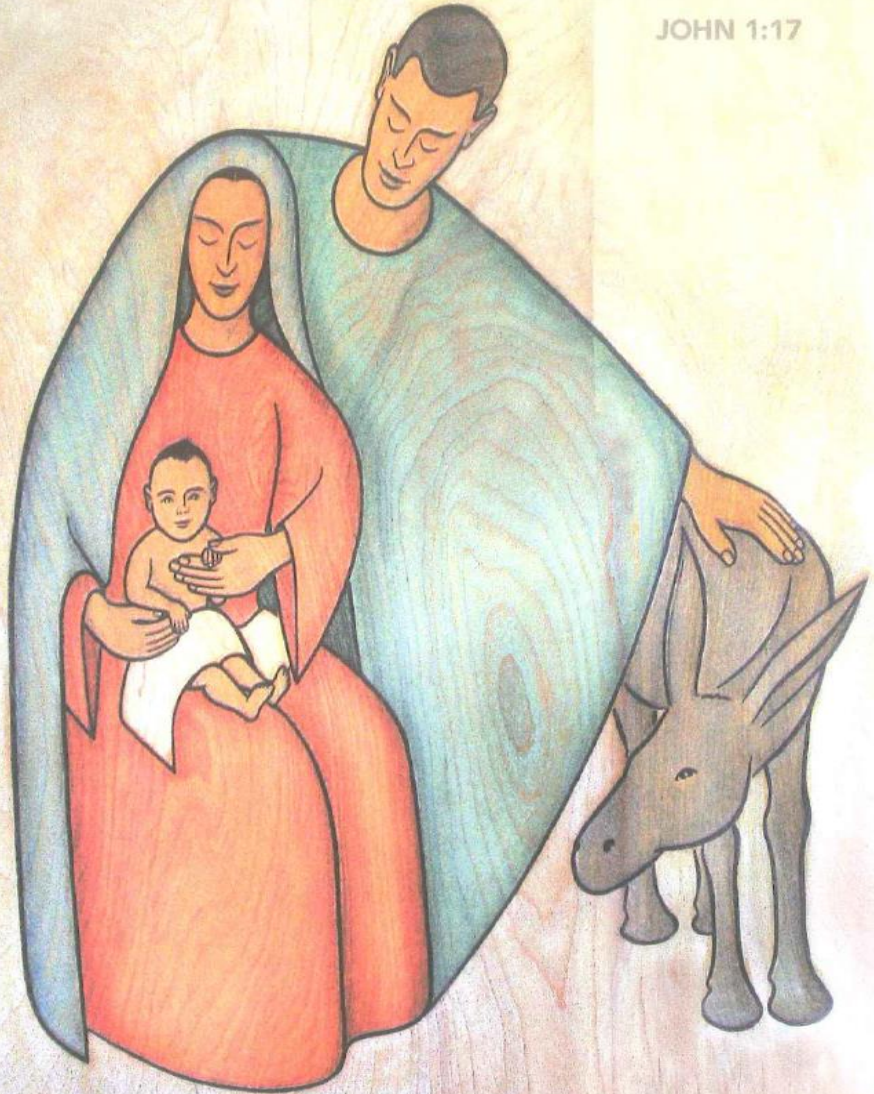


Grace and truth came
through Jesus Christ

JOHN 1:17



Called by the Spirit, we serve Christ, sharing God's love with all.

FIRST LUTHERAN CHURCH

WEBSITE: firstlutherantopeka.org

1234 Fairlawn Road, Topeka, KS 66604

Church office: (785) 272-5302 CDO office: (785) 272-5999

Ministers

Senior Pastor

Coordinator of Stewardship and Outreach

Children's Day Out (CDO) Director

Caring for Kids 1st Director

Organist

Director of Music

Director of Handbell Choirs

Secretary

Assistant Secretary

Bookkeeper

Nursery Attendant

Missionaries in Russia

Missionaries for Ripe For Harvest World Outreach

All Members of First

Pastor Jenny Jackson

Pastor Bob Dealey

Julie Lamott

Julie Bradley

Jerry Anderson

Mark Fuller

Linda Anderson

LaDonna J. Little

Jill Loomans

Cindy Crawford

Tahira Schmidt

Rev. Bradn & Natasha Buerkle

Jim & Dawn Anderson



Epiphany

THE CELEBRATION OF WORSHIP AT FIRST LUTHERAN CHURCH

10:00 A.M.

