Welcome to

Faith Lutheran

**Sunday, January 1, 2017**

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**4515 Dobie Road**

**Okemos, MI 48864**

**517-349-0620**

**Pastor Ellen Schoepf**

**prellen@faithlutheranokemos.org**

**GOSPEL MESSAGE**

**God in Trouble**

Jesus was born into a dangerous time and place. His parents became refugees fleeing from the violence of a murderous king. In the midst of such chaos and danger, God was taking a great risk, entrusting a humble and vulnerable young couple with the great responsibility of raising the Savior of the world. We might wonder why Jesus was not born a prince or the son of a Roman senator. Why did the Word of God not become flesh in Herod’s court, for instance, where he would presumably have been much safer?

The answer is found in Jesus’ whole life. Even as he grew up, taking the safe option was rarely his priority. He crossed his society’s boundaries, eating with outcasts, criminals, and lepers. He spoke out against the injustices of the religious and government elites of his time who were exploiting the poor and those who were vulnerable. He taught a new way of life that contradicted the accepted religious customs of his time by pushing for radical love and generosity. By doing all these things, he put not only his social standing on the line but also his life. In the end, he was wrongly executed as a common criminal.

In Jesus, we see that love takes risks. The sort of life for which all of us yearn in our own depths, the life that Jesus showed us, is not safe and comfortable. If our lives are comfortable and safe right now, the word of God challenges us to ask: are we loving and serving our neighbors with the same love that Jesus had, or are we holding back out of fear? But if we are in trouble right now, the word of God calls us to rejoice, because trouble is where God lives.

**Sunday, January 01, 2017**

First Sunday of Christmas

**Introduction to the day**

As we celebrate the Twelve Days of Christmas, our gospel today confronts us with the death of innocent children at the hands of Herod. The birth of Christ does not remove the power of evil from our world, but its light gives us hope as we walk with all the “holy innocents” of past generations and today who have suffered unjustly. In our gathering around word and meal, God continues to redeem us, lift us up, and carry us as in days of old.

*If hearing assistance is needed, please ask an usher for a personal PA receiver.*

*The ushers also have large print copies of today’s worship folder available.*

*If it will be difficult for you to stand along with the congregation during*

*any part of the worship service, please feel free to remain seated.*

*There is a nursery available during the worship service for those who wish*

*to use it. It is located at the end of the hall beyond the coat racks.*

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

*We cordially greet all who have come to worship today.*

*Please register your attendance and join us in fellowship after the service.*

Prayer Requests

PRELUDE

*The pre-service music signals the beginning of the worship service. Silence during the*

*pre-service music enables worshipers to prepare for worship through quiet meditation.*

“Once in Royal David’s City” Cherwien

**Gathering**

*The Holy Spirit calls us together as the people of God.*

**Confession and Forgiveness**

Blessed be the Holy One of Israel,

the Word made flesh,

the Power of the Most High,

☩ one God, now and forever.

**Amen.**

Gathered in the name of Jesus,

let us confess our sin against God and our neighbor.

Gracious God,

**in Christ Jesus you come among us**

**as light shining in darkness.**

**We confess our failure to welcome this light.**

**Forgive us and renew our hope,**

**so that we may live in the light of your grace,**

**and welcome the truth of Christ the Lord. Amen.**

I bring you good news of great joy for all the people:

To you is born a Savior, Christ the Lord.

Your sins are forgiven in ☩ Jesus’ name.

**Amen.**

**Gathering Song**

***Hark! The Herald Angels Sing ELW #270***

**Greeting**

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God,

and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

**And also with you.**

**Canticle of Praise**



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**Prayer of the Day**

Let us pray.

O Lord God, you know that we cannot place our trust in our own powers. As you protected the infant Jesus, so defend us and all the needy from harm and adversity, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

**Amen.**

*The assembly is seated.*

**Word**

*God speaks to us in scripture reading, preaching, and song.*

**First Reading: Isaiah 63:7-9**

*God does not delegate divine intervention to a messenger or angel. God’s own presence brings salvation. The prophet and all who read these words join in celebrating God’s gracious deeds. God trusts that God’s people will not act falsely.*

A reading from Isaiah.

