



# The Mountain Top Messenger

ZION LUTHERAN EVANGELICAL CHURCH, ASHLAND, WI      JANUARY

## *Pastor's Message*

All through Advent I have been talking about lights and about how Jesus is the light that came into the world to overcome the darkness. I think we can all agree that this world continues to be overcome by darkness as people either refuse, or simply decide not to recognize the light. A week ago in the Monday morning Bible study we finished reading through the Psalms, and right at the end there was a Psalm that really seemed to strike home with me. Psalm 147, the Editors of the Lutheran Study Bible chose to title this Psalm "He Heals the Brokenhearted". Now I want to point out, this is an editor's choice, it is not a part of the actual Psalm nor inspired scripture, but it is a very accurate summation of this Psalm of praise. So as I read and re-read this Psalm there was one verse that kept resonating in my thoughts, let me explain.

*Psalm 147:4 He determines the number of the stars; he gives to all of them their names.*

Now you might ask why does that resonate? What is so special about that one verse, other verses sing more praise, or express in greater detail the power and the majesty of our God. Well here goes, I hope I can do justice in my explanation:

According to Space.com, they estimate that there are 1,000,000,000,000,000,000,000 stars in the universe (they also feel this number could be a gross underestimation). Our verse in Psalms tells us that not only does our God determine that number, but he has given each and every one of those stars a name. The fact that he knows each of us by name, and has since before we were in the womb, seems almost minimal, considering that right now there are approximately 7,588,661,333 people on the planet including you and me. Now with all these huge numbers floating around you may wonder or even ask, what can I do to help spread the news of the light of the world that came into the darkness. How can I, a person being of any significance to point people to the light of the world? It is because even out of all those numbers, you, as a one person, matter to God, and if you matter to God, you can certainly impact the life of another, or even perhaps many.

Today I am going to share with you three possible ways you can accomplish that:

### **One: Love others as God loves us.**

In the news recently they spoke of a seven year old girl living in an impoverished home who wrote to Santa and asked for a blanket, food, and a ball that she could share with her brother. When her story was made public, donations poured in. So I ask, how can you help someone who needs what you have this holiday season and into the New Year?

(continued on pg. 2)

**Pastor Rick Williams -**  
715-209-0479

**Office Hours: M/T/W/Th**  
**8:00am-5:00pm**

Please call ahead if you need to speak with Pastor Williams as he may be visiting shut-in's, at a conference, etc.

**Office Secretary**  
Lynn Ladd 715-682-6075  
Office Hours M-W 8-3  
Days and times may change upon need of work.

**Church President:**  
John Pruss 715-292-4825

**Head Elder:**  
Darryl Warren 715-492-0488

**Little Friends of Jesus Child Care Center:** 715-682-5185

**LFOJ Administrator:**  
Karyn Leino 715-682-6075

**Website**  
[www.zionashland.org](http://www.zionashland.org)

**E-mail**  
[secretary@zionlutheranashland.com](mailto:secretary@zionlutheranashland.com)



**ZION LUTHERAN CHURCH**  
**1111—11TH AVE WEST**  
**ASHLAND, WI 54806**  
**715-682-6075**

Sunday Worship Service 9:00am  
Wednesday Evening Service 6:30pm  
Sunday School 10:15am (Sept.-May)  
Bible Studies  
Sunday 10:15am Monday 10:00am

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*(cont. from pg. 1)*

**Two: Tell people that God loves them.**

Often times I am not a big fan of some of the things that Pope Francis says, however recently the Pope met with an Evangelical pastor in Rome. What was the pontiff's advice for the pastor? "Preach, Preach the Good News. The world needs better Preaching. Preach. Don't ever stop. Tell as many people as you can. Our world needs Good News. Our world needs Jesus. So Preach." Who will hear the Good News from you this week, this month, this year?

**Three: Believe that God loves you.**

We cannot give what we do not have. When we truly believe that God loves us so much that he sent his Son at Christmas just for us, we will want to share what we have received. Philip Yancy wrote: "Sociologists have a theory of the looking-glass self: you become what the most important person in your life (wife, father, boss, etc.) thinks you are. How would my life change if I truly believed the Bible's astounding words about God's love for me, if I looked in the mirror and saw what God sees?" What do you see in your mirror today?

With that I welcome you to the year of our Lord Two Thousand and Eighteen. I look forward with great anticipation to all the great things that God will bring to fruition through His church here at Zion.

