



Brock Esser, 5th grade

Prairie du Sac, WI

January 2023

Dear Sisters and Brothers,

As I looked back on what I wrote last year for this article, I was reminded that we had no sanctuary heat from our roof top unit. It was instead coming from an exterior gas unit pumping warmth through two openings at the bottom of our stain glass windows. I am so glad that is not our situation this year! Thanks to all for helping us replace both of our large heating/cooling roof units as well as the three smaller units.

I am also grateful for a full staff. We enter 2023 with Intern John Evans and Youth Director, Penny Johnson. Both joined us last summer. A full staff, along with strong and gifted lay leaders, is a blessing.

My gratitude grows as I consider the members of our congregation. So many people engaged in demonstrating God's love to the world. Some of that happens in this building; teaching, learning, sharing, challenging and this list goes on. But most of what I am grateful for is the love shown beyond our doors.

Every Tuesday I go to the middle school to volunteer. Sometimes my time is spent in the halls, sometimes in classrooms, but wherever I am, I see over and over again, teachers and staff working hard at caring for young people. Many of these school staff are members of our congregation, but all are working hard to raise up caring and educated youth.

I remember my time in middle school. I was challenging and could be difficult. I am grateful that school staff saw beyond my behavior and as they cared for me while continuing to teach me the lessons I needed to learn.

Teachers, construction workers, scientists, medical staff, plumbers, truck drivers, city employees, grocery store clerks, restaurant drive through staff and this list goes on and on. So many people in our congregation live and work day in and day out. You may see their work at church from time to time, but the rest of the week they are...you are, out and about – living your life and showing the love of God to so many in our community.

I am privileged to hear some of the stories that are told of the love and forgiveness people experience through you in their day-to-day life. I also see the very love that I speak of being shown, often in challenging and difficult situations.

Thank you for being Christ to others. Thank you for showing them love and forgiveness. Thank you for being God's people in all the places you live and travel.

Shalom,



Thank You!

Dear sisters and brothers in Christ,

Thank you for all the cards and expressions of kindness this Christmas season. Thank you also for the kind words and support you have given over this past year. We are blessed to be part of this congregation and community. May the blessings of the Christ child continue to abound!

Fred and Kris Rilling



New Member Exploration

Have you been visiting St. John's and are interested in becoming a member? Or perhaps you know of someone looking for a new church home. We will receive new members on Sunday, February 19 at the 8am worship service followed by a reception in their honor. In the weeks preceding this reception we will have orientation sessions on Sundays, January 29, February 5, and February 12. The class will meet in Room 10 at the end of our education wing. If you are unable to attend these sessions, but would like to join please see one of the pastors.



Parish Planning Council Members:

Executive Director	Nancy Kaufman	(608) 963-0151
Assistant Exec Director	Nancy Passehl	(608) 219-1936
Secretary	Cathy Yanke	(608) 434-4869
Treasurer	Donna Nelson	(608) 393-4660
Evangelism Board	Sheila Dittberner	(608) 370-1550
Fellowship Board	Linda Michaels	(608) 643-8286
Lay Ministry Board	Gina Varley	(608) 544-5002
Member-at-Large	Roger Seymour	(608) 588-3198
Parish Education Board	Your Name Here	
Properties Board	Lon Kaderavek	(608) 434-2928
PR and Social Concerns	Ellen Jorgensen	(262) 995-3248
Stewardship Board	Anne Klinkner	(608) 393-6453
Women of ELCA	Eunice Yanke	(608) 643-8289
Youth Board	Megan Tarnutzer	(608) 963-0396
Youth Member-at-Large	Jonah Richard	(608) 347-0488

The Staff:

Pastors: Fred Rilling fred@stjohnssaukprairie.org 963-4706

Sally Williams sally@stjohnssaukprairie.org (h) 643-7810

Intern: John Evans johnEVANS@stjohnssaukprairie.org 643-2439

Director of Music: Ruellene Seymour

ruellene@stjohnssaukprairie.org (h) 588-3198

Youth Director: Penny Johnson penny@stjohnssaukprairie.org

643-2439

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

Office and Communications Coordinator: Linda Hines

linda@stjohnssaukprairie.org (h) 544-2409

Sunday School Superintendents: Joanna Jones and Miranda Jager

sundayschool@stjohnssaukprairie.org 643-2439

St. John's Lutheran Church: 643-2439 www.stjohnssaukprairie.org

Like us on Facebook at St Johns Lutheran Sauk Prairie

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

St. John's Lutheran Church
100 Oak Street
Prairie du Sac, Wisconsin 53578



Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

God's work. Our hands.