JANUARY 3, 2021

Before worship, talk to God. During worship, let God talk to you. After worship, talk to your fellow worshipper.

GATHERING

The Holy Spirit calls us together as the people of God.

PRELUDE “Noel sur les flûtes”

(L. C. d’Aquin)

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

CHIMES

GATHERING SONG “We Three Kings of Orient Are”

See Insert

CALL TO WORSHIP

A: It is you who light my lamp; you, my God, who lights up the darkness.

C: The Lord is my light and my salvation; whom then shall I fear? The Lord is the stronghold of my life; of whom shall I be afraid?

A: Light dawns for the righteous, and joy for the honest of heart.

C: Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path.

A: For with you is the fountain of life; in your light we see light.

C: O house of Jacob, come, let us walk in the light of the Lord!

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

P: Amidst the darkness of this world, let us confess our sin and welcome the light of God's forgiveness.

Silence for reflection and self-examination.

P: Mary accepted your call to be the mother of Jesus.

C: Forgive our lack of faith and trust in your will.

P: Your Son was born in the poverty of a stable.

C: Forgive our neglect of the poor.

P: The shepherds left their flocks and went to Bethlehem.

C: Forgive our selfishness and complacency.

P: The Magi followed the star to find the Savior of the nations.

C: Forgive our reluctance to seek you with all our hearts.

P: The angel said, you shall call his name Jesus for he will save his people from their sins. With great joy, I announce to you the entire forgiveness of your sins, in the name of the Father, and of the † Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

C: Amen.

INVOCATION

P: God of manger and star, open us to the depths and heights of your incredible love, which comes through humble stories and glorious songs. Speak to us in word and music and lift us to the realms of glory.

C: Amen.

EPIPHANY LITANY

(B. Y. Williams in "Masterpieces of Religious Verses")

P: Who are the Wise Men in the long ago?

C: Not Herod, fearful lest he lost his throne; not Pharisees too proud to claim their own;

P: who are the Wise Men in the long ago?

C: Not priests and scribes whose province was to know; not money-changers running to and fro;

P: but three who traveled, weary and alone,

C: with dauntless faith, because before them shone the star that led them to a manger low.

P: Who are the Wise Men now, when all is told?

C: Not men of science; not the great and strong; not those who wear a kingly diadem;

P: not those whose eager hands pile high the gold;

C: but those amid the tumult and the throng who follow still the Star of Bethlehem.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

P: Almighty God, you have filled all the earth with the light of your incarnate Word. By your grace empower us to reflect your light in all that we do, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C: Amen.

WORD

God speaks to us in scriptures read, sung, and preached.

FIRST READING: Jeremiah 31:7-14

God promises to bring Israel back to its land from the most remote parts of exile. In Zion Israel will rejoice over God's gift of food and livestock. Young women will express their joy in dancing; God will give gladness instead of sorrow.

⁷For thus says the LORD: Sing aloud with gladness for Jacob, and raise shouts for the chief of the nations; proclaim, give praise, and say, "Save, O LORD, your people, the remnant of Israel." ⁸See, I am going to bring them from the land of the north, and gather them from the farthest parts of the earth, among them the blind and the lame, those with child and those in labor, together; a great company, they shall return here. ⁹With weeping they shall come, and with consolations I will lead them back, I will let them walk by brooks of water, in a straight path in which they shall not stumble; for I have become a father to Israel, and Ephraim is my firstborn. ¹⁰Hear the word of the LORD, O nations, and declare it in the coastlands far away; say, "He who scattered Israel will gather him, and will keep him as a shepherd a flock." ¹¹For the LORD has ransomed Jacob, and has redeemed him from hands too strong for him.

