



January 2026

Volume 19, Issue 5

The Bethlehem
Star

Luther on Baptism in Galatians

We continue our look at Luther's lectures on Galatians, looking particularly at his comments on Galatians 3:27 where Paul writes, "For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ."

Luther writes, "Putting on Christ is understood in two ways: according to the Law and according to the Gospel. According to the Law, 'Put on the Lord Jesus Christ; that is: Imitate the example and the virtues of Christ. Do and suffer what He did and suffered.' So also 1 Peter 2:21; 'Christ suffered for us, leaving us an example, that we should follow in His steps.' In Christ we see the height of patience, gentleness, and love, and an admirable moderation in all things. We ought to put on this adornment of Christ, that is, imitate these virtues of His. In this sense we can imitate other saints as well.

But to put on Christ according to the Gospel is a matter, not of imitation but of a new birth and a new creation, namely, that I put on Christ Himself, that is, His innocence, righteousness, wisdom, power, salvation, life, and Spirit. We were dressed in the leather garment of Adam, which is a deadly garment and the clothing of sin. That is, we were all subjected and sold into the slavery of sin; horrible blindness, ignorance, and a contempt and hatred of God are present in us. Besides, we were filled with evil lust, uncleanness, and greed. By propagation from Adam we have acquired this garment, that is, this corrupt and sinful nature, which Paul calls 'the old man.' He must be put off with all his activities, so that from sons of Adam we may be changed into sons of God. This does not happen by a change of clothing or by any laws or works; it happens by the rebirth and renewal that takes place in Baptism, as Paul says; 'As many of you as were baptized have put on Christ.' Titus 3:5: 'He saved us, in virtue of His own mercy, by the washing of regeneration.' For in those who have been baptized a new light and flame arise; new and devout emotions come into being, such as fear and trust in God and hope; and a new will emerges. This is what it means to put on Christ properly, truly and according to the Gospel.

In Baptism, then, it is not the garment of the righteousness of the Law or of our own works that is given; but Christ becomes our garment. But He is not the Law, not a lawgiver, not a work; He is the divine and inestimable gift that the Father has given to us to be our Justifier, Lifesaver, and Redeemer. To put on Christ according to the Gospel, therefore, is to put on, not the Law or works but an inestimable gift, namely, the forgiveness of sins, righteousness, peace, comfort, joy in the Holy Spirit, salvation, life, and Christ Himself." (Luther's Works, American Edition, Volume 26, pages 352-253).

Rev. Samuel Wirgau



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Ossian, Indiana 46777
(260) 597-7121



Rev. Samuel Wirgau
Phone—(260) 273-7595
Email— samuel.wirgau@gmail.com
A congregation of the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod



January 2026

Sun Mon Tue Wed Thu Fri Sat

 <i>Epiphany</i>				1	2	3
4 9a Divine Service NO ABC / SS 10:30 Elders	5 6p Wholyfit 7p Handbell Choir Practice	6	7 10:00a Chapel Service 5:30p Adult Catechesis 7p Spoken Divine Service	8 6p Wholyfit	9	10
11 9a Divine Service 10:30 ABC / SS	12 6p PTL Meeting 6p Wholyfit 7p Handbell Choir Practice	13 5:30p Board of Christian Education Meeting	14 10:00a Chapel Service 5:30p Adult Catechesis 7p Spoken Divine Service	15 6p Wholyfit	16 Bethlehem Varsity Girls Tournament	17 Bethlehem Varsity Girls Tournament
18 9a Divine Service 10:30 ABC / SS	19 6p Wholyfit 7p Handbell Choir Practice	20	21 10:00a Chapel Service 5:30p Adult Catechesis 7p Spoken Divine Service	22 6p Wholyfit	23 Bethlehem Varsity Boys Tournament	24 Bethlehem Varsity Boys Tournament
25 9a Divine Service 10:30 ABC / SS	26 6p Wholyfit 7p Handbell Choir Practice	27	28 10:00a Chapel Service 5:30p Adult Catechesis 7p Spoken Divine Service	29 6p Wholyfit	30	31
<p>National Lutheran Schools Week</p> 						



Where's Jesus? January 4, 2026 – Second Sunday after Christmas
 Rev. Scott Zeckzer The season of Christmas is coming to an end. The Christmas decorations are put away but don't put Jesus away.

Jesus is still present, but where? Sermon Text: Luke 2:46 Readings: Psalm 119:97-104; 1 Kings 3:14-15; Luke 2:40-52 Featured Choirs: St. Paul Lutheran High School Choir, Concordia, Mo.; St. Paul Lutheran School Choir, Fort Wayne, Ind.; Lincoln Lutheran High School Choir, Lincoln, Neb. Featured Art and Architecture: Emmanuel Lutheran Church, New Haven, Ind.

The Baptism of Jesus January 11, 2026 – The Baptism of Our Lord Rev. Dr. Walter Maier III At the Baptism of Jesus there was clear, powerful evidence that He was not only a man but also God—the Son of God. Christ had to be human and divine in order to be the Savior of the world. As the Savior, Jesus closely identified with the human race, and that is why He submitted to being baptized with John. This is wonderful, good news for us today. Sermon Text: Matthew 3:13-17 Readings: Psalm 29:1-4; Isaiah 42:1-4; Matthew 3:13-17 Featured Choir: St. Paul Lutheran School Choir, Munster, Ind. Featured Art and Architecture: Grace Evangelical Lutheran Church, Muncie, Ind.

Who Is “The Real Jesus”? January 18, 2026 – Second Sunday after the Epiphany Rev. Dr. Thomas Ahlersmeyer What are people's first and lasting impressions of Jesus? Who do you think that He is? Will the “real Jesus” please stand Choirs: Holy Cross Lutheran Men's Chorus, Fort Wayne, Ind.; St. Paul Lutheran School Cup? Sermon Text: John 1:29 Readings: Psalm 40:1-11; 1 Corinthians 1:1-9; John 1:29-42a Featured choir, Fort Wayne, Ind. Featured Art and Architecture: Emanuel Lutheran Church, Tipton, Ind.

Fishers of Men -January 25, 2026 – Third Sunday after the Epiphany Rev. Shayne Jonker Formerly, the disciples fished for fish. Now, they would fish for men, catching men for the kingdom, dropping the dragnet of Jesus' own sacrificial death and resurrection into the sea of this world and dragging whatever they caught onto the shore and into the church. Sermon Text: Matthew 4:19 Readings: Psalm 27:1-9; Isaiah 9:1-4; Matthew 4:12-25 Featured Choirs: St. Peter's Lutheran School Choir, Fort Wayne, Ind.; St. John Lutheran Church Choir, Indianapolis, Ind. Featured Art and Architecture: Faith Lutheran Church, Roanoke, Ind.

