packages colored pencils
- 2 invisible ink coloring books
- 3 games
- 1 teen doll
- 6 Disney gift boxes
- 7 Lego minecraft sets
- 5 Lego super hero sets
- 1 Matchbox cars set
- 1 Lego friends set
- 2 hot wheels sets
- 4 toy truck sets
- 2 boxes of puzzles
- 6 Pokemon action figures
- 7 Shopkins
- 1 pack play dough
- 7 videos
- 2 Flyers shirts
- 1 Eagles winter hat
- 3 winter hats
- 3 pairs of gloves
- 3 pairs of fuzzy socks
- 1 purse

Total: 138 items

Again, thank you for your support of the Women of the ELCA project.

Nancy Regan

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## Men's Breakfast

The January Men's Breakfast will be held on Saturday, January 21, at 7:15 a.m. at The Court Diner, 140 E. Baltimore Ave., Media, PA 19063. All men are invited to join us for morning devotions, a great speaker, an excellent breakfast and good fellowship. Please come and enjoy an excellent way to start the day.

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## Silver Springs Christmas Wrapping Trip

On Wednesday, December 7, eleven ladies from Women of the ELCA traveled to Silver Springs-Martin Luther School to wrap more than 500 gifts for the children in the residential treatment program. A special thank you to Marjorie Aronson, Lily Beggarly, Paulyn Beggarly, Diane Billick, Dotty Engelbrecht, Barbara Kinsey, Marge Kobasa, Joan Krauter, Maureen McCleary, and Patti Stefl, who spent the day. We also enjoyed a pizza party as a thanks from the staff.

Nancy Regan

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## 500th Anniversary of the Reformation

We will be celebrating the 500th Anniversary of the Reformation and the 75th Anniversary of Saint Matthew Lutheran Church in 2017. Bishop Claire Burkat will be with us on Sunday, October 8, 2017; and there will be a luncheon and program at The Oaks Ballroom that day. If you would like to be part of the committee planning this event, please contact Nicole Smith or the church office.

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## The Circus!

"How big is an elephant, Dad?" My Mom and Dad had announced that we were going to the circus. My little sister Janette and I had never seen an elephant. From pictures in books I had seen them but could not imagine how big they were up close and "in person."

"Well, son" my Dad said, "An elephant is as big as the garage! We had a single car garage off the street at our house and I knew how big that was, but I was skeptical that an animal could be anywhere near the size of a garage!"

I remember one day I was showing off with a school friend and wanted to play Tarzan. I climbed up on the garage roof and, with a blood-curdling yell, jumped off! It was a long way down. My body picked up speed very rapidly and when my feet hit the lawn beside the garage, my heels dug into the ground and I rolled to one side in pain, with the breath knocked out of me from the force of the landing. Needless to say, I didn't try that stunt again. So I knew how big the garage was.

The day of the circus dawned and into the city we went, full of anticipation for an encounter with elephants. Mom asked me to hold onto little Janette's hand while we walked toward the big top. Dad went ahead to buy tickets and we followed with the crowd.

There were colorful sights and activities all around us and off to one side was a large tent which had closed flaps. I wanted to see inside. Janette came with me as we approached and I lifted the flap. The sight which greeted us could not be more scary for two kids together. We were face to face with an elephant! I had never seen anything so big! Dad was right, I thought. We stood transfixed at the sight of this awesome mountain of grey leathery hide and huge trunk that unfurled toward us in curiosity. We nearly fell over each other as we ran! My Mom said we had eyes as big as "gig-lamps!"

The circus under the big top was a wonder of color, movement and music as the performers introduced white horses, clowns, bears, lions and elephants. We were enthralled and also loved the trapeze artists and colorful costumes. We talked about the circus for days afterwards, and I never doubted my Dad again.

Friends at school were big talkers and I learned now that the truth was mostly less than their exaggerations. Perhaps that is why I had not been so convinced by my father's vivid comparison with our garage. I always took him at his word after that discovery.

Remembered incidents from growing up give us pleasure and reassurance in the present. Yes, they are personal presents that come to us from the High Power Source. That source of all creation. Thank you, thank you and thank you.

His peace be unto you.

Tony Webb

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## First Thursday Friends

First Thursday Friends will gather on Thursday, January 5, at 11:30 a.m. at Anthony's Restaurant in Drexline Shopping Center, 4990 State Road, Drexel Hill. For more information contact John Stefl.

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## January Newsletter Deadline

Articles for the February newsletter are due in the church office by **noon on Friday, January 15.**

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## Social Ministry

Once again, the Saint Matthew Congregation came through with flying colors with their support of our Pajama Project for the children of Faith Immanuel Lutheran Church. This was our biggest group of children yet, and it was heartwarming to see all of the wonderfully wrapped gifts that you so generously gave to brighten their Christmas. The gifts were delivered in time for their annual Christmas party.

