



*Ramona Blau, Fifth Grade*

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Prairie du Sac, WI

March 2018

Dear Sisters and Brothers,

I had to laugh this year when I found out that Ash Wednesday landed on Valentine's Day and Easter landed on April Fool's Day. I wondered how many pastors would feel compelled to say something about this or make sermon connections with these events.

Every year we have official holidays; Fourth of July, Memorial Day, Labor Day and so on. Along with these holidays, there are numerous 'special days' of note; Mother's Day, Father's Day, Valentine's Day and so on. Some of these days are legal holidays and some exist because of cultural decisions.

Then there are other days, ones that have long been connected to the church. Some have been connected by culture as well. For instance, take the week before Easter. In our past, this week was the time schools took their 'spring break.' Now many schools operate that week like every other week.

By now you may be asking, "What is the point of Fred's article?" Just this, we assign meaning to some days and not others. Some days we give people gifts or flowers or cards. Some days we travel to be with family and probably eat too much. Whatever we do, we choose some days to be times of greater importance than others.

For centuries the church has chosen the time before Easter as important. Beginning with Ash Wednesday, the 40 days of Lent is a time of preparation for Easter. It is a time of prayer, reflection, repentance, almsgiving and self-denial. Lent is a time for Christians to re-focus themselves on that which is at the heart of faith, the cross of Christ.

Sisters and brothers during the Lenten season I invite you to consider this time as important, a time to focus on what is worth your time and effort, to let go of that which lures you away from God's desire in your life and to join in a time of self-reflection and outward action, aimed at caring for a world in deep need of forgiveness, mercy and justice.

Shalom,



### **Congregational Meeting**

St. John's will meet on March 4, after the first service, to elect members to attend the May 5-6 Synod Assembly. Those elected will serve as voting members at the synod assembly and be our voice as the church gathers at the Kalahari Resort in Wisconsin Dells. This year we will elect a new bishop along with our normal assembly business. Please keep in prayer our synod and those who will be voting on this important decision.

At our congregational meeting we will also be hearing a report from a committee working on possibly building a columbarium on our property. Columbaria are structures with niches designed to hold urns with ashes of cremated remains. No action will be taken at this time beyond hearing about this ministry possibility.

## **Parish Planning Council Members:**

Executive Director	Ken Carlson	370-1356
Assistant Exec Director	Jon Sandeman	643-5006
Secretary	Kathy Lovell	643-2075
Treasurer	Butch Passehl	643-3008
Evangelism Board	Sheila Dittberner	370-1550
Fellowship Board	Lori Hegge	592-3196
Lay Ministry Board	Melani Wheeler	544-2711
Member at Large	Linda Lintl	370-7455
Member at Large-Youth	Ally Dunnum	644-0041
Parish Education Board	James Newman	512-7623
Properties Board	Roger Clason	576-0343
PR and Social Concerns	John Schmidt	643-2171
Stewardship Board	Bob Lange	434-2271
Women of ELCA	Eunice Yanke	643-8289
Youth Board	Megan Tarnutzer	963-0396

### The Staff:

Pastors: Fred Rilling [fred@stjohnssaukprairie.org](mailto:fred@stjohnssaukprairie.org) (h) 644-1359

Sally Williams [sally@stjohnssaukprairie.org](mailto:sally@stjohnssaukprairie.org) (h) 643-7810

Intern Derek Rosenstiel [derek@stjohnssaukprairie.org](mailto:derek@stjohnssaukprairie.org)  
(h) 370-7392

Director of Music: Connie Burton [connie@stjohnssaukprairie.org](mailto:connie@stjohnssaukprairie.org)  
(c)393-4291

Youth-Education: Abby Bennett [abby@stjohnssaukprairie.org](mailto:abby@stjohnssaukprairie.org)  
(c)370-2380

Custodian: John Hines [john@stjohnssaukprairie.org](mailto:john@stjohnssaukprairie.org) (c)393-2325

Office and Communications Coordinator: Linda Hines  
[linda@stjohnssaukprairie.org](mailto:linda@stjohnssaukprairie.org) (h) 544-2409

