



# Blessings and Musings

## The Lutheran Church of Our Blessed Savior

### FEBRUARY, 2024

#### From the Pastor:

**Pastor:**  
Kal Rissman  
765-754-7381

**Church Council  
President:**  
David Shears

**Vice President:**  
Shon Littlefield

**Secretary:**  
Carol Shears

**Treasurer:**  
Helen Gregory  
Accountability

**Other Members:**  
Andrea Barnett  
Becky Howard  
Donna Key-Kerr  
Stephanie Salazar  
Dick Zarse  
Kim Zarse

**Organist:**  
Marilyn Pierce

**Church Secretary:**  
Marilyn Pierce  
765-717-2992  
9 AM - Noon  
Mon. Tues. Wed.  
Thurs. and Fri.

**Office Phone:**  
765-724-3671

**Email Address:**  
pastorkal 2015  
@gmail.com

**Sunday School:**  
9:30 A.M.

**Worship:**  
10:30 A.M.

**Printing:**  
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The Zarse Family

Some of you may have noticed at the church picnic this year that I have a pretty substantial pile of wood in my barn. My sister thinks that I am obsessed with cutting trees down, but I am just trying to be a good conservationist and save a little money at the same time. Our furnace hasn't even had to kick on yet this year. There are all of these Ash trees that are now dead from the Emerald Ash Borer and they are cracking and falling down on my fences and out in the pasture. I figure that it makes more sense to cut them up and use them for firewood rather than just laying there and rotting. I am not cutting up anything that is not already dead.

It used to be kind of fun to cut up these trees, because I had a tree crew that I was a part of and we worked together. There used to be Leon, Bill, Bob and me and now they are all gone and my crew is just me and that is not nearly as much fun. George, Shon and my grandson, Caleb have gotten in on a little of this wood action as well, but I think they might be a little gun shy, since everybody I work with dies! I might be the kiss of death in the tree harvesting world. Maybe they will take a chance again – we'll see.

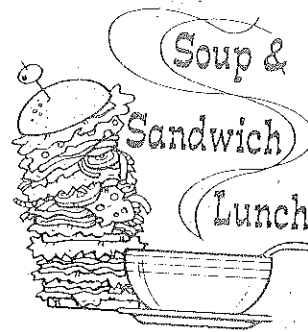
I do miss the fun part of the camaraderie that we had. Bill used to call what we did "old man work". That meant that we would work a little while and then sit down and talk big and tell lies for a while. Bill would trot out some interesting information and then Leon and Bob would wind him up about that. They all rather enjoyed teasing Pastor Kal quite a bit too. Making work fun is sort of a lost art, I guess. I think that churches do as good a job as any at keeping this going. I can hear a lot of good-natured banter as we are putting on our church dinners and doing other jobs around the church.

The other thought that I had this week as I had to stoke up the fire more often in the colder weather is about the sequence of getting wood and then being warmed by a fire. The wood is always first and then the fire. You can't tell the fire to give you more heat and then I will give you more wood. It is the other way around. First, I will give you more wood and then you can give me more heat.

This sequence applies in other areas of life too. For example, my parents used to always tell us kids, "First we do the work and then we have the fun". It is like that in our jobs as well where we do the work for 40 hours and then we get the paycheck. The same is true for school. First we do the studying and then we learn, get good grades and have a better life. Sports has a similar process, where we learn the fundamentals, then we play well and get the accolades.

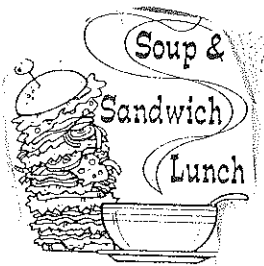
I wonder, however, if there are times that we forget this sequence when it comes to our relationship with the Lord. We expect to have great understanding of Scripture, but really do not want to do the work of studying Scripture with the help of commentaries or the Lutheran Study Bible. We want to have a great worship experience without being spiritually prepared to worship. We tend to say things like "I didn't get anything out of that service", instead of asking ourselves "What did I put into that service?" We expect to have a close relationship with the Lord, but we haven't talked to Him in a long time, which is what prayer is and we haven't taken time to listen to Him, which is meditation. In short, we want to be on fire for the Lord, but we haven't brought the wood for that fire.