And now may the peace of the Lord which surpasses all understanding keep your hearts and your minds on Christ Jesus. Go in peace and serve the Lord. God Bless  
Pastor Rick



## Our Prayer Concerns

### **PRAYERS FOR HEALTH AND HEALING**

For good test results, treatment, positive thinking, healing, and comfort during cancer treatments, for those suffering from addiction, mental illness and for healing, strength, comfort, and peace for family we pray for:

*Bob Heggie, Kevin Heggie, Joni Frisco, Brad Prill, Jean Wickman, Fran Fleig, Eddie Brown, Johnny Galligan, Alice Balmer, Mary Bullis,, Sheldon Henri, Violet Basina, Tim Smith, Jim Bullis, Ellen Hodgson, Joe Stach, Tyler Lehto, Doug Tutor, Patti Louko Berg, Barb Bjork, Joan Spalding, Ruth Goldman, Eric Kontny, Lloyd Koosmann, Sandy Fletcher, Tim Fulton, Jodi Kistner, Duane Lynch, David Palm, Jerry Karaba, Theresa Koosmann, and those in our hearts.*

### **PRAYERS FOR HOMEBOUND**

Those who aren't able to attend common worship that they would find comfort knowing that the Lord is with them.

*Walt Schutte, Arlene Zimmerman, Madge Houle, Donna Graves*

### **PRAYERS FOR PROTECTION**

For our full-time troops and public servants, for travel, missionaries, and for peace and protection for families.

*Aaron Esala, David Wright, Johanna Pearce, Emily Melecha, Tucker Melecha*



# Christmas Gift

*A Christmas Presentation by Mark Young for Young Children*

Sunday, December 17th during the morning worship service the Sunday School children presented their Christmas program. It was a hit. Thanks to Sydney Vyskocil and Brooke Sapper for being the leads and Jodi Truchon for leading the music. Chit-chat heard that it's the best they have ever sang.

On another note, that has been continuous. There is a need for a Sunday School Superintendent. This is a lead person who oversees the program. They don't have to do every aspect, but find people who would be eager to help out in a little way. Please speak with the Pastor if you would consider taking on this very important and vital role of our church.





# January Mission



## Project Night Night

Donate items to be distributed to children upon entering homeless shelters.

**BLANKETS** should be NEW or newly handmade. We appreciate quilted, fleece, knit, crocheted, and store-bought blankets. The ideal size is 50" x 60" or smaller. As of 2016, we do NOT take No-Sew Blankets

**BOOKS** appropriate for ages 0 to pre-teen, new or gently used.

**STUFFED ANIMALS** smaller than 20 inches. Stuffed animals must be NEW at this time.

## North Star Dartball League Schedule

Jan. 8th Zion at Good Shepherd

Jan. 15th Zion vs. Messiah

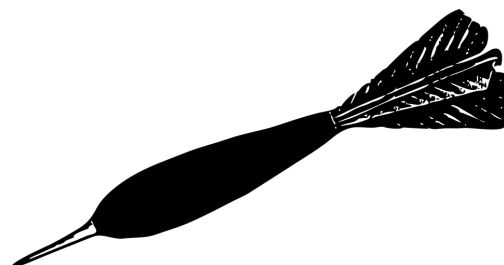
Jan. 22nd Zion at Sanborn Methodist

Jan. 29th Zion vs. Salem

Feb. 5th Zion at Saron

Feb. 19th, 26th, Mar. 5th Tournament

Watch for league standings and where Zion places in the February Newsletter .



**PLEASE CONSIDER** joining the Quilters' Group – they meet the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Tuesday of the month, now through April. You don't need to know how to sew or even thread a needle, there are people to guide you through the process. We will start up January 9th at 1:00pm



ALTAR GUILD - Meeting January 8th - 6:00pm

Do you have one month of Sundays or Wednesdays a year to offer to the church? That's all it takes to help glorify our Sanctuary. Contact Brenda Schwiesow at 682-4292 if you are interested in joining up. They can always use a few more help-

# LFOJ HAPPENINGS

"The Many Shapes  
of Christmas"  
December 19, 2017





***Under the microscope, I found that snowflakes were miracles of beauty; and it seemed a shame that this beauty should not be seen and appreciated by others. Every crystal was a masterpiece of design and no one design was ever repeated. When a snowflake melted, that design was forever lost. Just that much beauty was gone, without leaving any record behind. -Wilson "Snowflake" Bentley 1925***

Winter in Wisconsin is well known for snow: snow drifts, snow banks, snow fall, snow boots, snow plows, snow angels, snowboards, snow shoes, snow storms, snow fields, snow birds, snow etc. Snow is the vocabulary of life December through March.