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

Christ,
our strength
and refuge,
calling us
to serve

Non-Profit Org.
U.S. Postage
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Permit No. 23
Prairie du Sac,
Wisconsin 53578



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:

Pancake Mix	Syrup
Canned Stews	Flavored Rice pouches
Hot Cocoa Mix	Granola Bars
Dish Soap	Shampoo

Keep this list handy as you do your grocery shopping during the next few weeks. You may bring your donations to the table in the gathering area at any time.



Birthday Greetings

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

Marge Erlandson (4)
1425 Hemlock Street
Sauk City, WI 53583

Mel Lohr (4)
S9591 Church Road
Prairie du Sac, WI 53578

Jim Weeks (13)
930 Prairie Street
Prairie du Sac, WI 53578

Bonnie McGuine (17)
245 Sycamore Street
Sauk City, WI 53583

Arlene Foell (18)
7343 Tetiva Road
Sauk City, WI 53583

Carol Benson (19)
713 Madison St., Apt. 111
Sauk City, WI 53583



Women of the Church News



	Women of the Church News	
	<u>Lydia Circle</u> Combined Circles Meeting, Thursday, January 12 St. John's fellowship hall	1:00pm
	<u>Martha Circle</u> Combined Circles Meeting, Thursday, January 12 St. John's fellowship hall	1:00pm
	<u>Ruth Circle</u> Combined Circles Meeting, Thursday, January 12 St. John's fellowship hall	1:00pm
	<u>Sarah/Mary Circle</u> Combined Circles Meeting, Thursday, January 12 St. John's fellowship hall	1:00pm

Twenty-three ladies attended Circle meetings in December, with Diane Elsing, Barbara Salveson, Marian DeGiovanni and Kathy Lester leading the Bible Study.

As we have done in the past (before Covid), we will not have our regular individual Circle Meetings in January. Instead, all Circles will meet together on Thursday, January 12 at 1:00pm. in the fellowship hall. Of course, we will have some food first! We have decided that we will have finger food or whatever else anyone would like to bring for a light lunch. If you have leftover Christmas cookies, cheese, chips, fruit...just anything you would like to share. It is strictly if you want to bring food...you can come without....we just want to see you there! We are hoping for good weather and a good crowd and ALL women of St. John's are cordially invited.

It will be a special meeting with Intern John Evans leading the Bible Study....AND he will entertain us with his guitar and singing. We all know he has a beautiful singing voice (and a good speaking voice too) and we are looking forward to both the Study and the entertainment. After this, we will have our special Candlelight Service for members of St. John's who died during 2022. Members of St. John's who have lost loved ones are invited to come and light a candle for their loved one. Anyone present who would like to light a candle for a loved one who was not a member of St. John's is also invited to do so. We are hoping to see you there, so mark your calendars and plan to come.

The final amount collected for the ThankOffering is \$393.00.

The money in the "Pennies for Poverty Jar" has been counted and we are so pleased to find out that we have \$196.56! We will give this money to Hope House of Baraboo. We will "round it out" to make \$200.00. Hope House helps women and children in need and this will help greatly this Christmas season. Many thanks to those who contributed.

Looking ahead, the Baraboo Conference Spring Gathering will be on April 22, 2023 in the morning with a noon luncheon planned at Bonnet Prairie Church, N3794 Old F Road, Rio. We will have more information as it becomes available.

Looking further ahead, the Twelfth Triennial convention is scheduled for September 19-21, 2023 in Phoenix, AZ.

Lydia Circle is visiting Special Friends during December and January.

Remember to read a Prayer for Peace in this Visitor on January 20th.

The Bible Study Leaders' Meeting for February will be on Tuesday, January 31, at 9:00am.

Respectively submitted, Ruth Dresser



Milestone Ministry: Baptism Anniversary

All children of God who were baptized in 2022 are invited to take part in a special Baptism Anniversary celebration on Sunday, January 8 at either service. Please mark your calendars and invite your congregational sponsors to attend worship with you and your children that day. A letter of invitation was sent in December. Let Pastor Sally know if you have any questions. We look forward to celebrating with you.

Adult Education Schedule

We will wrap up our study of Bible and Film on January 8 and January 15. Then Pastor Sally will lead a series on Clichés of Faith: How we understand (or at least try to understand) how God works in the midst of suffering and tragedy. We will meet in the church library at 9:15am on Sunday mornings.

thank you

We have many reasons to be thankful and our church family is among the top. Thank you for your kind Christmas wishes, cards, goodies, and gifts this season and all year long. Your generosity continues to inspire us each day.

Thank you,
Pastor Sally, Jeff and Molly Williams



Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ,

The Work of Christmas

When the song of the angels is stilled,
When the star in the sky is gone,
When the kings and princes are home,
When the shepherds are back with their flock,
The work of Christmas begins:
To find the lost,
To heal the broken,
To feed the hungry,
To release the prisoner,
To rebuild the nations,
To bring peace among others,
To make music in the heart.