St. John's Lutheran Church: 643-2439 [www.stjohnssaukprairie.org](http://www.stjohnssaukprairie.org)

Like us on Facebook at St Johns Lutheran Sauk Prairie

*Mission Statement: Christ, our strength and refuge, calling us to serve*

Food Pantry Sunday is March 11th. Food, paper products and cleaning supplies may be brought to the table in the gathering area. These items are distributed to many families in the Sauk Prairie community. The food pantry especially needs:

Cereal	Canned Stews
Soup	Crackers
Shampoo	Laundry Soap

Keep this list handy as you do your grocery shopping during the next few weeks.

*Many parishioners find it easier to bring the items to the gathering area of the church at other times during the month. We appreciate the donations at any time.*

### **Birthday Greetings**

We hope you take a moment to send greetings to the following people who have birthdays in March. The day is in parentheses.

Marvin Beuthin (17)  
624 Sycamore Street  
Sauk City, WI 53583

Janice Zins (21)  
232 Spruce Street  
Sauk City, WI 53583

Betty Page (24)  
930 Prairie St., Apt. 209  
Prairie du Sac, WI 53578

Lillian Zick (26)  
200 Webster Ave., Apt. 13  
Sauk City, WI 53583

Eleanor Ferry (March 29, 1916)  
1090 Prairie St., #14  
Prairie du Sac, WI 53578

## **Women of the Church News**

Hannah Circle: Thursday, March 15, 6:15 p.m. at St. John's Library, childcare is provided

Lydia Circle: Thursday, March 8, 1:00 p.m. at St. John's Library, Carolyn Yanke, hostess

Martha Circle: Thursday, March 1, 9:00 a.m. at St. John's Library, Sandy Frey, hostess

Ruth Circle: Monday, March 12, 9:30 a.m. at Marian DeGiovanni's, 295 Water St., Prairie du Sac

Sarah/Mary Circles: Tuesday, March 6, 1:30 p.m. at St. John's Library



In February, 33 ladies attended Circle Meetings with Anne Klinkner, Macel Magnussen, Marge Erlandson, Marian DeGiovanni and Jeannine Robertson leading the Bible Study. In March, Anne Klinkner, Carol Benson, Marge Erlandson, Marian DeGiovanni and Kathy Lester will be leading the Bible Study.

The Baraboo Conference Meeting will be held at Zion Lutheran Church (near Rock Springs) on April 14<sup>th</sup>. Mark your calendar and save the date. It was decided last year that we will have only one meeting each year.

Lydia Circle is visiting Special Friends during February and March. Ruth Circle will visit them in April and May.

Remember to look in this Visitor for a Prayer for Peace to be read on March 20<sup>th</sup>.

The Bible Study Leaders Meeting for March will be on Tuesday, March 27 at 9:00 a.m.

## **Palm Sunday Breakfast**

The Fellowship Board will be serving the annual Palm Sunday Breakfast on Sunday, March 25 from 8:30 – 10:45 a.m. We need your help! Please sign up on the kiosk if you are able to bring food, help prepare the fellowship hall and food on Saturday the 24<sup>th</sup> or help with serving and clean-up on the 25<sup>th</sup>. The menu includes ham, egg and cheese soufflé, pancakes, coffee cakes, toast, fresh fruit, coffee, tea, juice and milk.

## **Older Wiser Livelier Seniors (OWLS)**

All 55+ members and friends of St. John's are invited to gather together at 9:30 a.m. on Thursday, March 15<sup>th</sup>. Back by popular demand will be Pastor Fred to talk about funeral planning. Come for the first time or come for a refresher! We hope you can join us!

Please let Pastor Sally know if you have any ideas or requests for future OWLS events or topics!

## **Women's Book Club**

On March 27<sup>th</sup> we will discuss The Color of Water: A Black Man's Tribute to His White Mother by James McBride at 10am in the church library. A copy has been placed on the desk in the library. There are a number of copies in the public library system. Get your name in now to get your copy!

