

## January 2026

The following is a portion from a New Year's Eve sermon preached by George Stoeckhardt. Stoeckhardt taught Old and New Testament at Concordia Seminary in St. Louis from 1887 until his death in 1913. Some of his work has recently been translated from German into English for the benefit of the church. This excerpt is taken from one of those recently translated works - *Grace upon Grace: Gospel Sermons for the Church Year*. Although over one hundred years old, solid preaching is timeless.

*The close of the year is the time for settling accounts. A smart businessman examines his books and checks to see how much profit he made in the old year, and he is happy when he is able to take a surplus with him into the new year. So also a Christian at year's end should seek a little quiet and open the book in which his works, good and bad, are recorded, reach back into his memory and conscience and determine whether he has been as fortunate and successful in spiritual matters as he was in temporal; whether he in his Christianity has moved forward or gone backward. If we candidly examine our conduct in God's light, then shall we no doubt slam the book closed and bemoan the fact that the heavenly treasure entrusted us yielded so little gain, such meager fruit. Not just this or that moral lapse and failure but our laziness and negligence in fulfilling our heavenly calling, our inactivity and unfruitfulness will come home to our conscience...*

*We must all today fall down before the King who reckons with us in order to pray for mercy, saying: Lord, have patience with me, I am in your debt! However, we do not want to engage in such foolishness as did the unfaithful servant in the parable [Luke 13:6-9] and add: I will repay you! We would from the very start spoil the new year were we to take along with us the old year's liabilities. No, we would rather today set everything right.*

*But how is that possible? Well, we have a Friend and Companion who stands at our side as we enter the new year, who travels through the years with us. It is Jesus Christ, the same yesterday and today and forever. He is our Surety and Mediator. He foots the bill for us. He has settled accounts for us. He cancels the guilt record of the past year with his blood. He prays that God will have patience with us and give us additional days of grace. Not an extension so we are able to make good the harm done – that he did; but an extension, so we might continue to work in the power of the Lord and take away with us from earth at least some fruit. And so we go, although with great trepidation, in the hand of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ comforted and cheerful out of the old year into the new. (Stoeckhardt, George; Grace upon Grace: Gospel Sermons for the Church Year, trans. E. Koehlinger, Steadfast Press 2023, p.57-58.)*

O, Lord Jesus, walk with us again this new year and be the cause and goal of our lives!

In Christ,  
Pastor Suggitt

## LIFE QUOTE

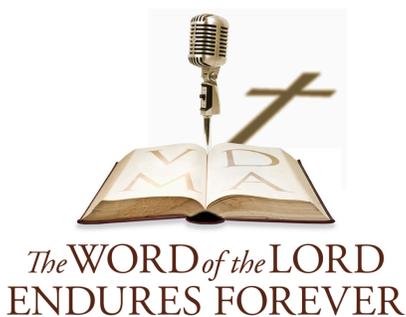
The One who gives us our new beginning in Baptism is the same God who fashioned us and gave us our first beginning in the womb. It is God who brings forth life. It is God who created us, who ‘knits us together,’ so that we are ‘intricately and wonderfully made.’ Some say that the Bible never mentions abortion, and thus we should not speak against it. How far from the truth! The decisive moral truth of what Scripture teaches is this: Human beings are such from fertilization. And—it is a sin to shed innocent blood.

*A Life Quote from Lutherans For Life • [lutheransforlife.org](http://lutheransforlife.org)*

The Lutheran Hour is heard Locally on WLEW Bad Axe at 11:10am Sundays and WSAM 1440 Saginaw at 8:30 a.m. Sundays. OR listen to it anytime anywhere on the Lutheran hour APP on your phone. Download the Lutheran Hour Devotions app and click on Lutheran hour sermons. You can also find the Lutheran hour sermons on the Lutheran hour website at [lh-m.org](http://lh-m.org). You can also dial 1-800-944-3450 and you will get the recorded instructions. Hit 3 then 1 and the whole Lutheran hour sermon will play just like you are receiving a phone call.



[LutheranPublicRadio.org](http://LutheranPublicRadio.org)



[thewordendures.org](http://thewordendures.org)