Howard Thurman

By the time you read this the season of Christmas (even in the church) will be over and we'll be celebrating Epiphany and speeding toward Lent. So, what now?

I love the above poem by Howard Thurman because it reminds me the birth of Christ is just the beginning. It's not an end to anything. We are invited into God's mission of caring for God's people and the world God made.

Luke 10:27 reminds us that Jesus said, "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength and with all your mind, and your neighbor as yourself." That is the work put before us now. The work given to us by the one whose birth we just celebrated.

I look forward to the many ways that we will do this work together. May the work we do in Christ's name be blessed richly this year and in all the years to come!

In celebration,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Sally".



Enlightenment strikes. That is the meaning behind the logo for the Grateful Dead, one of the most recognizable names in the history of popular music. With its bold, graphic, red white and blue color scheme, the logo depicts a human skull with a giant lightning bolt in its center, symbolizing a sudden rush and realization of truth and meaning in life.

While not all of us at St. John's Lutheran Church are deadheads, one thing I do know that applies to each of us is how the liturgical season of Epiphany is an embodiment of enlightenment striking each of us. To have an epiphany means to have an important revelation or insight that fundamentally changes your view of life.

Saint Matthew's gospel presents this epiphany, the reality of Christ's birth and presence among us, as something that is recognized by folks who should have no reason to do just that. The Magi are not Jewish, yet they recognize the importance of Jesus' birth long before Herod and all the religious leaders in Jerusalem did. Immediately after preaching the Sermon on the Mount, where Jesus said "I have not come to abolish the law but fulfill it", something just as crazy happens. The first person Jesus encounters is a Roman Centurion, whose faith in him is so great that he doesn't even ask Jesus to come to his home to heal his servant: "...Only speak the word, and my servant will be healed."

This is the reality of God's amazing and surprising grace, as Pastor Fred likes to say. It strikes like lightning where and when we least expect it, and it happens in and through folks whom we would never expect. Where, in this Epiphany season, is God calling each of us to witness amazing and surprising grace, striking seemingly out of nowhere?

Intern John

SPECIAL PRAYER

We invite you to pray for peace on the 20th day of each month. On January 20th, please repeat the following prayer:

God, teach us what it means to have faith in silence. When we face trials that are beyond our understanding, help us to find peace. Help us to be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, and faithful in prayer. You set all things in accordance to your time. Remind us to wait patiently, and find peace in your plan.



With Sincere Sympathy

We offer our condolences to the following families this month:

Roger Clason and his family, Dale Clason and her family on the death of Roger's wife and Dale's sister-in-law, Beverly Clason.

Marilyn Larson on the death of her sister, Luann.

Megan and Jeremy Burke on the death of Megan's grandmother, Beverly Christenson.

Aletha and John Ballweg and their family, Herb and Cathy Yanke and their family on the death of Aletha and Herb's great-aunt, Una Wolff. Herb and Aletha have also recently lost an aunt, Jeannine Mick.

Karen Ballweg, Ryan and Stephanie Ballweg, Jeff and Patti Ballweg, Shawn and Melissa Ballweg and their families on the death of Karen's sister-in-law, Millie Roth. Millie was an aunt of Ryan, Jeff and Shawn.

Connie and Dan Holl and family on the death of Connie's grandmother, Neva Virnig,



Baby Congratulations

We celebrate with Kim and Jarett Schoepp on the birth of their daughter, Aubrey Diane. Kris Helms is Aubrey's grandmother and Marilyn Herschleb is her great-grandmother.

We also rejoice with Brett and Michelle Lauer on the birth of their son, Zayden John. Zayden's grandparents are Bryce and Nadine Lauer.

thank you!

A big Thank You to our "Technology Team" Lisa Davis, Ellen Jorgensen, Eric Kaul, Charlie Kruchten, Liz Leith, Malcolm Leith, Amy Nelson, Jeff and Nicole Sandberg and Roger Seymour, plus our newcomers Alyssa Himebauch and Sean Jager for their dedication, flexibility and team spirit in making audio/video/Zoom continue to happen for our congregation.



JUST BAKERY

A JustDane Initiative

Just Bakery items will be sold on January 15 between our worship services. Stop by the display table and purchase a great-tasting baked good to take home with you!



Wanted: Mobile Meals Delivery Volunteers!

St. John's has committed to delivering meals the weeks of January 16-20 and January 23-27. We need two volunteers every weekday. One should plan to drive his/her car on the route, and one should plan to "run" the meals to the houses. Meals are ready for pickup at the Sauk Prairie Hospital near the Emergency entrance between 11:20 and 11:30 a.m. Total delivery time is usually one hour. Routing and delivery instructions are provided when you pick up the meals. This is a very rewarding volunteer experience.

If you are available to help, please add your name and phone number to the schedule on the kiosk.



