



The

Sanctuary

You are God's Temple

...God's Spirit Lives in You. 1 Cor. 3:15

BLESSED SAVIOR LUTHERAN CHURCH + 1205 NORTH LINCOLN AVE. + O'FALLON, IL 62269 + 618=632-0126 + WWW.MYBSLC.ORG

Upcoming Events

February 2023

Wed Feb 1, 8, 15

Ladies Bible Study 10

Adult Choir 7

Sat. Feb 4

Rolls & Goals all Church
Committee Member
Meeting 9 am

Sun. Feb 5, 12 19 26

Worship 930 am

Sun School/Adult Bible
1045 am

Sun. Feb 5

Youth—Winter Jam

Mon. Feb 6, 13, 20, 27

Support Group 7 pm

Tues. Feb 7

Quilting 930-12

Elders Meeting 7

Sun. Feb 12

Souper Bowl Sunday
Food Drive

Tues. Feb 14

Valentine's Day

Thur. Feb 16

Fellowship Mtg 430

Ladies Night Bunco 6

Tues. Feb 21

Christian Ed Mtg 7

Youth Brd Mtg 7

Wed. Feb 22

Ladies Bible Study 10

Ash Wednesday Worship
7 pm

No Adult Choir

Tues. Feb 28

Stewardship Mtg 6 Wed.

Wed. Mar 1

Lenten Dinners begin 6
Worship 7

Sat. Mar 18

Trivia Night

Challenge

Doors open 530

Play at 6 pm

American Legion

Church Council Annual "Rolls & Goals" Council Meeting

All committee members are
invited and encouraged to attend!

**Saturday, February 4
9:00 a.m.**



Souper Bowl of Caring

Don't miss your chance to help
conquer hunger in the O'Fallon
area.

Bring your donations of Non-
perishable canned and boxed goods
to church beginning Sunday,
February 5th and no later than
Sunday, February 19. All proceeds
go to the O'Fallon Food Pantry to
help hungry families in O'Fallon.

Ash Wednesday

Worship Service

Wednesday, February 22—7:00 p.m.

Lenten Dinners—March 1, 8, 15, 22, 29 - 6pm

Midweek Lenten Worship—7 pm



21st Trivia Night Challenge

WHERE: American Legion, 109 N. Penn O'Fallon,

WHEN: Saturday, March 18 2023. Doors open at
5:30PM. Play begins promptly at 6:00PM

WHAT: A night of fun for your team of eight play-
ers. For \$20.00 per person



Newsletter February 2023

The Lenten Season is just around the corner beginning with Ash Wednesday on February 22. It is typically a time when you hear Christians asking each other, "What are you going to give up (sacrifice) for Lent?" There are the typical things that improve our health like giving up coffee, alcohol, chocolate, ice cream, gossip and quarreling, and the like, which I often think we should give up just for the sake of good health. But since those things are considered pleasures, we willingly give them up for 40 days to help us to be mindful of the Lord's sacrifice on the cross for our sins, His life for ours. Giving up is a great reminder of the Lord's sacrifice for us! Keep it up!

But then, I'll run across a passage directly from the mouth of Jesus who says in Luke 11:28:

"Blessed rather are those who hear the word of God and keep it!" (meaning "obey" it).

And there's that other word "Blessed" which we heard repeated over and over again at the beginning of the Sermon on the Mount" on the 4th Sunday after the Epiphany, and means "EXCEEDINGLY HAPPY are those who hear the word of God and keep it!"

It's hard to believe that obedience can bring us true happiness because we're so conditioned to finding our happiness in the things that give us pleasure and not in listening to or obeying the words of Jesus. But have we really given obedience to God and finding happiness there a chance?

This Lenten Season I am going to ask you to join me and your fellow congregants to take up "The Red Letter Challenge." LCMS Pastor Zach Zehnder has written a guidebook for reading the actual words of Jesus (The red letters in many of your Bibles) in order to find happiness in obeying the words of Jesus. It is meant to give us a daily reading over the 40 days of Lent, to contemplate and begin working on obeying the Word of the Lord. I believe this could be life-changing for many of us, even those who have lived as Christians for many years.

