

JANUARY 2023

THE CROSS & CROWN

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PUTTING ON THE ARMOR OF GOD TODAY, PART 4: FELLOWSHIP

PASTOR HANS FIENE

In Ephesians 6, St. Paul urges us, "Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the schemes of the devil." It's a section of the Scriptures that is beautiful but rather vague. What exactly is Paul telling us to do in these words? When he urges us to put on "the belt of truth" and "the breastplate of righteousness," what is he asking of us in our daily lives?

One of the challenges of living in this sinful world is that we don't always want the thing we want—that thing, of course, being Jesus. In our regenerated heart, we want to hear Christ's word, to receive His gifts, and to live according to His will. But our sinful nature always seeks to drag us the opposite direction, away from Christ, from repentance, and hope.

One of the reasons our sinful nature accomplishes its desire is because we find ourselves surrounded by people who have surrendered to their own sinful nature. And very often, the desires of our peers rub off on us. The more we listen to the words of gossipers, the more we want to gossip. The more we surround ourselves with those who are bored with Christ, the easier it becomes to embrace their idolatrous indifference. As St. Paul says in 1 Corinthians 15, quoting the Greek poet Menander, "bad company ruins good morals."

Likewise, in 1 Corinthians 12, Paul urges the body of Christ to live as a body, with each member dependent upon the other for support, love, and encouragement, saying "but God has so composed the body, giving greater honor to the part that lacked it, that there may be no division in the body, but that the members may have the same care for one another. If one member suffers, all suffer together; if one member is honored, all rejoice together."

Quite simply, if we want to want the thing we want, if we want to keep loving Christ in a world where we're increasingly surrounded by those who hate Him, one of the best things we can do is surround ourselves with those who share our confession of faith. (CONT. on pg. 2)

JANUARY AT A GLANCE

JAN 3

**DAILY MATINS RESUMES
(M-F/9AM)**

JAN 7

**ELDERS' MTNG./TAKE DOWN
CHRISTMAS TREE (9 AM)**

JAN 9

COUNCIL MTNG.

JAN 10

**FELLOWSHIP DINNER
(STADIUM FOOD) 5:30**

JAN 11

**YOUTH CONFIRMATION
RESUMES**

JAN 23

**DEADLINE FOR REIS NEFF
CARE PACKAGE DROPOFF**



"...catechism study is a most effective help against the devil, the world, the flesh, and all evil thoughts. It helps to be occupied with God's Word, to speak it, and meditate on it, just as the first Psalm declares people blessed who meditate on God's Law day and night."

Luther, Preface to The Large Catechism

EASTER PEOPLE IN EVERY SEASON

VICAR MATT DOEBLER

And if Christ has not been raised, your faith is futile and you are still in your sins...But in fact Christ has been raised from the dead, the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep. (1 Cor. 15:17, 20)

How important is it to believe, teach, and confess that Jesus Christ rose bodily from the grave? Pretty important, as it turns out. In fact, it's absolutely non-negotiable. As St. Paul says, if you don't have a resurrected Christ, then you don't have Christianity. I like the way one scholar neatly summarizes St. Paul's point: "If Christ is risen, then nothing else matters. If Christ is not risen, then nothing else matters."

Why is Christ's bodily resurrection so important?

First, the resurrection proclaims to us who Jesus Christ is, namely, the Son of God. (Rom. 1:4) No ordinary human being—no matter how powerful, wealthy, or intelligent—has ever been able to master death. That's one of the reasons why death is sometimes called the "great equalizer." By his resurrection, Christ demonstrates that he has no equal. He is not merely a man, but the God-man. Christ's resurrection proves that Christ is the righteous King who has deposed death.

But the resurrection doesn't simply prove who Christ is, it also accomplishes our salvation. When Christ was raised, God was declaring that the sins of the entire human race were now forgiven. That's St. Paul's meaning when he writes that Christ was "delivered up for our trespasses, and raised for our justification." (Rom 4:25) When Christ was raised from the dead, God the Father was declaring every single person to be justified—made righteous in His sight. On the cross, the sins of the entire world were laid on Christ. In the resurrection, God declared that all those sins have been forgiven—paid for.

You can't have Christ without the cross, and, likewise, you can't have Christ without the resurrection. The resurrection not only demonstrates Christ's power over death, but also serves as a declaration that God is no longer counting our sins against us. When we cling to this promise by faith, we receive the benefits of that declaration. That's why, no matter the season, every Lord's Day is a celebration of the resurrection—a little taste of Easter. Because nothing is more important. Nothing matters more than Christ's resurrection.

