



# THE Messenger

Vol. 23, No. 1

A Newsletter of Faith Evangelical Lutheran Church of Antioch, Illinois

December 2022

## Ever Wonder? Answers to Important Questions.



### Am I Good Enough To Go To Heaven?

Mom went over to the slow cooker where the Thanksgiving turkey had been all day. As the lid was taken off, a shriek filled the air. Without her noticing, someone had unplugged the slow cooker hours earlier to make room for the vessel warming Uncle Bob's famous sweet potato soufflé.

Tears filled Mom's eyes. "Our dinner is ruined!" she cried. Dad tried to console with: "Oh, honey. I am sure that it is good enough." However, everyone present in the kitchen knew a half-baked turkey was not good enough, nor was it even safe to eat.

In our lives, we probably hear,

think or say those words often. "Oh, the lawn looks good enough. I'll wait another couple days to mow." "Oh, the house isn't really *that* dirty. It is good enough for now." "My job's done well enough for today. I'm heading home!"

What about when it is quitting time here in this life? Are we sure that we are going home to heaven? Are we now or have we ever been good enough?

We might be individuals who settle for good enough more than we would like to admit. However, we have a God who doesn't settle for anything but perfection. Jesus says, "Be perfect . . . as your heavenly Father is perfect" (*Matthew 5:48*).

So, are we good enough for God to let us into heaven?

God takes the "lid" off of our

hearts and tells us what he sees. "Every inclination of the human heart is evil from childhood" (*Genesis 8:21*). Even if we try really hard and truly work at being kind, good, and perfect, we still fail. "For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God" (*Romans 3:23*).

So, now what's going to happen to us? Is all hope of living forever in heaven with God completely ruined for all of us?

Thanks to Jesus Christ, our Savior, the answer is, "No." Jesus was born into this world specifically to answer that question! We do have hope because Jesus has paid for the forgiveness of every one of our sins by dying on the cross. And, he has declared us to be innocent by rising from the dead. Because of Jesus accomplishing everything he came into our world to do, every time God looks at us, he sees you and me now as "holy in his sight, without blemish and free from accusation" (*Colossians 1:22*).

Are you good enough to go to heaven? Jesus didn't just make you good enough, but he made you perfect! Through faith, you receive "the gift of God [which] is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord" (*Romans 6:23*). The best Christmas gift ever!

# FAITH...



## EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH

24300 W. Grass Lake Road (at HWY 59)  
Antioch, Illinois 60002  
847-395-1660

**Worship Services** Saturday at 5:30 PM  
Sunday at 9:30 AM

**Sunday School** Weekly at 8:15 AM

**Adult Studies** Sundays 8:15 AM & Wednesdays 7:00 PM

Visit us online...  
[www.faithantioch.org](http://www.faithantioch.org)  
[facebook.com/faithantioch](https://facebook.com/faithantioch)

or on the radio!  
WFEL 99.9 FM  
Antioch

### Connect With Faith Lutheran This December

Recent years have brought so very many changes to our Faith family. The early days of COVID were quite a challenge. First we traveled through a stretch of virtual only services (even Easter!), then extra weekly services with limited / distanced attendance requiring registrations. It was just about a year ago that we were finally freed of all restrictions on gathering for worship and fellowship.

As things have slowly been moving back to "normal" from COVID our Faith family has journeyed together through the suspension of our school ministry operations at the beginning of July. With the retirement of Pastor Hermanson later in July our tsunami of staffing transitions left us with only three existing staff members while we extended Calls for new candidates to join our staff.

In mid-October the installation of Staff Minister of Music & Instruction Joshua Kramer greatly helped our worship ministry and instructional efforts move back into more fa-

miliar territory with handbells, brass and Senior Choir all making their return to our worship life.

As we continue to extend Calls for another pastor a special committee has been working with WELS Congregational Services through an assessment process of where Faith currently stands and what our immediate priorities should be moving forward.

If you haven't connected with the Faith family in a while there is no doubt we've changed quite a bit through the last three years. But our message remains the eternal Gospel and the goal of our ministry together is still to bring the peace, joy and hope of forgiveness and eternal life in Jesus Christ to our community and beyond.

We hope you will choose to join us soon for worship, a Bible study, Sunday School, a support group or other activity that will prove a blessing for your life today and give you certainty of life in heaven with God forever. Our holiday schedule this December looks pretty familiar. We hope you will have time to come experience how much about Faith is - happily - the same!

## A FESTIVAL OF NINE LESSONS & CAROLS

**Saturday 12/17 & Sunday 12/18**

Each Christmas Eve, millions around the world tune their radios to hear a truly glorious service: The Festival of Nine Lessons & Carols from King's College, Cambridge, England. As one of the great traditions of the Christmas season Lessons and Carols is also sung by church choirs large and small in every part of the English-speaking world. Faith, Antioch will once again host a Lessons & Carols service this year.

