

January Newsletter 2012



THE SEASON OF EPIPHANY

Ebenezer Lutheran Church – Port Hudson
The Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod
9100 Highway YY Leslie, Missouri
Parsonage 573-459-6432 Church 573-459-6431
Rev. William F. Zastrow, Pastor
Mary Sprick, Secretary
ebenezerlutheran@hotmail.com
ebenezerlutheranchurch.wordpress.com

From the Pastor's Desk:

Epiphany – God's Glory Shining in Humility

The Word became flesh and lived for a while among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the one and only Son, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth. John 1:14

Achievement and recognition, the two usually go hand in hand. Take any field of endeavor. Achievement usually leads to some kind of recognition. For the diligent student, it means better scholarship offers. For the dedicated athlete, it nets a more lucrative contract. For the ambitious employee, it results in better opportunities and compensation. Because achievement and recognition are so closely linked, it is hard to reconcile the thought of glory in humility. Few people recognize the humble or take notice of those who stand in the shadows of the limelight. Still, this is exactly what Jesus did when he came to this earth, and it is the truth to which John testifies so clearly and powerfully.

Jesus came to this earth to take on flesh and blood. He came to live with all people, and he came to live for me. He came to be my Substitute and my Savior.

I was under God's just sentence for my sin and powerless to change the verdict. I desperately needed someone to rescue me. That someone was Jesus, and it meant he had to take my place in order to secure my release. Consequently,

he subjected himself to humility by stepping down from his power and glory as God to become my servant. In serving me, he subjected himself to life on this earth, as well as the shameful death and punishment I deserved.

Here is where I see glory in humility. When Jesus gave up his power as the Son of God, it was to his glory. When Jesus endured my humility, it was to his praise. When Jesus endured the burden of my guilt, it was to proclaim the greatness of his undeserved love. From the world's perspective this makes little sense. From God's perspective, and for my rescue, it means everything.

I have a faithful and loving Savior. He allowed himself to be humiliated, condemned and crucified. In the process he secured my release, set me apart for heaven, and sealed his glory forever.

Although it may be hard to reconcile glory in humility, I see it accomplished in Jesus. This is what the Epiphany season is all about. He is the glorious Son of God. He is the humble Servant of grace and truth. He is my faithful Substitute and Savior.

Prayer:

O dearest Jesus, how can I ever thank you for humbling yourself to be my Substitute and my Savior. Fill my heart with joy and thanksgiving for all you have done, and continue to do in order to bring me from this life to

**the glorious life you have prepared for me in heaven.
Amen.**

Season of Epiphany

Day of Epiphany followed by 4 – 9 weeks of thanks for Christ's revelation to the world, including the *Baptism of Our Lord*.

Epiphany was known in the earliest Christian centuries as the Feast of the *Manifestation*, the *Theophany*, and even as the *Feast of Light*.

Second only to Easter in importance, Epiphany was observed in the Eastern Church from the second or third century A.D. It celebrated the *fact* that God became man more than Jesus' birth *date*. Later the Western Church's observance of Christmas overshadowed Epiphany, the "Old Christmas."

Early Christians in the East may have set the date of Epiphany to replace a popular festival, just as Roman Christians may have chosen a date for Christmas that replaced a pagan festival.

In the eastern church, Epiphany became the day to receive new members through Baptism. They were called *illuminandi* – those who were about to be enlightened by Christ, the Light of the World.

The Epiphany season celebrates Christ's incarnation for all people of the world. They, like most of us, are not the chosen, Jewish people. But they long, nevertheless, for God to set the world right.

Epiphany celebrates the discovery that Someone *has* come, sent by God, to bring righteousness into our world and to reveal the unimaginable depth of God's love. The magi discovered that revelation in a baby lying in a humble manger. John heard that revelation in a voice at Jesus' baptism. And a merry wedding party at Cana experienced that revelation in a special gift of wine.

In Protestant churches this season extends from January 6th up through Transfiguration Sunday, the climactic conclusion of this part of the Church Year.

Quarterly Voter's Meeting

Our Quarterly Voter's Meeting will be held on Monday, January 23, 2012 at 7:30 PM. Church officers will meet Thursday, January 19, 2012 at 7:00 PM. Please make every effort to attend these important meetings for our Church!

John Strasen's Prayer Letter

John Strasen is with Lutheran Bible Translators. The following is an updated prayer letter:

“Dear Friends,

As you know, I anticipate leaving for my new assignment with the Shekgalagari Bible Translation Project in southwestern Botswana sometime during April of 2012.

I look forward to this move, but three things still need to come together before I can go.

