



THE SERVANT

The monthly newsletter of Servants of Christ Lutheran Church, a congregation of The North American Lutheran Church serving the Cedar Rapids area

Meeting at Robins City Hall Community Room, 265 South Second St., Robins, Iowa 52328
Worship: 9:00 am; Fellowship & Coffee: 10:00;
Bible Class and Sunday School: 10:15
Ron Voss, Pastor

*******January 2017*******

The Spreading Light of Epiphany

Dear Servants of Christ,

Welcome to Epiphany, the season of spreading light. The birth of Christ, our Light, was celebrated on Christmas. And the bright news of the Christ's birth now radiates out to all the world. The wise men were among the first to recognize the spreading Light of Christ. "We saw his star in the east and have come to worship him," they declared (Matthew 2:2). Since that time, people from the four corners of the globe have been touched by Christ's spreading Light in all its dazzling and varied glory. This Light reveals Christ's gracious gifts of divine presence, forgiveness from sin, and everlasting life. Where exactly can the Lord's radiating Light be seen today?

The Light of Christ spreads out through the Scriptures. "Thy word is a lamp unto my feet and light for my path," we read ((Psalm 119:105). The story of our salvation, culminating in the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ, is brought to light each time people read the Gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke and John. Highlight in your own Bible those passages that have enlightened you in your walk with Christ, and then make an effort to share those verses with friends and family. Consider giving or lending a Bible to someone who does not yet know Christ.

The Light of Christ spreads out through missionaries. Many men and women have heeded the directive of Jesus to "make disciples of all nations" and gone to places near and far where people have not yet been exposed to the Light of Christ (Matthew 28:19). Find out the addresses of missionaries whom your church supports. Write letters of encouragement to them to "keep spreading the Light of Christ." Make donations to them to brighten their day and support their work.

The Light of Christ spreads out through us. The wise men responded in the Light of Christ by bowing down to worship Him. They presented Him with the gifts of gold,

frankincense and myrrh (Matthew 2:11). Gladly attend worship services in your church and generously give of your time, talents and treasures in love and service to the Lord. In your church and in your community this Epiphany season, let the Light of Christ beam forth with powerful force.

In Christ's love,
Ron



Did you know????? Psalm 119 is the longest psalm in the Bible. Its 176 verses focus on God and His Word. God is mentioned in every verse, while the entire psalm celebrates the Scriptures and speaks of their priority and sufficiency in the daily life of the believer. The Scriptures are described as “law,” “statutes,” “ways,” “precepts,” “decrees,” “commandments,” and “word.”

***LIFE APPLICATION
STUDY BIBLE***

These are available to anyone. Please let Ron know of your interest.

Traveling Light (a Bible study on the 23rd Psalm) continues on Sunday morning at 10:20. Sessions for January are:

- ** January 1—The Burden of Worry
- ** January 8—The Burden of Hopelessness
- ** January 15—The Burden of Guilt
- ** January 22—The Burden of Arrogance
- ** January 29—The Burden of the Grave

Join us on any Sunday (or every Sunday!) as we study God's Word.

Mission Outreach Gifts in December



- **\$300 sent to The North American Lutheran Church General Fund
- **\$250 sent to support the work of the Iowa Mission District
- **\$250 sent to Trinity Lutheran Church in Warrenton, Virginia, to support its outreach ministry

Your faithful and generous support make this outreach possible. Thank you!

Thrivent Choice Dollars

Individuals who have qualifying Thrivent Financial annuities and/or insurance products will accumulate *Choice Dollars*. If you qualify, please consider designating them to Servants of Christ Lutheran Church. Visit www.thrivent.com/thriventchoice or call 1-800-847-4836 for details on how to designate and give.

Have you included planned giving in your will? Do you have a will? If so, do you review it annually? With our busy lives, we have many things to do and often neglect our wills. You are encouraged to contact your financial advisors and keep your wills current. And, consider remembering The North American Lutheran Church and Servants of Christ in your will.

The Gift of the Word of God

Among all the gifts the gift of the Word of God is the most valuable. For if you take this away, it is like taking the sun away from the earth. For if the Word were removed, what would the world be but a hell and mere realm of Satan . . . For only the Word keeps a joyful conscience, a gracious God, and all of religion, since out of the Word, as from a spring, flows our entire religion. Without the word and Christ, the world would not continue to exist for one moment. Therefore, though there are many great gifts of God in the world . . . Yet the one which includes and sustains all the others is the Word, which proclaims that God is merciful and promises forgiveness of sins and everlasting life.

Martin Luther
exposition on Psalm 122 in 1531

January Servants



Greeter/Usher: Dan Heckart
Communion Assistant: Aaron Opperman

Snacks:

- ** January 1—Mary Collins
- ** January 8—Becky Cooper
- ** January 15—Mike & LeAnn Arnold
- ** January 22—Tami Gerdemann
- ** January 29—Lenore Heckart

Our thanks to the women at Norway Lutheran Church at St. Olaf, Iowa, for their generous gift to our congregation of \$300.00



Friends of Madagascar Mission: Celebrating the Gift of Mission

It was a GIFT to visit Madagascar from August 24-September 7. During the visit the goals were to consult with the leaders of the Malagasy Lutheran Church and the leaders of the programs that Friends of Madagascar Mission (FOMM) supports.

We also held an Evangelist Training Event in Antsirabe, Madagascar. Some of the participants traveled for 3 1/2 days in overcrowded “bush taxis” to arrive at Antsirabe. One of the evangelists, a woman, shared with us that in addition to the travel time to Antsirabe, she had to walk for ten hours from her home to catch the “bush taxi.” This account shows the commitment of the evangelists to their work.

What a GIFT it was to be together, about 50 people, and celebrate our mission in Christ! Friends of Madagascar Mission paid for the transportation, lodging and food for all participants. This was a good investment because it is important to have “face to face” dialogue. During each consultation we signed a “Covenant Relationship Agreement” to establish our working relationship. This newsletter has two purposes: 1) To give a summary of our recent mission trip, and 2) To encourage you to support Friends of Madagascar Mission (FOMM) projects.

We are on the FRONT LINES OF MISSION, a unique GIFT to all FOMM donors, because 1) we guarantee 100% of a gift goes to a project selected; 2) we do not take anything from a gift for our Administrative Fund, unless instructed to do so by the donor, and 3) we update our donors about what their financial support has accomplished. We believe donors appreciate this!

Please enjoy reading about our mission projects, and we hope you will respond by SUPPORTING THE GIFT OF MISSION!

Peace in Christ,
The Rev. David P. Lerseth, President FOMM