Stormy Weather Approaching

How will you know if St. John's is closed for worship services and Sunday School? You can call the church office; the answering machine message will state the times of service or the news that the church is closed. You can also look at our facebook page. We will send you an email if we have your address. If you have any doubt about road conditions and your ability to maneuver, don't risk a fall or an accident. Please stay home and catch us on ZOOM.



Thank You

Thank you to all the many hands that helped with our candles for the Christmas Eve services. Those who helped set up the candelabra, those who put fresh candles out for each service, those who helped to put the candelabra away at the end of the evening and especially those who kept an eye on the burning candles to save us from a fire during our services. It takes many to create such a beautiful service and we thank you all for helping out.

St. John's Staff



Thank you

Thank you to each and everyone of you! The celebration of my 25 years of employment at St. John's was just wonderful. I have greatly enjoyed my jobs here (both custodian and office) and could not have done either of them as well without all of you. Your words of wisdom, encouragement, appreciation and care have all meant so much. Thank you!

I also thank the Fellowship Board members, Linda Michaels, Donna Nelson, Pastor Sally and Intern John (also helper, Doug Nelson) and my co-workers, Pastor Fred, Pastor Sally, Intern John, Ruellene Seymour, Penny Johnson and John Hines for organizing this special day for me. I am truly blessed!

Epiphany Star Words

Epiphany is the second-oldest festival of the Christian church (only Easter is an older observance). Originally, Epiphany celebrated four different events, all on one day: the birth of Jesus, his Baptism, his first miracle, and the visit of the Wise Men. Each of these is a revelation of God to humanity.

The Festival of Epiphany is always on January 6th (thirteen days after Christmas) and the season of the church year that follows is about the unwrapping of the Father's gift to the world of his only-begotten Son ('epiphany' is a Greek word for 'to be visible'). Christmas was about Jesus as fully human—a baby son born to Mary and laid in a manger. But Epiphany is about a Jesus who is fully divine—the Son of God.

Would you like to join the practice of receiving a Star Word for 2023, as part of your discipleship journey?

One single word is used to help us practice our discipleship throughout the new year. Here's how it works:

It works best to let God help you choose a word at random – don't just read through the list and take a word that you feel is easy. (You might be surprised, I was!) Choose a number from 1 to 50 and use that as your Star Word for 2023. Think about your first reaction to the word you have, does it sound unlike you and your habits? Is it an "easy" word that you use many times in your thoughts and prayers? This could be a challenge to see the word on a deeper level, really apply it to your discipleship. You may share your journey with your Star Word if you choose, or you may keep it as a private study between you and God.

Example: I received the word "reliability" as my first Star Word a couple of years ago. I thought, great I can do this. I am reliable. I show up to work and meetings on time, I finish the tasks asked of me. Then I looked at it the other way around and saw how God is so very reliable to me. He is ALWAYS there. What a great way to see God's presence in my life!

Give yourself a challenge – try a Star Word. It is not necessary to think about it every day. It will pop into your thoughts when the Holy Spirit wants to get your attention.

This idea has been copied from The Good Shepherd Lutheran Church of Manchester, MO. The Youth Pastor started this with her confirmation students and it was so popular that all the congregation wanted to take part. Give it some thought, and try it out for yourself.

Submitted by Linda Hines

(see list on next page – after choosing your number)

Star Words

- | | |
|--------------------|--------------------|
| 1) Joy | 2) Patience |
| 3) Reliability | 4) Kindness |
| 5) Love | 6) Grace |
| 7) Commitment | 8) Dependability |
| 9) Trust | 10) Happiness |
| 11) Justice | 12) Service |
| 13) Contentment | 14) Selflessness |
| 15) Peace | 16) Goodness |
| 17) Enthusiasm | 18) Faith |
| 19) Helping | 20) Honesty |
| 21) Hope | 22) Self-Control |
| 23) Dedication | 24) Mercy |
| 25) Hospitality | 26) Confidence |
| 27) Service | 28) Openness |
| 29) Humility | 30) Friendship |
| 31) Acceptance | 32) Compassion |
| 33) Caring | 34) Servanthood |
| 35) Cheerfulness 3 | 36) Gentleness |
| 37) Appreciation | 38) Thoughtfulness |
| 39) Accountability | 40) Sharing |
| 41) Prayer | 42) Boldness |
| 43) Waiting | 44) Grateful |
| 45) Charitable | 46) Needs |
| 47) Determination | 48) Bravery |
| 49) Silence | 50) Encouragement |

Congregational totals

	<u>Attendance</u>	<u>Offering</u>
November 27	174	\$ 7,890.50
December 4	247	\$13,628.28
December 11	255	\$19,090.57
December 18	206	\$ 5,933.56
December 24	658	\$11,843.25
December 25	63	\$ 5,387.00

