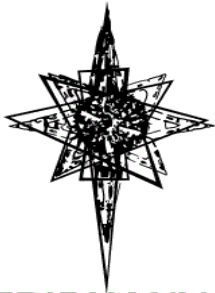


# RIVER OF LIFE *STREAMS*

Interim Pastor William Mitschke 815-725-1341  
email: [wmjm920@gmail.com](mailto:wmjm920@gmail.com)

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## The Opening Liturgical Season for the New Year



### EPIPHANY

The Epiphany Season begins in the first month of the new year, after the Twelve Days of Christmas. Epiphany is a season of variable weeks depending on the date of Easter. This year Easter is on Apr. 9. Lent begins forty days before Easter with Ash Wednesday on Feb. 22. This translates into Seven Sundays in the Epiphany season this year, the last being the Transfiguration of our Lord on February 19. Epiphany and Pentecost are the two seasons of variable length, depending on the date of Easter.

In the beginning the Church had no liturgical Church Year, as we have today. While the Church enjoyed varying degrees of freedom from place to place, much of the political atmosphere was inhospitable to the Church and the development of a Liturgical Church Year.

The beginning of the Church Year, the distinct manner in which the Church measures time, goes back to the year 313 when, by the Edict of Toleration, the Emperor Constantine accorded Christianity legal status in the Roman Empire.

The **Resurrection of our Lord** on Easter Day was the first of all the festivals observed by the Church. Second only to Easter, both in date and origin and early importance, was **Pentecost**. It too had fallen on a Sunday, seven weeks after Easter, the period bounded by these two festivals was the first liturgical season of the Church.

The third great early festival of the Church was **Epiphany**, celebrated on January 6. It was originally a festival which commemorated both the birth and baptism of Christ. As Scripture teaches, Jesus, the eternal Son of God and second person of the Holy Trinity, was born as a human baby in Bethlehem. In the season of Epiphany we see Jesus more clearly as God. In Epiphany there is an emphasis on who Jesus is and why He came to live among us and show us the grace and love of the Father.

Another interesting part of the liturgical year is how did Dec. 25 come to be celebrated as Jesus' Birthday. The first record of Early Christians recognizing Jesus birth on Dec. 25 was 354 A.D. There are many surrounding happenings with Jesus birth, but His birth date is not in the Bible. Why do we celebrate His birth Dec. 25? There are a number of interesting theories that will be saved for another day. I know of one fascinating theory I'll share in the future. Why does the Eastern Church celebrate Jesus birthday on Jan. 6 and the Western Church celebrates on Dec. 25, a twelve-day difference?

In the meantime, let's make the most of Epiphany in our seven Sundays of this season in 2023 before Easter.

In Christ, Greetings, Pastor *M*

# EPIPHANY

**Sunday Services – 11:45 AM**

**Jan. 1 – New Year’s Day. . The Circumcision  
and Name of Jesus**

**First Sunday after Christmas**

Guest Pastor . . . The Rev. Ron Rock

**Jan. 8 . . . . . The Baptism of our Lord**

*“Down by the Riverside”*

(To Fulfill All Righteousness)

Matthew 3:13-17

**Jan. 15. The 2nd Sunday after the Epiphany**

*“Behold the Lamb of God!”*

(Step Up and Get your Doctor of Divinity)

John 1:29-42a

**Jan. 22. The 3rd Sunday after the Epiphany**

*“Letting Go of Our Nets”*

Matthew 4:12-23

**Jan. 29 . . . . The Transfiguration of our Lord**

*“The Gifts God Gives Us”*

(It’s All Gospel)

Matthew 5:1-12



Thanks to **Doris Anderson** and Joanne **Morris** for their service on the Altar Guild and faithfully setting up and putting away our Communion vessels and elements each week.