Birthday Blessings! January



- 3) Marissa Geiger
- 4) Sara Fowler
- 6) Louis Schumm
Gary Werling
- 7) Dan Kleppinger
- 8) Eden Stoppenhagen
Sylvia Wann
- 9) Arthur Dodgers
- 10) Nikki Caldwell
Marilyn Franke
Kyle Patrick
- 11) Hallie Brege
Judith Lockwood
- 12) Melissa Price
- 14) Brandon Schumm
June Trammel
- 15) Jacob Bultemeier
- 18) Joshua Brown
Steve Conrad
Jordin Saalfrank
Ethan Williamson
- 19) Isla Meyer
Ronnie Trammel
- 21) DoRena Wirgau
- 22) Jennifer Meyer
- 24) Brittany Schumm
Hazel Todd
- 25) Briar Bauemeister
- 26) Tim Baker
Jason Lesh
Deann Oliver
Kim Werling
- 27) Tom Patrick
- 29) Jared Conrad
Olivia Householder
Jacob Werling
Kirsten Whitsitt
- 30) Dorothy Krick
Tara Werling
- 31) Rhys Meyer
Matthew Rekeweg

Wedding Anniversary Blessings

- Jan. 2 Jerry and Judith Lockwood (33)
 Jan. 4 Dan and Sue Buchinger (51)
 Jan. 31 Keith and Dorothy Krick (50)

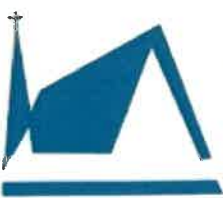


VISUAL FAITH MINISTRY WORKSHOP | TUESDAY, JAN 13 from 6-8pm

Join us as we explore the practice of Scripture Scribing. Create an accordion tag book to record verses about living in Christ. All supplies are provided but feel free to bring your favorite adhesive, paper trimmer and beverage. **Please RSVP by Jan 9** to reserve your spot! <https://blcsossian.org/visual-faith-ministry> or Contact Deann Oliver 616-894-0144



Join us Saturday, January 31st, 2026 for the Right to Life of Northeast Indiana Local March for Life. **Location:** Parkview Field, 1301 Ewing Street, Fort Wayne, IN. **Doors Open:** 12:00 PM
Pre-March Rally: 12:30–1:00 PM at Parkview Field **March Begins:** 1:00 PM. **Parking Information:** Parking is available in the **Parkview Field Silver Lot** and the **two adjacent lots**, all conveniently located in front of the stadium. PLEASE DRESS WARM. For more information visit: <https://www.ichooselife.org/resources/events/northeast-indiana-local-march-for-life-2026>



CONCORDIA
THEOLOGICAL
SEMINARY
Fort Wayne, Indiana

CONCORDIA THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY, Fort Wayne, invites you to the following events on the seminary campus. Tuesday, January 20: Vespers and Organ Recital (Dr. Craig Sproat); Wednesday January 21: Hymn Festival with the Schola Cantorum; January 22: Epiphany Evening Prayer with the Seminary Kantorei. All events are at 5:00 p.m. in Kramer Chape on the CTSFW campus and are free and open to the public. For more information, visit www.ctsfw.edu.

**The Endowment Committee thanks the Lord and the congregation
for the generous gifts to the Endowment Fund.**

Here is the monthly report for the Bethlehem Lutheran School Endowment Fund by the Lutheran Foundation. The following information is accurate as of October 31, 2025:

\$373,427.82 - Amount Bethlehem sent in since 2009
230,383.00 - Amount the Lutheran Foundation matched
392,597.09 - Amount generated since 2009
-179,500.00 - Amount disbursed to Bethlehem since 2009
\$816,907.91 - Value of the Endowment Fund as of October 31, 2025

Dr. David Nahrwold Fund
\$ 90,078.93 - Amount sent in since November 2024
9,447.73 - Amount generated since November 2024
-10,000.00 - Amount disbursed to Bethlehem since 2024
\$ 89,526.66 - Value of Dr. David Nahrwold Fund as of October 31, 2025

**Enjoy the convenience of Electronic
Giving!**

Please consider setting up a recurring giving plan. Automating your financial commitments means your contributions will be received on a steady, uninterrupted basis. If you wish to make a single online donation or set up recurring donations, you may do so on our website, www.blcsossian.org through our third-party provider-Vanco Payment Solutions. Online giving may be done as a credit card payment or ACH bank transfer. Please note, the church will incur a processing fee on each online transaction. Credit card transactions will be charged at least 2.75% fee. For ACH bank transfers, there is a fee of 1% of each dollar charged. This may affect how you wish to direct your online donations. You may also elect to increase your gift to cover the cost of the transaction fees.



**Folk Dancing - Sunday, February 8th
from 3:00 to 4:30 pm in the school
gym.**

Adults and children are invited to attend. No experience is required. Instructions will be given before each dance. Admission: \$1 per person or \$5 per family. For questions contact Kantor Brinkley. Please join us for this fun event!

December 31, 2025

BETHLEHEM FINANCIAL REPORT

General Fund (Home Fund) to Pay Operating Bills:

Balance: \$ 53,708.01
 Outstanding Checks Paid: \$ 13,130.70
 Total Checking: **\$ 40,577.31**

Savings Fund Balance:

	Accrued Amount	Restricted Amount Borrowed	Actual Balance
Improvement Fund:	\$ 33,071.96	\$ 24,075.00	\$ 8,996.96
Scholarship Fund:	\$ 15,111.68	\$ 9,350.00	\$ 5,761.68
Music Fund:	\$ 3,809.13	\$ 3,000.00	\$ 809.13
Relief Fund:	\$ 4,181.41	\$ 4,000.00	\$ 181.41
Organ Fund:	\$ 4,606.78	\$ 2,455.00	\$ 2,151.78
Endowment:	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Synod/Seminary Fund:	\$ 70.00	\$ -	\$ 70.00
Reserved (TBD):	\$ 2,469.26	\$ -	\$ 2,469.26
Totals	\$ 63,320.22	\$ 42,880.00	\$ 20,440.22