Those Serving in January

<u>Ushers:</u>	<u>8:00 a.m.</u>	<u>10:30 a.m.</u>
January 1 (9:00am)		
January 8	Parker Frosch	Cannon Esser
January 15	Lee LaVigne	
January 22		Kylie Hutchins
January 29	Lillyann Nurkala	Dylan Walker
<u>Acolytes:</u>	<u>8:00 a.m.</u>	<u>10:30 a.m.</u>
January 1 (9:00)	Douglas and Michael	Jolicoeur
January 8	Lillian Hegge	Sean Jager
January 15	Lillian Hegge	Dylan Walker
January 22	Lillyann Nurkala	Parker Frosch
January 29	Joslyn Schultz	Parker Pape
<u>Readers:</u>	<u>8:00 a.m.</u>	<u>10:30 a.m.</u>
January 1 (9:00)	John Hines	
January 8	Kathy Lovell	Jama Graves
January 15	Mary Halweg	Lynn Esser
January 22	Donna Knickmeyer	Donna Knickmeyer
January 29	Crystal Lautenbach	Bob Nelson
<u>Cantors:</u>	<u>8:00 a.m.</u>	<u>10:30 a.m.</u>
January 1 (9:00)	Becky Weittenhiller	
January 8	Becky Weittenhiller	Becky Weittenhiller
January 15	Lisa Davis	Marv/Janelle Hupp
January 22	Chris Stephan	Chris Stephan
January 29	Melani Wheeler	Melani Wheeler
<u>Assisting Ministers:</u>	<u>8:00 a.m.</u>	<u>10:30 a.m.</u>
January 1 (9:00)	Marv Hupp	
January 8		Clay Hutchins
January 15	Marv Hupp	Connie Burton
January 22	Donna Knickmeyer	Donna Knickmeyer
January 29		
<u>Communion Set/Clean</u>	<u>8:00 a.m.</u>	<u>10:30 a.m.</u>
January 1 (9:00)	Marilyn Herschleb	
January 8	Dorothy Halverson	Deb Westphal
January 15		Elio Piccinelli
January 22	Darlene Holl	Bob/Dede Egan
	Diane Williams	
January 29	Darlene Holl	Carol Benson
	Diane Williams	Renee Pierce

Communion Assistants 8:00 a.m.

January 1 (9:00) Deb Westphal
 January 8 Roxanne Zick
 January 15 Brooke Braund
 January 22 Roxanne Zick
 January 29 Linda Hines

10:30 a.m.

Gerry Westphal
 Elio Piccinelli
 Doris Lohr
 Aletha Ballweg

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

Jan. 1 (Front doors) (9:00) John and Ellen Mast
 (Sanctuary doors) (9:00) John and Linda Hines
 Jan. 8 (Front doors) Cliff/Cindy Thompson John/Ellen Mast
 (Sanctuary doors) Todd/Gina Wyttenbach Jackie Frosch
 Jan. 15 (Front doors) Evelynn Brennan Parker Frosch
 (Sanctuary doors) Alyssa Himebauch Parker Pape
 Jan. 22 (Front doors) Steve/Holly Kindschi
 (Sanctuary doors) Vi/Don Bohler Ginny Nimmow
 Jan. 29 (Front doors)
 (Sanctuary doors) Vi/Don Bohler

Sunday Stewards**8:00 a.m.****10:30 a.m.**

January 1 (9:00) Nancy Passehl
 January 8
 January 15
 January 22
 January 29 Anne Klinkner

Gina Varley
 Linda Michaels

Coffee Servers

January 8 Patty and Steve Barritt
 January 15
 January 22 Dorothy Halverson
 January 29

Technology Team**8:00 a.m.****10:30 a.m.**

January 1 (9:00) Lisa Davis, Roger Seymour
 January 8 Ellen Jorgensen Nicole Sandberg
 Amy Nelson Jeff Sandberg
 January 15 Lisa Davis Nicole Sandberg
 Charlie Kruchten Jeff Sandberg
 January 22 Ellen Jorgensen Eric Kaul
 January 29 Ellen Jorgensen Charlie Kruchten
 Amy Nelson

Education News

Sunday School:

We will resume classes after Christmas break on Sunday, January 8 at 9:15am.

The 5th and 6th graders of Sunday School will be holding a Bake Sale on Sunday, February 12 between worship services. All proceeds go to God's Global Barnyard.

News from the Confirmation Students and Young Adults

December brought many fun activities for the confirmation students and young adults at St. John's. Students gathered on Dec. 7th to go Christmas shopping for the Sauk Prairie Caring Tree. We gathered 50 tags/requests for presents and drove to Walmart in Baraboo to fulfill these Christmas wishes. Students applied their creativity to find the very best presents while staying in budget. A great time was had by all, and we filled two shopping carts to the brim!