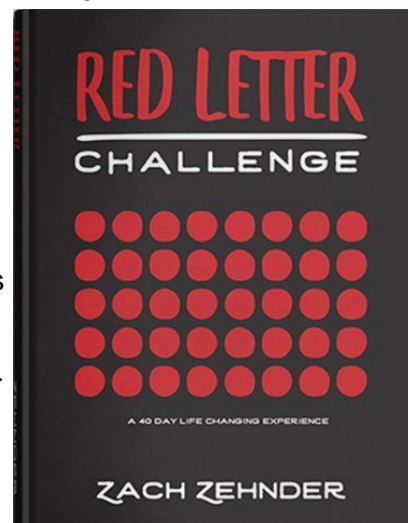
The beauty of this challenge is we can (and will) make mistakes, choose to avoid the Lord's words, fall into our old nature... but without harm to God's claim upon us. We will still be His children, still receive forgiveness, and still inherit the kingdom of heaven! Christ has secured ALL THAT on His sacred cross. We've got nothing to lose and "HAPPINESS" to gain if we're willing to take this 40 Day Life Changing Experience.

More information will be forthcoming so keep an eye on your email or our website (mybslc.org) or our Facebook page frequently. Books are being purchased and we will make them available to you in the coming weeks before Lent. The Sunday Sermons in Lent will focus on the main points given in the book.

All I ask right now is that you prayerfully consider committing to join your Blessed Savior Family in this challenge. We will be setting up small groups to dig into the content more deeply, but you may feel more comfortable leading your family in the Red Letter Challenge. Either way, the goal is to experience the Joy of the Lord, true happiness, which He promises to those who hear and obey His Word.

Look for the signup sheet in the narthex. You can also check out Pastor Zehnder's Facebook page called "The Red Letter Challenge" to read more about the blessing of this challenge.

Praying that this Season of Lent will be a Season of True Happiness,
Blessed Lent,
Pastor Vern





Painting the Sanctuary

Many thanks to all that helped with preparing the sanctuary for the painters! It was a big job! It went quick with so many willing helpers.





Many thanks to Ed and his crew that poured the new sidewalk and also the bases for the new parking lot lights.

The sidewalk looks great! Parking lot lights will be up soon!



WE ARE *grateful* FOR YOU!



THANK *you!*





New Members to Our Church Family

Starting this month, 2 members of the Board of Outreach, John Lundeby and Perry Schefelker, plan to interview some of our new members, and introduce them to the congregation through our church newsletter. Our hope is that this will help our members to get to know the newest members of our church family and to introduce themselves to them. This month, we have the privilege of sharing with you a little about **Cynthia & Tom Brecks and their children: Hadrian and Aeneas**.

The Brecks, 527 Flagstone Pass Dr. (Timberline Ridge Subdivision), O'Fallon, 618-698-2441, cynthiabrecks@gmail.com, joined Blessed Savior by transfer in August of last year from Good Shepherd, Collinsville, where they had been members for 10 years. They said that they had thought about making the transition for quite some time, since they live in O'Fallon not far from Blessed Savior.

Cynthia is a graduate of Purdue Univ. with a major in Biology; and, from North Carolina Wake Forest Univ. with a PHD in Immunology. After graduation, she worked at Washington Univ. in research on rheumatoid arthritis and bones. After marriage, she quit her job to raise their family.

Tom is an SIU, Carbondale grad with a business degree in Management Info Systems. After college he joined the army in the infantry division for 4 years. After "Sept. 11th," he was stationed overseas at Kuwait and then returned for the Iraq Invasion. Currently, he is employed by Stifel, an investment company, in Information Technology doing internal audits of computer systems - locating weaknesses and fixing them.

In 2009, Cynthia & Tom were married at Trinity Lutheran Church in the Soulard District of St. Louis. If you want to hear an interesting story, ask them how they met – and where they had their first date. Cynthia & Tom enjoy hiking and riding bikes. They have hiked in Shawnee National Forest, Carbondale.