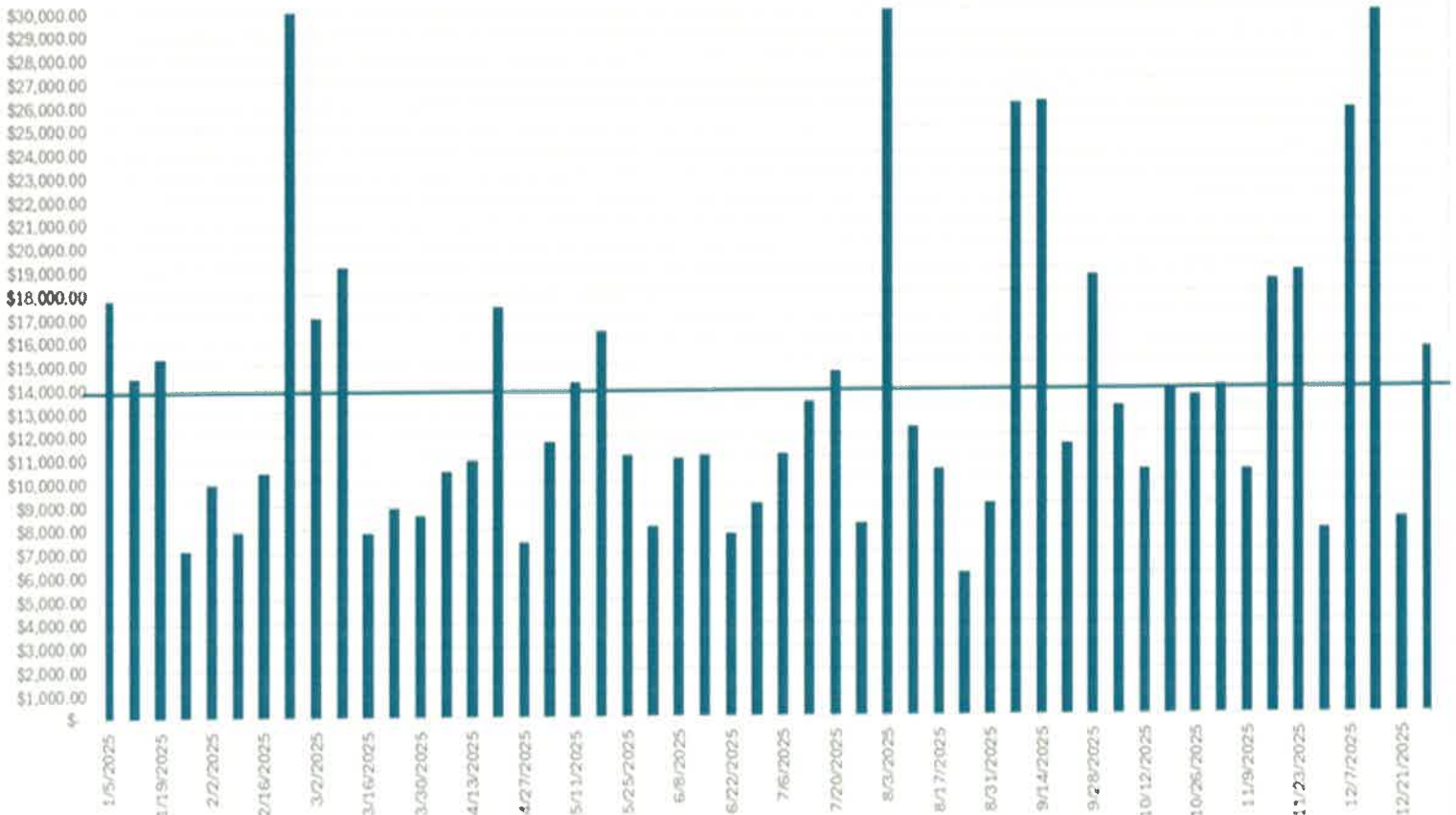
Borrowed Amounts

From Restricted Savings Account \$ 42,880.00
 Operating Loan \$ - (of \$30,000 max available)
TOTAL BORROWED \$ 42,880.00 (\$0.00/day for interest)

Total cash available to pay operate church **\$ 91,017.53**

Bills due week of: 1/5/2026 \$ 5,000
 Bills due week of: 1/12/2026 \$ 15,000

Weekly Offering



Come and Learn

Fees: \$10 per adult per course for 4 sessions. Free for college, high school, and elementary students. The public is cordially invited to attend. Bring your own personal Bible.

Registration: Participants are encouraged to pre-enroll with their parish representative. Final enrollments begin at 6:30 P.M. on the first night of classes at Wyneken Memorial Lutheran School on US Hwy 27, just north of Decatur, Indiana.

Contact Persons of the various Lutheran congregations in the area serve as members of the executive board and are available for information about the Lutheran Bible Institute. Anyone may enroll in the courses, as they are open to the public.

BETHLEHEM, Ossian
Ted Schumm

Denise Schumm

EMMANUEL, Soest

Jill Griebel

Joy Scott

FAITH, Roanoke

Terri Edmiston

IMMANUEL, Union

Ken Krause

NEW HOPE, Ossian

Tina Bauermeister, Treasurer

Tony Bauermeister

PEACE, Berne

Bill Endorf

REDEEMER, Convoy, Ohio

Rick Pettyjohn

ST. JOHN, Bingen

Kevin Selking, Vice Chairman

Pam Selking

ST. JOHN, Flatrock

(Vacancy)

ST. PAUL, Ft. Wayne

Dan Wietfeldt, Secretary

ST. PAUL, Gar Creek

Jon Koeneman

ST. PAUL, Preble

Darrel Ehlerding

ST. PETER, Fuelling

Rev. Leonard Tanksley, Dean

Duane Franz

ZION, Decatur

Norbert Bleeke

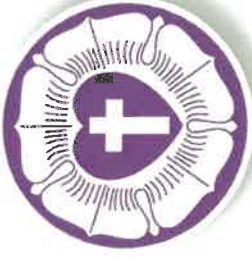
ZION, Friedheim

Dennis Werling, Chairman

ZION, Schumm, Ohio

Larry Schwartz

2026 Sessions



Decatur Lutheran Bible Institute

Don't miss this year's
Decatur Lutheran
Bible Institute.

Four stimulating courses
are open to the public on
the Tuesday evenings
listed below.

