

*Briggs Ludowitz, 6<sup>th</sup> grade*

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Prairie du Sac, WI

March 2024

Dear Friends of St. John's,

March is upon us, and with it there always comes this sense of awakening. The sun feels stronger, the warmth is coming back, snow is melting, creation is waking up from the winter sleep. We are probably getting ready to plant a garden, looking at possible plants and flowers to grow, maybe looking at purchasing a new lawn mower, lawn tools, gardening accessories, etc. There is an excitement in the air where we have hopefully made it through another winter, and we are actively looking ahead at the next season.

It's not much different in the church. We look ahead with great anticipation of what's next. The liturgical seasons, the upcoming Sundays, the music, the sermons, the bulletins, the calendar, the Sunday school lessons, the meetings, the lists of volunteers, and the countless tasks that go unnoticed but are filled by faithful people every week. The seasons are always in motion. Lent will come to an end, and we will go through Holy Week beginning on March 24<sup>th</sup> with Palm Sunday, culminating with the celebration of Easter on March 31<sup>st</sup>. What a celebration that will be!

For you St. John's, this is also a season of transition. It is a time to take a breath, step back and look at the church for who it has been, who it is, and who it dreams of becoming. It is a time to pull back the lens, and see the church in all its presence, its role, and its character. It is time to look at the church with an open view,

an open mind, and an open heart. Because we know that the church, as true as it is in standing strong for our faith, for our hope, and for our peace, there are also opportunities for the church to evolve, change, expand, learn, and grow. This looks different for every church community. What do these opportunities promise to look like for you St. John's? It is up to you as a congregation to own those opportunities for the sake of the church now, and into the future. The church is here for us now, but who will the church be when our children and grandchildren grow into men and women, raising their own families, looking for a place of hope and rest? Who will the church be for the next generation(s)? The church is beautiful for who she is. She is a place where the Holy Spirit knows no limits. She is a place where Jesus Christ is at the center and continues to gather all people together in His name. She is a place where indeed God is worshipped and glorified, given thanks and praise for the gift of life now and the life to come. It is in the expression of that life; our faith is lived out.

By the time you read this, you will have been given the opportunity to start the transition process with the St John's Transition Team (affectionately known as TNT). The Transition Team is reminding you of the two questions for you to help us with:

- 1) What trends in our church and community should be addressed and considered?
- 2) What are some things we do well as a congregation? What are some things we don't do well?

Your thoughtful responses are appreciated. You have this entire month to answer these questions. Please send responses to our brand-new transition team email address:

[tnt@stjohnssaukprairie.org](mailto:tnt@stjohnssaukprairie.org)

I am so thankful to be here among you. I am excited to feel the energy of transition. I am thankful for the conversations, questions, and issues that you have already raised in this important process. I am grateful for the St John's TNT and their commitment to leading and facilitating this work. I ask that you continue to keep our TNT in thought and prayer as they pray for you St. John's. The Holy Spirit is let loose: let's see what's possible and feel its hope surround us.

Peace,  
Pastor Jason



### **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	Gwen Ringelstetter	(608) 643-6922
Fellowship Board	Cathy McAlexander	(402) 689-5196
Lay Ministry Board	Gina Varley	(608) 963-0325
Member-at-Large	Roger Seymour	(608) 588-3198
Parish Education Board	James Newman	(608) 512-7623
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	Tracy Pape	(608) 574-0577
Youth Member-at-Large	Sean Jager	(608) 643-2439

### **The Staff:**

**Pastor:** Sally Williams [sally@stjohnssaukprairie.org](mailto:sally@stjohnssaukprairie.org) 370-4501

**Interim Pastor:** Jason Hill [jason@stjohnssaukprairie.org](mailto:jason@stjohnssaukprairie.org) 643-2439

**Director of Music:** Ruellene Seymour

[ruellene@stjohnssaukprairie.org](mailto:ruellene@stjohnssaukprairie.org)

**Youth Director:** Penny Johnson [penny@stjohnssaukprairie.org](mailto:penny@stjohnssaukprairie.org)

**Custodian:** John Hines [john@stjohnssaukprairie.org](mailto:john@stjohnssaukprairie.org)

**Office and Communications Coordinator:** Linda Hines

[linda@stjohnssaukprairie.org](mailto:linda@stjohnssaukprairie.org)