Hadrian and Aeneas are fraternal twins. They are 6th grade students at Fulton Jr. High. The boys play on the soccer team with Gateway Community Center. They are also in martial arts, "Jiu Jitsu." Plus, they are in band at Fulton: Hadrian plays trombone and Aeneas plays trumpet.

The Brecks are glad to be part of our church family. Hadrian and Aeneas are in 6th Grade Sunday School. Cynthia has expressed willingness to serve on the Altar Guild; she has experience. And, Tom is willing to put his computer training and skills to use with Eric on the Sound Board. Be sure to greet them and tell them how glad we are to have them as part of our church family!



Pew Cleaners Needed!

We will be cleaning the pews on Saturday, February 4th from 10:00 am until noon. We would like to have 10 adult volunteers to help with this project. The properties committee will provide the soap, wash cloths, and several buckets. However, it would be helpful if you could bring your bucket from home along with some additional wash cloths. If you would like to help, there is a sign-up sheet in the narthex or contact John Lundeby, 618-830-5768, jlundeby53@gmail.com, or Muriel Mayer, 618-632-5254, Muriel.mayer@charter.net.

Calling all Singers!!

Adult Choir Schedule for February:

Wed Feb 1 at 7pm

Wed Feb 8 at 7pm

Wed Feb 15 at 7pm

NO CHOIR WED FEB 22 - ASH WEDNESDAY

beginning Wed., Mar. 1, 2023 Adult Choir will practice following Midweek Lent Services ~7:45 - 8:30pm

I will *sing* and
make *music*
to the **LORD**.

Psalm 27:6, NIV





Fellowship Committee

The Fellowship Committee has been busy! Seems like we are always busy though. This past month, we hosted a funeral luncheon for Jerry Clausius' family. We also had a great turnout for the Ladies Bunco Night. We had four sets of Mother/Daughter teams. We gave out six prizes and had a lot of fun.

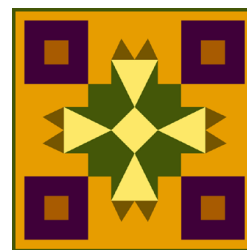
Beginning the 29th of Jan, we will be getting Donuts from Woods Bakery weekly for Fellowship time. We will also have some kind

of fruit/and or vegetables as well. If you would like to donate for Fellowship Snacks you can do that through either the basket in the fellowship hall OR through the offering plate. If you are donating through the offering, please designate your check or cash for "FELLOWSHIP SNACKS" to alleviate confusion. All Donations are appreciated.



If you would like to have an activity or know of an activity for us to host, please contact either Gwen Borsch @ gkob1995@gmail.com Or Ginger Kieffer @ gkieffer24@charter.net

God's Blessings,
Gwen and Ginger



Join the Lutheran World Relief QUILTERS on **Tuesdays Feb. 7, March 7 and April 4** from 9:30–12:00 p.m. to tie quilts. (We don't actually quilt by hand. Instead we secure the layers by hand tying them.) Come and join us for a time of good ole fellowship. Hope to see you there! Mark your calendar for the 1st Tuesday of each month. If you have any fabric pieces, thin blankets, curtains, drapes, sheets, etc. you no longer need, the quilters would love to recycle them into quilts.



The youth are going to Winter Jam at the St. Louis Family Arena on Sunday, February 5.

Cost is \$15.00 at the door.

Reservations must be made in advance with Tyler. She has to know how many are going to have rides for everyone. See Tyler for more information.

618-407-1000





STEWARDSHIP

gives us material things. The time, talents, and treasure trinity places before our eyes the fact that we are to give something of all three of these things toward the mission of the church in thanksgiving for what God has provided. For everything we have, and indeed, everything we are, comes from God's fatherly, divine goodness and mercy.

The problem with this alliterative trinity comes when we replace one little word with another little word — when we replace the word *and* with the word *or*. It is always written with the *and*, but when we read it, we read it with the *or*. Thus this quite helpful trinity, which extolls that everything that we have and are is a gift from God, to be given back in service of His church, turns into a trinity that we can pick and choose from when we serve God. The giving of our time, talents *and* treasure turns into the giving of our time, talents *or* treasure.