## **Hannah Circle**

Hannah Circle will meet on Thursday, March 15, 2018 at 6:15 p.m. and the third Thursday at 6:15 p.m. through May, 2018.

## **St. John's Web Page**

Be sure to go online and look at our web page. See the changes at [stjohnssaukprairie.org](http://stjohnssaukprairie.org). Please call Pastor Fred if you are interested in helping with our webpage.

## **Adult Education Schedule**

March's adult education focuses on issues of discrimination and prejudice. We will continue our focus on the new social statement study on Women and Justice, specifically talking about issues of sexism. Then we will wrap up these sessions with talking about how we are called to respond as faithful people of God. We will meet in room 1 at 9:15 a.m. on Sunday mornings.

## Text Study

We will not meet for text study in March. We will reconvene on Wednesday, April 4.

## Learn About Woodworking

Did you know there are over a dozen different categories of woodworking? Have you ever wanted to know more about the craft? Maybe you want to know how much it might cost to get started or what skills are required or where does one go to learn about woodworking. If you are someone who's interested, then get a cup of coffee and a donut and join me, Roger Clason, in the large gathering space on Sunday, March 18 between services. Who knows, one of you might develop a new hobby.

# SPECIAL PRAYER

We invite you to pray for peace on the 20<sup>th</sup> day of each month. On March 20<sup>th</sup>, please repeat the following prayer:

Dear Lord,

I come before you and ask for Your strength within me.

A strength not of the world but of Your kingdom.

To refrain from judgment and feast on love.

To push out greed and hold tight to joy.

To dispel pride and rise with humility.

To quell anger and rest in self-control.

To shun greed and rest in giving.

To turn from power and embrace service.

To let go of resentment and rest in peace.

To push through fear and walk forwards in grace.

To run with faith, soar with forgiveness,  
and allow Your eternal strength to abide with me.

Amen.

Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ,

The ELCA is preparing a social statement on women and justice to be considered by the 2019 ELCA Churchwide Assembly. The greater church has several social statements on a variety of topics such as human sexuality, abortion, creation, race and ethnicity, and several others. Check out the resource section on [www.elca.org](http://www.elca.org) to read more about these.

The purpose of social statements is to teach as well as act as a policy document about significant social issues. This particular statement is to address issues that women face in society, act as a call to justice, and to make new commitments to one another in the Body of Christ.

A task force has invited women and men to read through the draft of this social statement and to give honest feedback. If you are interested in participating in this conversation, please see me and I can get a copy of the draft for you. The task force requests that all responses be submitted prior to September 30, 2018.

The prophet Micah reminds us, "And what does the Lord require of you? To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God."

We have the honor and the responsibility to work for justice for anyone who has been pushed down, excluded, and judged.

Join me in this opportunity to be a voice for women, proclaiming that Christ is present and active in this church as we lift up those who are broken and hurting in this world.

In Christ,



## ***Thank you***

We are indeed thankful today and every day for your partnership in Wartburg Seminary's mission. What a gift you are to future leaders for the church! It is my privilege to thank you for your gifts of \$1000 to the Student Account Fund of Halcyon Bjornstad and \$2250 to the Student Account Fund of Kathi Matthews-Risley.

The Rev. Louise N. Johnson, President

(Money given through our Stewardship Committee.)



Greetings Siblings in Christ,

Thank you St. John's for welcoming and supporting me this year! Words of thanksgiving can never be overdone in my opinion, so I continue to give thanks for everything that you have done for me in making this internship year pretty amazing already. It takes a lot of commitment and a lot of work to be a teaching congregation. All of this work will raise up new leaders within the Church and it all goes to the glory of God. So thank you from Becky, Theodore & myself!

Throughout this year of internship I have been given many different opportunities to learn about what it means to be a pastor and to grow into the way in which I hope to live out this calling. One of the most important ways in which I am able to learn and grow in this way is through feedback. I encourage you to continue to give me encouragement and feedback on ways in which I can develop my skills as a pastor. You can do this through an email, a phone call, or simply by coming up to me when you see me and letting me know how I am doing and what I can improve on. There are many different areas of growth that I need to focus on this year. Areas such as teaching, pastoral care, stewardship, administration and others as well. All of these skills are vital to the calling of pastoral ministry, and can continually be sharpened with the aid of feedback.