First, the government of Botswana requires that there be an entity within Botswana which will act as a liaison between LBT and the Botswana government. Currently, this entity is the Bible Society in Botswana. LBT has four missionary families in Botswana at this time and each of them had to get a nod of approval from the Bible Society before they could proceed further. For me, the invitation from the Shekgalagari committee is significant because the Committee is an official project of the Bible Society.

Second, once the Bible Society approves, work with Botswana's immigration department can proceed so I can make applications for permission to work and reside in the country. This normally takes about two to three months.

Finally, LBT wants to be confident that I am ready and prepared for my new assignment. A key issue is to have adequate financial support before I leave the USA. Because of the current financial climate and lower income levels to the mission, LBT is requiring missionaries be 100% supported before departure. In recent years my support has tended to come more during the second half of the year. My current support level is at 77%. Pray with me that this can raise to 100% in the next four months.

Even though April seems like a reasonable departure time, there are still a few reasons it could be delayed. Please pray with me that God would work to make His intentions clear to both me and my coworkers at LBT so that we can plan well.

I am currently living in Washington, Missouri. If you desire to have a mission speaker at a church function in Iowa, Illinois, or Missouri, please e-mail me at jstrasen@LBT.org or call me at (503) 602-0671 (cell phone).

Thank the Lord that my time studying Hebrew at Concordia Seminary in St. Louis went very well. It was a fast-paced, but inspiring ten weeks of study. I learned a lot, enjoyed it even more, and very successfully completed all the course requirements. I look forward to continued personal study in the weeks and months to come.

Praise be to God that the Dhimba New Testament translation seems to be proceeding to a nice conclusion. The last I heard was that printing would be starting soon and that the projected dedication date would be around May 2012 in Namibia. I pray that this is all true.

Please pray with me that God would help tie up all of the details and loose ends leading up to my departure next April. From a human perspective it is easy to get lost in the shuffle. Only God can see the whole picture.”

John Strasen

Church Schedules for January 2012

Usher Schedule

1: Mark Kassebaum

2: David Summers

3: Jeff Bopp

4: Joe Kassebaum

5: Warren Bauche

Alternate: Tyler Gardner

Head Usher: Marvin Kassebaum

Altar Guild

Barb Gilbert and Mary Adams

Acolyte Schedule

January 1

**Justine Huellinghoff
Brian Nelson**

**Bell Ringer
Codie Brunkhorst**

January 8

**Cody Adams
Brent Thurmond**

Corey Adams

January 15

**Brian Nelson
Justine Huellinghoff**

Jeff Hohlt

January 22

**Brent Thurmond
Cody Adams**

Matt Kassebaum

January 29

**Brian Nelson
Justine Huellinghoff**

Jeff Hohlt



Lutheran Witness Renewals

February 2012 is the renewal month for The Lutheran Witness subscriptions. We must send in the renewal notices by February 1, 2012. The cost of The Lutheran Witness subscription for 2012 is \$15.60. Please let Mary Sprick know if you would like to have your subscription

renewed or terminated for 2012. If we do not hear, we will assume you want to renew your subscription. Thank you for your help!

January Birthdays

Heidi Koch	1-2
Esther Hoemann	1-3
Andrew Inman	1-4
Corey Adams	1-5
Judy Wettling	1-5
Owen Joseph Ward	1-5
Tonya Reynolds	1-7
Mathilde Ohse	1-8
Peggy Helling	1-11
Wanda Gilbert	1-12
Justine Huellinghoff	1-14
Tyler Nelson	1-14
Carson Donatti	1-17
Dennis Brune	1-18
Marilyn Bade	1-19
Ricky Bunge	1-19
Susan Kassebaum	1-21
Robert D. Bunge II	1-23
Ryan Kassebaum	1-23
Jane Redhage	1-24
Dana Kasmann	1-24
Mark Kassebaum	1-26
Trista Kormeier	1-27
Ron Wettling	1-29
Jacob Nelson	1-29
Trent Kormeier	1-30

January Anniversaries

Gilbert & Esther Voelker	1-11
Todd & Nancy Satre	1-17

**God's Blessings to all of you
who celebrate a Birthday or
Anniversary in January!**

If your birthday or anniversary is not listed or listed incorrectly, please let Mary know.