Then the question arises: Can we give of our time and talents instead of our treasure? Or perhaps it is the other way round: Can we give of our treasure and not of our time and talents? But these are the wrong questions. The right question is, can we give of our time and talents in addition to our treasure?

Yes, indeed, we are called to give of all three. The things that God gives us are not to be pitted against one another. Rather, they are given to us, and we are to press them all into God's service for benefit of His church and our neighbors in need.

Thus, we give all three. We give our treasure in the form of a generous, first-fruits proportion of our income. We give of our time in generosity for the benefit of Christ's holy church. We give of our talents in the same manner. Since God gave us all these things, we are called to give generously of all these things in faith toward Him and in fervent love to our neighbors.

For God has provided all these things for us. Out of His fatherly, divine goodness and mercy, He gives us each time, talents *AND* treasure as a means to bless those around us. We serve our neighbors with these things, blessing them with the blessings with which God has blessed us. We give of our time, talents and treasure to our families, our society, our church and our local congregations. And we do this because we know that we are not our own. Rather, we belong to God. We have been bought with a price: the holy, precious blood and innocent suffering and death of our Lord Jesus Christ. He gave everything — His time, His talents and His treasure — to have us as His own and to live under Him in His kingdom and serve Him in everlasting righteousness, innocence and blessedness. We have these things as gifts and blessings from God. Let us then press them all into service for the sake of His love — time, talents and treasure together.

LCMS Stewardship Ministry: lcms.org/stewardship

Don't Replace "And" with "Or"

We've all heard that stewardship means giving to the church of our time, talents and treasure. This alliterative trinity helps us see that giving is not just about money, but about our whole lives. As we confess in the Small Catechism's explanation of the First Article of the Apostle's Creed, God gives us everything we have and enjoy. First we confess that God gives us "our body and soul, our eyes, ears, and all our members, our reason and all our senses" (SC II). Then we confess that He



Time, Talents & Treasure



Why should we observe Lent? This 40-day season of repentance and reflection that begins on Ash Wednesday has three important purposes. Lent helps us STOP, LOOK and LISTEN.

We observe Lent because it tells us to STOP and rest awhile — and to stop sinning. Lent tells us to LOOK inward for an honest self-examination, to look upward to see the cross of Jesus with healing and love, and to look forward to the hope of the Resurrection. And we observe Lent because it tells us to LISTEN — to the voice of God, the words of Christ and the movement of the Holy Spirit.

STOP, LOOK and LISTEN! These commands that are so crucial for travel safety are also important for our journey through Lent.



FEBRUARY

Birthdays

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 1 Karen Olson | 17 Elise Trapp |
| 2 Isaiah Siron | 21 Nancy Schmidt , Reeva Alvarado |
| 4 Annette LaBruyere | 22 Jill Kinsella, Samuel Calzada |
| 5 Sara Lesire | 24 Nate Berens, Aeneas Brecks |
| 6 Barbara Edgar | 24 Hadrian Brecks |
| 8 Elizabeth Lundebly, Jennifer Knox | 25 Margene Jerrolds, |
| 9 Brian Gass | 26 Jackson Husemann |
| 11 Diane Colvin | |
| 11 John & Joan Gefferth | |
| 15 Karen Depping | |

We are sorry if your birthday or anniversary has been overlooked. Please call the church office, 632-0126 or email Nancy at nancy@mybslc.org so we may add your name to our list. Thanks for your help.

FEBRUARY

Anniversaries

14 Tom & Kris McManus

Baptism is Serious Business!

Baptizing people into God's family has always been a ministry highlight for Pastor Stan Purdum. One Sunday, he had the privilege of welcoming three infants and two young boys to the baptismal font, along with all their parents. After baptizing the babies, Purdum turned toward the families with older children, who'd been instructed to have their boys step forward one at a time.

Immediately, the 3-year-old shouted, "Not me!" and bolted for the exit. His father caught the youngster and carried him back as the congregation chuckled. This time, Purdum wasted no time completing the sacrament.