**Sunday School Superintendents:** Joanna Jones and Miranda Jager

[sundayschool@stjohnssaukprairie.org](mailto:sundayschool@stjohnssaukprairie.org)

**St. John's Lutheran Church:** (608) 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*

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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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:

- |                 |             |
|-----------------|-------------|
| Soup            | Crackers    |
| Cornbread Mix   | Chili Beans |
| Canned Tomatoes | Cookies     |

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



### **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.

Stan Mallon (6)  
N1617 Fjord Circle  
Prairie du Sac, WI 53578

Kathy Lester (10)  
741 Water Street  
Prairie du Sac, WI 53578

Larry Sawyer (11)  
W14284 Golf Road  
Prairie du Sac, WI 53578

Duane Lokken (18)  
1253 S. Forest Lane  
Prairie du Sac, WI 53578



Jayne Carlson (23)  
207 15<sup>th</sup> Street  
Prairie du Sac, WI 53578

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

Martin Ohlsen (25)  
E12550 Inspiration Drive  
Merrimac, WI 53561

Barb Salvesson (27)  
200 Webster St., #2  
Sauk City, WI 53583

Bob Wilson (28)  
9411 Lakebend Preserve Ct.  
Bonita Springs, FL 34135

	<b>Women of the Church News</b>	
	<b><u>Lydia Circle</u></b> Thursday, March 14, in St. John's Library, Carol Benson, hostess	1:00pm
	<b><u>Martha Circle</u></b> Thursday, March 7, in St. John's Library	9:30am
	<b><u>Ruth Circle</u></b> Monday, March 11, at Patty Barritt's, 314 Hickory St., Sauk City	9:00am
	<b><u>Sarah/Mary Circle</u></b> Tuesday, March 5, in St. John's Library	9:30am

In February, 27 ladies attended Circle Meetings, with Mary Weeks, Darlene Holl, Marian DeGiovanni and Kathy Lester leading the Bible Study. The lesson was about animals and creatures that bless our lives. In March, the Study will be led by Mary Weeks, Darlene Holl, Maren Andersen Boerger and Kathy Lester.

We are always looking for new members in all our Circles and we invite all ladies of St. John's to join us. The most important part of any Circle is studying the Bible, and it is fun making new friends and being part of a group. Also, it is a great feeling to be a part of worthwhile projects such as putting together Lutheran World Relief kits (Personal Care, Baby, Fabric/Sewing and School Kits). We take turns visiting our Special Friends who are home bound or in Assisted Living and Nursing Homes. These experiences can be very life enriching.

On April 20<sup>th</sup>, there will be a meeting of Women of the Baraboo Conference at St. Paul's Lutheran Church in Baraboo. This involves getting together with women from several other Lutheran churches in our area. We will have more information about this event soon. It will be a very informative meeting with an interesting speaker and a good meal. We always carpool from our church's parking lot. Mark your calendars now!

We gave \$200 to the Special Olympics for Christmas Cheer. We have received a Thank You note from members of the Special Olympics with their signatures. There was also a letter from Special Olympics of Wisconsin thanking us for this gift. The money will be used for bowling and other events. The group was very appreciative.

We also received Thank You letters from WELCA for two things:

- 1) \$150 for the South-Central Synodical Women's Organization for the fourth quarter of 2023/2024.

- 2) \$515 for the Thank Offering supporting the ministries of WELCA.

The Sarah/Mary Circle is visiting Special Friends during February and March.

The Bible Study Leaders Meeting for April will be on Tuesday, March 26<sup>th</sup>, at 9:00am.

On March 20<sup>th</sup>, you should be sure to read the Prayer for Peace found in this [Visitor](#).

### **Adult Education Schedule**

Classes are held in room 3 in the Sunday School hallway at 9:15-10:15 on Sunday mornings. Upcoming topics include learning more about the Holy Land crisis, text studies, the beliefs of the ELCA regarding our LGBTQ+ siblings in Christ, persecution of Christians around the world, and a variety of speakers on death and dying. Check the weekly bulletins to see the calendar. All are welcome!