Expand your knowledge
and *grow in Christ!*

January 27,
February 3,
February 10,
February 17
7:00-9:15 pm

Wyneken Memorial
Lutheran School
11565 US Hwy 27
Decatur, Indiana

Choose one of the four courses . Classes meet from 7:00 – 9:15 pm



Rev. Dr. Daniel Brege
St. Paul Preble Lutheran Church, Decatur

**Topic: The Psalms: A Little Bible
Christ and His Work: See it in the Psalms**

Do you want to learn about Jesus? Peer into the Psalms. Do you want to learn the basic doctrines of Christianity? Study the Psalms. Do you want to pray God's prayers? Pray the Psalms. Do you want comfort and encouragement? Consider several Psalms.

Session Topics

1. *Specifics About Jesus – in the Psalms*
2. *Realize the Catechism in the Psalms*
3. *Law and Gospel in the Psalms*
4. *Praying the Psalms*



Rev. Dr. Gifford Grobrien
Concordia Theological Seminary, Fort Wayne

Topic: Christian Ethics

Bearing Fruit for God: How to Live the Christian Life

Drawing primarily from the Bible, this course will introduce students to ideas, concepts and applications in Christian Ethics. The course will focus on the activity of the Christian Life, considering the orders of creation: church, family, and society. Besides addressing traditional topics such as marriage and family, Christian piety, work, and citizenship, we will address contemporary challenges related to bioethics, technology, and secularism.

Session Topics

1. *Christian Ethics: The Law and the Spirit*
2. *The Orders of Creation*
3. *Contemporary Challenges: Technology and Secularism*
4. *Issues: Bioethics and Politics*



Rev. Raymond Doubrava II
New Hope Lutheran Church, Ossian

Topic: Liturgics

God's Service: The Lutheran Liturgy at the 500th Anniversary of Luther's German Mass

On Christmas Day 1525, Luther's German Mass was first used in Wittenberg and quickly spread throughout the Lutheran states. How was what Luther did innovative, and how was it consistent with the history of the Church? What ramifications does this have for us today

Session Topics

1. *Why the Divine Service?*
2. *The Biblical Foundation of the Divine Service*
3. *The Historical Foundation of the Divine Service*
4. *The Divine Service Today*



Rev. Andrew Yeager
St. Paul Preble Lutheran Church, Decatur

Topic: The Noble Army of Martyrs

Martyrdom: Accounts from the Early Church

This course will provide an in-depth history of early-church martyrs. As we examine how the martyrs bore witness to Jesus by their blood, our faith will be strengthened to follow their example and confess Christ in our own lives.

Session Topics

1. *Saint Polycarp*
2. *Saint Ignatius of Antioch*
3. *Saints Lucia, Perpetua, and Felicitas*
4. *Saint Cyprian of Carthage*

YOUTH Newsletter

JANUARY
2026

WHAT WE'RE LEARNING

Bible Study

Both groups have been studying the book of Galatians.

High School youth are still selling cheeseballs for Higher Things 2026.

March for Life in D.C. Jan. 24
March for Life in Fort Wayne Jan. 31

Chili Cookoff Feb. 13th
EOC event TBD

Galatians 4:1-7

January 11th

New Hope 2nd year Seminarian

Middle: Seminarian William Harr

High: Vicar Charles McLain

Galatians 4:8-20

January 25th

Bethlehem 2nd year Seminarian

Middle: Seminarian Brandon Streeks

High: Vicar Charles McLain

“...God sent forth his Son
... so that we might receive
adoption as sons.”

Galatians 4:4-5

UPCOMING EVENTS

- Bible Study: January 11
(6:30pm-8:00pm)
- Bible Study: January 25
(6:30pm-8:00pm)



Christmas Party
Middle & High School Group

REFRESHMENTS

Doughnut Duty: Stoppenhagen

Bible Study 11th: Meyer

Bible Study 25th:

HEALTH & WELLNESS

RESOURCES

Life in FW- January 31st, 2026

Parkview Field, 1301 Ewing St, Fort Wayne, IN

Doors Open: 12:00 PM

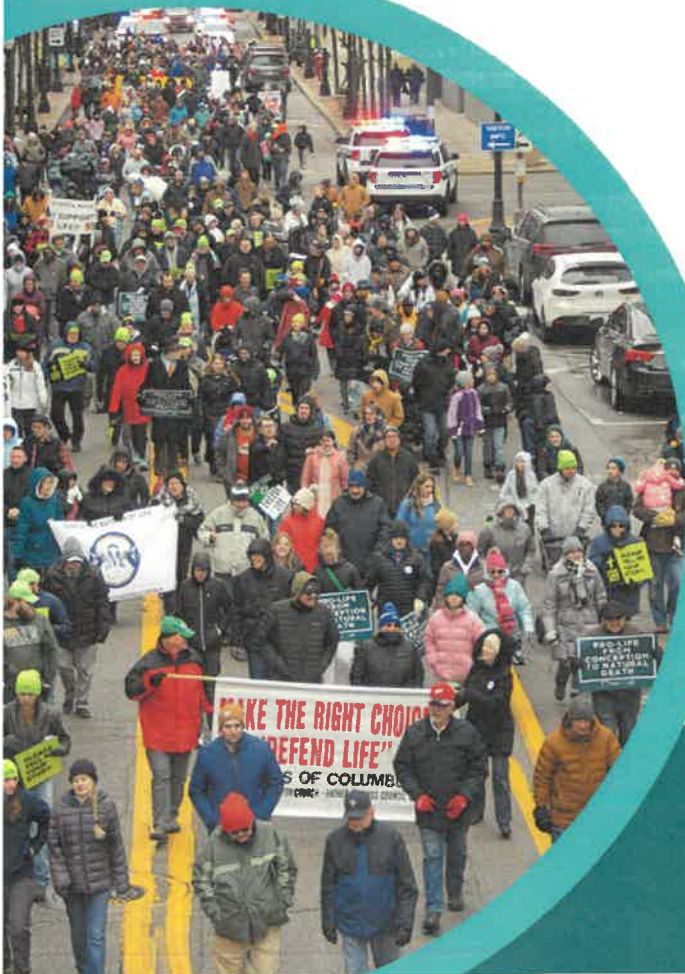
Pre-March Rally: 12:30–1:00 PM at Parkview Field

March Begins: 1:00 PM

Washington, D.C. | January 23, 2026

Lutherans for Life

Y4Life Conference in D.C.



Why March?