***Thanks to Pam Vermeulen for sending cards to our shut-ins and those with medical issues!***



**Judy Bremer**

1215 Burns,  
Minooka, IL 60447

**Sandra Krause**

North Aurora Nursing Home  
310 Banbury Rd  
Aurora, IL 60542

**Bill Richardson**

StoryPoint, Room 355  
605 S. Edward Dr.  
Romeoville, IL 60446

**Vince Zitella**

6105 E. Hilltop Dr.  
Coal City, IL 60416

**Julianne Zitella-Grell**

650 S. Broadway St. Apt. 2F  
Coal City, IL 60416

**Roger Feiertag**

1610 Augusta Lane  
Shorewood, IL 60404

Pastor Mark Willig

Recovering from a stroke

Friends in Christ Lutheran Church

513 E Main Street, Morris, IL 60450

Pastor David Daniel

In treatment for Colo-Rectal Cancer

Zion Lutheran Church

Ottawa, IL



## Sunday School...

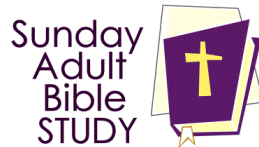
**Sunday School is at 10:45am each Sunday in a Classroom #2  
No Sunday School January 1.**



**See or call Pastor Mitschke about Confirmation class.**

## Youth Group...

Plan on attending all events if possible, for some fellowship and to help our youth group!



**Bible Study is at 10:45am each Sunday in Upstairs Classroom #1  
No Bible Study January 1.**



**Chairman and 1 Usher – Vacant (If interested in serving see Bob Grimm)**

***If you need to use the LIFT, let an Elder or Usher know to assist you!***



Head Elder Dave Hall and the Elders have been in touch with Pastor Ryden and are working with him in regard to looking for a pastor.

## **A Poster Found in a Church...**

"When you enter this church, it may be possible that you hear "the call of God". However, it is unlikely that He will call on your mobile. Thank you for turning off your phones. If you want to talk to God, enter, choose a quiet place and talk to Him. If you want to see Him, send Him a text while driving."

## **Swaddling Clothes**

*Our outreach ministry for families!*

**Open** on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Saturday, and the 4<sup>th</sup> Tuesday of each month.

**January 14**

9 am – 12 pm

Contact Amanda Graves for any questions.

**January 24**

5:00 pm – 7:00 pm

If you're interested in helping, please contact Amanda Graves.

Contact Pam Sterle if you want to help some mornings.

The more, the merrier!

Please consider donating your time to this worthwhile ministry.

Help is always needed and appreciated.