### **Parkinson's Support Group**

Dr. Gerald Pankratz is a faculty member in the Division of Geriatrics and Gerontology within the Department of Medicine. He is a member of the American Geriatrics Society and is actively involved in training medical students, residents and fellows in the principles of geriatric care in both the inpatient and outpatient settings. Dr. Pankratz is the clinical lead for UW Health's Interdisciplinary Geriatrics Clinic and Mobility and Falls Clinics, which aim to prevent falls in older adults and the consequences that can impact independence. He will be discussing geriatric issues with an emphasis on fall prevention.

The Group wishes to invite interested parties in our congregation to attend: no fee, no registration necessary. The meeting will be held Monday, March 18 at 1:00pm at St. John's.



### **Spring Ahead March 10**

Set your clocks ahead one hour on March 10. Plan to come to the 8:00am worship service, attend the Congregational Meeting at 9:00 and enjoy coffee hour at 9:15am! We would love to see you!



## **Lenten Worship Schedule**

Lenten Worship Services are offered each Wednesday of Lent, March 6, 13, and 20 at 1:00pm and 6:30pm. Lunch will be served before each 1:00pm service at noon. The evening meal will be served at 5:30pm.

The cost of all meals is \$1.00 for senior citizens and \$2.00 for children and adults. All are invited to attend the meals and worship services.

Maundy Thursday worship services will be at 1:00pm and 6:30pm on March 28. Lunch will be served before the 1:00pm service, no evening meal is planned.

Good Friday worship services will be at 1:00pm and 6:30pm on March 29. No meals will be served that day.



## **Easter Worship Services**

St. John's will hold Easter worship services at 7:00, 8:00 and 10:30am on March 31. Services are available in our sanctuary or via Zoom. Join as you would for any Sunday worship. (A quick way to connect via Zoom is to go to [www.stjohnssaukprairie.org](http://www.stjohnssaukprairie.org) and click on the "Join Us Live for Worship" button in the upper righthand corner.)

There will not be any Sunday School or Adult Education classes held that day.

## **Palm Sunday Breakfast is coming!**

The Breakfast is hosted by St. John's Fellowship Board.

When: Sunday, March 24, 2024

Serving: 9:00 a.m. – 10:30 a.m.

This is always such a fun event and enjoyed by many! Mark your calendars now to attend!

Please sign up on the poster board on the Kiosk if you would like to bring some of our needed items for this event or if you can volunteer for a portion of the morning. Then be sure to come and enjoy the wonderful food and great fellowship.



## **Important Congregational Meeting**

We will be having a short Congregational Meeting on Sunday March 10<sup>th</sup> between services, immediately following the 8:00am worship service.

The purpose of the meeting is to discuss the church organ and the repairs needed.

Please make an effort to come and stay for this important meeting. I promise it will be short.

The minutes from the previous Congregational Meeting held on October 15, 2023, are printed below so that you may read through them prior to the meeting on March 10<sup>th</sup>. Please note if there are any corrections to be made.

Peace, Nancy Kaufman, Executive Director

## **Congregational Meeting, October 15, 2023**

(In building and via Zoom platform)

PPC Executive Director, Nancy Kaufman, confirmed at least 50 voting members were present and called the meeting to order at 9:02am. The purpose of the meeting is to approve the 2024 budget, vote on nominees for the Parish Planning Council, approve nominating committee members for PPC recruiting and approve Synod Assembly volunteers.

The minutes of the October 2022 Congregational Meeting were published in the October Visitor as well as in the October 8 and 15, 2023 Sunday bulletins in lieu of reading them at the meeting. Motion to approve the minutes as provided was made by Peter Heide and seconded by Donna Nelson. Motion was approved by unanimous vote.

Nancy described the 2024 budget changes and pointed out those most significant changes including an increase for the Youth Gathering trip that will happen in 2024, and a decrease for Parish Education for a change in The Lutheran magazine. There is also a plan to restart outsourcing Vacation Bible School. WELCA has decreased their budget numbers to better match actual spending and the Administration budget includes salary for a Lead Pastor and Intern as well as an increase in benefits and other costs for current staff. The Benevolence budget is down due to no seminary assistance needed for interns this fall, but that will return next fall. A motion to approve the budget was made by Donna Knickmeyer and seconded by Alice Chenoweth. Motion was approved by unanimous vote.