¹²They shall come and sing aloud on the height of Zion, and they shall be radiant over the goodness of the LORD, over the grain, the wine, and the oil, and over the young of the flock and the herd; their life shall become like a watered garden, and they shall never languish again.

¹³Then shall the young women rejoice in the dance, and the young men and the old shall be merry. I will turn their mourning into joy, I will comfort them, and give them gladness for sorrow. ¹⁴I will give the priests their fill of fatness, and my people shall be satisfied with my bounty, says the LORD.

L: This is the Word of the Lord. C: **Thanks be to God.**

SECOND READING: Ephesians 1:3-14

In Jesus, all of God's plans and purposes have been made known as heaven and earth are united in Christ. Through Jesus, we have been chosen as God's children and have been promised eternal salvation.

³Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places, ⁴just as he chose us in Christ before the foundation of the world to be holy and blameless before him in love. ⁵He destined us for adoption as his children through Jesus Christ, according to the good pleasure of his will, ⁶to the praise of his glorious grace that he freely bestowed on us in the Beloved. ⁷In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace ⁸that he lavished on us. With all wisdom and insight ⁹he has made known to us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure that he set forth in Christ, ¹⁰as a plan for the fullness of time, to gather up all things in him, things in heaven and things on earth. ¹¹In Christ we have also obtained an inheritance, having been destined according to the purpose of him who accomplishes all things according to his counsel and will, ¹²so that we, who were the first to set our hope on Christ, might live for the praise of his glory. ¹³In him you also, when you had heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and had believed in him, were marked with the seal of the promised Holy Spirit; ¹⁴this is the pledge of our inheritance toward redemption as God's own people, to the praise of his glory.

L: This is the Word of the Lord. C: **Thanks be to God.**

CELTIC ALLELUIA



P: The Holy Gospel according to Saint John, the 1st chapter. C: **Glory to you, O Lord.**

GOSPEL: John 1:1-18

John begins his gospel with this prologue: a hymn to the Word through whom all things were created. This Word became flesh and brought grace and truth to the world.

¹In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. ²He was in the beginning with God. ³All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being ⁴in him was life, and the life was the light of all people. ⁵The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it.

⁶There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. ⁷He came as a witness to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him. ⁸He himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light. ⁹The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world. ¹⁰He was in the world, and the world came into being through him; yet the world did not know him. ¹¹He came to what was his own, and his own people did not accept him. ¹²But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God, ¹³who were born, not of blood or of the will of the flesh or of the will of man, but of God. ¹⁴And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father's only son, full of grace and truth. ¹⁵(John testified to him and cried out, "This was he of whom I said, 'He who comes after me ranks ahead of me because he was before me.'") ¹⁶From his fullness we have all received, grace upon grace. ¹⁷The law indeed was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. ¹⁸No one has ever seen God. It is God the only Son, who is close to the Father's heart, who has made him known.

P: The Gospel of the Lord. **C: Praise to you, O Christ.**

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE SERMON

295 HYMN OF THE DAY *"Of the Father's Love Begotten"*

APOSTLES' CREED

I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth.

I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord,

**who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried;
he descended to the dead.**

On the third day he rose again;

**he ascended into heaven, he is seated at the right hand of the Father,
and he will come to judge the living and the dead.**

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic church,

**the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.**

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

A: Joining our voices with the song of the angels, let us pray for the church, the world, and all who are in need.

A brief silence.

A: Redeeming God, you gather together your people from the farthest parts of the earth. Protect your church from stumbling. Let it not be overcome by sorrow, division, or despair. Make us radiant with goodness, that we might live always to the praise of your glory. Hear us, O God.

C: Your mercy is great.

A: You bring together heaven and earth. All creation testifies to your splendor. Hold the ecosystems of this earth in delicate balance, from coastlands to farmlands, forests to wetlands, deserts to rainforests. Show us new ways to live in harmony with the world around us. Hear us, O God.