Our prayer for this season is to tell the lord, "I'll bring the wood, Lord, and you light the fire."



### **"SOUPER" BOWL SUNDAY**

We are getting ready to hold our annual Souper Bowl luncheon! The youth will present a fun and creative skit during the service to help bring awareness and care for those who need food support. There will be a soup and sandwich lunch immediately following the February 11<sup>th</sup> church service. There will be a variety of soups and sandwiches along with desserts to enjoy. There is a sign-up sheet in the narthex for anyone who would be willing to bring a soup, sandwiches, or a dessert to share. Please plan to come, eat, and support the local food pantry with can goods, dry goods, or monetary donation. If you have a question or would like to donate and cannot get to church, please feel free to contact or text Kim Zarse at 765-635-4895 or Donna Key-Kerr at 765-278-3180.



## SOUPER BOWL OF CARING

The Souper Bowl of Caring will be on Super Bowl Sunday, February 11th. The youth will be providing information in their skit and there will be a pitch-in soup and sandwich dinner after the service.



## HEAR OUR PRAYERS

Ralph Grose, Roselynn Brown, Barrett Key, Matthew Barnett, and Richard Thompson. The Social Ministries Committee sends cards each month to Nursing Home members and those who are sick. If you know of anyone that is sick please contact Marilyn in the church office or Becky Howard, Deacon of Social Ministries.

*Thank You!*

Pastor Kal, Marilyn Pierce, Amy McNally would like to thank the congregation for the wonderful Christmas gift. We love working for you and our Lord. We hope that each of you had a great Christmas. Thank you for letting us serve you.

**From the Staff,  
Pastor Kal, Marilyn, and Amy**



We five little Lutheran Church mice hate snow, ice, and Winter weather. We are so little we get cold easily. We love to have a blanket wrapped around us to keep us warm.

On Wednesday, January 17th we had a big bird in the lounge area, Bethel Room, Marilyn's office, Pastors office and the balcony. It was a pretty bird and very scared. Dick and Marilyn tried to get it to go out. Finally the bird went to the hall way with the door opened and it felt the air and away it flew back to it's home. We were so glad that we had helped one of God's precious animals, which God loves dearly. He made all the animals and he wants us to be nice and loving to them. He doesn't want us to put them on a big chain and never let them in the house when it is too hot or cold outside.

Someone has said that Marilyn's dog, Penny is a very spoiled dog, who gets air conditioning just for her in the summer and a warm house in the Winter, a doggy door to go through when she wants in or out, and of course dog treats! We think God likes it that she is taken care of so wonderfully.

**Squeaky  
The Lutheran Church Mouse**

B.C. = Bible Class    S.S. = Sunday School for children

## FEBRUARY 2024

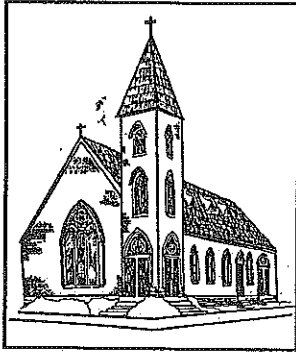
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
4 9:30 am S.S. & B.C. 10:30 am Worship	5 9:00am Office 9:30 am Pantry	6. 9:00 am Office	7 9 am Office 4:30pm Warehouse open donations	8 9:00 am Office 9:30am Pantry 7 pm Choir Alexandria	9:00 am Office 1:00pm Bible Study St. John Elwood	10 10:00 am Warehouse open shopping only
11 9:30 am S.S. & B.C. 10:30 worship Super Bowl of Caring Lunch	12 9:00 am Office 9:30 am Pantry	13 9:00 am Office	14 9:00 am Office 4:30pm Warehouse open	15 9:00 am Office 9:30 am Pantry 7 pm Choir	16 9:00 am Office 1:00 pm Bible Study St. John Elwood	17
18 9:30 am S.S. & B.C. 10:30 am Worship	19 9:00 am Office 9:30 am Pantry	20 9:00 am Office	21 4:30pm Warehouse Open 6:00 pm Church Council	22 9:00 am Office 9:30 am Pantry 7 pm Choir	23 9:00 am Office 1:00 pm Bible Study St. John Elwood	24 10:00 am Warehouse Open Shopping only
25 9:30am S.S. & B. C. Worship	26	27 9:00 am Office	28 9:00am Office 4:30pm Warehouse open for donations	29 9:00am Office 9:30am Pantry 7 pm Choir		