God is the giver of life and the Creator of every person. LCMS Life Ministry bears witness to the sanctity of life by proclaiming Christ crucified and by gathering Lutherans to stand for the life of the unborn. Through life marches, Lutherans remember the lives lost to abortion, pray for mothers and families facing difficult circumstances, and ask the Lord to turn hearts to His Son, in whom forgiveness and life are found.

Many state and national life marches also provide opportunities for participants to meet directly with elected officials, encouraging them to protect and care for all human life—from conception to natural death. At the 2024 March for Life in Washington, D.C., LCMS President Rev. Dr. Matthew C. Harrison reminded participants that the Church's witness is rooted not in politics, but in Christ. "Why do we march?" he asked. "Because the blood of Jesus Christ, God's Son, cleanses us from all our sins. Why do we march? Because many consciences in America have died, and we believe in resurrections, and we say, 'Lazarus, come out.'"

Rev. Christopher Esget, LCMS fifth vice-president and pastor of Immanuel Lutheran Church in Alexandria, Va., reflected on how his understanding of the march has deepened over time. "My first few years I saw it as a political statement," he said. "I now see it as a confession that every life is valuable and a gift from God. We're testifying in the public square that there is something greater than politics—setting the matter before God and lifting high the cross to call the world to Jesus, in whom is life."

That shared confession is strengthened when Lutherans gather together. "There is strength in numbers and in unity," said Kaye Wolff, a longtime LWML leader and member of Emmanuel Lutheran Church in Dearborn, Mich. "People see us together as sisters and brothers in Christ, upholding Christ's Word—and hopefully next year they'll join us."

For many, the march is also a testimony of hope. "Every life matters," said Cody Moen of Ascension Lutheran Church in Huntsville, Ala. "Support for mothers and fathers matters. The church is a place where all life is important—a place of hope. In the church, you're not alone."

In a brief address following the Divine Service, Harrison reflected on the weight of abortion's impact since 1973. "That means at least 120 million people involved," he said. "And we in the Church have something to give: the free conscience. Freedom from sin. Reconciliation with God. Joy, peace, and hope."

TAKEN FROM
2025 LCMS REPORTER "HIS THE VICTORY" &
"MARCHING FOR LIFE" ENGAGE 2024

Beat the Winter Blues and Join Us for

Craft for a Cause

Saturday, March 7, 2026

7am - 7pm

Bethlehem Lutheran Church, 6514 E 750 N, Ossian, IN

Ladies, pack up your crafting supplies and join us for 12 hours of fellowship, food and uninterrupted crafting fun!!!

Registration Includes

1/2 of an 8' Table Workspace
with Electricity Provided

Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner*
Snack & Beverage Station

Table Gifts
Progressive Bingo for Prizes

Not Crafty? NO WORRIES!

Bring a hobby, coloring books, a book or whatever you want and come fellowship with us!

SPACE IS LIMITED AND FILLS UP FAST!!!

\$45 per person**

Registration Deadline: February 27 or until spaces are full.

Proceeds benefit the Women of Bethlehem Ministry

**We are not able to accommodate all dietary restrictions. Meal plans will be emailed 2 weeks prior to the event so you can plan for your specific needs.*

***Due to limited space and fundraising nature, refunds will not be given if you cannot attend.*

Please direct inquiries to Deann Oliver at deannrene@outlook.com or 616-894-0144.



Mail this form and check **payable to Women of Bethlehem** to
Bethlehem Lutheran Church, Craft for a Cause, 6514 E 750 N, Ossian, IN 46777.

Name _____

Email _____ Phone _____

Name _____

Email _____ Phone _____

Name _____

Email _____ Phone _____

Name _____

Email _____ Phone _____

TOTAL ENCLOSED



JANUARY EVENT SCHEDULE

FACEBOOK: BRIDGE 20/30 GROUP FT. WAYNE | INSTAGRAM: THEBRIDGE2030

6
JAN 2026

LINE DANCING LESSONS - ALL TYPES

7 PM THE FORT WAYNE BALLROOM
COMPANY - 3127 CARROLL RD
\$5/PERSON- CHECK IN AT
6:45 PM

13
JAN 2026

THE PORCH NIGHT: SERIES ON VANITY: A STUDY OF THE BOOK OF ECCLESIASTES

7 PM HOLY CROSS YOUTH CENTER
3420 N. ANTHONY BLVD

20
JAN 2026

DEVOTION ANCHOR NIGH WITH BRIAN LOESEL FOLLOWED BY CARDS & GAMES

7 PM THE GARDEN
3308 N ANTHONY BLVD

27
JAN 2026

MEETUP - RACK & HELEN'S TRIVIA | TACO TUESDAY

7 PM T525 BROADWAY STREET
NEW HAVEN



TIGER TALES

“Make a Joyful Noise”



A New Song & A New Year

Christmas is known for its songs. No other holiday has so many. We hear them in stores, in the car, at home, and at church. Every year we expect to sing many of the same songs and our children practice them and sing them in services and pageants. Why is that? Why does Christmas have so many songs?

Psalm 98 calls to us: *Oh sing to the Lord a new song, for He has done marvelous things! His right hand and His holy arm have worked salvation for Him.* The song we sing is “new” because it’s a song about the “new thing” our Lord has done. Our God became a man! And He died on a cross! And He rose from the dead, defeating sin, devil, and death! Christmas is a great outburst of song because it is the beginning of this new work that Christ did for us. And this new work of Christ actually makes us new.

Jesus says that we must be born again, born of water and the Spirit (John 3:3,5). In Baptism, we are made new. Just as Christ was born, we are given new birth (Titus 3:5). And just as Christ was raised from the dead, we are given new life (Romans 6:4). This is why we sing a new song—because Christ’s new work of salvation makes us new people. *Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come (2 Corinthians 5:17).*

The changing of the calendar can even serve as a reminder of this new thing. It’s fitting that the Christmas and New Year holidays go hand in hand. We celebrate the beginning of Christ’s new work in His birth. At the same time, the old year dies and the new year is born. So also, Christ continues to do His new thing as He make us new with life and joy.

This is why we sing so many Christmas songs. We’re always singing the new song of Christ’s salvation. So, begin this New Year by making a joyful noise to the One who makes all things new (Revelation 21:5).

Happy New Year!