Ebenezer Mission Society 2011 Financial Report

Balance on hand 1/1/2011 \$ 278.46

Receipts:

Voluntary Contributions	91.00
Mission Boxes	159.87
Ladies Aid Mission Boxes	124.00
Cookie Sales for Orphan Grain	
Train	191.00
Country Store	<u>1548.50</u>
Total Receipts	\$2114.37

Disbursements:

Rice Bag Scripture Transfers	19.89
Cookie Sale Containers	9.11
LCMS World Relief Human	
Care Tornado Relief	100.00
Otis Woodard	50.00
Orphan Grain Train – Cookie Sales	191.00
LCMS World Relief	200.00
Jim Wilshusen – Seminary	
Student	200.00
Lutheran Bible Translators –	
John Strasen	200.00
LCMS World Mission – Robin	
McCoy	200.00
LCMS – Rodewalds	200.00
Rev. Darius Petkunas - Lithuanian	
Ministry	200.00
Lutherans For Life	200.00
Amigos de Cristo	200.00
Lutheran Family and Children’s	
Services	150.00
Kids Against Hunger – With God’s	
Little Ones	<u>100.00</u>
Total Disbursements	\$2220.00

Balance on hand 12/31/2011 \$172.83

Recycle Update

December has been a great month for recycling for missions. We have added \$143.40 to our recycle aluminum total. The funds from the newspaper dumpster have not arrived as of 1/3/12. This brings our recycle aluminum total to \$3,282.45 and our grand total to \$4,433.31. Sincere thanks to everyone for your support. We will now be able to send \$500 to each of our missionaries (Robin McCoy, John Strasen, and Mike and Cindy Rodewald) sometime this month.

Men's Club Year End 2011 Financial Report

Balance on hand 1/1/2011	\$1068.24
Receipts:	
Applebutter sales	<u>55.00</u>
Total Receipts:	\$1123.24
Expenses:	
American Cancer Society donation	<u>250.00</u>
<u>Balance on hand 12/31/2011</u>	\$ 873.24
Church Extension Fund	
Balance on hand 1/1/2011	\$1905.17
Interest	<u>23.90</u>
<u>Balance on hand 12/31/2011</u>	<u>\$1929.07</u>

Mission Society

Ebenezer Mission Society will have a sewing night on Monday, January 16th beginning at 6:00 – 6:30 (whenever you can get here at Church). We will again be making rice filled warming bags for the labor and delivery floor at Mercy Hospital. We have been told often that the new mothers really appreciate these bags!

The Church Year

The Church Year is a cycle of festivals and seasons. Christians around the world and throughout history have shaped their faith and marked their lives by these events. The first half of the Church Year (Advent through Pentecost Day) recalls events in the life of our Lord, making them real for us in the present. The rest of the Church Year (Pentecost Season) focuses on discipleship – new life in Christ in which we are living and growing. The community of believers, the Church, keeps the Church Year because it celebrates God’s forgiveness and justice for today’s people living in an unforgiving and unjust world. When Christians observe the Church Year’s festivals and seasons, they *learn the words and acts of God that have changed history; *remember the birth, life and death and resurrection of our Lord for us; *relive these saving events through which our Lord created His Church and transformed our lives.

Monthly Treasurer's Summary

November 2011

Beginning checking balance	\$11,150.89
Receipts	\$8,904.17
Disbursements	\$13,517.49
Ending checking balance	\$6,537.57
LCEF savings balance	\$68,983.31
Thrivent FPDA balance	\$18,292.69
Pledged to Missouri District for year	\$4,800.00
Paid to Missouri District this year-to-date	\$4,400.00
Monthly receipts needed to meet budget	\$11,798.00
Surplus or (shortfall) in actual receipts	(\$2,893.83)

JANUARY 2012

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1 New Year's Day	2	3	4 Confirmation 6:30 PM	5	6 The Epiphany of our Lord Epiphany Worship @ Zion – Owensville 7:00 PM	7 Worship with Holy Communion 3:00 PM
8 Sunday School 9:00 AM Worship 10:00 AM Baptism of Our Lord	9	10 Elder's 7:00 PM	11 Confirmation 6:30 PM	12	13	14 Worship 3:00 PM
15 Sunday School 9:00 AM Worship with Holy Communion 10:00 AM	16 Mission Society Sewing Night 6:00 PM Martin Lutheran King Jr. Day (Observed)	17 Circuit Pastor's Conference at Boeuf 9:00 AM	18 The Confession of St. Peter Confirmation 6:30 PM	19 Church Officers' Meeting 7:00 PM	20	21 Worship with Holy Communion 3:00 PM
22 Sunday School 9:00 AM Worship 10:00 AM	23 Voter's Meeting 7:30PM	24 Education/Sunday School Teachers 7:00 PM	25 The Conversion of St. Paul Confirmation 6:30 PM	26	27	28 Worship 3:00 PM