7I will recount the gracious deeds of the Lord,  
  the praiseworthy acts of the Lord,  
 because of all that the Lord has done for us,  
  and the great favor to the house of Israel  
 that he has shown them according to his mercy,  
  according to the abundance of his steadfast love.  
 8For he said, “Surely they are my people,  
  children who will not deal falsely”;  
 and he became their savior  
  9in all their distress.  
 It was no messenger or angel  
  but his presence that saved them;  
 in his love and in his pity he redeemed them;  
  he lifted them up and carried them all the days of old.

The word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

**Second Reading: Hebrews 2:10-18**

*Through Jesus’ suffering and death, the trail to eternal salvation has been blazed for us. We do not fear death, because he has conquered the power of death. Thus Christ, our merciful and faithful high priest, has the final say over the destiny of our lives.*

A reading from Hebrews.

10It was fitting that God, for whom and through whom all things exist, in bringing many children to glory, should make the pioneer of their salvation perfect through sufferings. 11For the one who sanctifies and those who are sanctified all have one Father. For this reason Jesus is not ashamed to call them brothers and sisters, 12saying,   
 “I will proclaim your name to my brothers and sisters,  
  in the midst of the congregation I will praise you.”  
13And again,   
 “I will put my trust in him.”  
And again,   
 “Here am I and the children whom God has given me.”  
  14Since, therefore, the children share flesh and blood, he himself likewise shared the same things, so that through death he might destroy the one who has the power of death, that is, the devil, 15and free those who all their lives were held in slavery by the fear of death. 16For it is clear that he did not come to help angels, but the descendants of Abraham. 17Therefore he had to become like his brothers and sisters in every respect, so that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in the service of God, to make a sacrifice of atonement for the sins of the people. 18Because he himself was tested by what he suffered, he is able to help those who are being tested.

The word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

*The assembly stands to welcome the gospel.*

**Gospel Acclamation**



**Gospel: Matthew 2:13-23**

*Matthew relates the slaughter of babies in Bethlehem as one example of evil in the world. Jesus has been born into this world to manifest God’s presence and save his people from their sins.*

The holy gospel according to Matthew.

**Glory to you, O Lord.**

13Now after [the wise men] had left, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream and said, “Get up, take the child and his mother, and flee to Egypt, and remain there until I tell you; for Herod is about to search for the child, to destroy him.” 14Then Joseph got up, took the child and his mother by night, and went to Egypt, 15and remained there until the death of Herod. This was to fulfill what had been spoken by the Lord through the prophet, “Out of Egypt I have called my son.”  
  16When Herod saw that he had been tricked by the wise men, he was infuriated, and he sent and killed all the children in and around Bethlehem who were two years old or under, according to the time that he had learned from the wise men. 17Then was fulfilled what had been spoken through the prophet Jeremiah:  
 18“A voice was heard in Ramah,  
  wailing and loud lamentation,  
 Rachel weeping for her children;  
  she refused to be consoled, because they are no more.”  
  19When Herod died, an angel of the Lord suddenly appeared in a dream to Joseph in Egypt and said, 20“Get up, take the child and his mother, and go to the land of Israel, for those who were seeking the child’s life are dead.” 21Then Joseph got up, took the child and his mother, and went to the land of Israel. 22But when he heard that Archelaus was ruling over Judea in place of his father Herod, he was afraid to go there. And after being warned in a dream, he went away to the district of Galilee. 23There he made his home in a town called Nazareth, so that what had been spoken through the prophets might be fulfilled, “He will be called a Nazorean.”

The gospel of the Lord.

**Praise to you, O Christ.**

*The assembly is seated.*

**Childrens message**

**Sermon**

*The assembly stands to proclaim the word of God in song*

**Hymn of the Day**

***It Came upon the Midnight Clear ELW #282***

*Please use the hymnal in your seat.*

**Creed**

**I believe in God, the Father almighty,**

**creator of heaven and earth.**

**I believe in Jesus Christ, God’s only Son, our Lord,**

**who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,**

**born of the virgin Mary,**

**suffered under Pontius Pilate,**

**was crucified, died, and was buried;**

**he descended to the dead.**

**On the third day he rose again;**

**he ascended into heaven,**

**he is seated at the right hand of the Father,**

**and he will come to judge the living and the dead.**

**I believe in the Holy Spirit,**

**the holy catholic church,**

**the communion of saints,**

**the forgiveness of sins,**

**the resurrection of the body,**

**and the life everlasting. Amen.**

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**Prayers of Intercession**

Rejoicing in the good news of Christ’s birth and dwelling in hope, let us pray for the church, those in need, and all of creation.