During the months of March and April, I will be asking you to give me some formal feedback on my preaching. We will have printed sermon feedback forms that will be handed out to you with the bulletin prior to service. I ask you to fill these out and hand them back in after service, or if you need some time you can bring them back to the church office later. I have come up with a few questions I would like you to focus on while listening to me preach. Here they are:

1. In a "nutshell," what was the main point of the sermon?
2. What feelings, thoughts, or questions did the sermon bring up for you?
3. Where/How did the sermon connect with and speak to your daily life?
4. How did the delivery of the sermon help or hinder the message?

These questions are hopefully pretty directive, but if you need any help with what exactly I am looking for feel free to ask me. Constructive feedback would include some specific things that stand out to you that are either positive or are things that need work. I am asking for answers to these questions that are more than - "It was good" or "It was bad". I appreciate all that you are

able to put down on these forms and I am excited to hear what I am doing well and where I can improve my preaching.

I thank you for everything you have already done and for everything you continue to do for me as your intern! Your support and love has made it possible for me to push myself and get outside of my comfort zone as I learn and grow this year!

God's Peace,  
Intern Derek

### **Sauk Prairie Area Literacy Council**

The literacy council is looking for tutors. What does it mean to be a tutor with the literacy council? It means helping adults improve their functional literacy skills so that day-to-day experiences become easier.

No previous teaching experience is required. The usual time commitment is 1 to 2 contact hours per week. Participation in a Tutor Preparation Workshop is required. There is no cost for this 4 session workshop. Workshop dates are March 8, 15, 22 and April 5 from 6:30 – 8:00 p.m.

To register or for more information, contact Heather Cole, SPALC Coordinator at 643-8318.

 **THANK** you!

Dear St. John's,

Thank you so much for making the blankets for us. We loved them and it was the perfect gift. We really appreciate your hard work. Thanks again.

Willow Creek Students and Dani Tarnutzer, teacher  
*St. John's 9<sup>th</sup> grade confirmation students tied fleece blankets to send to Willow Creek. We thank Betty Fisher and Carol Mallon for assisting with this project.*

## With Sincere Sympathy

We offer our condolences to the following families this month:

Norma Newman on the death of her sister, Marilyn Elaine Sprecher on the death of her granddaughter,

Elizabeth Sprecher

Kathy and Dan Lovell on the death of Kathy's sister, Terry Hartmann



We recently received monetary gifts in memory of Alan Jones and Jim Merlet. We are grateful when our congregation is remembered in this manner. These gifts will be used to benefit our church.

## THANK YOU

We would like to thank you for all you have done for our parents over many years. They spoke very highly of you all. Dad's (Jim Merlet) funeral service was very nice and we had many family and friends relay positive comments as well. Thank you!

Mike and Mark Merlet



In the Hospital

St. John's reports many of the names of our hospitalized and recently discharged members in the monthly newsletter. We include only those who have given us permission to print their names. You may send cards or telephone them and pray for their improved health.

### Hospitalized/Recently Discharged

Janis Klaetsch

Walter Scott

Ed Nimmow

Arlene Foell

Hana Johnson

## **News from the Director of Music**

Dear members of St. John's,

On Ash Wednesday of 2001, I became the director of music at St. John's. This position included serving as the organist and director of the Senior Choir. In 2002, I also took on the position of director of Kids of the Kingdom, and after a few years, also became director of the Messengers. Serving as your music director has been a great privilege and joy of my life. From the start, I was welcomed with loving open arms, and was shown the love of Christ at work. This has been a wonderful place to do music ministry.

On June 30, 2018, I will be retiring. I have been an organist since I was a junior in high school! Before coming to St. John's, I was the organist at St. John's in Grafton, Wisconsin. So, I have served for 25 years in an "almost every Sunday" position. My husband, Bill, has been a constant support through all my years of serving in the church as a music leader. He has been retired for a couple of years, and now is the time for me to do that as well! We are excited about the possibilities, and look forward to finding out how we can serve in new ways.