A Service of Lessons and Carols has been an annual tradition at King's since 1918. But its roots go back even further to the 1880s. Beginning with *Once in Royal David's City*, sixteen boy and fourteen undergraduate male voices sing carols old and new. Lectors read nine Scripture lessons tracing the history of God's plan of salvation in Christ Jesus. Since 1928, the service has been broadcast worldwide to millions of listeners every year, even during World War II when the stained glass (and heating system) was removed from

the cathedral for safety reasons. Since its inception, the lessons and prayers have remained virtually unchanged.

As the creator of the Lessons and Carols service pointed out in the first program, the pattern and strength of the service resides with the lessons themselves and not with the music. "The main theme of the service is the development, through the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments, of the loving purpose of God in sending his Son. Carols and hymns simply guide us in our response to the word of God's promise."

Faith, Antioch has now held these holiday services for more than two decades, becoming a yearly favorite for both congregation & our friends in the community. If you have never experienced a presentation of the Christmas message in this format, you've truly missed out!

Your friends at Faith cordially invite you to join us for this special event. We also encourage you to let your friends know! Identical services will be held the weekend before Christmas on Saturday evening, December 17, at 5:30 PM and Sunday morning, December 18, at 9:30 AM.

*You are most cordially invited to join us at Faith for...*

## HOLIDAY WORSHIP 2022

- WEDNESDAYS** December 7 & 14  
**ADVENT EVENING PRAYER** at 3:30 & 7:00 PM
- SATURDAY** December 17  
**FESTIVAL OF NINE LESSONS & CAROLS** at 5:30 PM
- SUNDAY** December 18  
**FESTIVAL OF NINE LESSONS & CAROLS** at 9:30 AM
- SATURDAY** December 24 **CHRISTMAS EVE**  
*(two uniquely different services)*  
**CHRISTMAS EVE WORSHIP** at 5:00 PM  
**CANDLELIGHT WORSHIP** at 10:30 PM
- SUNDAY** December 25 **CHRISTMAS DAY**  
**CHRISTMAS DAY FESTIVAL WORSHIP** at 9:30 AM
- SATURDAY** December 31 **NEW YEAR'S EVE**  
**EVENING PRAYER** at 5:30 PM
- SUNDAY** January 1 **NEW YEAR'S DAY**  
**THE NAME OF JESUS FESTIVAL WORSHIP** at 9:30 AM
- FRIDAY** January 6 **FESTIVAL OF THE EPIPHANY**  
**CANDLELIGHT WORSHIP** at 7:00 PM

## Ever wondered why . . . ?

### Manger Scenes

Has the word "crèche" caught your ear at Christmas time? It's an occasionally used term for a scene of figurines and a small stable depicting the first Christmas night. Creches often grace our homes, our yards or sit under our Christmas trees. "Creche" is simply the old French word for "crib" or "nursery" used in reference of the manger or stable.

St. Francis of Assisi is most often credited by historians for assembling the very first crèche around AD 1200 to express his love for the Christ Child. But he also clearly expressed his love for the animals he nurtured and protected. In his early annual scenes St. Francis depicted the Child alone with the animals snuggling him to keep him warm. Later on he added Mary, Joseph, shepherds, angels and even Magi to illustrate and teach the Christmas Gospels for all who could not read them for themselves.

Today an ornate crèche may be a family's or congregation's truly treasured heirloom. It has also grown increasingly popular in recent years to produce living nativities and provide observers the opportunity to experience the sights, sounds, and even the smells of that first Christmas night in little Bethlehem when there was no room in the inn.

Hopefully such displays are enjoyed as originally intended by Francis as an opportunity to express love and worship of the heavenly Child laid in a manger. And now you know how it all started!

**Wednesday Advent Evening Prayer**

Special Advent evening worship services are a way we annually prepare heart, mind and soul for the coming of the Christ. While these quiet evenings focused on the Word of our God prepare us to celebrate the Christ's arrival in Bethlehem, we also prepare ourselves to meet him face to face on the Last Day. Until then we also meet him continually in his Word itself.

Our Wednesday gatherings this December are themed "Advent Psalms: Focused Thanks to A Savior God." We focus on the psalms that are assigned to Advent worship and how they shape our preparation for observing Christmas and meeting Jesus when he returns in Glory. We pray these meditations guide us in readying our hearts to meet our Savior every single day. Wednesday services begin at 3:30 & 7:00 PM.

**WFEL 99.9 FM - Your Source for  
THE MUSIC OF THE SEASON**

Looking for "commercial free" traditional, Christ-centered holiday music to help you keep the spirit of the season all December through? We have a suggestion! WFEL 99.9 FM!

Hear traditional and sacred Christmas music at various times of the day throughout December. Enjoy choral variety from a selection of artists known throughout the world. Seasonal selections increase as December progresses.