*Prayers of intercession are prayed.*

*To each petition, the assembly responds:*

Lord, in your mercy,

**hear our prayer.**

*The presiding minister concludes the*

*prayers, and the assembly responds:*

Hear the prayers of your people, glorious God, for the sake of the one who took on our nature and form to redeem the whole world, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

**Amen.**

**Peace**

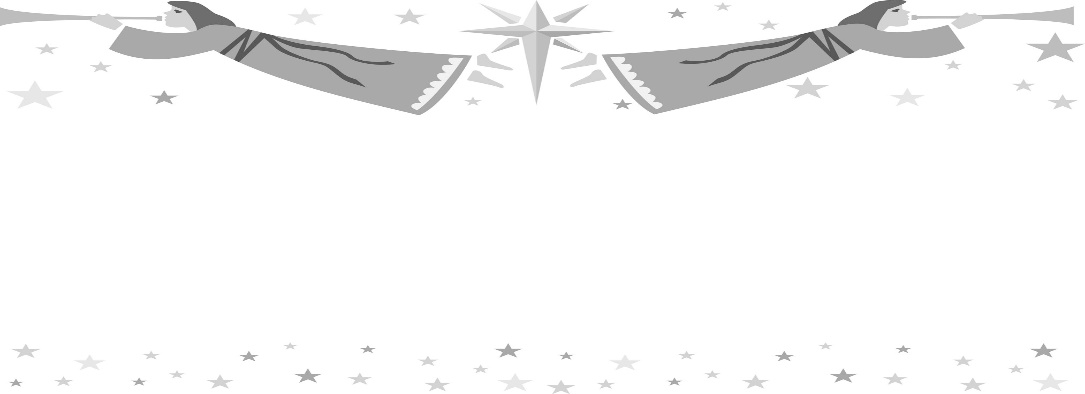
The peace of Christ be with you always.

**And also with you.**

*The people may greet one another with a sign of Christ’s peace, and may say, “Peace be with you,” or similar words.*

*The assembly is seated.*

**Meal**

*God feeds us with the presence of Jesus Christ.*

**offering**

Chancel Choir When the Angel’s Song is Silent (Beall)

*The assembly stands*

**Offering response**

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**Offering Prayer**

God with us:

You came as a baby to a manger.

You slept on straw and greeted shepherds.

You come again in bread and wine.

Remind us how good you are at blessing ordinary things.

And then, through these gifts,

help us to bless the lives of others

in the strength of your holy name. **Amen.**

**Great Thanksgiving**

**Dialogue**

The Lord be with you.

**And also with you.**

Lift up your hearts.

**We lift them to the Lord.**

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

**It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

**Preface**

It is indeed right, our duty and our joy,

that we should at all times and in all places

give thanks and praise to you, almighty and merciful God,

through our Savior Jesus Christ.

In the wonder and mystery of the Word made flesh

you have opened the eyes of faith

to a new and radiant vision of your glory,

that, beholding the God made visible,

we may be drawn to love the God whom we cannot see.

And so, with all the choirs of angels,

with the church on earth and the hosts of heaven,

****we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

**Holy, Holy, Holy**

**Thanksgiving at the Table**

Holy God, Creator of all and Source of life, at the birth of time

your word brought light into the world. In the fullness of time,

you sent your Word, born of Mary, to shine in our darkness

and to make us your daughters and sons.

In the night in which he was betrayed, our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks; broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying: Take and eat; this is my body, given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me.

Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it for all to drink, saying: This cup is the new covenant in my blood,

shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin. Do this for the remembrance of me.

Remembering, therefore, his birth and life among us,

his death and resurrection, we await his coming again

when all things will be restored in him.

By your Spirit bless us and this bread and cup, that, held and nourished by you, we may live as your children, shining with the light of your Son.

Through him all glory and honor is yours, Almighty Father, with the Holy Spirit, in your holy Church, both now and forever.

**Amen**

**Lord’s Prayer**

Gathered into one by the Holy Spirit,

let us pray as Jesus taught us.