C: Your mercy is great.

A: You overflow with grace upon grace. Expand the imaginations of those who serve in positions of authority. Open their hearts to the needs of their nations and communities. Protect all those in harm's way and those risking danger for the sake of others. Hear us, O God.

C: Your mercy is great.

A: You bring consolation to those who weep. Embrace those who feel far-off, excluded, or defeated. Accompany those living with chronic and invisible illness. Sustain the weak and weary. Refresh those who labor under the weight of pain or sickness. We pray especially for Margaret, Mark, Verla, Lynnette, Lu, Marian, Blake, Phil, Rob, and Breck, as well as our homebound members, all unable to worship this weekend, and all family, friends and even enemies we name now, either out loud or in the silence of our hearts (pause). Hear us, O God.

C: Your mercy is great.

A: You come to us in the beauty of darkness and of light. Bring justice and reconciliation to communities divided by oppressions and misuse of power. Guide us to speak holy words of advocacy and truth. Help us to honor your image in one another. Hear us, O God.

C: Your mercy is great.

A: You turn our mourning into joy. We give thanks for those who have died in faith. With all the saints, give us our inheritance in Christ. In the fullness of time, gather us all together in your mercy. Hear us, O God.

C: Your mercy is great.

P: God of mercy, come quickly to us with grace upon grace as we lift these and all our prayers to you, in the name of Jesus.

C: Amen.

PEACE

P: For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given. And he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. May the peace of the Lord be with you always.

C: And also with you.

ORGAN VOLUNTARY

OFFERING PRAYER

A: Gracious God,

C: you came to us as one unknown, bringing joy and salvation to the earth. Nourish us at your banquet table, that with all who welcome your birth we may proclaim your peace, revealed in Jesus Christ, our Savior. Amen.

MEAL

God feeds us with the presence of Jesus Christ.

GREAT THANKSGIVING

page 206

P: The Lord be with you.

C: And also with you.

P: Lift up your hearts.

C: We lift them to the Lord.

P: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

C: It is right to give our thanks and praise.

P: It is indeed right, our duty and our joy.....we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

HOLY, HOLY, HOLY

hymn 190

Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of pow'r and might,___

Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of pow'r and might,___

hea - ven and earth are full,___ full___ of your glo - ry, Ho -

san - na in the high - est. Ho - san - na in the high - est.

Bless - ed is he who comes_ in the name of the Lord.____ Ho -

san - na in the high - est. Ho - san - na in the high - est.

WORDS OF INSTITUTION

P: In the night in which he was betrayed, our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks; broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying: Take and eat; this is my body, given for you.

Do this for the remembrance of me.

Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it for all to drink, saying:

This cup is the new covenant in my blood, shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin.

Do this for the remembrance of me.

LORD'S PRAYER

**Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven.**

Give us today our daily bread.

Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us.

Save us from the time of trial and deliver us from evil.

For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours, now and forever. Amen.

P: The Word is revealed in a manger, in simple bread and wine. Come meet Christ in this meal.

COMMUNION SONG “Lamb of God”

page 208



1 O Lamb of God, you bear the sin of all the world a - way;
2 O Lamb of God, you bear the sin of all the world a - way;
3 O Lamb of God, you bear the sin of all the world a - way;



you suf-fered death our lives to save: have mer-cy now, we pray.
you set us free from guilt and grave: have mer-cy now, we pray.
e - ter-nal peace with God you made: give us your peace, we pray.

COMMUNION DISTRIBUTION

ORGAN VOLUNTARY

POST COMMUNION BLESSING

Congregation: Amen

POST-COMMUNION PRAYER

A: Emmanuel, God with us,

C: **you grace us with life and breath and give us bread for the journey. Send us out in service to this world that you love, telling the amazing news of your coming to be Savior and Lord of all. Amen.**

LITANY FOR THE NEW YEAR

A: God of our Life, we thank you for the year that is passed and for the dawn of another year.