Nancy thanked our outgoing board chairs for their years of service and then moved on to list nominees of: Evangelism Chair – Gwen Ringelstetter, Fellowship Chair – Cathy McAlexander, Parish

Education Chair – James Newman, Youth Board Chair – Tracy Pape and Youth Member-at-Large – Sean Jager. A motion to approve the nominees was made by Eunice Yanke and seconded by Jerry Kaufman. Motion was approved by unanimous vote.

Third, we approved the Nominating Committee to recruit members for additional PPC members that includes Pastor Sally, Janelle Hupp as the outgoing PPC Director, three congregational members (self-nominated) that include Kathy Lovell, Josie Fentress, and Donna Knickmeyer. Three PPC members will be determined. A motion to approve the nominees was made by Marilyn Herschleb and seconded by Donna Nelson. Motion was approved by unanimous vote.

Our final topic was to accept nominations for attendees to the Synod Assembly in May 2024. We can send 3 adults (either 2 males and 1 female or 2 females and 1 male), 1 young adult (under 30 years old) and 1 high school youth. Pastor Sally is also a voting member. Dale Haroldson, Nancy Passehl and Linda Lintl were nominated to attend. A motion to approve the nominees was made by Mary Weeks and seconded by Crystal Lautenbach. If any adult under 30 or a high school youth is interested, please contact Linda Hines in the church office.

An update on the Interim Pastor by Nancy included that we are close to signing a six-month contract and if it is finished, the Interim will begin November 1, 2023. Bill Burton made the motion to adjourn the meeting, and this was seconded by Anne Klinkner. Director Nancy Kaufman asked if there were any objections and after receiving none, she adjourned the meeting at 9:12am.

Respectfully submitted, Cathy Yanke



### **First Communion Class**

A First Communion class will be held on Sunday, March 10, between worship services. Join Pastor Jason in the church library. A parent(s) should plan to attend this class with their students. 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 or emailing Pastor Jason at [jason@stjohnssaukprairie.org](mailto:jason@stjohnssaukprairie.org). 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. The next class will be offered in the fall, but the pastors are always happy to meet with families individually if these times don't work!



Dear Friends in Christ,

One summer day a number of years ago I went to a children's museum with my daughter and some of her friends. There was a stage with props and costumes, just begging to come alive. I noticed right away the rich imaginations each one of the girls activated that day. They were so playful and creative. There wasn't stress over what the plotline would be, there wasn't worry about doing something wrong, and they worked together and encouraged each other's ideas along the way.

The adult onlookers...well, we never really caught on. We got stuck wanting to have a clear plan, and we were worried about our egos and what others would think. But overall, we were just in awe of these young people who joined the land of make-believe and made it come to life.

This memory got me thinking about how often we lose our sense of imagination and freedom as we age, which often means we lose some of that playfulness, fun, and freedom. Now, not everything in life can be playful, fun, and free. However, I can't help but wonder how much we hold ourselves back.

This Lenten season we have been engaging the Psalms and striving to find rest in the Lord. The Lord who is our shepherd, shield, fortress, our quiet trust, and who is inescapable. The Lord is our strong foundation, grounding us in the midst of chaos. So resting in that strong foundation that cannot be shaken, what might it look like if we got in touch with our childlike imaginations as we think about our faith and our role in this world as God's people?

What might you do in the Lord's name if you weren't worried about the ego, understanding all the details, and trusted in the Lord and in yourselves? Would you teach or preach? Would you write or sing? Would you be more generous or take on a leadership role? What might the strong foundation you have in the Lord and your rich imagination lead you to do?

I invite you to ponder this question for yourselves for the rest of the Lenten season. Listen to your heart. Listen for the Spirit's whisper and sometimes the Spirit's roar. Get in touch with the childlike imagination and confidence to live the life God has created for you!

Blessings,

# SPECIAL PRAYER

We invite you to pray this prayer on March 20<sup>th</sup>.