**Our Father in heaven,**

**hallowed be your name,**

**your kingdom come,**

**your will be done,**

**on earth as in heaven.**

**Give us today our daily bread.**

**Forgive us our sins**

**as we forgive those**

**who sin against us.**

**Save us from the time of trial**

**and deliver us from evil.**

**For the kingdom, the power,**

**and the glory are yours,**

**now and forever. Amen.**

**Invitation to Communion**

Joy to the world! The Lord is come.

Let every heart receive your Savior.

*The assembly may be seated*

**Communion**

The body of Christ, given for you.

The blood of Christ, shed for you.

**Amen.**

**Communion Song**



**Song after Communion**

***What Child Is This*  *ELW #296***

*The assembly stands*

The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ

strengthen you and keep you in his grace.

**Amen**

**Prayer after Communion**

On this day, O God, you gave us

Christ the Son to save us.

As you sent the one foretold,

send us now with good news for all people.

Let the gladness of this feast have no end

as we share with others the joy that fills us;

through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

**Amen.**

**Sending**

*God blesses us and sends us in mission to the world.*

**Blessing**

May Christ, who by his incarnation

has filled us with grace and truth,

give you peace this Christmas and always.

Almighty God, Father, ☩ Son, and the Holy Spirit,

bless you now and forever.

**Amen.**

**Sending Song**

***The Bells of Christmas ELW #298***

*Vs. 1-4*

**Dismissal**

Glory to God in the highest!

**Peace to God’s people on earth!**

Go in peace. Share the gift of Jesus.

**Thanks be to God.**

**POSTLUDE**

“Joy to the World” Lasky

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New year, new day and, always, new life in Christ. Thank you Lord!

**Winter Break Schedule**

Children’s Classes will resume at 9:00am on Sunday, January 8th, 2017.

Adult study resumes on Sunday, February 5th, 2017.

Pastor Ellen Schoepf prellen@faithlutheranokemos.org

Secretary Katie Love klove@faithlutheranokemos.org

Director of Christian Education Melinda Schultz

Director of Music Debra Borton-McDonough

Organist/Pianist Bruce Williams

December 25, 2016 Attendance : 40

Serving Faith January 1 January 8

Acolyte Lily O’Brien

Altar Care Whitmyer Family Carol Towl and Cecelia Kramer

Communion Assistants Lily O’Brien

Diane Wilke Jim Crum

Melinda Schultz

Greeters Chris & Jean Lewis Bill & Pam Williams

Lay Assistants Diane Wilke Jim Crum

Readers Diane Wilke Melinda Schultz

Ushers Ken & Karen Whitmyer and Family

Dingledine Family

Nursery Heidi Bowers Lori Webb



The 2017 Flower Chart is up. There are several openings for January. Sign up on the bulletin board.

**ANNOUNCEMENTS**

FaithFamily&Friends3

**January 1st , 2017**

*Log onto Faith’s website www.faithlutheranokemos.org 24/7 for updates*

**DEADLINES**

Sunday worship folder announcements⎯Tuesday of each week

Submit to Katie at klove@faithlutheranokemos.org

***February Faith Family News newsletter*⎯**

**Please submit by Monday January 16**

Submit to Katie at klove@faithlutheranokemos.org

**PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION**

Please lift up in prayer this week:

🕆 Members—Max Ambs, Lowell Barricklow, Ellen Milne, Harry Nawrock

and the Barry family.

🕆 Friends and family—

Pat Belonga, Chris Cotter, Lil Jennings, Terrie Becker, Allie, Heather,

Al, Lilly, Sai Eshwar Lingamgunta, Jenn Leitch, Jeanne and Leonard, Tom

Brown, Susan Heft, Pat Hillberg & Family, Dennis Cobler, John Joseph

Lanzetta and Bethany Robison.

🕆 Our mission partner congregation⎯Lansing Redeemer Lutheran Church

🕆 Those in military service⎯Jon Schoepf, Lani Yearicks,

Melody and Adam Wright and Joe Galvin.

🕆 Samaritas children who seek adoption— Giovanni, Jessica, LeeAnn and

Valerie. Pray for each to be adopted and for Jesus to be their lifelong friend.

**NORTH/WEST LOWER MICHIGAN SYNOD PRAYER PARTNER**

As Jesus calls us to be one, even as he and the Father are one, please include Pastor Bob Farrels & Pastor Jerry Switzer and the congregation of Immanuel Lutheran Church of Bridgeport, Michigan in your prayers of intercession this week.

