



HERALD

December 9, 2018
Second Sunday in Advent

On behalf of the family of Bethany Lutheran Church & School, we welcome our members and our guests in the name of Jesus Christ, our Risen Savior. If you are a visitor, we ask you to fill out the guest registration card in the pew. We also invite you to stop by our welcome center in the Narthex for a gift and more information about our church.

Yes, Virginia, There is a St. Nicholas By Rev. William Cwirla

Dear Virginia,

What, no Santa Claus? Why there might as well be no angels and archangels! No shepherds and wise men! No Joseph and Mary! No infant Jesus in the manger! No cross and empty tomb! No Father, Son, and Holy Spirit! No church, no communion of saints, no forgiveness of sins!

But of course, Virginia, there is a Santa Claus! Oh, I don't mean those silly old santas you see in the shopping malls wearing those funny red and white suits and bushy beards. [...] They're for fun. I'm talking about the real Santa Claus. His real name is Saint Nicholas. St. Nicholas lived in the 4th century in a town called Myra in what today is the country of Turkey. We don't really know very much about St. Nicholas. We're not even sure exactly what he looked like. He probably had a long beard. We know he didn't wear a silly red and white suit. He probably wore black most of the time. His clothes probably looked something like what your pastor wears on Sunday morning in the Liturgy.

You see, St. Nicholas was a bishop. A bishop is a pastor in charge of all the churches in his town. He makes sure that everyone is well cared for and that his pastors are teaching people true things about God from the Bible. St. Nicholas especially was concerned for all the poor widows and orphans in his city. If they didn't have shoes, he'd bring them shoes. If they didn't have a blanket to keep them warm at night, he'd give them a blanket. If they needed food, he'd bring them food. If they needed a place to sleep for the night, he let them sleep in the church. He was always looking for poor people to help, especially little children who had no parents.

The real St. Nicholas didn't worry so much about whether children were naughty or nice. He knew that all children are both naughty and nice, sometimes at the same time. So are adults. He also knew that Jesus died for everyone, the naughty and the nice. St. Nicholas wanted everyone to believe

that. He didn't keep any kind of list that he checked over twice, except maybe a list of all the people in his congregation who needed some kind of help. He was careful about making sure that people knew how much God loved them by showing them his love. If you looked at St. Nicholas and saw how much he loved other people, you could see the love of Jesus shining through him.

You see, Virginia, St. Nicholas loved Jesus very much, and he knew that Jesus loved him. He believed that Jesus was his best friend in the whole world and his Savior. St. Nicholas knew that because Jesus suffered and died for him, he would live forever with Jesus. He knew that Jesus became poor so that we might be rich in heavenly treasures. That's why he was always doing good things for poor people. He wanted to show them the love of Jesus from his own heart.

St. Nicholas worshiped Jesus much the same way that we worship Jesus every Sunday. He preached God's Word and celebrated the Lord's Supper with his people. He preached sermons about Jesus, just as your pastor does, Virginia. Sometimes the children in St. Nicholas' church got a little restless and noisy, but St. Nicholas didn't seem to mind that. He was so happy that the children were there with their parents to hear about Jesus that he just kept on preaching anyway. He told people how God sent His Son to be born of the Virgin Mary, how he suffered for their sins under Pontius Pilate, how he died on a cross and was buried to save everyone from death and hell, how He rose from the dead three days later and now reigns as our Redeemer, and how Jesus is going to appear very soon to take us to live with Him forever. Many people believed in Jesus because of St. Nicholas' preaching. That made St. Nicholas happy.

St. Nicholas wasn't always jolly. When people didn't believe in Jesus or made fun of him, St. Nicholas became very

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This Week's Calendar

Sunday, December 9

Second Sunday in Advent

8:30 am—Worship w/communion
 10:00 am— Bible Class/Sunday School
 11:00 am—Worship w/communion
 12:30 pm—Jr. Confirmation Luncheon
 2:30 pm—Sr. High Christmas Caroling

Monday, December 10

Tuesday, December 11

7:00 pm—BLS Christmas Concert
 7:00 pm—Board of Finance

Wednesday, December 12

8:50 am—BLS Chapel
 9:00 am—Ladies LifeLight
 3:00 pm—Schola Cantorum
 5:30 pm—Praises Ring
 7:15 pm—Advent Evening Prayer
 8:00 pm—Proclaim