"Maybe this young boy was not greatly wrong to try to duck baptism," he later pondered. "Far from being a harmless little ceremony, baptism begins a lifetime commitment to God, which over the long haul is no easy thing. It lays upon us the responsibility to live up to the vows we have made." How seriously do you take your baptismal vows?



Tamaira and Aaron

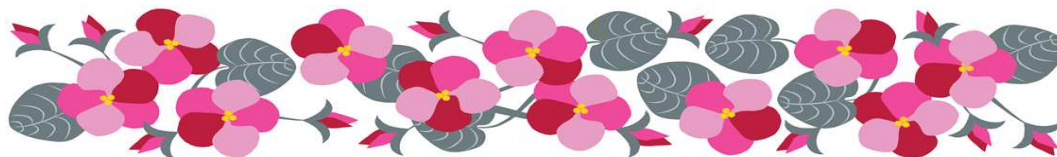
20 BABY BOTTLE CAMPAIGN

You help more women and babies when you pick up a baby bottle and fill it with coins, cash, and checks!

PICK UP YOUR BOTTLE TODAY!

mosaic health

Bottles are due back by Sunday, February 12th



News from the Aarsvolds



Merry Christmas, Happy New Year, and Happy Epiphany!

2022 was a big year for us! Talek turned one in January, we had a blast in St. Louis during PJ's last semester at Concordia Seminary, and then PJ graduated with his Master of Divinity in May. He received a call to St. John's Lutheran Church to be the campus pastor of their Highlands campus, Renewal church, in Denver, Colorado.

PJ was ordained as a pastor and installed at Renewal church in June. Our church family is truly incredible and we are so blessed to do life with them. We also get to live in a beautiful home (parsonage) on the church property. Come visit us!

Melanie is loving being a stay at home mom to Talek. She is finishing up her master's degree (hopefully this fall) in Human Development and Family Science. Melanie also learned how to bake sourdough bread from scratch this year and is learning to play piano! She also got to go to Vegas with her dad and sister to celebrate a milestone birthday for her dad and see Aerosmith in concert. Talek is doing great and turning two in a few weeks. He is the best! He is such a sweet, fun and intelligent little boy. He loves anything with wheels, being outside, and reading. His vocabulary exploded this year and we are loving having conversations with him and listening to him share his memories and ideas and plans (for example, he told us he was planning to go on an airplane ride with his little bestie, just the two of them!).

We have taken full advantage of not having to buy a plane ticket yet for Talek, taking him on 8 plane trips this year! We visited family in Minnesota, Florida, St. Louis, a family trip to the Lake of the Ozarks, and celebrated the weddings of PJ's two brothers. We also went camping (sort of, Talek requested to go home in the middle of the night), did parent-child swim lessons, hosted visiting family (no more air mattresses- we finally have guest bedrooms and beds!), made it to a Broncos game and a Rockies game, and went on so many hikes and walks.

We hope you had a great Christmas and wish you a wonderful 2023!

Love, PJ, Melanie & Talek

MAKING THE MOVE FROM LAW TO LAW AND GOSPEL

SEMINARY INSIGHTS FROM A RETIRED SHERIFF'S CAPTAIN

BY REBEKAH LUKAS



Captain Matthew Martin, from his time working with the Douglas County Sheriff's Office. Photo: Courtesy Martin

What does a law enforcement officer have in common with a parish pastor? More than you might think. Retired sheriff's captain and current Concordia Seminary student Matthew Martin recently sat down with *Concordia Seminary* magazine and shared how God prepared him for ministry by first giving him a career of more than 30 years in law enforcement.

Martin's journey began after he graduated from Wayne State College in Wayne, Neb., with a Bachelor of Science in criminal justice in 1989 and started his first job as a patrol officer for the Norfolk, Neb., police department. He married Tami in 1995 and they had two children, Jessica and Jacob. After five years in Norfolk, the Douglas County Sheriff's Office in Omaha, Neb., hired him, and over the next 27 years, Martin moved from patrol officer to sergeant, to lieutenant, to captain and everything in between.

"I did court security, patrol, was a field training officer and did training for our agency and others, including the state academy. I did criminal investigations, which involved

everything from portraying a 14-year-old girl on the internet to investigating homicides," Martin said. "I worked internal affairs for 10 years, testifying in state and federal court, and spent a year and a half in the administrative services bureau."