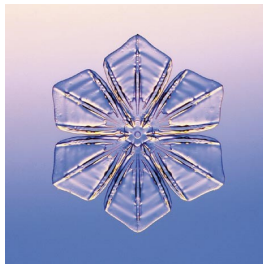


Snow can be cold and dangerous for creatures. Snow can be beautiful and warm for an earth at rest. Snow can be as delicate as catching a flake on your tongue, or as deep and wide as a Midwest blizzard.

**Snow images are used in *The Bible* for instruction:**

Though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be as white as snow. Isaiah 1:18 b

The angel of the Lord descended from heaven came and rolled back the stone and sat upon it. His appearance was like lightning and his raiment white as snow. Mt. 28:3



**Dear Gentle Reader,** In Wisconsin, we understand the beauty of sparkling-white snow. Once again, may our lives be blessed with fresh beauty and joy-filled instruction as we drive, plow, walk, slip, slide, ski, play, and seek God's promises in this season of winter. Snow angels hover near.

**Behold and Be Blessed.**

Behold the snowflake.

Delicate bones of ice.

Born in the clouds...

Cast on the earth...

Down comforter of winter.

**-A. Ellis**

**THRIVENT MEMBERS** Please remember, as a Thrivent Member through Thrivent Financial, you may qualify for grants. Each qualifying member can apply for 2 - \$250 grants per year. These can be used for community service projects/events, education and fundraisers.

Some events/projects that Zion has done or could do include:

Sunday School

Coats (Plus) for Kids

Vacation Bible School

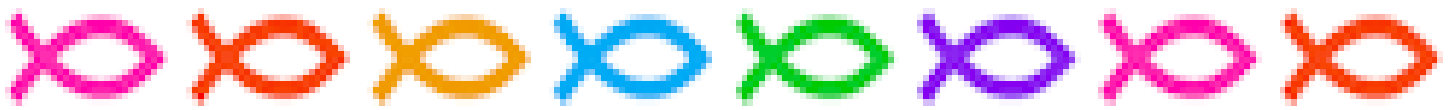
Zion Picnic

Students outreach boxes

Spring planting yard event

Quilters

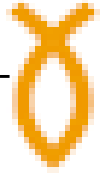
Community outreach with a program/speaker



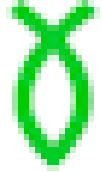
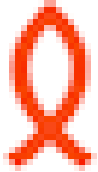
## Stewardship Thoughts



For the past few months we have learned that God is the owner and Creator of the world and the universe and all that is in it. We are the stewards of it. It's His "vineyard," we are the "workers" or stewards.



To build on this further, let's engage in the discussion of "prepositional stewardship." As stewards we give "TO" The Lord of our first fruits through the local congregation which in turn flows to district and synod with little thought what goes beyond. The other preposition is "FROM." The faithful Christian steward gives FROM the desire to express gratitude TO The Lord for His provisions for us. This is a limiting expression of stewardship as we can fall into the trap of transposing ownership of the vineyard!



The words "over" and "above" are used in stewardship programs as well. They also emphasize short-sightedness as they don't propel us to look "FORWARD" and "OUTWARD" beyond the local context.



The purpose of the steward is to be about stewarding the Gospel. That means utilizing the preposition "THROUGH." The creation account tells how creation was to be kept and worked for the sake of others. That is to be fruitful and multiply. FORWARD and OUTWARD thinking to keep and steward creation for generations to come.



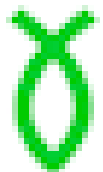
In our sinful fallen world this thinking is difficult because, as Adam and Eve, we want "to be like God." Forward and outward thinking in stewardship is how the forgiven restored steward carries the task of stewardship. It is the direction of the Gospel. Jesus went forward and outward when He left His heavenly throne to restore our stewardship through His death and resurrection. The Holy Spirit was poured outward and forward calling fallen stewards to repentance and faith in Jesus. Through the Gospel, fallen and restored stewards are free from the fear of death and restored to the task of working and keeping the vineyard (kingdom.)