I have been blessed by the pastoral leadership here. St. John's has strong theologians as pastors, who seek to teach, preach, and bring the Good News to all. Both Fred and Sally have been a constant source of encouragement and support and I am grateful for all they have done for me and my family.

I am also lucky to have served with wonderful staff here. The internship program has also proven to be a wonderful opportunity to see more of the upcoming leaders in the ELCA.

Having said all this, June is several months away, and there is still much to do! Thank you, St. John's for showing the love of Christ in so many ways.

Sincerely,  
Connie Burton

## **Good Friday Cantata**

On Good Friday we will present a cantata at our ecumenical services. If you are interested in being a part of the ecumenical choir and have any questions, please speak with Connie Burton. The rehearsal schedule is:

Saturdays: March 3 and March 17, at 9:00 a.m.

If you cannot make the Saturday sessions, there will be a rehearsal on

Wednesday: March 14 at 2:00 p.m.

## **Ecumenical Ash Wednesday and Good Friday Contributions**

The loose offering collected at the ecumenical services Ash Wednesday and Good Friday will be divided and given to the Good Neighbor Clinic, My Neighbor in Need, the Salvation Army and 6:8, a local non-profit aiming to make service personal.

Thank you for your generous giving.

## **Lenten Worship Services**

We will have worship services on Wednesdays at 1:00 and 6:30 p.m. There will be a meal served before each service, at noon and 5:20 p.m. respectfully. As we have done in the past, our Wednesday Lenten offerings will be divided among other organizations that reach out to help our neighbors. This year the Parish Planning Council has chosen HOPE of Sauk Prairie, a local suicide prevention group and the Sauk Prairie Schools Special Needs Fund, a program that helps to meet the needs of students that other funds will not cover, as the recipients of our Lenten offerings.

## **Good Friday Services**

On March 30 St. John's will host an ecumenical Good Friday worship service. The service will be a cantata, featuring word and song. Services are at 1:00 p.m. and 6:30 p.m. (No meals will be served at St. John's on Good Friday.)

## **Easter Flower Garden**

Karen Bader will be in the gathering area between services on March 4th to collect money for flowers for Easter. We will purchase tulips and daffodils for the garden around the altar. You may pick up the flowers you purchased after the last service on Easter Sunday. If you are not interested in taking flowers home, you may also make a donation which will be given to St. Vincent de Paul. The cost is \$7 each and the flowers/donations may be given in celebration of a special occasion or in honor or memory of a loved one. The details will be printed in the Easter bulletin. Any flowers not picked up by the Thursday morning after Easter Sunday will be available to anyone who wants them.

## **Happy March Birthday!**

*The day is in parenthesis*

### **Our Youngest:**

Cataleya Lane (11)	Adeline Newman (13)
Ethan Gilchrist (19)	August Maestri (19)

### **Our Sunday School Students:**

Maximus Ederer (8)	Ella Carthew (9)
Ethan Desso (9)	Sean Jager (10)
Samson Begalske (11)	Jozie Braund (12)
Preston Ott (12)	Campbell Kelter (15)
Olivia Naggs (17)	Lillian Ott (17)
Byrce Ballweg (18)	Micah Bennett (19)
Cole Helgerson (19)	Joe Frosch (21)
Eliot Carlson (22)	Jude Thompson (24)
Ethan Duren (26)	Kyle Cass (27)
Whitney Maier (28)	Kendra Frey (29)
Simi Bever (30)	

### **Our Youth:**

Signe Begalske (1)	Ben Levers (3)
Drew Marshall (11)	Alex Kinnamon (13)
Sawyer Ladd (13)	JJ Wolfe (13)
Kyle King (14)	Jacob Vieth (14)
Ethan Kolnik (15)	Sara Bradley (17)
Bailey Herschleb (25)	Tekla Nimmow (29)