Lord God,  
You loved this world so much,  
That you gave your one and only Son,  
That we might be called your children too.  
Lord, help us to live in the gladness and grace  
Of Easter Sunday, every day.  
Let us have hearts of thankfulness  
For your sacrifice.  
Let us have eyes that look upon  
Your grace and rejoice in our salvation.  
Help us to walk in that mighty grace  
And tell your good news to the world.  
All for your glory do we pray, Lord,  
Amen.



## **With Sincere Sympathy**

We offer our condolences to the following families this month:

Stephanie and Brandon Ballweg, Matthew and Tiffany Katzman and their families on the death of Stephanie's and Matthew's grandmother Vera Feiner.

Jean Knuth, Sandy Osgood and their families on the death of Jean's son and Sandy's brother, Ken Knuth.



## **Baby Congratulations**

We celebrate with Kyle and Tayler Goodwin on the birth of their daughter, Harlow Ann born Feb. 22. Harlow joins big brother Graham at home. Marilyn Herschleb is the great-grandmother to Harlow and Graham.

We also rejoice with Keith and Janelle Slotty on the birth of their son, Harlan Dane, born Feb. 24. Paternal grandparents of Harlan are Terry and Sue Slotty.



## Stock the Schools

In cooperation with the Sauk Prairie community, St. John's is collecting items to be given to Sauk Prairie students in need. March's items are individual bags of pretzels, Goldfish crackers or Ritz crackers, and new or gently used leggings or sweatpants. Look for the red bin in the gathering area by the church office to drop off your donations.

*Thank  
You*

To all of my wonderful church family!

I can't tell you how much I have appreciated all the acts of kindness during my stay at Maplewood. The cards, flowers, candy, valentines, and many other goodies. The visits from the pastors, friends, my Martha Circle ladies for coming here for the February meeting and those who came to play games. Everything has truly made my rehab time so much more fun!

Love you all. Ruth Dresser

♥ **THANK** you!

Dear Church Family,

Blessings to all. Thank you over and over for celebrating my birthday with me! You make me happy. St. John's is a wonderful church!

Love to all, Marilyn Larson

*Thank you*

Thank you to every single wonderful volunteer who gave of their time and talents in welcoming the ELCA South-Central Synod of Wisconsin Bishop Joy, her staff and many congregational representatives to St John's on February 17th for the LEAD Event. We were chosen to be this year's host site, and it was a great success and very informative for those who attended. Thank you members of the St John's PPC for offering hospitality. Extra special thanks to Donna Nelson, John and Linda Hines and Ruellene Seymour for their extra time with hospitality, food preparation, site and building preparation, music and worship needs, and clean-up.

# Sunday School News

## **Sunday School**

The 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> grade students of Sunday School held their Bake Sale February 11<sup>th</sup> and were able to raise \$969.26. All the money collected will go to the ELCA's program of God's Global Barnyard. Thank you to this wonderful congregation for helping the students so generously!

## **Middle and High School News**

### **Fun in the Snow!**

St. John's students, their families and friends had a great time at Tyrol Basin in February! Spending time together helps our young people develop friends that they can lean on, find common support in one another, increase their sense of belonging, and prevent loneliness - all of which helps to solidify the community of our church. Thanks to all for joining!

### **Confirmation and Lenten Evening Services**

For each Wednesday during Lent, we will have a fellowship meal at 5:30pm. Students will have a short classroom lesson at 6:00pm. Then, we will attend the worship service from 6:30 to 7:00pm. On March 6<sup>th</sup>, Grade 7 will lead service, On March 13<sup>th</sup>, Grade 9 will lead service and on March 20<sup>th</sup>, Grade 8 will lead service. Families and friends are welcome to attend Lenten Evening services to see their students lead worship!

### **Save the Date: Affirmation of Baptism**

Calling all parents of 9<sup>th</sup> Graders! Mark your calendars for Affirmation of Baptism on Sunday, April 28<sup>th</sup> at the 10:30am service. Parents, Mentors and Confirmands are asked to arrive at 9:30am to prepare for the service. We'll have a small reception and a professional photographer as well. More information will be coming soon to students via mail and e-mail.