Your servant in Christ,
Pastor Dodgers



January 2026

Sun

Mon

Tue

Wed

Thu

Fri

Sat



				1	2	3
4	5 NO BUS or Hot Lunch 5p Girls vs Zion 6p Boys vs Zion 				9 Girls St. John Emmauel Tournament 	10 Girls St. John Emmauel Tournament
11 Girls St. John Emmauel Tournament	12 6p PTL Meeting	13 5:30p Board of Christian Education Meeting	14 3-5p Cheer Camp	15 MaKayla Berkey 	16 Bethlehem Varsity Girls Tournament 	17 Bethlehem Varsity Girls Tournament
18 1-4p Cheer Camp	19	20	21 Regular schedule	22	23  Delaney Wood Bethlehem Varsity Boys	24 Bethlehem Varsity Boys Tournament 
25	26 100th Day of School	27 6p Boys vs Harlan 7p Girls vs Harlan	28	29 Olivia Household-er 	30 Mid-term	31 Matthew Re-keweg 
National Lutheran Schools Week						



Please join us for Tiger's Basketball

1/5/2026	Monday	Girls	Zion Lutheran	Home	5:00p
1/5/2026	Monday	Boys	Zion Lutheran	Home	6:00p
1/9/2026	Friday	Girls JV	St John-Emmanuel	Away	TBD
1/10/2026	Saturday	Girls JV	St John-Emmanuel	Away	TBD
1/11/2026	Sunday	Girls JV	St John-Emmanuel	Away	TBD
1/16/2026	Friday	Girls V	Bethlehem Tourney	Home	TBD
1/17/2026	Saturday	Girls V	Bethlehem Tourney	Home	TBD
1/23/2026	Friday	Boys V	Bethlehem Tourney	Home	TBD
1/24/2026	Saturday	Boys V	Bethlehem Tourney	Home	TBD
1/27/2026	Tuesday	Boys	Harlan	Home	6:00p
1/27/2026	Tuesday	Girls	Harlan	Home	7:00p

School Gym Use after school hours – Before using the school gym after school hours, please be sure to contact our current Athletic Director, Brandon Schumm. Please call or text him at 260-273-7403 to make arrangements. Thank you

***Rules for the gym include NO Roller Blading or Skateboarding. Please be diligent in wearing clean non-marking shoes. Thank you**

With Gradelink you can stay updated on your child's academic progress at school and get information on upcoming assignments such as assignment descriptions and due dates. The following information is available to you when you **log in to Gradelink**:

- Current Grade in each class
- Current GPA for the term, if applicable
- Descriptions, Grades, and Teacher Comments for graded assignments
- Descriptions and Due Dates for upcoming assignments
- Assignment handouts or documents (attachments)
- Email Alerts you can configure for grades and attendance
- Attendance Information
- Transcript Information, if applicable
- Billing Information, online payment for tuition and lunch fees



To access this information go to www.gradelink.com and click on the green Log In button.

PLEASE CALL THE SCHOOL OFFICE IF YOU NEED ANY HELP logging in.

PRIVACY NOTICE We all love to share pictures of our child's school activities and accomplishments. However, we have to be very careful where those pictures are posted and respect that other students might also be in the picture. Parents, please remember to not post pictures that may have students in them other than your own child. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact the school office before posting anything. Thank you

Weather permitting the students will be going outside for recess time. Please have your child dress appropriately for the weather.



Potential delays and cancellations for Bethlehem will follow the same as Northern Wells Community Schools.

Bethlehem will be on a normal school day schedule, Monday, January 5th with NO bus or lunch service.

Bethlehem will NOT be following the Northern Wells Community Schools 2 hour delay on Wednesday, January 21st. Therefore, unless a weather related delay or closing comes along, Bethlehem will operate on a regular schedule. Morning bus service will NOT be provided. The 7-8th grade students will be excused from their NW morning classes and are asked to be at Bethlehem by 9:15 a.m. Please contact the school office if you have any questions.

December / January Birthday Pizza Lunch
with Pastor Dodgers

Thursday, January 15th at 12:00 Noon

Those celebrating will be:

Annabelle Fuhrmann, Anna Haiflich, Violet Nahrwold, Emma Campbell
MaKayla Berkey, Delaney Wood, Olivia Householder, Matthew Rekeweg



Lutheran School Week Dress-up



Monday, Jan. 26- Teacher/Student Swap Dress-up: Students dress like teachers. Teachers dress like students.

Tuesday, Jan. 27- Dress as a Saint: Dress like a famous believer from the Bible or Church History.

Wednesday, Jan. 28- Dress Your Best: Wear your nicest, fanciest, snazziest clothes.

Thursday, Jan. 29- Dress as a Book Character: Dress like one of your favorite characters from one of your favorite books.

Friday, Jan. 30- Letter Day: Wear something or dress up like something with the first letter of your first name.



Sign up today!

Shop at Kroger and help Bethlehem Lutheran School tuition assistance fund with the **Kroger Community Rewards Program**.

Register online at krogercommunityrewards.com, be sure to have your Kroger Plus card handy and register your card with Bethlehem Lutheran School as your organization for the reward. The NPO number for Bethlehem is **WG595#**.

If you don't have a Kroger Plus card, they are available at the customer service desk.

Members must swipe their registered Kroger Plus card or use the phone number that is related to their registered card when shopping for each purchase to count.



To redeem Box Top products, you will need to download the Box Tops app on your phone and then scan each receipt that contains your Box Tops products. **KEEP ON SCANNING!**

PLAN TO USE SCRIP FOR ALL YOUR SHOPPING NEEDS

Please see the flyer attached to this newsletter for information on how to create your own account through Raise Right using Bethlehem's enrollment code noted on the attached flyer. Physical cards, ecards and reloadable cards are all available for your purchase and can be sent directly to your home.

Please be sure to check out our new scrip order sheet attached to this newsletter. Physical cards from local vendors and more are now available for order. Ordering dates are set to reduce shipping costs. **For questions or for placing an order, please contact Jill Holtzclaw 260-301-1965 our current PTL representative.**

As you purchase SCRIP you will also accumulate a percentage of profit to be applied to your child's tuition. Thank you to the church congregation and school families for supporting the Scrip Program.

Our Washington D.C. group appreciates your support.

This year's trip for our 7th & 8th graders will take place in April 2026

Please save your newspapers, catalogs, magazines, junk mail, old phone books, office/school papers and hard/soft cover books. Along with cereal type boxes (NO CARDBOARD). Bring your recycled paper to school and dispose of it in our "PaperGator" located right next to the trash dumpster in the front parking area of the school.



