

“Trust in the Lord forever, for the Lord God is an everlasting Rock.”
Isaiah 26:4

THE ROCK

Issue No. 1

January 2012

Special Dates

- Dec 25 Christmas Day Service
- Dec 26 Office Closed
- Dec 31 New Year's Eve
- Jan 1 New Year's Day Service
- Jan 1 De-decorate church
- Jan 2 Office Closed
- Jan 6 Epiphany
- Jan 9 Book Club
- Jan 10 Circuit pastors meet at Faith
- Jan 10 Elders Meeting
- Jan 12 Bible Study
- Jan 12 Ukraine Meeting
- Jan 16 Ladies Bible Study
- Jan 18 Circuit Forum
- Jan 19 Church Council
- Jan 20 3rd Friday
- Jan 20 Songwriters Session
- Jan 20-22 LVR Jr. High Retreat
- Jan 21 Ladies Guild Meeting
- Jan 26 Bible Study

Read the Bible in One Year

What better way to start a new year than committing to read the Bible in its entirety this year. What a powerful and uplifting New Year's resolution!

Below is a web site that can adapt to your preferences very easily:

<http://www.ewordtoday.com/year/>

Step 1: pick a translation and reading plan – Reading Plans are:

Beginning to End: Read the Bible from start to finish, from Genesis to Revelation.

Chronological: Read the Bible as its events occurred in real time. For example, Job lived sometime after the beginning of creation (Genesis 1) but before Abraham was born (Genesis 12). As a result, the Book of Job is integrated into the Book of Genesis.

Historical: Read the books of the Bible as they were written historically, according to the estimated date of their writing.

New then Old: A BibleYear.com exclusive! Read through the New Testament first, then read through the Old Testament.

Old and New: Each day includes a passage from both the Old Testament and New Testament.

Step 2: Pick a start date – Either the 1st or 15th of any month

Step 3: Print list and start reading!!!

If you would like a list but are without access to a computer, set up a time to meet with Kay and she will help you to get a list printed out!

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A Happy and Blessed
New Year to All!

I Bind Unto Myself Today

Dear Brothers & Sisters in Christ Jesus,

I shared last month a bit of the Catechism Class's studies of the Apostles' Creed and the Attributes of God. The Church has traditionally recognized three ancient Creeds – The Apostles', the Nicene, and the Athanasian. But I often enjoy spending some devotion time with another – St. Patrick's Breastplate.

*I bind unto myself today
The strong name of the Trinity,
By invocation of the same,
The Three in One and One in Three.*

*I bind this day to me forever
By pow'r of faith, Christ's Incarnation,
His Baptism in the Jordan River,
His Cross of death for my salvation.
His bursting from the spiced Tomb,
His riding up the heav'nly way,
His coming at the day of doom
I bind unto myself today.*

It continues for another five stanzas. We have now left Advent and Christmas behind us and swiftly approach Epiphany and then the celebration of Christ's Baptism on January 8, 2012. And one line from this Creed caught my attention recently – "His Baptism in the Jordan River." The three traditional creeds don't include this event and the church today seems to forget it as well in the aftermath of the frantic Christmas season.

"I bind this day to me forever..." Just what does it mean to bind oneself to Jesus' Baptism? When Jesus came to the Jordan River to be Baptized by John, John objected. But Jesus simply replied, "Let it be so now for it is proper for us in this way to fulfill all righteousness" (Matthew 3:15). To fulfill all righteousness. Jesus set Himself to live the righteous life that God expects of His children, something we could not do. He did this for us. He lived His life for us, fulfilled all righteousness for us.

And then, having fulfilled this requirement of God, He took upon Himself the consequences of our failure to live the life God expects, and He suffered and died in our place.

If you have been baptized, what happened to Jesus at His Baptism happened to you. The Spirit of God descended on you, God said to you, "You are My beloved son, My beloved child with whom I am well pleased. Read what Paul said in Romans 6:1-11. As God's son or daughter, you can now do what Jesus did: "fulfill all righteousness." You can love instead of hate. You can heal instead of harm. This new Epiphany season I encourage you to "bind the Baptism of Jesus to yourself." Connect His Baptism to yours with Luther's encouragement in his *Small Catechism*, begin each new day "Making the sign of the Holy Cross and saying 'In the name of the Father and of the + Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.'"