In 2014, Martin earned a Master of Arts in public administration from Bellevue University in Bellevue, Neb.

"I DON'T KNOW HOW MUCH TIME GOD HAS LEFT FOR ME ON THIS EARTH, BUT I KNOW WITH THE TIME I HAVE LEFT, I WANT TO TELL PEOPLE WHAT JESUS HAS DONE FOR THEM."

-MATTHEW MARTIN

"I started training at the FBI National Academy at Quantico in 2017, but had a medical emergency on the track and had to go home two days in after receiving two heart stints. But I returned the next year, completing the 10-week, 17-credit course through the University of Virginia. I passed," he recounted with a smile.

After serving the county sheriff's office as captain for about two years, Martin retired in May 2021.

And how did he kick off his retirement? He and Tami packed, sold their house and moved to St. Louis in time for Martin to begin summer Greek at the Seminary in June. He started the Residential Alternate Route (RAR) Program that fall.

STUDENT SPOTLIGHT ■

"Basically, I moved from law to Law and Gospel," Martin said smiling. "I have some different life experiences than other people, having been shot at or having a knife pulled on me. I've had to deliver death notifications and talk with victims of crime. I've worked with people experiencing pain and suffering and shared their pain. I feel those are skills that are translatable to this field, this calling of being a pastor."

While in law enforcement, Martin could not share his faith unless he was directly asked about it. At times, though, he was given opportunities to share his hope in Jesus Christ and the Resurrection, but he still had to walk the line between church and state. "As a pastor, I won't need permission or have to worry about getting fired for sharing my faith as I might have as a law enforcement officer," he said.

Working with people experiencing pain and suffering is not the only cross-over skill from law enforcement to pastoral ministry that Martin discovered through his Seminary studies.

"In dealing with officers for more than 30 years, we conducted written exams, interviews, background investigations, polygraphs, psychological exams and physical exams, all before we hired anyone to make sure we were hiring the best people," Martin said. "Yet, some still failed. They're human. So we provided tools to get them through."

Martin recounted a mentor program he was involved with while he worked with the sheriff's office.

"When done properly, it allowed new employees to team up with older mentors, giving them a way to ask questions they might not have felt comfortable bringing to their supervisor or chain of command," he said. "It allowed us to ensure the younger guys were getting good counsel, training and support."

Now, having been at the Seminary for almost two years, Martin sees the value of that experience and brings it to bear with his classmates. "A lot of the students here are young enough to be my children," he said. "I'm able to help these younger seminarians, mentor them, guide them as needed, to reassure them they are on the right path even if they feel like they're failing."

Yet, Martin acknowledged, he also has a lot to learn. "Like anyone else, I'm broken," he said. "A lot of times, broken people need another broken person to point them to Christ, to show them the One who can fix us. Here at the Seminary, our professors are first-class. I'm not just learning new things every day. I'm learning new things every hour."

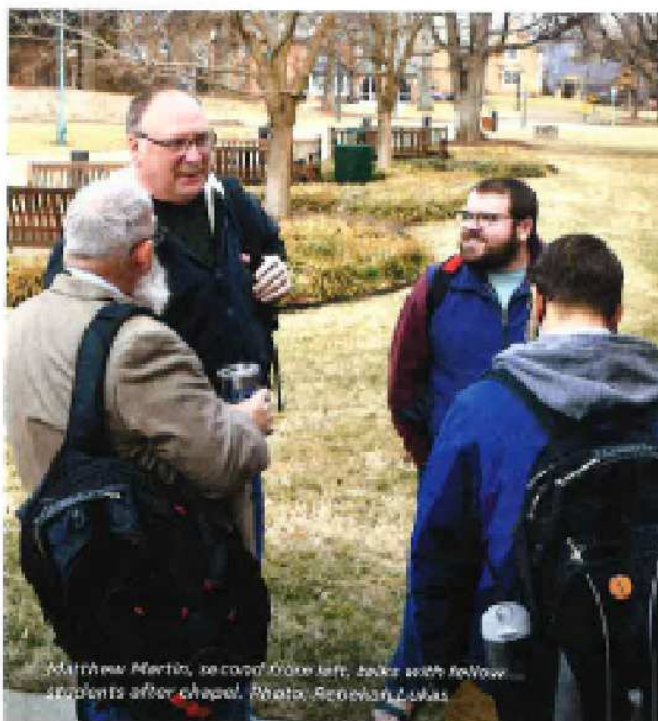
The things of the faith, I'm able to see them and understand them in ways I never have before."