### **College and Career-age Young People:**

Kaitlynn Pulvemacher (1)	Alex Statz (11)
Ivan Lohr (23)	Jacob Treinen (26)
Kayla Wernsing (27)	Beth Yanke (27)
Tessa Pierce (28)	

## Serving in March

### Ushers:

March 4

### 8:00 a.m.

Molly Ballweg  
Shawn Ballweg  
Butch Passehl  
Nancy Passehl

### 10:30 a.m.

Emma Kinnamon  
Dave Kinnamon

March 11

Carly Coy  
Steve Coy  
Roger Clason  
Nancy Kaufman

Jack Gorsuch  
Mary Richardson

March 18

Jonah Richard  
Rob Richard  
Roger Clason  
Linda Meyer

Quinn Baier  
Stacey Stoehr

March 25

Jack Gorsuch  
Mary Richardson

Quinn Baier  
Stacey Stoehr

### Acolytes:

March 4

### 8:00 a.m.

Megan Small  
Brody Ballweg  
Courtney Lautenbach  
Chesney Schonenberger

### 10:30 a.m.

Emily Cafilisch  
Jay Dregney  
Ethan Jones  
Meadow Liedtke

March 11

Jack Boerger  
Ashley Pape

Zach Guentherman  
Ben Levers

March 18

Wesley Himebauch  
Jaxson Dunn

Claire Thiede

March 25

### Readers:

March 4

### 8:00 a.m.

Anna Ballweg  
Nancy Kaufman  
Marilyn Herschleb  
Tony DeGiovanni

### 10:30 a.m.

Kyra Manning  
Dale Clason  
Dale Haroldson  
Dale Clason

March 11

March 18

March 25

### Cantors:

March 4

### 8:00 a.m.

Bill Burton  
Derek Rosenstiel  
Karley Blau  
Katie LaVigne

### 10:30 a.m.

Megan/Jordan Small  
Derek Rosenstiel  
Doris Lohr  
Katie LaVigne

March 11

March 18

March 25

**Communion Assistants: 8:00 a.m.**

March 4 Megan Small  
 March 11 Crystal Lautenbach  
 March 18 Linda Hines  
 March 25 Marilyn Herschleb

**10:30 a.m.**

Emily Caflich  
 Dale Clason  
 Deb Westphal  
 Dale Clason

**Assisting Ministers: 8:00 a.m.**

March 4 Dennis Fisher  
 March 11 Bev Clason  
 March 18 Marv Hupp  
 March 25 Bev Clason

**10:30 a.m.**

Dennis Fisher  
 Bev Clason  
 Marv Hupp  
 Audrie Nurkala

**Communion Set Up/Clean Up 8:00 a.m.**

March 4 Jayne Carlson  
 March 11 Courtney Lautenbach  
 March 18 Deb Corrao  
 Cindy Frey  
 March 25 Joe/Alice Chenoweth

**10:30 a.m.**

Deb Lohr-Foster  
 Jaxson Dunn  
 Deb/Gerry Westphal

**Nursery Staff:**

March 4 Jordan Chao  
 Drew Marshall  
 March 11 Megan Small  
 Alia Schlimgen  
 March 18 Zach Guentherman  
 Kyra Manning  
 March 25 Karley Blau  
 Karlie Harpold

**10:30 a.m.**

Wyatt Urban  
 Quinn Baier  
 Emily Caflich  
 Alia Schlimgen  
 Alia Schlimgen  
 Chesney Schonenberger  
 Emily Caflich  
 Ruby Sandeman

**Coffee Set-Up/Clean-Up: 7:30 a.m.**

March 4 Ava Roach  
 March 11 Gavin Tompkin  
 March 18 Olivia Joyce  
 March 25 Palm Sunday Breakfast

**9:00 a.m.(Serve)**

Sam Beattie  
 Chesney Schonenberger  
 Olivia Joyce

**Sunday Stewards**

March 4 Roger Clason  
 March 11 Butch Passehl  
 March 18 Linda Lintl  
 March 25 Roger Clason