From St. Patrick's Breastplate, sixth stanza:

*Christ be with me, Christ before me,
Christ be after me, Christ within me,
Christ beneath me, Christ above me,
Christ at my right hand, Christ at my left.*

To read more of this beautiful Creed, check out our *Lutheran Service Book*, hymn #604. May your New Year be blessed in Christ's Baptism and your own.

Your servant in Christ Jesus,
Pastor Ron

As the Heavens are Higher than the Earth...

Sometimes God reveals His power while teaching His children a lesson in timing. I saw this firsthand in the June 2011 trip to Ukraine. During the 2010 mission trip, the ROA team had visited children recovering from tuberculosis at a hospital near Mykolaiv. Before heading over to the hospital, we were told by the Millers, our host family, that our visit to the hospital had been pre-arranged. However, when we arrived at the location, these plans had evaporated. The Millers spent the next 45 minutes negotiating our visit inside the hospital while we sat outside in the heat. They emerged saying that we had 20 minutes.

We entered the hospital playroom – a stark room devoid of any decoration. For the next 30 minutes, we performed our songs and a skit while donned in masks (for the children’s protection). The masks inhibited our ability to connect with the kids – without a common language, you often rely on smiles. We were also not allowed to touch the kids or be closer than 4 feet from them. The kids barely participated or even smiled. There were several adults standing in the hall, looking sternly at us.

As we left the hospital that day in 2010, I thought “What a flop! Why did we waste our time?” I don’t know how God took this – probably as a complaint -- but, as I would come to find out later, according to His thoughts, our presence there that day was far from a failure.

This year’s trip found us once again in Mykolaiv. When Ghenya Miller said that we would return to the hospital, I inwardly groaned. I didn’t want to go back. Yet, when we returned this time, we walked right in. We were ushered into the same playroom but the room was transformed with brightly colored murals and hand-written signs. Both the kids and staff seemed happier as well, eagerly participating in the activities and singing the songs with the Team.

After asking, we were told by a nurse that she had spearheaded the changes in the room’s décor. Her church had painted the murals, beautiful scenes of God’s creation. The government objected to the first rendering of the murals because they included Christian messages. The murals were re-painted to remove the messages. However, the nurse posted handwritten signs of Bible verses. “When the government comes, the kids know to take the signs down. When the government leaves, the kids put the verses back up,” she told us. After seeing us in 2010 from her vantage point in the hall, she was inspired to do this because we had proclaimed the name of the Lord. This fellow Christian believed that she, also, could fearlessly proclaim the gospel of Christ.

As we left the hospital this year, my thoughts were very different. Instead of complaining, I was amazed at how God had revealed His faithful power. He had unquestionably demonstrated that His thoughts and ways are higher than ours and that His Word, when sent out, does not return to Him empty (Isaiah 55:8-11). ROA has answered God’s call in Ukraine for almost a decade. The harvest there continues to be plentiful, growing each year as God continues to reveal His awesome power and love.

Karen Twenhafel

Library—Monthly Featured Item

WHY I AM A LUTHERAN Author: Daniel Preus

Through a blend of understandable explanations and real-life stories, this book explores the foundational teachings of the Christian church. The author keeps the focus on Jesus Christ who is "always and only at the center of all Christian teachings." He writes that: "I am a Lutheran for the same reason I am a Christian. It is not by choice but by grace. No other confession demonstrates such fidelity to the truths of God's Word. No other confession so glorifies Christ by placing Him at the center of all it confesses and teaches."



HUMOR FOR THE MONTH

There was a lady who was mailing an old family Bible to her brother in another part of the country. "Is there anything breakable in here?" asked the postal clerk. "Only the Ten Commandments," answered the lady.

* * *

"Somebody has said there are only two kinds of people in the world. There are those who wake up in the morning and say, "Good morning, Lord," and there are those who wake up in the morning and say, "Good Lord, it's morning."

Top 7 New Year's Resolutions of Joseph, Son of Jacob

- 7) Gets pants of many colors to go with the coat.
- 6) Get rid of the T-shirt that says "I'm Dad's Favorite"
- 5) Don't fall for the old "we've got a really neat pit to show you" trick.
- 4) Never listen to the boss's wife.
- 3) Write a Broadway musical.
- 2) Ratify NAEFTA (the North African—Egyptian Free Trade Agreement).
- 1) Once and for all, interpret that "falling" dream.