We continue to support the Loaves and Fishes Food Pantry with donations of non-perishable food and packing food one Thursday night a month. If you can assist with packing, please see Joanne Castagna or Marge Kobasa for information.

Souper Bowl of Caring is coming up soon. Please watch for additional information as many people are needed as drivers and packers, as well as volunteers to deliver flyers and

pick up donations at the doors.

We wish all of our church members good health and much happiness in 2017.

Cheryl Morrell

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## Library

**H**appy New Year! A New Year to reflect and move on to make things better. This month's book is *The Call to Wholeness* by Kenneth L. Bakken found on Shelf 248.4 BAK. We all encounter times of physical illness as well as emotional psychological, and spiritual distress and pain. We are all in need of healing—in every aspect of life.

In this book, a physician specializing in preventive medicine integrates learnings from both science and religion to present a holistic approach to well-being that is rooted in a new understanding of Christian principles—an approach that has already proven effective in countless lives. Using examples of people who have been healed, Dr. Bakken shows how stress (fear, anxiety, anger, guilt, depression, loneliness, and unforgiveness) contributes to dis-ease and how spiritual growth (“perfect love casts out fear”) promotes health, healing, and wholeness.

The call to wholeness demonstrates that God is the author, renewer, and sustainer of all life, and the ultimate source of all healing. It challenges individuals, the Church, and the medical establishment to expand their view of reality in the context of a Christ-centered spirituality which can bring true and lasting wholeness to each and all of us.

May God be with all of you.

Barbara Kinsey

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## Women of the ELCA

*Give thanks to the Lord for he is good. His love endures forever. (Psalm 136:1)*

**W**e thank God for the many blessings of the past year, for you, our church family; and we look forward to walking with Jesus in this new year.

Upcoming events for Saint Matthew women:

January 11—Board Meeting—Library at 9:30 a.m.

January 14—LWR Quilting—Parish Ed Building at 10:30 a.m.

January 18—Ronald McDonald Quilting—Parlor at 10:00 a.m.

January 24—Sarah Circle—Parish Ed Building at 7:00 p.m. (note time change)

January 25—Esther Circle—Parlor at 10:00 a.m.

Thank you to everyone who came to the breakfast on December 3. Vicar Daniel Smith gave a most interesting talk with slides about his mission trip to Serbia. Thank you, ladies, for the delicious food.

Thank you once again for the donations to The

Welcome Church. **This month we will be collecting small toiletries (foot powder, razors, deodorant, small packages of tissues, and shampoo.) Cookies are always welcome.**

Joan Krauter

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## Monthly Mailbag

Dear Pastor Karl and the saints of Saint Matthew,

Thank you for your very generous gift of \$60,000 to our *Forward Together in Faith* campaign. We call this campaign “Forward Together in Faith” because we can do so much more when we are doing it together. Ultimately the Synod is not an organization, or a body of congregations, or a collection of programs; it is a web of relationships, of people working together to be God’s hands and heart here in Southeastern Pennsylvania. Thank you for being part of our network.

Your support—and that of many generous saints like you—allows us to focus on our mission of equipping our leaders and congregations for ministry in the challenging 21st Century mission field. We could not sustain the level of services and support our congregations and leaders now enjoy without your gift.

I thank you and bless you for your faithful support of the ministry we share to grow and encourage Christ’s disciples across our region.

With and in Christ,

The Rev. Claire S. Burkat, Bishop

Dear Pastor Karl, Vicar Daniel and the Saint Matthew family,

I just want to say “thank you” for all your kindness during George’s hospitalization and after his passing. The visits and prayers were certainly a blessing to him as they have been to us in the weeks that followed.

There are no words to express our gratitude. During times like these we realize just how much the body of Christ means to us. Day to day we tend to take each other for granted, but then things happen that remind us that we have been brought together to care for one another. “Thank you” hardly seems adequate.

May God bless you as he uses your gifts of encouragement, prayer and service to bless others just as you have blessed us.

Love,

Portia Bahl and family

To my church family,

I want to let you know how much I appreciate your thoughtfulness in sending get well wishes. It became a little surprise every day. The altar flowers, delivered by Joan Krauter, are bright and beautiful. I also had two of my favorite gentlemen offer to help me if I needed anything done.

My biggest thank you to you all.

In Christ,

Bea Toomey

Dear Saint Matthew Family,

As 2016 comes to a close, we would like to thank the entire congregation for their efforts, participation, and donations regarding the fellowship events at Saint Matthew. The success of each event was a result of all our collective work. We are looking forward to a very exciting 2017 packed with more opportunities for us to connect as a congregation. Wishing everyone a very Merry Christmas and a happy and healthy New Year!