**10:30 a.m.**

Jon Sandeman



**Greeters:****8:00 a.m.****10:30 a.m.**

Mar 4 (Sanctuary)	Karen Bader	Curt/Peggy Johnson
(Front doors)	Roger/Bev Clason	Denny/Bonnie Dederich
(Side doors)	Bob/Josie Fentress	
Mar 11 (Sanctuary)	Roger Maynard	Jeff/Becky Nimmow
(Front doors)	Linda Lintl	Ed/Ginny Nimmow
(Side doors)	Shirley Anding	Norma Newman
Mar 18 (Sanctuary)	Olivia Joyce	Jack Boerger
(Front doors)	Jonah Richard	Anna Francour
(Side doors)	Megan Small	Kyra Manning
Mar 25 (Sanctuary)	Monte Wick	Norma Newman
(Front doors)	Gina Wyttenbach	John/Ellen Mast
(Side doors)	Dick/Jan Dobrzynski	

**Congregational totals**

	<b>Attendance</b>	<b>Offering</b>
January 21	234	\$ 6,297.50
January 28	220	\$ 7,331.06
February 4	204	\$11,954.49
February 11	287	\$ 7,807.47
February 14, Ash Wed.	315	\$ 1,684.25
February 18	253	\$12,138.81

**Stock the Schools**

In cooperation with 6:8, St. John's is collecting items to be given to Sauk Prairie students in need. Each month we will have different items to collect that will help our local students. Some of these items can be used in school and some at home. March's items are: Ritz-type crackers, soap and women's and men's deodorant. Look for the red bin in the gathering area by the church office to drop off your donations.

# Sunday School News

## Important Sunday School Dates to Remember

Sunday School families, please remember there is no Sunday School on March 25th or April 1st. Our last day of Sunday School will be May 20th.

<u>Sunday School</u>	<u>Attendance</u>	<u>Offering</u>
January 28	61	\$28.50
February 4	68	\$8.91
February 11	71	\$26.22
February 18	41	\$25.00

## Bake Sale to Fight Hunger

Thank you for your kind and generous hearts! The 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> graders were able to collect \$950! With this money they will choose pigs, chicks and goats to be sent to families in need around the world to help fight hunger and provide education for the families.

## Vacation Bible School

Mark your calendars, our 2018 Vacation Bible School will be August 6-10, 2018, from 9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. Times are the same for older kids and for pre-K. Sign up will be in April, and stay tuned for more details!

## Summer Camp

Summer may seem very far away, but Bible camps are getting ready for your children's registrations. If you get your registrations in early (February/early March), you are likely to get the week you want. Wait too long (late March/April) – and you may have a child who wants to go but no week available for them to go. So register early!

St. John's Lutheran Church contributes \$80 towards the cost of camp for those youth who attend a week at an ELCA Bible camp, and \$35 for a 2 or 3 day camp.

# Middle and High School News

## Middle and High School Upcoming Events

March 14 – Mentor Night

March 28 – No Confirmation

April 4<sup>th</sup> – Mentor Night

May 2<sup>nd</sup> – Worship Service and Potluck

    Last Day of Confirmation

    Affirmation of Baptism Practice

May 9th – 6th Grade Confirmation Orientation – 6:00 p.m.

May 13th – Affirmation of Baptism – 10:30 a.m. service

May 20th – Senior Recognition – 10:30 a.m. service

**Congrats** Megan Small, Annika Braund, Wesley Himebauch and Anna Francour on completing your sermon notes!

## Confirmation Lenten Schedule

Students are expected to attend class and worship each week throughout Lent. Meals will continue to be provided at 5:20 for students and families, except for Maundy Thursday and Good Friday. The schedule is as follows:

March 7<sup>th</sup> – Class and Worship, 6:00 p.m.

March 14 – Class and Worship, 6:00 p.m. (Mentor Night)

March 21 – Class and Worship, 6:00 p.m.

March 28 – NO CLASS

March 29 – Attend Maundy Thursday Worship 1:00 p.m. or

6:30 p.m.

March 30 – Attend Good Friday Worship, 1:00 p.m. or 6:30 p.m.