C: **We thank you for whatever happiness has been our lot.**

A: We thank you for whatever trials have come our way.

C: **And we pray for you to transform both our happy memories and the remembrance of trials into nurture for our spirits.**

A: In the New Year, Timeless One, may your Spirit's presence compel us to be faithful co-workers with you, pursuing your purposes in this hate-filled, pain-racked world:

C: **freedom, peace with justice, compassion without bounds.**

A: God Beyond Time, at a time when we stand between memory and hope,

C: **we pray for those having too many memories and little or no hope, except in your final mercy.**

A: Be with those who are walking in death's shadow,

C: **and equip us for the ministry of presence that we may at least be with them, near them, even if there is nothing else we can do.**

- A: We pray in the name of him whose own years on Earth were few, but whose impact for healing was incalculable.
- C: Jesus Christ, the Lord of the old year and of the new and of all our years, the Lord of history and of eternity. Amen.**

SENDING

God blesses us and sends us in mission to the world.

BLESSING

P: Almighty God, who sent the Holy Spirit to Mary, proclaimed joy through the angels, sent the shepherds with good news, and led the magi by a star, bless you this day † through the Word made flesh.

C: Amen.

300 SENDING SONG *“The First Noel”*

DISMISSAL

A: Go in peace. Share the gift of Jesus.

C: Thanks be to God.

POSTLUDE *Trumpet Tune on “Joy to the World”*

(M. Helman)

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THE ALTAR FLOWERS *are given by The Jackson Family in hope of new life and new beginnings for the new year.*

THE ETERNAL CANDLE FOR JANUARY *is given by Sue Wild in memory of her great aunt, Helen Radtke. She was such a family treasure!*

THE PRAYERS OF THE CHURCH ARE REQUESTED FOR THE FOLLOWING PEOPLE:

Margaret Stewart (home), Mark Fuller (home), Verla Buch (home), Lynnette Johnson (home), Lu Heisler (home), Marian Orton (home), Blake Hopper (home), Martha Donohoe (home), Phil Engelhardt (home), Rob Peterson (home), Breck Edds (home), Clyde Naber (Laura Haefke’s brother-in-law), Donna Tobyen (friend of Barb Collins), Martin Godlove (Sylvia Levings’ son), Lewis Sanders (Rachelle Witherspoon’s father), Syndee Haake (daughter of friend of Nancy Vaughn), Blanche Stephansen (Ron Bessler’s sister), Nicole Klein (Patti’s God-daughter), Georgi Peterson (Rhonda Dealey’s mother), Linda Boleski (Penny & Marvin Boleski’s sister-in-law), Lawrence & Lenette Kottas (Eileen Caspers’ parents), John Browne (Penny & Marvin Boleski’s brother-in-law), Ann Dorton (extended family member of LaDonna Little), Camille Baehni Engler (former member), Brennan Soukup (Julie Bender’s cousin), Carlotta Ullman (Trudi Myers’ great niece), C.A. & Mary Lou Brunkhorst (Ann Sanders’ parents), Dan Lykins (cousin of Nancy Sherbert), Heather Roesch (Tracy’s sister-in-law), Katelynn Herring (Jeanie Schuler’s great niece), Linda Myers (Trudi’s daughter-in-law), David Metzenthin (Bud & Lois’ son).

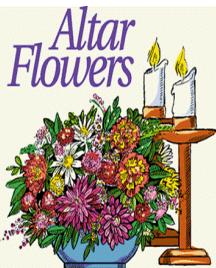
LESSONS JANUARY 10

Genesis 1:1-5 Acts 19:1-7 Mark 1:4-11



ETERNAL CANDLES can be found in both the main Worship Center and our beautiful Chapel. In **2021** you may **DONATE** both candles in remembrance or in honor of someone for the entire month. Please contact LaDonna, in the church office, (785) 272-5302 or email her at 1stlutherantopeka@sbcglobal.net to sign-up for a month and give information that will be included in the bulletin. **The cost will be \$20 for the month. Available months are: April and December.**

ALTAR FLOWERS FOR 2021



Fresh flowers on our altar are a special way to enrich our worship space and to honor and memorialize special people in our lives. Please join in this beautiful practice by reserving your dates for 2021 now.