**ALTAR FLOWER DEDICATIONS**

The flowers on the altar are given to the glory of God by Jon & Elaine Harrison in Celebration of Dan’s birthday.

**FINANCIAL UPDATE**

**Weekly Offering 12/24/16**  Year-to-date as of 11/30/2016

Loose Cash $ 415.00 Income $264,588.69

Loose Checks $ 600.00 Expenses 274,587.10

World Hunger $ 25.00 Net Income (-9998.41)

Christmas Staff Gifts $ 200.00

Capital Repairs $ 50.00

Facility Rental $ 50.00

General Fund $ 4685.00

Total $ 6025.00

**Weekly Offering 12/25/16**

Loose Cash $ 24.00

Loose Checks $5.00

Loaves & Fishes $10.00

2017 Offering Envelopes are available in the narthex.

Music $200.00

Capital Repairs $300.00

World Hunger $35.00

General Fund $9320.00

Total $9894.00

THIS WEEK’S CHRONOLOGY OF EVENTS

**Today Happy New Year**

10:00 a.m. Worship: Pastor Darrell Neves

Monday, January 2nd

Church Office Closed

Tuesday, January 3rd

Worship folder announcements deadline

Noon: Study in Pastor Ellen’s office

Wednesday, January 4th

7:30 a.m. Men’s Study

9:30 a.m. Quilting and Samaritas ACTION

5:30 p.m. Joyful Noise

6:00 p.m. T & C

6:00 p.m. First Communion Classes

6:30 p.m. Membership Development

6:30 p.m. Faith Bells

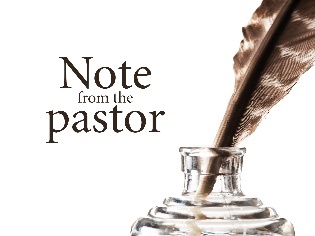
7:30 p.m. Chancel Choir

Thursday, January 5th

Friday, January 6th:

Saturday, January 7th:

The church offices will be closed on Monday, January 2nd.



Thank you all for the wonderful Christmas gift. My husband and I are truly grateful and appreciate all you do for the Faith community. Blessings to all in the New Year! Pastor Ellen

MARK YOUR CALANDERS

**Water In Tanzania** - Tula Ngasala is one of our members and she is working on her Environmental Engineering degree at MSU.  During this time, she has also been working on developing water projects in her home country of Tanzania.  Working with Engineers Without Borders and WEES (another non-profit organization), she was able to construct a much needed well at her father's home congregation in Tanzania.  This well serves people in the surrounding community.  Now she is developing and working on a water project in another part of her home country.  Next **Sunday, January 8**, during the morning worship service, Tula will be sharing information about these water projects and the way her faith informs her work.



**Save the Date:**

**Marriage Retreat: March 3-5, Grand Rapids**

More information coming soon!

**Annual Meeting- Sunday, January 22nd**

This year’s annual meeting will take place Sunday, January 22nd following the worship service. Committee annual reports are due to the church office by Monday, January 9th. RIC will be hosting a lunch following the meeting.

**SOGI Lunch and Learn  
January 22 - After the Annual Meeting**What does sexual orientation and gender identity (SOGI) mean? Is there more than just straight and gay? What does the Q really stand for in LGBTQ? Is everything black and white or is there more to it? The RIC team invites you to join us to explore these questions and more.

The lunch and learn will be held after the annual meeting on January 22.  We'll meet in the fellowship hall and have a light lunch of soups, breads, desserts, and beverages.  While we enjoy lunch we'll learn together about the SOGI spectrum and have an open discussion so we can all be more understanding of our LGBTQ siblings in Christ.  
  
Please sign up on the sheet in the narthex so we can plan for how many people are coming. We will also offer child care if you want to attend while someone else watches your children. Please indicate on the form if you'll be using the child care.

As the RIC team continues to plan and prepare a possible welcome statement that welcomes all of God's children regardless of gender, sexual orientation, race, political leanings, etc. we encourage you to attend the RIC events and the events offered by the racism planning team. If you have any questions or feedback about the RIC process and our plans, please reach out to Pastor Ellen or Rich Weingartner, chair of the RIC team.