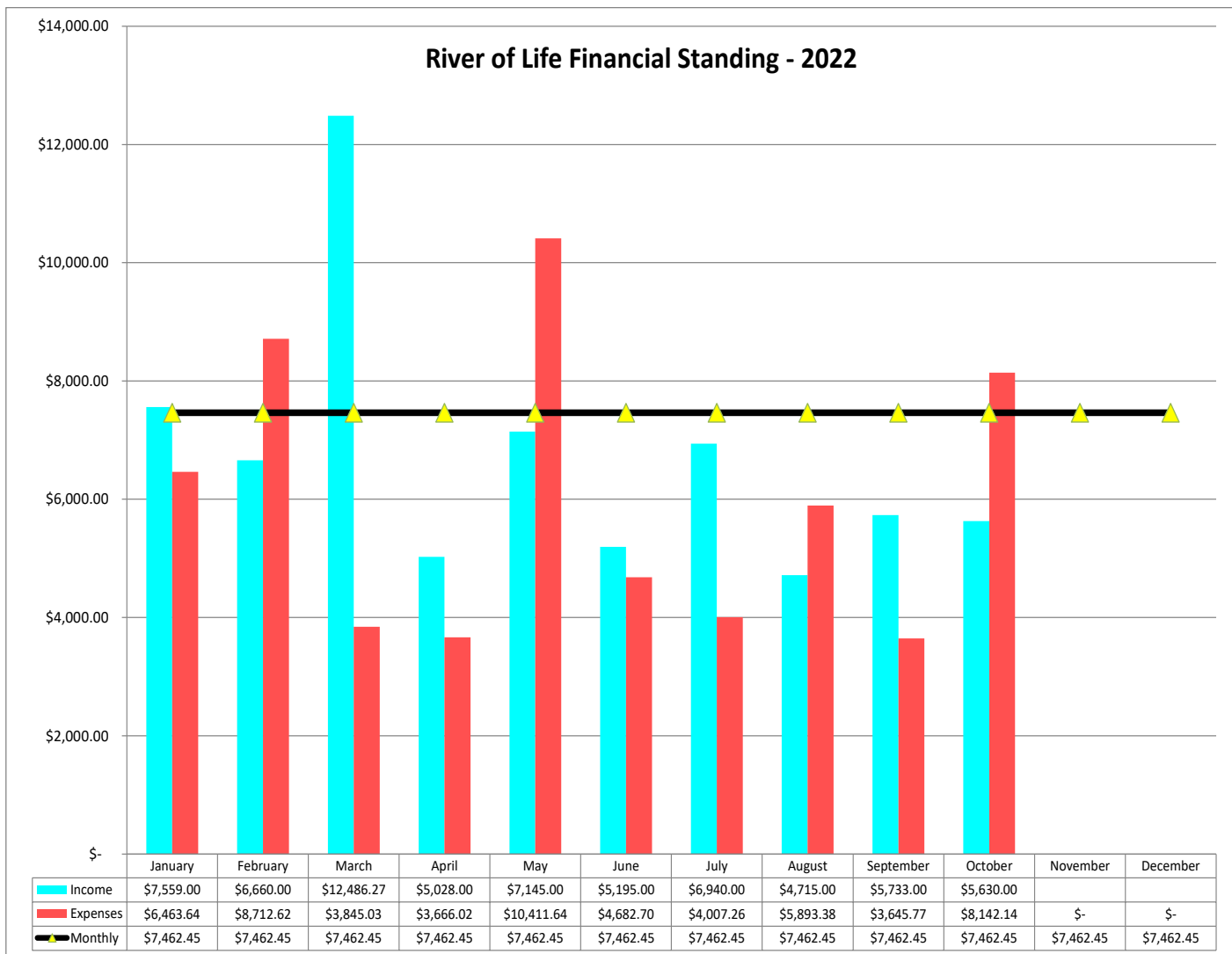
# Donating to a charity using a qualified charitable distribution (QCD).

If you are age 72 or older, IRS rules require you to take required minimum distributions (RMDs) each year from your tax-deferred retirement accounts.

Learn how by taking your RMD as a QCD and donating directly to a charity it will not be considered as taxable income.

Check the website listed below for an explanation, or you can ask Vince on how it all works.

<https://www.fidelity.com/learning-center/personal-finance/retirement/qcds-the-basics>



Giving	\$ 67,091.27
Expenses	\$ 59,470.20
	<b>\$ 7,621.07</b>



## **Holy *COMMUNION***

The Sacrament of Christ's Body and Blood is received reverently among us. With COVID-19, our reception of the Sacrament is still affected.

Social distancing is practiced coming forward. Communicants come to receive the Sacrament as singles or a family. As the first family/single leaves the Communion Table, the next single or family comes forward.

In our distribution of the wine and the bread in the Sacrament, there is now no contact between the pastor/elder and the people.

The bread and wine are in individual cups touched only by the communicant(s). As the pastor says, "*Take eat*" . . ., each communicant takes his own cup with bread, "*Take drink*" ., each communicant then takes his own cup with wine. The pastor then speaks the dismissal.

We followed suggestions and introduced these new precautions long ago. If you have comments or suggestions, please feel free to share them with an elder or pastor.

We appreciate the service of our Altar Guild for their beautiful service and add an extra thank you for their special work currently.

Dave Hall, Head Elder