There is a chart of reserved dates and forms to complete in the hallway by the offices. You may complete the questionnaire and leave it there. For those who are not coming to the building at this time, please contact either LaDonna at the church office 785-272-5302 or Jeanie Schuler 785-845-7964 and we will gladly take your information over the phone.

For those with annual orders, the chart has been completed and we will call you to confirm your order information. **The altar flowers cost \$25 per vase plus tax.** Reservations may be made for one (\$25) or two vases (\$50). Pulpit flowers are also an option to recognize a special occasion for \$50 plus tax.

OPEN 2021 DATES FOR BOTH VASES (unless indicated otherwise) ARE:

4/11 (one vase), 4/18 (one vase); 5/2 (one vase), 5/23; 7/11, 7/25; 8/1 (one vase), 8/29; 9/26; 10/24, 11/7, 11/28; 12/12 (one vase).

Truth beyond the Facts

There are many questions today about facts. Who do we trust to give us the facts? What sources and individuals are reliable? Social media can be a great tool for sharing, but it has also become a means of spreading misinformation, false beliefs, and bad advice. Many people today are suspicious of what some claim to be the facts.

Even if we have the right facts, we might not have something more important: the truth. Facts can be a partial representation of the truth. Facts might tell us that it is sunny and warm this morning, but the weather forecast might say thunderstorms are coming in the afternoon. The latter statement is truth. Truth is the larger reality that smaller facts don't capture, and sometimes contradict.

John tells us that Jesus is God's Word, full of grace and truth. In Jesus we get the full truth of God, not merely the facts. What are the facts we might see? We are all sinful and have strayed from God's just and loving ways. The world is a mess. Left to our own ways, we are surely lost. These are the facts, as if we woke up to a dangerous thunderstorm but don't know what the weather forecast is after that. Jesus is the fuller truth that in spite of the stormy mess of the world and our individual lives, God's grace is a gift to us in Christ. There is a blue sky and a safe calm that is ours through divine love.

Some of us live with messages that tell us we are not the right kind of person to receive God's grace because of our past mistakes, or ethnicity, or gender identity, or level of education, or poverty. The truth of Jesus Christ tells us we are children of God. "From his fullness we have all received, grace upon grace" (John 1:16). This is the truth that gives us life.

We Three Kings of Orient Are



1 We three kings of O - ri - ent are; bear - ing
 2 Born a king on Beth - le - hem's plain, gold I
 3 Frank - in - cense to of - fer have I; in - cense
 4 Myrrh is mine; its bit - ter per - fume breathes a
 5 Glo - rious now be - hold him a - rise, King and



gifts we tra - verse a - far, field and foun - tain,
 bring to crown him a - gain; king for - ev - er,
 owns a de - i - ty nigh; prayer and prais - ing,
 life of gath - er - ing gloom; sor - rowing, sigh - ing,
 God and Sac - ri - fice; heav'n sings al - le -



moor and moun - tain, fol - low - ing yon - der star.
 ceas - ing nev - er, o - ver us all to reign.
 glad - ly rais - ing, wor - ship - ing God Most High.
 bleed - ing, dy - ing, sealed in the stone - cold tomb.
 lu - ia: al - le - lu - ia the earth re - plies.



Refrain
 Oh, star of won - der, star of night, star with roy - al beau - ty bright;



west - ward lead - ing, still pro - ceed - ing, guide us to thy per - fect light!

Text: John Henry Hopkins Jr., 1820–1891, alt.

Music: THREE KINGS OF ORIENT, John Henry Hopkins Jr., 1820–1891

ANNUAL MEETING



**ANNUAL CONGREGATIONAL MEETING
SUNDAY, JANUARY 31, 2021
MORE INFORMATION WILL BE COMING SOON.**