## Serving in March

### Greeters:

Mar 3 (Front Doors)  
(Sanctuary)  
Mar 10 (Front Doors)  
(Sanctuary)  
Mar 17 (Front Doors)  
(Sanctuary)  
Mar 24 (Front Doors)  
(Sanctuary)  
Mar 31 (Front Doors)  
(Sanctuary)

### Early Service

C/C Thompson  
Don/Vi Bohler  
Linda Lintl  
John/Linda Hines  
Joslyn Schultz  
Hudson Ballweg  
Linda Lintl  
T/G Wytttenbach  
Carden Argall  
Don/Vi Bohler

### Late Service

John/Ellen Mast  
Drew Brickl  
Roger/Marcia Howard  
Tom/Gina Varley  
Kiptyn Suchla  
Michael Jolicoeur  
Ginny Nimmow  
Tom/Gina Varley  
Drew Brickl

### Ushers:

March 3

March 6 (Wed.)

March 10

March 13 (Wed.)

March 17

March 20 (Wed.)

March 24

March 28 (Thur.)

March 29 (Fri.)

March 31 (7am)

### Early Service

Brian Weeks  
Doug Nelson  
Hudson Ballweg  
Cathy Yanke  
Dale Haroldson  
Joel Liedtke  
Brian Weeks  
Charlie Lueck  
Dale Haroldson  
Joel Liedtke  
Lon Kaderavek  
Parker Frosch  
Dale Haroldson  
Todd Wytttenbach  
Gina Wytttenbach  
Hudson Ballweg  
Dale Haroldson  
Dale Haroldson  
Dale Haroldson  
Joel Liedtke  
Evelynn Brennan

### Late Service

Joel Liedtke  
Kiptyn Suchla  
Tom Varley  
Gina Varley  
Kiptyn Suchla  
Rob Richard  
Laura Hutchins  
Ryan Jorgenson  
Tom Varley  
Gina Varley  
Joel Liedtke  
Kendra Frey  
Joel Liedtke  
Joel Liedtke  
Rob Richard  
Paityn Hauge

### Acolytes:

March 3

March 10

March 17

March 24

March 31 (7am)

### Early Service

Cora Miller  
Cora Miller  
Michael Jolicoeur  
Willy Pickett  
Ella Stephan  
Alyssa Himebauch

### Late Service

Willy Pickett  
Madyne Ludowitz  
Clay Hutchins  
Madyne Ludowitz  
Violet Richard

**Assisting Ministers: Early Service**

March 3 Marv Hupp  
 March 10 Jordan Small  
 March 17  
 March 24 Jordan Small  
 March 31 Donna Knickmeyer

**Late Service**

Jordan Small  
 Clay Hutchins  
 Jordan Small

**Readers:**

March 3  
 March 10  
 March 17  
 March 24  
 March 31

**Early Service**

Patty Barritt  
 John Hines  
 Jama Graves  
 Mary Halweg  
 Donna Knickmeyer

**Late Service**

Bob Nelson  
 Dale Clason  
 Carrie Richard  
 Kathy Lovell  
 Denny Dederich

**Cantors:**

March 3  
 March 10  
 March 17  
 March 24  
 March 31

**Early Service**

Becky Weittenhiller  
 Katie LaVigne  
 Chris Stephan  
 Doug Slater  
 Senior Choir

**Late Service**

Becky Weittenhiller  
 Katie LaVigne  
 Chris Stephan  
 Doug Slater  
 Senior Choir

**Communion**

March 3  
 March 10  
 March 17  
 March 24  
 March 31

**Set Up**

Darlene Holl  
 Diane Williams  
 Darlene Holl  
 Diane Williams  
 Evelynn Brennan  
 Jayne Carlson

**Clean Up**

Barb Salveson  
 Sarah Warmke  
 Deb Westphal  
 Gerry Westphal  
 Henry Dean  
 Dale Clason  
 Ginny Nimmow

**Communion Assistants Early Service**

March 3  
 March 10  
 March 17  
 March 24  
 March 28  
 March 31

Patty Barritt  
 Kris Frey  
 Parker Pape  
 Jayne Carlson  
 Alice Chenoweth  
 Kris Frey

**Late Service**

Braylin Breunig  
 Audrey Luetscher  
 Violet Richard  
 Dale Clason  
 Marilyn Herschleb  
 Audrey Luetscher

**Coffee Servers**

March 3  
 March 10  
 March 17  
 March 24  
 March 31

Donna and Doug Nelson  
 Gwen Ringelstetter and Sheila Dittberner  
 Theresa and Ezra Bauer  
 Fellowship Board Breakfast Group



**Technology:**

March 3

March 6 (Wed.)