UPCOMING MEETINGS & STUDIES

 **60 +/- Popcorn & a Movie**

Are you looking for ways to warm up your Michigan January? Join your friends from Sixty Plus or Minus for popcorn and a movie on **Wednesday,** **January 18, 2017, at 1 p.m.**! We will be watching the award-winning film “The Impossible,” the story of a tourist family in Thailand caught in the destruction and chaotic aftermath of the 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami. A Christmas vacation in a tropical paradise turned into the worst of nightmares.

**CAREGIVERS SUPPORT Group Meeting**

Join us at 11:30am for a light lunch and discussion. All are Welcome!

Thursday, January 12th: Angie Cantlon form CareLinc Medical Equipment will speak on how the Durable Medical Equipment World works. There is more offered then just a wheelchair and a walker!

Thursday, February 9th : Michelle Traill – Crosser from Caring Transitions will be speaking about downsizing.

Thursday, March 9th: Mike Harrison, Life & Business Coach. From Spectator to Spectacular: Living the Life YOU Want.

**Thursday Evening Worship Service**

The Worship Committee has decided to experiment by adding a second worship service to our weekly schedule.  This service will NOT take place on Sundays.  It WILL take place on Thursday evenings at 6:30 PM.  This service will be more intimate, less formal, and more contemplative.  **The first gathering of this alternative worship service take place on Thursday evening, January 12.** Join us if you are able.  Please speak to Pastor Ellen if you have any questions.

**Adult Sunday School**

Class will resume on Sunday, February 5th at 9:00am in the library. We will be studying Walter Brueggemann’s book “Embracing the Prophets”

Walter, arguably America’s leading Old Testament scholar and theologian, takes us on a wild ride through the poetic prophecy of Hebrew Scripture, identifying cultural contexts, putting a framework to Israel’s history, and, most significantly -and at times challengingly! - drawing connections between Israel’s sociological, economic and spiritual status and that of America today.

WAYS TO GET INVOLVED

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**Help Decorate the Sharing Tree**

**Not with Ornaments and Tinsel....**

**.....but with baby items!!!**

Visit the Sharing Tree in the coffee fellowship area and select a paper “ornament” or two. On each ornament a specific layette item is indicated.  Take the ornament home, so it can be a reminder of what to purchase. *(Only new baby items, please.)*  Bring your unwrapped, layette items and tuck them into the Sharing Tree branches.  Your gifts will be given to Shared Pregnancy of Lansing, an organization that offers emotional and spiritual support to new moms. *The sharing tree will come down the 2nd week of January.*

**READ THROUGH THE BIBLE IN 2017**

**STARTING TODAY!!**

Do you need a New Year’s resolution that will grow your faith and knowledge of the Bible? **Join us as we read through the entire Bible in 2017**. Readings for the entire month will be posted in the Newsletter. Daily readings will be printed on the website calendar. Reading guides are available in the narthex.

**CHRISTIAN EDUCATION AND YOUTH ANNOUNCEMENTS**



**HAPPY NEW YEAR FROM PARISH EDUCATION**!!

**Thrivent Action Teams are needed!!!**  
Please apply to help your youth group in a one-time fundraiser, service activity or educational event that can be completed within 90 days. Here are some suggestions for your Thrivent Action Teams: March Madness Meal and Quiche Meal, to name a few. Use this link to get started: <https://www.thrivent.com/making-a-difference/living-generously/thrivent-action-teams/> Please talk to Melinda if you have any questions.

**Important Dates in January and February**4th - Trinity & Confirmation Resumes, 6:00-8:00pm

4th - 1st Communion Classes begin, 6:00-8:00pm

8th - Youth Group Outing, TBD

13th-14th Confirmation Lock-in, 6:00pm – 10:00am

**15th -** **NO SUNDAY SCHOOL**

22nd - Confirmation Review, 1:00-4:00pm

29th - Children sing during service.

**Feb. 5th - 1st Communion Sunday**

**19th - NO SUNDAY SCHOOL**

24th-26th Youth Weekend, 5:00pm – 3:00pm

28th - Shrove Supper, 5:30-7:00pm





To make disciples for Jesus Christ. . .

. . .we **Gather** in faith for worship, prayer,

study and fellowship

. . .we **Equip** the people of God with a faith

that works in real life

. . .we **Serve** the world in the name of Jesus Christ