**Continuous SACRED Christmas music will be offered from noon Christmas Eve through midnight of Christmas Day.**

WFEL 99.9 (LP) FM Antioch is Faith's very own radio station. We broadcast family friendly variety programming locally to Antioch and immediate surrounding 24 hours a day! This December marks 18 years on the air! Check out our schedule on the Faith website to see the variety of programming we feature.

Christmas devotions and sermons, of Faith pastors and others, are also featured throughout the Christmas season until the Festival of the Epiphany on January 6 in both radio programming and also available at our church website - faithantioch.org. Enjoy!



*Directions: Find the words listed below. Then unscramble the intersecting letters to complete Luke 2:11, NIV.*



**WORD BANK**

- Shepherds
- Child
- Nazareth
- Census
- Baby
- David
- Mary
- Travel
- Town
- Register
- Born
- Night

T	B	W	Y	A	Z	K	E	S	H	N	G	D	J	K
Q	O	Y	A	P	R	A	L	B	F	P	I	C	Q	L
N	R	W	X	B	E	Y	R	M	B	D	M	O	E	E
S	N	O	N	W	G	A	I	B	A	C	D	O	T	D
R	G	X	J	F	I	W	M	V	B	R	R	C	E	O
P	S	C	E	N	S	U	S	H	Y	U	Y	F	P	N
O	T	P	I	G	T	Q	C	N	T	G	M	U	S	T
O	A	N	D	B	E	C	H	I	L	D	N	Z	F	A
A	T	B	A	U	R	W	H	G	F	V	A	B	U	M
T	R	A	V	E	L	J	C	H	V	O	Z	G	N	H
F	B	Q	I	W	D	X	P	T	E	N	A	O	L	Q
Z	C	R	D	Q	S	H	E	P	H	E	R	D	S	V
R	U	V	Y	K	N	I	R	T	K	G	E	Y	I	R
K	V	A	Z	X	L	S	H	Y	T	P	T	J	S	K
L	L	E	S	M	J	Z	L	Q	R	U	H	V	W	X

"Today in the town of David a \_\_\_\_\_ has been born to you; he is the Messiah, the Lord."

LUKE 2:11, NIV

Answer: Savior

**Amazing Birth of Jesus**

**"Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is the Messiah, the Lord,"** (Luke 2:11) and we smile in response to the good news. But implied within that good news is the sobering statement that we need to be saved. God, by his nature, is so good, that he came down from heaven so you could be with him forever. A Savior has been born to YOU! He is the Messiah, the LORD!

**Pastor Mike Novotny**  
Time of Grace Ministries

**Listen to "Time of Grace"**

Monday at 9 am - Tuesday at 9 pm  
Thursday at 9 am - Saturday at 9 pm



**WFEL 99.9**  
FM

THE VOICE OF FAITH FOR THE ANTIOCH AREA



# The Messenger

Faith Evangelical Lutheran Church  
1275 Main Street  
Antioch Illinois 60002

CHANGE SERVICE REQUESTED

---

Nonprofit  
Organization  
U.S. Postage  
PAID  
Antioch, IL  
Permit No. 64

---



*We are still located at TWO sites...*

## FAITH Evangelical...

**Lutheran Church**  
24300 West Grass Lake Road  
Antioch Illinois 60002  
847-395-1660

**Church Offices**  
(8 AM-5 PM Monday-Friday)  
1275 Main Street  
Antioch Illinois 60002  
847-395-1660

*Find out more about us at...*

[www.faihtantioch.org](http://www.faihtantioch.org)  
[facebook.com/faihtantioch](https://facebook.com/faihtantioch)  
&  
**WFEL 99.9 FM Antioch**  
*broadcasting locally 24 hours a day*

*This is a non-profit publication serving the members of Faith and residents of the surrounding communities with information on activities of the church and the surrounding community.*



### Our Mission:

The mission of every Christian and of Faith congregation is to help make more and stronger disciples by sharing with everyone the good news of Jesus Christ.

## Highlighting Coming Events at FAITH of Antioch

*Unless specifically noted all ministry activity takes place on our **Church Campus...***

- ◆ December 7, 14 **Wednesday Advent Vespers** at 3:30 & 7:00 PM
- ◆ December 17 **A Festival of Nine Lessons & Carols** at 5:30 PM
- ◆ December 18 **A Festival of Nine Lesson & Carols** at 9:30 AM
- ◆ December 24 **Christmas Eve Vespers Worship** at 5:00 PM  
**Christmas Eve "Candlelight" Worship** at 10:30 PM
- ◆ December 25 **Christmas Day Festival Worship** at 9:30 AM
- ◆ December 31 **New Year's Eve Evening Prayer** at 5:30 PM
- ◆ January 1 **Name of Jesus Festival Worship** at 9:30 AM
- ◆ January 6 **Epiphany "Candlelight" Worship** at 7:00 PM

*We invite you to be with us for any of these occasions.  
For questions look to our website [www.faihtantioch.org](http://www.faihtantioch.org) for more information  
or feel free to give Pastor Ungemach a call at 847-293-6101.*