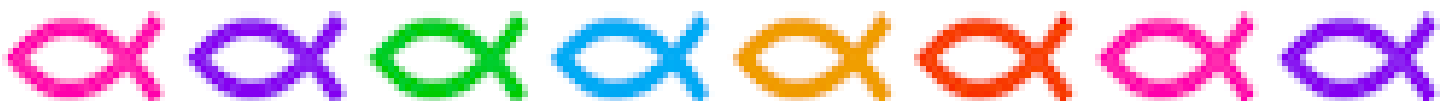
Stewardship directed by the Holy Spirit allows selfless stewardship of the Gospel in the home. From home it ripples through the congregation. From congregation it ripples through the community and the world. Stewardship that flows through the conduit of the faithful steward to the world in need is the kind of stewardship the Scriptures teach.



Through prepositional stewardship this can be done. Less focus on TO and FROM, and think THROUGH God working in and through His stewards for the sake of the kingdom.



*LCMS Newsletter StewardCAST*







**Mustard Seed**

**Daily Devotions**  
Lutheran Women in Mission

## *Faith is ... Knowing that God is Bigger than Our Problems*

### **In the Word**

*"Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own." [Matthew 6:34](#)*

### **Of the Word**

William A. Quayle was so worried that he could not sleep. Late in the night he heard a voice, "Quayle, you go to bed. I'll sit up the rest of the night for you." God is much bigger than our problems. He solved the biggest problem we have - our separation from Him - through His Son, Jesus. Therefore, we can trust Him for everything!

Jesus tells us not to be troubled about so many things. *"Look at the birds of the air; they do not sow or reap or store away in barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them" ([Matthew 6:26a](#)).*

*Now hush, dear soul, hush every sigh; God rules the earth, the sea, the sky. And will He not take care of you, And those who seek His will to do? (Author unknown)*

Great is God's compassion for us. Yet not until we reach glory shall we know the height and breadth and depth and wonder of His love for His children.

### **Walking with my Lord**

Thank You, Jesus, that I can trust You with everything in my life. In Your name I pray. Amen.

## December 10, 2017, Annual Meeting: Zion Lutheran Congregation.

The meeting was opened with prayer by Pastor Rick Williams. Nick Jarvela, congregational President, called the meeting to order. 32 voting members of the congregation were present.

**2018 Budget was presented:** Questions were fielded regarding increase in music portion: related to copyright fees, and the plan to use BAYNET for music support during praise services every other month. It was noted increases reflect wages and benefits. President Jarvela pointed out that he asked every committee to pare down their budget needs and they responded well to this request. The Youth Program portion is set up for \$1000 for education, pizza, etc. and \$3000 for major gathering opportunities. A motion to approve the budget as presented by Chuck Chronis. Second by Shannon Esala. MMC.

**Board/Officer Nominations:** It was reported that it is often difficult to fill board vacancies. Also, questions were addressed on how can we address the information on congregational talent surveys. These officer nominations were accepted: John Pruss, Congregational President. Trustee: Loren Munson. Stewardship: Paul Pruss (will continue another term). Motion made to accept nominations by Ron Schwiesow. Second by Chuck Chronis. MMC.

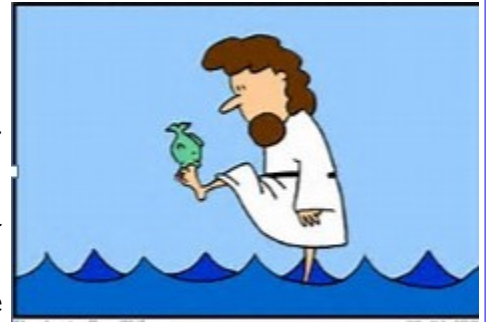
**Educational Board needs:** Zion continues to have an urgent need for a Sunday School Superintendent. It was also noted that more board members are needed, and perhaps the superintendent duties can be shared. A motion to invite present Education Board Members to the January Council Meeting to address the needs of the board, and Sunday School support by Alice Ellis. Second by June Williams. MMC.

Motion to adjourn the meeting by Chuck Chronis. Second by Lisa Guski. MMC. The meeting was closed with *The Lord's Prayer*.

Respectfully: Alice J. Ellis, Secretary

## Missing the Rocks

There is a joke concerning this text that has gone around for years about three ministers out fishing together in a small boat. One of them, suddenly realizing that he had left his tackle box in the cabin, stepped out of the boat, and walked on the water over to shore. Just then, the second one said he had forgotten his faithful fishing hat on the front seat of the car. He too stepped out of the boat and walked on the water over to shore. When they had both returned, the third minister who had watched this remarkable demonstration with mouth open and eyes wide, reasoned to himself "My faith is as strong as theirs. I can do that too."