Aluminum cans and scrap metal The Washington DC group would like to remind everyone that we are looking for "pop can" style cans only for collection purposes. We are starting to find trash and glass in the recycling bin here at church which slows the sorting process down. If anyone has any questions, please contact Jay Werling or Jason Rekeweg. Thanks to everyone for your continued support.



As you are able, please bring an Offering for Chapel on Wednesdays

Our God has given so much to us! One way that we worship Him is by giving back a portion of His gifts to Him and to His Church. Students may place their offerings in the offering plate as they come into chapel every Wednesday.

The third quarter chapel project will be for Orphan Grain Train. More details will be coming home soon.

Please feel free to join us for Wednesday morning Chapel at 10:00 a.m.



Thank you to everyone who donated to our Northern Wells Food Pantry Chapel Project last quarter. We appreciate everyone's kindness and generosity. The 5-6 grade students will be taking a field trip to the Northern Wells Food Pantry in Osasian to deliver all the collected items and a check from our chapel offerings.



A big thank you to the Women of Bethlehem for a wonderful Christmas luncheon! The kindergarten students made special ginger man houses as centerpieces. All the students sang Christmas carols to entertain and thank the ladies.

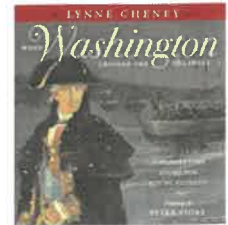


We have New books for the new year!

Remember, you can browse our library catalog online any time from

<https://www.librarycat.org/lib/BLCSOssianLibrary/>

The search page shows the books most recently added to our system. We have several new picture books perfect for winter reading.



We also invite everyone to a Bingo reading challenge!

When you complete a Bingo you can get your picture in the Tiger Tales, plus a special prize!



You have until the last library day of the school year to work on the challenge. You have to share the titles of the books or tell the librarians about what you read. Yes, audiobooks and books read aloud by parents count! Printed Bingo cards will be distributed in the school library.

Happy New Year of Reading!



Bethlehem Library Bingo

Book with a One Word Title	Historical Fiction	2nd in a Series (after reading the first!)	Nonfiction American History Book	A Librarian Favorite
Re-read a Book	A Book Older than Your Dad	A Picture Book	Biography	Write a Book Review for Tiger Tales
Recommend a Book to Someone	Suggested by your Parent	Free Read	Mystery	Book from the Public Library
A chapter or story from the Old Testament	Read in a Blanket Fort	Book Made into a Movie	10 Poems	A Teacher Favorite
Nonfiction Animal Book	Read to Someone Else	Write a Story or Poem	Memorize a Poem or Psalm	Your Friend's Favorite Book

Children's Christmas Artwork



Pictures from our Winners were used for
Worship Service bulletin covers:
Children's Christmas Service – Emma Campbell
Christmas Eve Service – Brooke Werling
Christmas Day Service – Harper Miller



Personal picks from our Headmaster
Jude Wirgau
Delaney Wood
MaKayla Berkey



Honorable Mention Award
June Trammel
Mazie Day
Cora Day
Violet Nahrwold
Maren Meyer
Jonah Bultemeier
Emma Schueler

Children's Christmas Service





Skating Party Highlights



The last few days before Christmas break were filled with a week of special dress up days. The last day was PJ's and Flannel Shirt Day along with classroom parties! Even Vicar McLain and his wife Natalie joined in the festivities!

MIDDLE SCHOOL GIRLS

DEC 17 HANGING AROUND AND...

DEC 21 BAAL GOES DOWN THE...

SCRIPTURE: 1 KINGS 18

SUMMARY: WORSHIPPING OF FALSE PROPHETS, THE PROPHETS OF BAAL DIED IN A SLAUGHTER.



Book Club

**THE LION,
THE WITCH
AND THE WARDROBE**
BY C. S. LEWIS

MEET JANUARY 17



DATES

12.18 (1.8)
NLSW Project

1.15
Lent Devotional

Deaconess Discussion

NLSW Project

Rescheduled to January.

Will have two meeting times in January.

Adult Fellowship Group

Sun. Jan. 11
Noon

Potluck & card games

At Bethlehem Church
in fellowship hall

Women's Bible Study

TBD

We will be having a spring Womens bible study. More info to come.

Let's
Make
a Joyful
Noise PSALM 98:4

News Notes To Parents

Purdue University Cooperative Extension Service

January 2026

8 Parenting Goals to Start the New Year Strong.

New Year's resolutions are often sweeping and grand. But you can often reap the biggest rewards by building off strengths already in place. Helping to make your family safer, stronger and more harmonious in the coming year may not require a complete overhaul, but rather a few strategic tweaks.

The start of a new year is a great time to take a step back, take a breath and look at how you are taking care of yourself and others in your family. Consider these suggestions for a healthy new year.

1. Get everyone up-to-date on recommended immunizations

Vaccines are the best way to protect yourself, your children, and other loved ones from dangerous viruses such as RSV, flu and COVID, which have been rising among children. Call your pediatrician to make sure your children are up-to-date on all recommended immunizations. Also, remind your kids that good hand hygiene habits will help prevent the spread of germs.

2. Build healthy digital habits

What are your kids watching on TV and online? Devote some time to researching age-appropriate media. Make a family media use plan, and try to prevent gaming from becoming an unhealthy habit.

3. Read together

Set aside some time for shared reading each day. For younger kids, an easy way is to build it into your child's bedtime routine. For older children and teens, share a favorite book by taking turns reading aloud or listen to audiobooks together.



4. Get outside more

Spending time outdoors can be a great mood booster. It also helps families get needed physical activity and vitamin D while enjoying time in nature.

5. Check your car seat limits for safety

Kids grow so fast and can easily outgrow car seats faster than parents realize. Keep kids riding rear-facing as long as possible, up to the limits of their car seat, because this is the safest mode. This commonly includes children under 2 and most children up to age 4.

6. Set aside time to cook together & share family meals

Many families enjoy baking treats together during the holidays. Schedule special times to cook together as a family. Research finds that kids who eat with their families at least 3 times a week enjoy physical, emotional, social and academic benefits.

7. Make a family disaster kit

It's scary to think how disasters like wildfires, hurricanes or tornados could affect our communities. But extreme weather events are becoming more frequent due to climate change. Ask your children what they would want with them in a disaster and assemble basic supplies.

8. Mind mental health & practice self-care

When was the last time you had a check-up? Got proper rest? Once a baby is no longer a part of your body, it's easy to forget that how you care for yourself affects how well you can care for your child. The National Maternal Mental Health Hotline is available 24/7 by calling 1-833-943-5746. And for non-emergency support, you can contact Postpartum Support International: call or text "Help" to 1-800-944-4773.