**CONGREGATION FOR THE YEAR ENDING  
FOR GREEN RECORD BOOK  
YEAR 2023**

1. Baptized membership at end of 2023	<u>282</u>	
2. Baptized members received during 2024		
a. By Baptism: Children (15 yrs. and younger)	<u>1</u>	
b. By Baptism: adults (16 yrs. and older)	<u>0</u>	
c. By affirmation of faith	<u>0</u>	
d. By transfer	<u>0</u>	
e. From other sources and statistical adjustment	<u>0</u>	
f. Total members received this year		<u>283</u>
3. Baptized Members removed during 2024		
a. By death	<u>7</u>	
b. By transfer	<u>0</u>	
c. For other reasons and statistical adjustment	<u>0</u>	
d. Total members removed this year		
4. Baptized Membership, end of 2024		<u>276</u>
5. Total Confirmed Membership, end of year 2024	<u>138</u>	
6. Number of baptized youth who were confirmed in	<u>0</u>	
7. Average weekly worship attendance in year	<u>42</u>	
8. Total number of people (including children) actively participating in the life of the Congregation in 2024 Who communed	<u>71</u>	

## CONGREGATIONAL REPORT 2023

MEMBERSHIP	BAPTIZED	CONFIRMED
2024 Year Starting Numbers	282	145
By Confirmation	0	0
By Confirmation Youth	0	0
By Affirmation of Faith	0	0
By Transfer	0	0
By Baptism	1	0
By Statistical Adjustment	0	0
<b>MEMBERSHIP TOTAL</b>		
<b>AS OF 12-31-2023</b>	283	145
 MEMBERS REMOVED IN 2023		
1. By Death	7	7
2. By Transfer	0	0
3. By Statistical Adjustment	0	0
 <b>MEMBERSHIP TOTAL</b>		
<b>AS OF 12-31-2023</b>	276	138
 FUNERALS: Non Member	0	
WEDDINGS: Non Member	0	
 ATTENDANCE STATISTICS		
TOTAL: SUNDAY SERVICES:	2244	
SPECIAL SERVICES:	43	
AVERAGE: SUNDAY SERVICES:	42	
 COMMUNING MEMBERS:		
A. CONFIRMED WHO COMMUNED:	71	
 ATTENDANCE:		
ASH WEDNESDAY Alexandria:	43	
CHRISTMAS EVE Alexandria:	88	



**Lutheran Church  
of Our Blessed Savior**  
309 West Washington  
PO Box 206  
Alexandria, IN 46001

**Church Office**  
765-724-3671  
**Pastor Kal Rissman**  
Home: 765-754-7381



## February Participants



### ORGANIST

4 Marilyn Pierce  
11 Marilyn Pierce  
18 Marilyn Pierce  
25 Richard Thompson

### LECTORS

Carol Shears  
Becca Keu-Kerr  
Donna Key-Kerr  
Dick Zarse

### ALTAR GUILD

Tina Gilman  
Family

### SOUND EQUIPMENT

4 David Shears  
11 David Shears  
18 David Shears  
25 David Shears

### ASSISTING MINISTERS

Andrea Barnett  
Shon Littlefield  
Peggy Cox  
Shon Littlefield

### DEACONS

Donna Key-Kerr  
Becky Howard  
George Bennett