So he stepped out of the boat and promptly sank to the bottom. His two companions dragged him out, but once they got him in the boat, he was determined not to be shown up. He stepped out once more, and immediately sank again. As his friends pulled him out, he sputtered, "My faith is as strong as yours. Why can't I walk on the water?"

The first two looked at each another and one finally said, "We'd better tell him where those rocks are before he drowns himself."

**Dear Mite Box,**  
By Luetta Werner  
You're by my kitchen window  
To greet me each new day,  
Each day I plan to feed you  
For missions far away.

For each little mite I give  
I thank my God above  
For all the many blessings  
He gives to us in love.

You watch me in the kitchen  
As I sing with joy and pray  
That God will bless our efforts  
For His Kingdom each new day.

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LWML collects your change and/or mite boxes the first Sunday of every month. The proceeds go to many projects that have been designated. Look on the bulletin board for more information.



## **YOU'RE A WINNER THANK YOU !**

As the new year begins we can't forget all of you who have so richly contributed to Zion. There are so many ways that people (you) have provided their service to us. It warms our hearts and hopefully yours also. From attending all our great worship services (that's actually a blessing to each personally), and tithing, to saying "good morning", lighting the candles, singing, playing, teaching, preaching, guiding, and ushering, buying needed items like wine, batteries, bulletin covers, flowers, soap, then on to mowing, shoveling, gardening, fixing and maintaining items, washing dishes, cleaning, and the list can keep going on and on. If you have missed out of this fulfillment, join us in 2018 and warm your hearts along with the many others. Join a bible study, group or committee, attend Church more regularly, volunteer when needed, put in a little more in the offering, give us your ideas or suggestions, ask where we can use your help. Many things can be done at home. It will amaze you how good it can make you feel. Looking forward into 2018 we hope you will be able to participate in Zion and obtain all the joys of being a Christian.  
God Bless You All in 2018..

### **January Services**

Wednesday, Jan. 3rd Circumcision and Name of Jesus  
Sunday, Jan. 7th The Epiphany of Our Lord  
Wednesday, Jan. 10th The Baptism of Our Lord  
Sunday, Jan. 14th Second Sunday After Epiphany

## **FOOD SHELF SUNDAY**

### **Last Sunday of each Month**

The BRICK appreciates your food donations each and every month. It truly helps our community giving those are need of food to sustain their life. It's hard to believe that these days that are still some who are surprised by a layoff, lose their home, have a dysfunctional family, can't cope with things. They need a helping hand and Zion tries to provide



# REVIEW

Martin Luther's Small Catechism - when was the last time you looked through your catechism? One year? Ten years? Forty years?

A review at any time is a good thing and more times the better. It helps us to keep refreshed in our beliefs and ideals. This will be a monthly addition to the Newsletter. We hope that you will review and enjoy, and maybe learn something that was forgotten.

The First Commandment

**You shall have no other gods.**

*What does this mean?* We should fear, love, and trust in God above all things.

The Second Commandment

**You shall not misuse the name of the LORD your God.**

*What does this mean?* We should fear and love God so that we do not curse, swear, use satanic arts, lie, or deceive by His name, but call upon it in every trouble, pray, praise, and give thanks.

The Third Commandment

**Remember the Sabbath day by keeping it holy.**

*What does this mean?* We should fear and love God so that we do not despise preaching and His Word, but hold it sacred and gladly hear and learn it.

The Fourth Commandment

**Honor your father and your mother.**

*What does this mean?* We should fear and love God so that we do not despise or anger our parents and other authorities, but honor them, serve and obey them, love and cherish them.

The Fifth Commandment

**You shall not murder.**

*What does this mean?* We should fear and love God so that we do not hurt or harm our neighbor in his body, but help and support him in every physical need.

## **Some interesting data about the Ten Commandments**

Without God, the Ten Commandments, and morality in general, is just a list of arbitrary rules. Unless there is a Higher Authority (God) behind the Ten Commandments, all right and wrong are just personal opinion and belief, subject to change.

The First Commandment (according to the Jewish tradition), "You shall have no other gods before me," does not simply refer to stone idols of Moses' day. "Other gods" are anything that we "worship" more than God—money, power, love, education, a nation, or art.

The Third Commandment, "Remember the Sabbath Day," uplifts mankind more than any other commandment. For most of history, life consisted overwhelmingly of work, and human beings were essentially beasts of burden. This commandment changed that by insisting that people stop working one day out of seven to rest, strengthen relationships, and enjoy life.