March 10

March 13 (Wed.)

March 17

March 20 (Wed.)

March 24

March 28 (Thurs.)

March 21 (Fri.)

March 31

**Early Service**

Ellen Jorgensen

Ellen Jorgensen

Ellen Jorgensen  
Lisa Davis

Ellen Jorgensen

Ellen Jorgensen  
Evelynn Brennan  
Lee LaVigne

Ellen Jorgensen

Ellen Jorgensen

Lee LaVigne

**Late Service**Jeff, Nicole, Audrey  
SandbergCharlie, Leah Kruchten  
Audrey SandbergJeff, Nicole, Audrey  
SandbergCharlie, Carter  
KruchtenLiz Leith  
Henry Dean

Liam Hart

Lee LaVigne  
Evelynn BrennanSean Jager  
Alyssa Himebauch  
Himebauch Family**Sunday Stewards**

March 3

March 10

March 17

March 24

March 31 (7:00)

**Early Service**

Nancy Kaufman

Lon Kaderavek

Cathy Yanke

Gwen Ringelstetter

Anne Klinkner

Anne Klinkner

**Late Service**

Roger Seymour

Gina Varley

Anne Klinkner

Gina Varley

Gina Varley

**Lenten Worship Service Times**

- Wednesdays, March 6, March 13 and March 20 at 1:00pm and 6:30pm
- Palm Sunday, March 24 at 8:00am and 10:30am
- Maundy Thursday, March 28 at 1:00pm and 6:30pm
- Good Friday, March 29 at 1:00pm and 6:30pm
- Easter Sunday Sunrise Service, March 31 at 7:00am
- Easter Sunday Celebration Services, March 31 at 8:00am and 10:30am

Won't you please join us?

## **Meet the Parish Planning Council**

In continuance with our series on the different boards that make up our Parish Planning Council, this month we spotlight two of our boards – the Parish Education Board and the Executive Director/Assistant Director positions.

**The Parish Education Board** is currently made up of 5 members. Our Sunday School Superintendents Miranda Jager and Joanna Jones, Youth Director Penny Johnson, Pastor Sally Williams, and chairperson James Newman

The board supports, organizes, and budgets for all church activities pertaining to the education of children and adults. The most obvious of these are Sunday School and Confirmation classes which handle religious education for our young people from pre-school age all the way through freshman year of high school. In particular, the board finds volunteers from the congregation to teach and help these classes, selects where offerings go to each year, organizes events throughout the year such as the hayride and Christmas Program, funds a meal on Wednesday nights to make attending confirmation classes easier, and places Bibles in the hands of our 3-year-old and 3rd grade children. The board also facilitates anything needed for Adult Education and the Church Library.

## **The Executive Director/Assistant Director**

This position is a 4-year term. You spend 2 years as the Assistant Director. As the Assistant Director your duties are as assigned by the Executive Director for special projects, but there are no regularly assigned tasks. They fill in when the PPC Secretary is unavailable for a meeting to take the minutes. They fill in for the Executive Director and lead the PPC meeting when the Executive Director is unavailable. They also sit on the Executive Committee.

The Executive Director moves from Assistant after 2 years for a second 2-year term.

The Executive Director manages the monthly Parish Planning Council meeting. They create and send out the PPC agenda each month. They confirm the Treasurer's balance numbers each month and sign off on such. They are the person that oversees all of the activities of the church but doesn't necessarily attend those activities.

The Executive Director meets with the Pastors monthly to assess needs and issues. This year, with no lead pastor the Executive Director is also responsible for staffing issues and reviews. Also to advise and oversee the transition process.