**The third day He rose
again from the dead.**

CONT. FROM PAGE 1

This is why the fellowship life of our congregation is so important. When we have opportunities to eat together, to laugh together, to weep together and sing together, we strengthen ourselves against the attacks of the devil. The more we surround ourselves with those who will rebuke us for our sins instead of embracing them, the easier it will be to follow the Lord who calls all of us to repentance. The more time we spend with our fellow congregation members who have promised to carry our burdens, the easier it is to let them carry those burdens to the foot of the cross with us. The more we get to know each other, the more we love each other. And the more we love our congregation members, the more likely we are to notice when they're not here, when they're not at peace, when they're struggling and in need of prayer or other forms of support.

So please join us for our various fellowship events. Come rejoice in the gift of the church family that God invites you to receive even outside of our worship hours. Come make friends with your brothers in Christ. Come eat, drink, and be merry with those who know that, when we die, we won't really die because our risen Lord has clothed us in His resurrection promises. Come surround yourself with those who want the things you want and you'll find that you want them even more.

A LOOK BACK AT DECEMBER

ANGEL TREE DONATIONS

A special thank-you for your generosity in supporting our 2022 Angel Tree toy drive.

We received so many wonderful donations that our Social Ministry Director, Richard Goldstein, had to make three trips to deliver it all. All of the donations were taken to local Toys For Tots collection sites.



AN ELDER BOARD TRADITION

It's time to say goodbye to our Christmas trees and all the beautiful Christmas decorations that have graced our building for the past month.

A word of thanks to the men who serve on our elder board and to our congregational president for continuing the annual tradition of decorating (and un-decorating) our building once again.

NEW AND CONTINUING OFFICERS

Join us in congratulating the following individuals who were elected/re-elected to Church Council and the Board of Elders:

OFFICERS:

President, Greg Hall
Vice President, Bob Androff
Secretary, Sandra Hall
Treasurer, Daniel Schow

BOARD CHAIRS:

Finance, Drake Smith
Social Ministry, Richard Goldstein
Stewardship, John Crumrine
Trustees, David Witbrodt
Youth, Ashley Lasky

BOARD OF ELDERS:

Bill Fletcher
Michael Lasky
John McGrew
David Weisheit

*These individuals will be installed during our worship service on January 8.



FOR YOUR INFORMATION

ROOF FUND UPDATE

As you know, we have been in the process of raising funds to replace portions of the roof. Thanks to your generous donations, our roof fund now stands at a bit over \$30,000!

We are still in the process of soliciting bids from various roofing companies, so we do not yet have a final cost (most estimates are between \$25,000-\$35,000.)

Thank you for your generosity in giving to this fund so that our building may be properly maintained as we carry out the task given to us by our Lord of making disciples.

A CLOSER LOOK AT... THE SEASON OF EPIPHANY

The season of Epiphany is the third longest liturgical season that the church observes--and one of the oldest liturgical festivals (dating back to the 4th century).

The Feast of Epiphany, which heralds the start of the season, is celebrated on January 6 and is followed closely by the church's celebration of Christ's baptism. The word *epiphany* means *manifestation*. Both the festival day and the season highlight the revelation of the Son of God who took on human flesh as the light of the world and wisdom from God.

Each of the successive seven weeks of Epiphany marks how the light of Christ is made manifest through his teaching. It is also a time to reflect upon Christ's call to faithful discipleship.

The season of Epiphany culminates in the observance of the Transfiguration of Our Lord--that moment when the incarnate Christ reveals his divine glory just before embarking upon his journey to Jerusalem and to the cross.

BIBLE STUDY OPPORTUNITIES

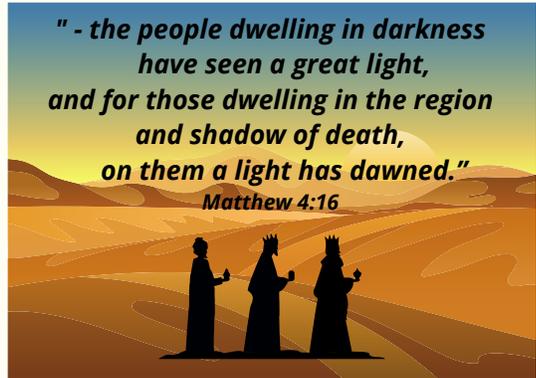
Looking for ways to make time in God's Word a priority in 2023? Here's a reminder of the bible study opportunities that happen each week at Prince of Peace:

- **Sunday Morning at 10:30** join us for Sunday School hour. We offer classes from pre-school through adult.
- **Tuesday Morning at 10:30** join us for Pastor's Bible class. We are currently looking at the differences between Lutherans and other Christian denominations.
- **Monday-Friday at 9:00** we hold daily matins services. Our readings for each morning are drawn from the *Treasury of Daily Prayer*--which is a great way to read through most of the Bible on a yearly basis.