Sincerely,  
Nicole Smith and the Fellowship Committee

Dear Saint Matthew Lutheran Church,

Thank you for your generous in-kind donation to the Philadelphia Ronald McDonald House. We rely on in-kind gifts such as yours to create a community of comfort and hope for the thousands of families with seriously ill children that we serve each year through our two Ronald McDonald Houses, two Ronald McDonald Family Rooms, Hospitality Kiosk, and Ronald McDonald Camp. Thank you for your donation of 18 tied quilts, 8 knit quilts, 9 crocheted quilts, 4 pillows, and 1 crocheted scarf.

L. Tracton, Volunteer  
Ronald McDonald House

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## Worship Responsibilities

### Altar Guild Coordinator: Jeff Wesley

Jan. 1	J. Krauter, M. Ziff
Jan. 8	J. Krauter, P. Stefl
Jan. 15	J. Krauter, M. McCleary
Jan. 22	J. Krauter, P. Stefl
Jan. 29	P. Stefl, B. Camagna

### Worship Assistants Coordinator: John Kampmeyer

Jan. 1	8:00 a.m.	Vicar Daniel Smith
	10:15 a.m.	Vicar Daniel Smith
Jan. 8	8:00 a.m.	Kathie Morgan
	10:15 a.m.	Joe Link
Jan. 15	8:00 a.m.	Abby Richard
	10:15 a.m.	(No assistant needed)
Jan. 22	8:00 a.m.	Joanne Castagna
	10:15 a.m.	Fran Gordon
Jan. 29	8:00 a.m.	Maureen McCleary
	10:15 a.m.	(No assistant needed)

### Acolytes Coordinator: Dawn von Berg

Jan. 1	8:00 a.m.	Matthew Johnston
	10:15 a.m.	Madison Wesley, Rebecca Engberg
	Crucifer:	Matt DiSanto
Jan. 8	8:00 a.m.	Gavin and Alexa von Berg
	10:15 a.m.	Rebecca Engberg, Briana Burdette
	Crucifer:	Ethan Kraft
Jan. 15	8:00 a.m.	Jackson and Cole Bennett
	10:15 a.m.	Abby Richard, Matt DiSanto
Jan. 22	8:00 a.m.	Abby Kiely
	10:15 a.m.	Ethan Kraft, Briana Burdette
	Crucifer:	Madison Wesley

Jan. 29	8:00 a.m.	Stephen Scott
	10:15 a.m.	Matt DiSanto, Rebecca Engberg

### Communion Servers Coordinator: Joan Krauter

Jan. 1	8:00 a.m.	Kim Cobb, Nancy Regan
	10:15 a.m.	Chris and Karen DiSanto
Jan. 8	8:00 a.m.	Bill Penjucke, Barbara Hewitt
	10:15 a.m.	Tony Webb, Carol Jo Eick
Jan. 15	8:00 a.m.	Barbara Kinsey, Diane Frattini
	10:15 a.m.	Natalie Berry, Joe Link, Abigail Richard
Jan. 22	8:00 a.m.	Vicar Daniel Smith, Doug Bratz
	10:15 a.m.	Vicar Daniel Smith, Dawn Liscom
Jan. 29	8:00 a.m.	Michael and Lisa Umbenhauer
	10:15 a.m.	Gail Hendrickson, Meredith Harris, Dan Lazaro

### Lectors Coordinator: Jeff Wesley

Jan. 1	10:15 a.m.	Nicole Smith
Jan. 8	10:15 a.m.	Jeff Wesley
Jan. 15	10:15 a.m.	Britten Winters
Jan. 22	10:15 a.m.	Vicar Daniel Smith
Jan. 29	10:15 a.m.	Stephen Bashore

### Sunday Nursery Coordinator: Janice Gardner

Jan. 1	10:15 a.m.	Kristen and Ivan Plachuta
Jan. 8	10:15 a.m.	Sue and Brian Barber
Jan. 15	10:15 a.m.	Nicole and Greg Smith
Jan. 22	10:15 a.m.	Gary Pflieger, Kathy Kinder
Jan. 29	10:15 a.m.	Kristen and Ivan Plachuta

### Greeters Coordinator: Nicole Smith

Jan. 1	8:00 a.m.	Chris and Kristen Rohrer
	10:15 a.m.	Linda Shipley, Nicole Smith
Jan. 8	8:00 a.m.	Matthew and Christine Scott
	10:15 a.m.	Carole Centrella, Bea Toomey
Jan. 15	8:00 a.m.	Dee and Doug Bratz
	10:15 a.m.	Don and Sylvia Yost
Jan. 22	8:00 a.m.	John and Patti Stefl
	10:15 a.m.	Steve and Cheryl Morrell
Jan. 29	8:00 a.m.	Diane Frattini, Barbara Kinsey
	10:15 a.m.	Dorothy D'Arcy, Jim Snyder



*Celebrate the New Year -  
worship our Lord!*

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Plan to attend  
the Annual Congregational Meeting  
on Sunday, January 29,  
following the 10:15 a.m. service