On Dec. 14th the Confirmation students were surprised when we told them that classes were cancelled so we could go caroling at Maplewood Nursing Home. Katie LaVigne led our students through many traditional carols while we walked the hallways and wished the residents a Merry Christmas and blessed New Year. Students came back to St. John's, after caroling, to find hot cocoa and Christmas cookies. It was a wonderful way to share the holiday cheer.

Students will take a break from confirmation classes over the Christmas holiday and will return to Wednesday evening meals and classes starting on January 4th. We look forward to having a mid-year review, and welcoming the second half of the confirmation program.

We have plenty of winter activities to keep our youth busy in January. On Friday January 20 we will host students and their friends for the annual Lock In at St. John's. Students will stay overnight, play games, have a bible lesson, watch movies, share snacks and hopefully catch 40 winks at some point during the night. On Sat January 21, students will be sent home after breakfast, to catch up on some sleep.

On Friday January 27, confirmation families and friends will travel to Tyrol Basin for Sauk Prairie night, from 5-9pm. We look forward to joining our Sauk Prairie friends and neighbors for a fun night of tubing in the snow.

Young Adult Updates

New job? Accepted into a new program? Won an award? Need prayers for something specific? Please email Pastor Sally at sally@stjohnssaukprairie.org or message her on Facebook with any updates, so that we may continue to celebrate and pray for you in your life in Christ.



Stock the Schools

In cooperation with the Sauk Prairie community, St. John's will be 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. January's items are: granola and breakfast bars, and new or gently used zip hoodies, sizes S-2XL. Look for the red bin in the gathering area by the church office door to drop off your donations.

Thank You

St. John's Lutheran Church family,
We would like to extend a huge, HUGE thank you to all of the congregation, families and volunteers for collecting, loading and delivering many pounds of food for the SPA Food Pantry. The overwhelming volume and effort are to be commended. We are so incredibly grateful for all of you!

Thank you so much for helping us continue to provide a service to many in our community. You should all be very proud. I know I am, for without people and organizations like you we would not be able to exist! Thank you so much!

Kris Ballweg and the rest of the Sauk Prairie Area
Food Pantry Family

Parish Planning Council Minutes
December 6, 2022, 6:00 PM

Present:

Donna Nelson, Nancy Kaufman, Nancy Passehl, Cathy Yanke, Fred Rilling, Lon Kaderavek, Eunice Yanke, Megan Tarnutzer, Roger Seymour, Linda Michaels, Jonah Richard, Ellen Jorgensen, Sheila Dittberner, Anne Klinkner

Absent: Sally Williams, Gina Varley

Call to Order/Opening Remarks:

Meeting was called to order at 6:05 p.m. by Nancy Kaufman. Nancy K started to ask for approval of the agenda but realized we were sent last month's agenda so were not able to approve. A devotion/prayer was then given by Nancy.

Secretary Minutes:

The November minutes were submitted online by Cathy Yanke. A motion to approve minutes was made by Lon and seconded by Megan. Motion carried.

Treasurer report:

The committee reviewed and discussed the October and November 2022 Treasurer Report submitted by Donna Nelson.

In October, \$20,000 was transferred from savings to checking to make the final furnace payment of \$16,000 for the insulation not in the original price because they were unable to re-use the original insulation. October expenses exceeded income by almost \$30,000.

November update included completing a signature sheet for identification for expense reports. A discretionary fund was established for the pastor's use for unbudgeted special benevolence for needs that are brought to the attention of the pastors outside of the budget.

YTD our expenses have exceeded income by \$50,000.

A motion to approve the financial report was made Linda and seconded by Lon. Motion carried.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Evangelism: Sheila Dittberner reported:

- Entry bulletin board updates were made.
- Graduates listing for 2022 received and shopping for and shipping will be completed by mid/end of December.
- Reminder to submit receipts by year end.

- Guestbook mailing list update
- Book of reference in process. Estimated completed March 2023.
- Remind and encourage group/members to participate with services.

Fellowship: Linda Michaels reported:

- We are working on a celebration for Linda Hines for her 25th anniversary of employment at St. John's
- Dale Clason has taken over the management of funeral luncheons. I met with her, Ginny Nimmow, and Diane Effinger to go over the process. Both Ginny and Diane have offered guidance.
- I have sent another e-mail requesting coffee servers. We are scheduled to through December 18th. The next two weeks would be Christmas and New Years so there will be no coffee. We have all open dates so far for 2023
- Other upcoming events:
 - o February 19th – new member installation
 - o March 12 – Pi Day (3/14)
 - o March (TBD) – Volunteer Appreciation
 - o April 2 – Palm Sunday brunch

Lay Ministry: Gina Varley reported:

- Discussed volunteer sign up options
- A small group will meet at 8 am Nov. 12th to decorate sanctuary for Thanksgiving. Anyone who is present at Ecumenical Thanksgiving Eve service will take down decorations afterwards.
- We have plenty of candles for Christmas Eve and will order tape and Saran Wrap accordingly.
- In need of ushers for Christmas Eve services.