Now that Martin is becoming a pastor, he is able to join his previous career and experiences with his new Seminary experiences and education and point broken people to Jesus. "While we didn't have Confession and Absolution in law enforcement, I was still able to show those guys that we're all broken, and here's the path you need to follow to continue in the force," he said. "Now, I'll get to help people know the One who is perfect through my specific role in the pastoral office, showing them and walking with them along the path they need to follow to continue in life."

With only a few months left of his Seminary studies in St. Louis, Martin soon will leave for his vicarage assignment, which, after a year, may be converted into his first pastoral call.

"I don't know how much time God has left for me on this earth, but I know with the time I have left, I want to tell people what Jesus has done for them," Martin said. "I want to share the Good News of Christ's death and resurrection for us, to help strengthen people's faith and help them to know their Lord and Savior, Jesus."

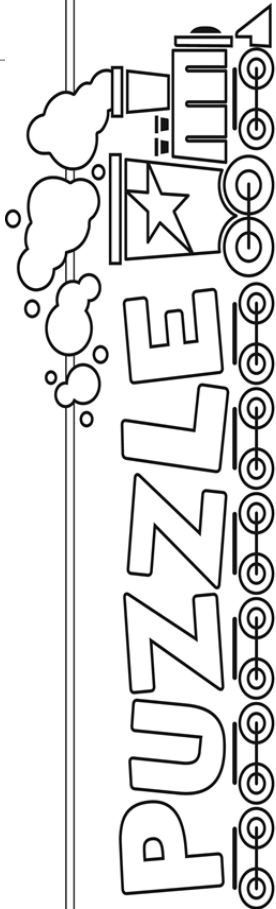
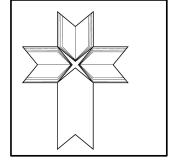
Deaconess Rebekah Lukas is a communications specialist at Concordia Seminary, St. Louis.



Matthew Martin, second from left, talks with fellow students after chapel. Photo: Rebekah Lukas

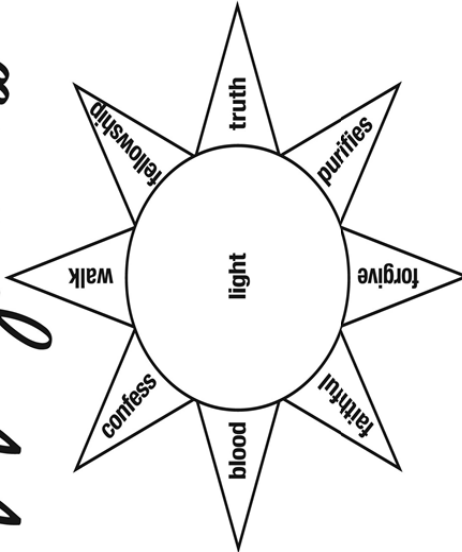


The Sanctuary
Blessed Savior Lutheran Church
1205 North Lincoln Ave.
O'Fallon, IL 62269



The light of forgiveness

The Lord is full of mercy and light. What happens when we confess our sins to God?



Directions:
Use the coded shapes
to fill in the blanks and
complete 1 John 1:7-9, NIV.

But if we _____ in the _____, as he is in the _____,
we have _____ with one another, and the _____
of Jesus, his Son, _____ us from all sin. If we claim to be
without sin, we deceive ourselves and the _____ is not in us.
If we _____ our sins, he is _____ and just and will
_____ us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.

1 JOHN 1:7-9, NIV

Answer: walk, light, light, fellowship, blood, purifies, truth, confess, faithful, forgive