Thursday, December 13

11:30 am—OWLS

Friday, December 14

Saturday, December 15

7:30 am—Saturday AM Men's Basketball
 8:00 am—Saturday AM Men's Bible Study
 9:00 am—Board of Trustees
 10:00 am—Sun. School Christmas Program Practice
 5:00 pm—Worship w/communion

Sunday, December 16

Third Sunday in Advent

8:30 am—Worship w/communion
 10:00 am—Bible Class/Sunday School
 11:00 am—Worship w/communion
 12:30 pm—Sr. High Youth
 4:00 pm—Sunday School Christmas Program

Baptisms

Catherine Eva Daniel, daughter of Enoch and Christina (Mohandoss) Daniel will be baptized at the 8:30 a.m. service this weekend. Catherine's godparents are Solomon Daniel and Sharon Daniel.

Aubrey Lee Gemkow, daughter of John and Kristin (Kolzow) Gemkow will be baptized at the 11 a.m. service this weekend. Aubrey's godparents are Lauren Kolzow and Alex Gemkow.

Cora Ruth Kolzow, daughter of Steven and Lauren (Howanski) Kolzow will be baptized at the 11 a.m. service this weekend. Cora's godparents are Kristin Gemkow and John Gemkow.

Prayers

In Our Prayers.....

All of Our Members, especially: **Diane Benecke**, early onset Alzheimer's Disease; **Tanner Diriltten**, for resolution of seizures; **Lucien Giuliani**, recovery from broken collar bone/seizures; **Lynn Hart**, recovery from fall; **Bill Kokaska**, recovery from heart attack/heart procedure; **Deb Tatara**, recovery from broken leg; **Enrique Veguilla**, chronic pain. *(please renew after four weeks).*

All of our Family Members & Friends, especially: **Todd Bahlmann**, (cousin of Sheri Walsh) chemo treatments; **Debbie**, (friend of Maria Simpson) cancer; **Hudson Feldman**, (friend of the Anderson family) age 2/stage 4 cancer; **Marion Hardin**, (mother of Fred Hardin) recovery from pacemaker surgery; **Katie**, (friend of Elaine Gavin) hospice care; **Delia Kelsner** ill health; **Dave Milz**, (father of Elaine Gavin) hospitalized with infection; **Margie Milz**, (mother of Elaine Gavin) severe back pain; **Michael Psaromatis**, (son of Martha Stark) continued healing; **George Raetzke**, (stepfather of Deborah Smart) cancer. *(please renew after two weeks).*

Prayers that the Lord be with **Matthew Hinze** and **Michael Hinze**, **Adam Horton**, **Peter Johnson**, **Savanna Lugay**, **Shalyn Martinek** as they continue to serve in the Military.

For **Matt and Jennifer Krock** at the birth of a baby boy, Benjamin Matthew, on November 21. For **Josh and Kari Janetzke** at the birth of a baby boy, Jakob, on December 3.

For God's guidance at critical crossroad in members' lives.

Simpson family—work/school issues.

Chancel Flowers

Chancel flowers for this weekend are placed by **Bob and Pam Splitt** for the marriage of their daughter Sonny to Brian Donahue on December 7, by **Enoch and Christina Daniel** for daughter Catherine's baptism this Sunday and by Dave and Pam Kolzow for the baptisms of their granddaughters, Aubrey Lee Gemkow and Cora Ruth Kolzow.

Please Complete an Oktoberfest Survey

This is the last day to complete an Oktoberfest Survey. An email was sent to members on November 15 with a link to the survey and paper copies are also available on the Welcome Center. Thanks for your input!

December
Theology on Tap
Tuesday, December 18
6:30 to 8 p.m.

News

Owls to meet December 13

The Owls will be meeting at Bethany on Thursday, December 13 at 11:30 a.m. Please bring your own lunch, two dozen cookies for our cookie exchange, and a wrapped White Elephant gift for a game we will play. Please RSVP by Tuesday, December 11 to Nancy Yendrejczyk at 630-842-0300 or at nyendrejczyk@hotmail.com. Please join us!

Dignity for Girls Sewing Event Scheduled for Monday, January 21, 2019

Please put January 21, a Monday and school holiday, on your calendars for our first group sewing date of the season—all day, from 9 a.m. until 3 p.m. in the multi-purpose room. Come and go as time allows!