Parish Education: No chair to report.

- Parish Ed info included in Sally's report.

Properties: Lon Kaderavek reported:

- All exit signs will be replaced in December, as well as some emergency lights
- Discussed replacement of mower in spring. Current one is over 20 years old and has issues.

PR & Social Concerns: Ellen Jorgensen reported:

- Just Bakery items will be sold December 18th between services.
- Brainstormed Temple Talk topics for 2023
- St. John's will deliver Mobile Meals during the weeks of January 16 and January 23. Look for more sign-up information in the new year.

Stewardship Board: Anne Klinkner reported:

- The preliminary financial statements for October 2022 were reviewed by the board. During the month of October 2022 payments were made to the Synod, Hurricane victims and the payment for the roof insulation. Those are all included in the results for the month.
- Although we have had losses for a couple of months now, the losses started later this year than in the past so the losses should be watched but are not worrisome.
- 2022 Financial Review. The team has been lined up for the financial review of the 2022 statements. An original date of January 11, 2023, was proposed but that is too tight for scheduling. The revised date is February 1, 2023, at 6:00 PM.
- Procedure Manual. Work continues on the Procedure Manual. Cathy was given some more edits. The board will continue the review at the January 2024 meeting.
- Budget Change for 2024 Budget. The covid donations will be renamed Pastor's Discretionary Fund and will continue to be included in the Special Benevolence budget.

Women of ELCA: Eunice Yanke reported:

- We will send \$200 to Hope House and \$200 to the 6:8 Program from our Christmas Cheer
- ThankOffering total collected so far is \$348.
- The Combined Circles meeting with our Candlelight Memorial Service will be January 12 at 1:00pm. Bible Study will be led by Intern John.
- Pennies for Poverty jar will be collected and cashed in during late December.

Youth Committee: Megan Tarnutzer reported:

- Youth peeled potatoes on November 23rd
- Caring tree shopping December 7th @ 7pm
- Caroling at Maplewood December 14th @6:15pm
- Lock-in January 20th, 2023

Member at Large: Roger Seymour reported:

- No report received.

Youth member at Large: Jonah Richard reported:

- Nothing new to report.

Executive Director Comments:

- The Nominating Committee has been unable to find a nominee to fill the Parish Education Chair position, but we are still working on this.
- Lon is checking into the EXIT sign issue, that was discovered during the last power outage.
- We are working on shifting some budget dollars to create 2 small discretionary funds for last minute issues that may arise during the year that couldn't be foretold.

Pastor/Intern Reports

Fred's Report:

- Our bell ringing for the Salvation Army went well. Thanks to Linda Michaels and Patti Barritt for their work in collecting the funds. A total of \$3,663.39 was collected. Thanks to the Bank of Prairie Du Sac for issuing a counter check to the Salvation Army for these funds.
- Intern John and I discussed the 3-month evaluation last week. There are two more evaluations in the process for internship. John and I completed the first one. John, the Internship Committee and I will complete the 6 and 12-month evaluations. I have also completed the 2023-24 Internship Application. Assignments are made mid-March.
- It has come to my attention that Sauk Prairie is in great need of childcare locations for children up to age three. Because of this need, the Sauk Prairie School District has been working with the Chamber of Commerce to explore possible options to meet this need. One option has been to look at local churches as possible sites for childcare centers. We were approached as to whether we might be open to hosting such a center. We hosted Head Start here for at least 15 years. Because of our history I told the school district that we would be open to a conversation. Two weeks ago, a state childcare facility inspector, along with the Chamber Executive and a childcare specialist, came to look over our facility. On a first look it appears that we meet most of the state childcare building codes. What appeared to be an issue was that two rooms that would be used would need exterior doors added. If we decided to go ahead with being a site, all costs would be covered by the school district through grants, school district funds and community donations. Superintendent Jeff Wright met with Sally and me last week to look at our facility and talk more about what the next steps might be from the school district's perspective. He felt our site could work if the church was open to sharing the space during the week.

- During Covid a fund was established to help members and others with various needs. This fund was completely set up by donations from members. The fund has been depleted but the need to help has not. Recently I became aware of a need that we could not fund. I made several phone calls and due to the generosity of various members, nearly \$13,000 was collected and more was pledged. Until the Covid fund was established, it had been many years since we had a regular fund to help those in need. I am proposing that we establish a fund and put it into our yearly budget. The purpose would be the same, that of helping members and others in need. The fund could be under Stewardship and be one of benevolence funds. I would like the PPC to discuss how this might take shape.

Sally's Report:

Below is my report for PPC, including Parish Education Board updates.