Families are encouraged to attend Wednesday Lenten services at 6:30 p.m. with your confirmation students.

## YOUTH LOCK IN!

All 6th-12th graders are invited to a lock-in (a sleepover at the church) on Friday, March 9, at 7:00 p.m. through Saturday, March 10th at 7:00 a.m. You are all invited and so are your friends! There is no cost and there will be lots of fun...basketball, movies, crafts, games, food, and maybe some sleeping (but not usually!). Please bring a snack or drink to share. A sign-up sheet is on the Youth Board near Abby's office. We need 20 students and 12 adults to sign up in order to have the event. Hope to see you there! See Abby Bennett or Megan Tarnutzer for more information.

We welcomed a new sister into the family of Christ following her baptism during the month of February.

Avery Marie Brunner, daughter of Joshua Daniel and Rochelle Marie (Peterson) Brunner. Avery's sponsors are Stacey Brunner-Jones and Jenny Costa. Meta Hartman is her congregational sponsor.

### **First Communion Instruction**

First Communion instruction will be Thursday, March 8 from 6-7pm. If you would like to explore the possibilities of first communion for your children, no matter what their age, please sign up by calling the church office. Taking the class does not obligate anyone to begin communing nor is it a requirement for communion. The class is simply a time to explore what this gift of God might mean for you. Children are welcome to start communing at any time, but we will have a special First Communion Sunday, March 18 so the congregation can honor your children in this important milestone! See the pastors with any questions and to sign up.

### **Mattresses for the Orphanage**

Help purchase much needed mattresses for the House of Jesus' Children Orphanage. Each one costs \$50. They need 100 mattresses in order to replace those that have literally fallen apart, along with adding additional ones to meet the growing size of the orphanage.

Whatever you can give, please indicate on your gift, Orphanage Mattress Project. We will continue collecting money for mattresses through May, 2018. We currently have collected \$4379.00. Thank you!

## NEW Evening Book Discussion in 2018

The NEW Evening Book Discussion group met for the first time in January. We enjoyed getting to know one another better as we discussed What Is a Prince? using *The Little Prince*, *The Prince*, and the Prince of Peace .

There were five of us, but there is plenty of room for more at the Blue Spoon. And I know many of you know where that is because you were there that same night for other activities. So if that means the last Tuesday of the month at 6:30 p.m. is not a good time to meet with us, let me know. We may be able to accommodate you!

This group is open to all: men and women, young and old, members and non-members, anyone who enjoys reading and talking about it. We want to know, How did this book affect you?

We read from any genre: best seller, classics, fiction, non-fiction, fantasy, thriller, biography, or graphic novel. We hope to find books we enjoy that stretch us in new directions. Even books we've read before.

As always, reading is **not** required to be part of the discussion. Come enjoy a glass of wine, if you are 21, or bowl of gelato, no age requirement, with us! If you have given those up for Lent, maybe Pastor Sally or Pastor Fred will offer a dispensation.

### **Mar. 27** *The Round House* by Louise Erdrich

The story of a woman brutally attacked and her 13 year old son's struggle to find a way to help his mother and his search for vengeance. Explores love and family ties, coming of age, the boundary between childhood and adulthood; women, bigotry, and sexual violence, race, politics, land, judicial system, injustice; Chippewa tradition vs. Catholicism, religion, storytelling, superstition, magic, good and evil, morality.

### **Apr. 24** *Worse than Slavery: Parchman Farm and the Ordeal of Jim Crow Justice* by David M. Oshinsky

A sensitively told tale of suffering, brutality, and inhumanity; an epic history of race and punishment in the deepest South from emancipation to the civil rights era—and beyond.

### **May 29** *Cellist of Sarajevo* by Steven Galloway

The story of four people who serve as a microcosm of country as it faces a war. Discusses hatred and the other; **war**, civilians and humanity; **art**, culture and the fragility of civilization, the ease with which society can be torn apart by the political machinations.

Contact Susan Heide, [sheide@merr.com](mailto:sheide@merr.com), if you have questions or can't make the next meeting.