To all members and friends: if you have a sewing machine and can sew a straight seam, please consider coming with your machine to take part in this wonderful life-changing mission project. Also, if you don't sew, but can devote some time, other tasks such as ironing, turning items right-side-out, tracing templates onto fabric, and cutting them out will be available.

Consider satisfying your RMD (Required Minimum Distribution) by making a donation to Bethany

If you have to satisfy an RMD and you would also like to make a gift to Bethany, then consider a qualified charitable distribution (QCD).

A QCD is a direct transfer of funds from your IRA custodian, payable to a qualified charity. Once you've reached age 70½, the QCD amount counts toward your RMD for the year, up to an annual maximum of \$100,000. It's not included in your gross income and does not count against the limits on deductions for charitable contributions. These can be significant advantages for certain high-income earners.

Due to changes enacted by the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act, a number of retirees may now take the standard deduction when filing taxes (\$12,000 for singles; \$24,000 for couples). For some, it may not make economic sense to itemize deductions on their taxes because they may not be able to get a tax deduction for a conventional charitable contribution. In such cases, QCDs—which do not depend on itemization—may be a useful alternative.

Remember, your QCD amount will not count as an itemized deduction. The rules are complex, so be sure to consult your tax advisor.

Sr High Youth Christmas Caroling/Party

Come join us for Christmas Caroling this Sunday, December 9! Meet at Bethany at 2:30 p.m. We will sing for a few of our Bethany members at nearby nursing homes and make a stop at Bethesda. Then we will end at the Taylor home for pizza, cookies and white elephant! Please dress festive and wear a Santa hat if you like! We will finish by 7 p.m. and youth can be picked up at 563 Saratoga Dr. Aurora.

White elephant gifts must be something unwanted from your home. Be creative! A new gift cannot be purchased to bring. Questions—please contact Jody Taylor or Pastor Clemmer.

It's Time to Defend Our League Championship!

Bethany is again forming a women's volleyball team (high school and up) to play in the Lutheran Athletic Association of Greater Chicago League. The season is January 6 through March 10. Games are on Sunday afternoons and are played at the various churches in the league. For more information and to express interest in joining, please contact Kari Janetzke at kjanetzke@bethanylcs.org.

Poinsettias for Christmas

If you would like to order a red or white poinsettia to decorate the chancel area this Christmas, please sign your name to the sheet at the flower chart in the Narthex. The cost is \$11 for each poinsettia and envelopes are available for payments. You may take your poinsettia home after church on Christmas day.

College Locals Student Bible Study

This month's study is TBA, since we'll try to meet at a time when many of the out-of-town students are home for Christmas. Keep an eye on your email!

Recap of Voters' Assembly Meeting

Thanks to those who attended the quarterly meeting of the Voters' Assembly last Sunday. Board and staff reports were given, the election of officers and board members took place and six motions were passed.

The complete, updated list of officers and board members is posted in the Narthex. Those elected, re-elected or re-affirmed last Sunday include:

Vice Chair: Keith Luhrs

Day School Policy Board: James Dahan, Julie Franken, Kierste Schafer

Board of Finance: Tim Gutzwiller, Aaron Hackman, Bill Hahn, Rich Sutis

Board of Trustees: Steve Lindenmeyer, Wyatt McIntyre, Jon Roberts, Mike Teske

Board of Elders: Tye Fox

Theology on Tap

Theology on Tap will meet on Tuesday, December 18 from 6:30 to 8 p.m. at Hopvine Brewing Co. (4030 Fox Valley Center Dr.). We hope you will join us.

BLS News

- Pre-school Open House—January 16 noon—1 p.m.
- Kindergarten Open House is on **January 16 from 6-7**

Our Sunday School Christmas Program is next Sunday, December 16 at 4 p.m. All are welcome!

Yes, Virginia...(continued from page 1)

sad. Sometimes he even cried when some people in his city never came to church. When people said bad things about Jesus, St. Nicholas would get very angry. One time, a fellow bishop named Arius said some bad things about Jesus. Arius said that Jesus wasn't really God. That made St. Nicholas very upset. You see, St. Nicholas loved Jesus so much, he couldn't stand to hear such awful things.