Upcoming Book Club Selections:

We are changing the format we use for Book Club Discussions. After January, we will be moving to discussing each book for 2 months- the first month focusing on the author, and the second on the book itself. You are welcome to attend one or both of the discussions, regardless of whether you have finished the book or not!

January: [The Constantine Codex](#) by Paul Maier This book is the third in the Skeleton Series. From Amazon.com- Harvard Professor Jonathan Weber is finally enjoying a season of peace when a shocking discovery thrusts him into the national spotlight once again. While touring monasteries in Greece, Jon and his wife Shannon—a seasoned archaeologist—uncover an ancient biblical manuscript containing the lost ending of Mark and an additional book of the Bible. If proven authentic, the codex could forever change the way the world views the holy Word of God. As Jon and Shannon work to validate their find, it soon becomes clear that there are powerful forces who don't want the codex to go public. When it's stolen en route to America, Jon and Shannon are swept into a deadly race to find the manuscript and confirm its authenticity before it's lost forever.



February/March: [The Shallows: what the internet is doing to our brains](#) by Nicholas Carr. This book was the all Pikes Peak reads selection for 2011. A review from PPLD website: Expanding on his provocative Atlantic Monthly article, "Is Google Making Us Stupid?," technology writer Carr (The Big Switch) provides a deep, enlightening examination of how the Internet influences the brain and its neural pathways. Computers have altered the way we work; how we organize information, share news and stories, and communicate; and how we search for, read, and absorb information. Carr's analysis incorporates a wealth of neuroscience and other research, as well as philosophy, science, history, and cultural developments. There are many copies of this book available to borrow from the Pikes Peak Library District!

April/May: [The Ragamuffin Gospel](#) by Brennan Manning. A Furious Love Is Hot on Your Trail! Many believers feel stunted in their Christian growth. We beat ourselves up over our failures and, in the process, pull away from God because we subconsciously believe He tallies our defects and hangs His head in disappointment. In this newly repackaged edition—now with full appendix, study questions, and the author's own epilogue, "Ragamuffin Ten Years Later," Brennan Manning reminds us that nothing could be further from the truth.

Both Easy and Hard

Bad habits are like a comfortable bed—easy to get into and hard to get out of.

Saved by Grace

God loves us the way we are—but he cares too much to leave us that way.

“TRUST IN THE LORD FOREVER, FOR THE
LORD GOD IS AN EVERLASTING ROCK.”
ISAIAH 26:4

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Newsletter Deadline January 18, 2012

LUTHERAN HOUR TIME
Sun. 7:30 a.m. KZNT 1640 AM

A note from Sunday School...

Thank you to everyone for helping and attending the Children's Christmas Program! It was an absolute treat and the children did a "SUPER STAR" job at sharing the Joy of CHRISTmas with everyone! Sunday School classes are back in full swing now and fun things will be happening. Thank you for your support and prayers! Make sure you give a Sunday School staff member a pat on the back for all their hard work! If you would like to volunteer we always need help! We need helpers to sign up for monthly duties... so if you have any interest or questions please talk to me and I will give you details!

Happy New Year and God's Blessings to you all for a great 2012!

In His Name!
Karen Bodine

Top 7 Bible Fitness Videos

- 7) *Geriatric Workout*—Methuselah shows how to shave two to three hundred off your figure.
- 6) Noah's *Pecs of Steel*—Chop enough gopher wood to build your own ark.
- 5) Moses' *Forty-Year Walk to Better Health*
- 4) Joshua's *Aerobic Marching* (do not ret this at home)
- 3) *You Too Can be a Lean, Mean, Killing Machine*, with Samson (includes free jawbone)
- 2) *Run for Your Life*, with Elijah (crazy woman and chariot not included)
- 1) Daniel's *Veggie Trails* for health, fitness, and bureaucratic fast-trackers



ITEMS FOR DONATIONS FOR WESTSIDE CARES FOR JANUARY ARE:

Canned Fruits and Fruit Juices

FUNDS UPDATE

Building Fund = \$210.00
Scholarship Fund = \$14,151.85
Capital Improvement Fund = \$16,400.15
Ukraine Fund = 2050.48