## 2018 BOARD MEMBERS & CHURCH OFFICIALS

\*Zion Church Council Members (term expires 12/31/year)

<b>Church President</b>	John Pruss (2020)
<b>Council Secretary</b>	*Alice Ellis (2019)
<b>Financial Secretary</b>	*Mary Koosmann (2018)
<b>Church Treasurer</b>	Lisa Guski [Chad Lipske]
<b>Accountant</b>	*Raelyn Pearson
<b>Elders</b>	<b>Trustees</b>
<b>*Darryl Warren</b>	<b>*Nick Jarvela (2018)</b>
Doug Warren	Chuck Porter (2018)
Randy Spangle (2020)	Ron Schwiesow (2019)
John Pruss (2020)	Scott Thimm (2019)
Scott Thimm (2018)	Rick Nutt (2019)
Andy Pruss (2018)	Adam Hinch (2019)
	Loren Munson (2020)
<b>Education</b>	<b>Stewardship</b>
Laurie Bauer (2019)	<b>Chuck Chronis (2018)</b>
Janet Houle (2018)	Paula Pruss (2020)
	Jaimie Lipske (2018)
<b>Evangelism</b>	<b>Little Friends of Jesus</b>
<b>*Lori Landry (2018)</b>	<b>*Lisa Guski (2018)</b>
Jim Johnson (2018)	Fran Kuester (2019)
June Williams (2018)	Jule Jarvela (2019)
Lisa Sunie (2018)	Chad Lipske (2020)
Alice Ellis (2019)	Karyn Leino /Amy Mashlan
Ingrid Pocernich (2018)	Rachel Verch (LFOJ Parent)
Sandy Frisco (2019)	

LCEF Scholarships The Lutheran Church Extension Fund (LCEF) -



Central Region Scholarship applications are available now through Jan. 31, 2018. NWD graduating high school seniors and current college students are encouraged to apply. All the details & the on-line application are available on the LCEF Central Region site



SORRY, SON...THERE'S NO APP FOR THAT

LFOJ is in need of a person to shovel at the center mornings by 5:45am Monday through Friday when there is snow accumulation. This is a paid position. Please contact Karyn at 682-6075.



### ANNUAL REPORTS

All reports should be turned into the office by January 15<sup>th</sup>. Please send them by email to:

secretary@zionlutheranashland.com





Our Servers for our Worship Service are very important. We ask that if you are unable to serve on your designated date, please find someone else to take your place. We really appreciate your help in this matter!! If you would like to be added or taken off one of our lists please contact the office. Greeters and Ushers should arrive 20 minutes before services start. Thank-you to

January	Elders	Acolytes	Ushers	Greeters
Wed. 3	Scott Thimm			
Sun. 7	Doug Warren Darryl Warren	Lily Truchon	Loren Munson Chris Bolz	Nick & Jule Jarvela
Wed. 10	Andy Pruss			
Sun. 14	John Pruss Randy Spangle	Austin Vyskocil	Tim Bauer Mike Cashman	Ethel Guss & Penny Mattson
Wed. 17	Scott Thimm			
Sun. 21	Darryl Warren Andy Pruss	Emily Dickrell	Bruce Honkala Pat Colgrove	Jerry & Sandy Frisco
Wed. 24	Randy Spangle			
Sun. 28	Doug Warren John Pruss	Adeline Bauer	Rick Nutt Warren Draeger	June Williams
Wed 31	Scott Thimm			
Feb. Sun. 4	Randy Spangle Andy Pruss	Trista Bolz	Adam Hinch Larry Hildebrandt	Loren & Ellie Munson
Feb. Wed. 7	Darryl Warren			

**January**

Sandy Frisco 682-5401  
Stephanie Wegener 685  
Judy Nevala 682-292-9822

**OFFICIAL ACTS**

Baptism: Dec. 13, 2017  
Kaylee Sue Hildebrandt

New Member:  
Harold & Penny Larson 12-7-2017

## Brand New

I am the new year. I am an unspoiled page in your book of time. I am your next chance at the art of living. I am your opportunity to practice what you have learned about life during the last 12 months. All you sought and didn't find is hidden in me, waiting for you to search it but with more determination. All the good you tried for and didn't achieve is mine to grant when you have fewer conflicting desires. All you dreamed but didn't dare to do, all you hoped but did not will, all the faith you claimed but did not have — these slumber lightly, waiting to be awakened by the touch of a strong purpose.

I am your opportunity to renew your allegiance to him who said,  
"See, I am making all things new" (Revelation 21:5, NRSV).

—Author unknown