Some good bishops got together with St. Nicholas and wrote what we call the Nicene Creed. It's the same Creed we say together in church every Sunday. Just think, Virginia, when you say the Creed, St. Nicholas is saying it with you! It makes him very happy to hear little children say the Creed by heart. St. Nicholas is always jolly and happy when children love Jesus and confess Him.

The real St. Nicholas actually doesn't bring presents to boys and girls at Christmas time. And he doesn't slide down chimneys. [...] [When your] Mom and Dad give you presents at Christmas time, they do that because they love you, and they want to teach you to give good things to other people, especially poor people, just as St. Nicholas did. Most of all, they want you to remember God's Gift to you of His Son Jesus.

St. Nicholas died a long time ago. But he still lives! St. Nicholas now lives with God. Thank God, St. Nicholas lives, Virginia! He lives because Jesus died and lives. He lives because he was baptized and believed in Jesus, who was born and died and rose and reigns for St. Nicholas and for us all. I don't know if St. Nicholas sees you when you're sleeping or knows if you're awake. But I do know that St. Nicholas is with us whenever we are together in church to hear God's Word and to eat and drink Jesus' Body and Blood in the Lord's Supper. He's there with the angels and archangels and all the company of heaven.

No, Virginia. [...] St. Nicholas doesn't want you to believe in him or pray to him. He wants you to believe in Jesus. Pray to your heavenly Father through His Son Jesus in the Holy Spirit. Love and trust Jesus with all your heart, and know for certain that He loves you with all His heart. He was born of Mary and laid in a manger for you. He baptized you when you were a baby so that you could belong to Him forever. He forgives you and feeds you and teaches you and will raise you from the dead. Those are gifts only God can give you. So believe in God. And thank God for St. Nicholas.

Board of Trustees

Dave Groth	Tom Hart	Josh Janetzke
Steve Lindenmeyer	Jon Roberts	Mike Teske
Mike Walsh		Jeff Williams

The deadline for the December 16 Herald is Tuesday, December 11.

Bible Studies at Bethany

Living the Christian Life Taught by Pastor Schumacher

Pastor Schumacher continues his study of "Living the Christian Life" this weekend. We Lutherans have a definite theology of how to live the Christian Life. The Bible has a lot to say about how to love daily in the Lord's grace according to the Lord's will. Join us in the gym at 10 a.m.

Adult Instruction Class

We have just completed the fall session of Adult Instruction class and received new members last weekend. If you're interested in joining Bethany or learning more about the Lutheran faith contact Pastor Schumacher at sschumacher@bethanylcs.org or Pastor Clemmer at sclemmer@bethanylcs.org or call 630-355-2198.

Sunday School for Children Meets at 10 a.m.

All classes meet each week at 10 a.m. in our school wing and grade levels are marked on the doorways. We have Sunday School classes for preschoolers through grade 8.

Today in Sunday School children studied "the Birth of John." Zechariah spoke God's Word announcing that this baby, John, would give people knowledge of salvation in the forgiveness of sins. God speaks through His holy Word to give us knowledge of salvation and forgiveness through Jesus, His Son. *In your family discuss, "How does Jesus remind us of the work He has done for us?"*

High School Bible Class Meets in the Youth Room

Bible Class for high school students meets in the youth room at 10 a.m. each Sunday. If you have questions or want more information contact Matt Carlson at mcarlson@bethanylcs.org.

Women's LifeLight Study Meets Wednesdays

Wednesday Morning Women's LifeLight is studying of the Gospel of John. Please join us in the Harris Wing board room from 9 to 11 a.m. each Wednesday morning. Please contact Sheri Walsh with questions at ssmdw@wideopenwest.com or call or text 630-816-4647. Gospel of John study books are available in the church office.

Evening Lifestudy: Haggai/Zechariah/Malachi

The Thursday Evening Lifestudy Bible Study meets with Pastor at church one week and in a home the next. This class begins at 7 p.m. each Thursday We are studying Haggai, Zechariah and Malachi. For more information, please call the church office.

Bethany Lutheran Church & School

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Church: (630) 355-2198 School: (630) 355-6607
www.bethanylcs.org

Service Times

Saturday 5 p.m.
Sunday 8:30 & 11:00 a.m.
(Communion at all services)

Sunday worship is followed by Coffee Fellowship time. Sunday School, Adult and Youth Bible Study begin at 10 a.m.

Nursery The nursery is available as a cry room during worship services and during Bible Study hour. Our nursery is no longer staffed.