CARE PACKAGE FOR REIS NEFF

POP member Reis Neff is currently serving with the U.S. Air Force in Misawa, Japan. Now through Jan. 23, we are collecting care package items for Reis. Suggested items are Jif Peanut Butter; Lipton Ice Tea packets; hot chocolate packets; healthy snacks (nuts, etc.). You can leave items for donation on the front counter in the church office. Thank you!

JANUARY 2023



SUN

MON

TUE

WED

THR

FRI

SAT

<p> 1</p> <p>HOLY COMMUNION 9:00 a.m. Worship Service Com. Assist.: Doebler Usher Team: 1</p> <p>NO Sunday School/Bible Class</p>	<p>NO 2</p> <p>Matins Service</p> <p>HOLY COMMUNION 7:00 p.m. Worship Service Com. Assist.: Weisheit Usher Team: 1</p> <p>Church Office Closed</p>	<p> 3</p> <p>9:00 a.m. Matins Service</p> <p>10:30 a.m. Pastor's Bible Study</p>	<p> 4</p> <p>9:00 a.m. Matins Service</p>	<p> 5</p> <p>9:00 a.m. Matins Service</p>	<p> 6</p> <p>9:00 a.m. Matins Service <i>The Epiphany of Our Lord</i> Church Office Closed</p>	<p>9:00 a.m. 7</p> <p>Elders Meeting and Removal of Christmas Tree</p> <p>Church Office Closed</p>
<p> 8</p> <p>HOLY COMMUNION 9:00 a.m. Worship Service Com. Assist.: McGrew Usher Team: 2</p> <p>10:30 a.m. Sunday School/Bible Class</p>	<p>9:00 a.m.  9</p> <p>Matins Service</p> <p>HOLY COMMUNION 7:00 p.m. Worship Service Com. Assist.: Fletcher Usher Team: 2</p> <p>8:00 p.m. Council Meeting</p>	<p> 10</p> <p>9:00 a.m. Matins Service</p> <p>10:30 a.m. Pastor's Bible Study</p>	<p> 11</p> <p>9:00 a.m. Matins Service</p> <p>5:30 p.m. Dinner/Fellowship Night Theme: Stadium Favorites</p>	<p> 12</p> <p>9:00 a.m. Matins Service</p>	<p> 13</p> <p>9:00 a.m. Matins Service</p> <p>Church Office Closed</p>	<p> 14</p> <p>9:00 a.m. - 12:00 Noon Swaddling Clothes Shopping Day</p> <p>Church Office Closed</p>
<p> 15</p> <p>HOLY COMMUNION 9:00 a.m. Worship Service Com. Assist.: Lasky Usher Team: 3</p> <p>10:30 a.m. Sunday School/Bible Class</p>	<p>9:00 a.m.  16</p> <p>Matins Service</p> <p>HOLY COMMUNION 7:00 p.m. Worship Service Com. Assist.: Androff Usher Team: 3</p>	<p> 17</p> <p>9:00 a.m. Matins Service</p> <p>10:30 a.m. Pastor's Bible Study</p>	<p> 18</p> <p>9:00 a.m. Matins Service</p>	<p> 19</p> <p>9:00 a.m. Matins Service</p>	<p> 20</p> <p>9:00 a.m. Matins Service</p> <p>Church Office Closed</p>	<p>21</p> <p>Church Office Closed</p>
<p> 22</p> <p>HOLY COMMUNION 9:00 a.m. Worship Service Com. Assist.: Hall Usher Team: 4</p> <p>10:30 a.m. Sunday School/Bible Class</p>	<p>9:00 a.m.  23</p> <p>Matins Service</p> <p>HOLY COMMUNION 7:00 p.m. Worship Service Com. Assist.: Weisheit Usher Team: 4</p>	<p> 24</p> <p>9:00 a.m. Matins Service</p> <p>10:30 a.m. Pastor's Bible Study</p>	<p> 25</p> <p>9:00 a.m. Matins Service</p>	<p> 26</p> <p>9:00 a.m. Matins Service</p>	<p> 27</p> <p>9:00 a.m. Matins Service</p> <p>Church Office Closed</p>	<p>28</p> <p>Church Office Closed</p>
<p> 29</p> <p>HOLY COMMUNION 9:00 a.m. Worship Service Com. Assist.: Fletcher Usher Team: 1</p> <p>10:30 a.m. Sunday School/Bible Class</p>	<p> 30</p> <p>9:00 a.m. Matins Service</p> <p>HOLY COMMUNION 7:00 p.m. Worship Service Com. Assist.: Doebler Usher Team: 1</p>	<p> 31</p> <p>9:00 a.m. Matins Service</p> <p>10:30 a.m. Pastor's Bible Study</p>	<p>Deadline to submit an announcement for the bulletin is 12:00 Noon, each Wednesday.</p>		<p></p> <p><i>Altar Guild</i> Karen Androff Cathy Knight</p>	