- Confirmation students peeled potatoes for the community Thanksgiving meal and we are looking forward to some caroling at Maplewood Nursing Home in December if they are still allowing visitors.
- We had a very nice Thanksgiving service with 6 participating clergy members.
- I am directing the Sunday School Christmas Program. It will be on Sunday, December 18th at 1pm. Many thanks to the Parish Ed Board, teaching staff, and musicians who are working hard to make this happen.
- Adult Ed continues with Intern John's series on Bible and Film. He will teach into mid-January. Then I will offer a series on Cliches of Faith.
- We are still looking for someone to chair the Parish Education Board. Please spread the word.
- We will celebrate the Anniversary of Baptism Milestone on Sunday, January 8th. As of this writing, we baptized 15 children this year.
- The staff is busy coordinating all of the details for the Christmas services. I am grateful for their hard work!

Intern John's Report:

- Fred and I, along with the internship committee, recently completed and submitted the 3-month internship evaluation to Wartburg Seminary. There will be a 6 month and then a full year evaluation.
- Teaching confirmation for 7th grade continues on also, as well as other expected assignments for an Intern such as visitation, leading

worship, preaching, one-on-one meetings with Pastor Fred, and regular communication with Wartburg.

- I began teaching an Adult Education series on Film and Theology during the Sunday School hour. Each week, a different film is discussed in conjunction with a passage of scripture, which provides for one-on-one engagement as well as vigorous group discussion. This will continue through January 15th.
- In early November, I attended the Lutheran Outdoor Ministry's Leadership Training Event in Boise, Idaho. This was a continuing education opportunity which I gained much out of, including connections with camps local to Wisconsin and the ELCA.
- At my last internship meeting, Cliff Thompson described in detail a unique ministry opportunity and partnership with Tower Rock Elementary School, whereby I would be a regular volunteer starting in late January/early February and continue for the rest of school year.

Old Business:

- Covid updates—still in green
- Group email list –Ellen will put together an email list to make it easier for us to include all members
- LGBTQ –The high school group is self-reportedly not religious because of uncertainty of our acceptance. One of our goals would be to increase their trust to provide a safe place. Fred and John will reach out. Middle School has created a group of kids with a mission to increase awareness and 'watch out' for their classmates who made need assistance.
- Parish Ed Chair update—no volunteers yet
- Parish Planning Retreat on the morning of Jan 21, venue possibly at the library. 8:30am – noon.

New Business:

- Additional discussion about discretionary fund for the pastor's use described in the treasurers report as well as a Special Celebration fund for little things like flowers or baby gifts as a part of the Fellowship Board. A motion to call the pastor's fund the Community Benevolence fund was made by Ellen and seconded by Eunice. Motion carried.
- Linda Hines's 25th work anniversary is coming. Celebration on 12/11 between services. A proposal of a \$10 per year of service bonus to be paid after taxes. A motion to award Linda with a \$250 net check was made by Eunice and seconded by Donna. Motion carried.

- Childcare proposal from SP School District. Some details in Fred's report. Send questions we have to Linda Michaels by 12/16 who will condense the questions and send to Fred by 12/19.
- Recruitment for Internship Committee – 3 open seats (2 co-chairs and 1 committee member) when the 2022-2023 intern departs in July 2023

Next meeting is Tuesday, Jan 10, at 6:00 pm. Devotion will be given by Linda M. Lon made a motion to adjourn our meeting, and the motion was 2nd by Donna. Motion carried. Meeting Adjourned at 7:30 pm. with The Lord's Prayer lead by Nancy Kaufman.

Respectfully submitted by Cathy Yanke.

Thanks

Dear St. John's members,

Thank you so very much for all the wonderful new and used coats, snow pants, hats, gloves and scarves. Thanks to all of you my coat closet is full and able to keep up with this colder weather! Have a wonderful holiday season and thank you for remembering the Sauk Prairie School District students.

We also greatly appreciate the meals and snack foods that you have donated. Many students use the snack cupboard at each school to help them make it through their day.

Thank you all!

Sincerely, Susan Baumann-Duren SPSD Social Worker



Happy January Birthday!

The day is in parenthesis

Our Youngest:

Knox Kruchten (7)

James Johnson (14)

Our Sunday School Students:

Molly Philo (6)

Clare Kaderavek (12)

Maddie Keller (18)

Parker Pape (18)

Cole Haug (23)

Emma Naggs (27)

Cadence Schwartz (30)

Brielle Schell (31)

Our Youth:

Kaden Ballweg (2)

Jack Boerger (7)

Noelle Small (13)

Douglas Jolicoeur (15)

Leo Hartman (16)

Chesney Schonenberger (17)

Karley Blau (29)

Sophia Hanson (29)

Andrew King (31)

Nicholas Keyser (31)

College and Career-age Young People:

Carley Frosch (18)

Samuel Beattie (28)