Source: adapted from [healthychildren.org](https://www.healthychildren.org)
American Academy of Pediatrics

Photo credit: Canva



Eating better on a budget

Get the most for your budget! The three main steps are planning before you shop, purchasing the items at the best price, and preparing meals that stretch your food dollars.

1 Plan, plan, plan!

Before you head to the grocery store, plan your meals for the week. Check to see what foods you already have and make a list for what you need to buy.



2 Get the best price

Check the local newspaper, online, and at the store for sales and coupons. Look for specials or sales on meat and seafood—often the most expensive items on your list.

3 Compare and contrast

Locate the "Unit Price" on the shelf directly below the product. Use it to compare different brands and different sizes of the same brand to determine which is the best buy.

4 Buy in bulk

It is almost always cheaper to buy foods in bulk. Before you shop, remember to check if you have enough freezer space.



5 Buy in season

Buying fruits and vegetables in season can lower the cost and add to the freshness! If you are not going to use them all right away, buy some that still need time to ripen.

6 Convenience costs... go back to the basics

Convenience foods like frozen dinners, pre-cut fruits and vegetables, and take-out meals can often cost more than if you were to make them at home. Take the time to prepare your own—and save!

7 Easy on your wallet

Certain foods are typically low-cost options all year round.



8 Cook once...eat all week!

Prepare a large batch of favorite recipes on your day off (double or triple the recipe). Freeze in individual containers.

9 Get creative with leftovers

Spice up your leftovers—use them in new ways. For example, try leftover chicken in a stir-fry, over a garden salad, or in chili. Remember, throwing away food is throwing away your money!

10 Eating out

Restaurants can be expensive. Save money by getting the early bird special, going out for lunch instead of dinner, or looking for "2 for 1" deals. Ask for water instead of ordering other beverages, which add to the bill.

Molly Hoag, Health & Human Sciences Educator

www.extension.purdue.edu/Wells

News Notes To Parents is a product of Purdue Extension—Wells County. If you have comments or need information, call (260) 824-6412. The office is located at 1240 4-H Park Road, Bluffton IN, 46714. **Tell someone about us!**

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Jen H., earns for hockey

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Organization enrollment code: 43ALE7851441

For questions, contact our coordinator: Mariah Trammel at (260)2671614



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Bethlehem Lutheran Scrips Order Form [Orders due on Monday]

Date: _____ Student _____

Name _____ Circle One: **BLS** Student(named above)

Phone # _____ Check # _____ Total _____

				QTY.	Total					QTY.	Total
A	Amazon.com	1.6%	\$25			M	Marathon	3%	\$25		
	Amazon.com	1.6%	\$100				Marathon	3%	\$100		
	Applebee's	8%	\$25				Marathon	4%	\$250		
	Arby's	8%	\$10				McAlister's Deli	6%	\$25		
	Arby's	8%	\$25				McDonalds	5%	\$5		
B	Barnes & Noble	8%	\$10				McDonalds	5%	\$10		
	Barnes & Noble	8%	\$25				McDonalds	5%	\$25		
	Bath & Body Works	12%	\$10				McDonalds	5%	\$50		
	BP	1.5%	\$50				Meijer	3%	\$25		
	BP	1.5%	\$100				Meijer	3%	\$50		
	Buffalo Wild Wings	8%	\$10				Meijer	3%	\$100		
	Buffalo Wild Wings	8%	\$25				Menard's	3%	\$25		
	Burger King	4%	\$10				Menard's	3%	\$100		
	Burger King	4%	\$25				Mike's Carwash	20%	\$11		
C	Chipotle	10%	\$10			N	Nine Mile	8%	\$20		
	Colliers Comfort	5%					O'Charley's	13%	\$25		
	Cracker Barrel	8%	\$10			Old Navy	14%	\$25			
	Cracker Barrel	8%	\$25			Olive Garden/Cheddars	8%	\$25			
	Culvers	10%	\$10			& Longhorn Steakhouse					
D	Dairy Queen	6.5%	\$10			P	Outback	10%	\$25		
	Dick's Sporting Goods	8%	\$25				Panda Express	8%	\$25		
	Disney	3%	\$25				Panera Bread	8%	\$5		
E	East of Chicago	10%	\$10				Papa John's Pizza	8%	\$10		
	East of Chicago	10%	\$25				Pizza Hut	8%	\$10		
F	Fazoli's	9%	\$25			R	Richards	10%	\$20		
G	Galley	10%	\$20				Red Lobster	8%	\$25		
	Ginger Fresh Market	5%	\$25			S	Speedway	4%	\$25		
	Ginger Fresh Market	5%	\$50				Starbucks	4.5%	\$5		
	Ginger Fresh Market	5%	\$100				Starbucks	4.5%	\$10		
	Gordons Food Service	4%	\$25				Starbucks	4.5%	\$25		
	Gordons Food Service	4%	\$100				Steak & Shake	8%	\$10		
H	Hall's	10%	\$15				Subway	6.0%	\$10		
	Hall's	10%	\$30				Subway	6%	\$50		
	Happy Moments	10%	\$25			T	Taco Bell	5%	\$10		
	Hardees	5%	\$10				Target	2.5%	\$25		
	Hills Market	4%	\$25				Texas Roadhouse	8%	\$25		
	Hills Market	4%	\$50				T.J Maxx/ Marshalls	6%	\$25		
	Hills Market	4%	\$100			V	prepaid VISA	1.25%	\$25		
	Hollywood Nails	17%	\$20				prepaid VISA	1.25%	\$50		
I	iTunes	5%	\$15				prepaid VISA	1.25%	\$100		
	Kohl's (can NOT use to pay bill)	4%	\$25				prepaid VISA	1.25%	\$250		
K	Kohl's (can NOT use to pay bill)	4%	\$100			W	Walmart / Sams Club	2.5%	\$25		
	Kroger	4%	\$25				Walmart / Sams Club	2.5%	\$50		
	Kroger	4%	\$100			Walmart / Sams Club	2.5%	\$100			
L	Little Caesars	8%	\$20			Walmart / Sams Club	2.5%	\$250			
	Lowe's	4%	\$25			Walgreens	5%	\$25			
	Lowe's	4%	\$100			Walgreens	5%	\$100			
						Wendy's	6%	\$25			
						Z	Zurcher Tire	5%			