They also meet with PPC chairs for the various committees as needed and chair the Executive Committee when meetings are warranted.

Peace,  
Nancy Kaufman, Executive Director

### **Notes from the Fellowship Board**

- We served Valentine's cookies at fellowship in February.
- Volunteers cleaned the church kitchen. Thank you to all that helped.
- New Members were welcomed during the fellowship hour on January 28 with servings of pie. Thank you to all St. John's bakers.
- We facilitated a Shepherding Program to help our new members get to know our church family.
- Interim Pastor Jason was surprised for his 50<sup>th</sup> birthday when we served his favorites – scotcheroos and a coffee bar featuring Death Wish coffee.
- The Palm Sunday Breakfast sign-up sheet has been posted on the kiosk in the front gathering area. Please indicate how you will help.
- Please continue to volunteer to serve coffee on Sunday mornings. Board members are happy to help!



### **Transition Team Update**

We want to begin by taking an initial pulse of the congregation right now, asking for some initial thoughts and insight you can offer for us. We ask you all to consider two questions:

- 1) What trends in our church and community should be addressed and considered?
- 2) What are some things we do well as a congregation? What are some things we don't do well?

The Transition Team (affectionately named "TNT") has its own email address. Please use that address to send your responses. Please know that we will be adding questions to this conversation in the near future. Thank you so much for your thoughts, insights, and reflections. Send responses to:  
[tnt@stjohnssaukprairie.org](mailto:tnt@stjohnssaukprairie.org)

# PARISH PLANNING COUNCIL MINUTES

DATE: February 6, 2024

**Present:** Donna Nelson, Nancy Kaufman, Nancy Passehl, Cathy Yanke, Sally Williams, Jason Hill, Lon Kaderavek, Eunice Yanke, Ellen Jorgensen, Tracy Pape, Roger Seymour, Gina Varley, James Newman, Gwen Ringelstetter, Anne Klinkner, Cathy McAlexander

**Absent:** Sean Jager

## **Call to Order/Opening Remarks:**

Meeting was called to order at 5:59 p.m. by Nancy Kaufman. Nancy K asked for approval of the agenda. Motion to approve was made by Donna and seconded by James. Motion carried. A devotion/prayer was moved to the end of the meeting.

## **Secretary Minutes:**

The January minutes were submitted online by Cathy Yanke. A motion to approve minutes was made by Gina and seconded by Nancy P. Motion carried.

## **Treasurer report:**

The committee reviewed and discussed the January 2024 Treasurer Report submitted by Donna Nelson.

- The financial review was completed on Jan 24 and went fine. No changes to any numbers reported previously and I am awaiting the written report.
- The memorial committee approved \$8400 to pay off the balance due on the carpet and a large portion of the asbestos removal bill.
- There was a transfer of funds from the Youth Trip savings to the checking account to pay for the air transportation to the National Youth Gathering.

A motion to approve the financial report was made by Anne and seconded by Tracy. Motion carried.

## **COMMITTEE REPORTS**

**Evangelism:** Gwen Ringelstetter reported:

- Updated new member folders to give out Jan 28
- Work to get addresses of all 2023 graduates and are putting together graduation kits.
- Pick a date to serve coffee—Looks like March

**Fellowship:** Cathy McAlexander reported:

- The kitchen was cleaned by volunteers.
- Pies were served at the New Member Welcome.

- Celebrated Pastor Jason's 50th birthday with his favorites - scotcheroos and a coffee bar.
- Paired congregation members with new members for shepherding experiences.

**Lay Ministry:** Gina Varley reported:

- Lay Ministry did not meet in January.
- Volunteer needs during lent services were discussed via email and planned for accordingly.
- Easter flowers will go on sale between services on Feb. 18th and Feb. 25th.

**Parish Education:** James Newman reported:

- Sunday School Christmas program recap and things to improve.
- Sunday School Teacher would like a little more communication. One of the classes didn't receive their lines until very late.
- Should shorten the practice time with the 3-year-old and Kindergarten students. Having them sit through the full Sunday school hour was a little too much.
- Confirmation volunteering workload discussion.
- VBS
- Contacted Sugar Creek and Lutherdale about running a VBS program like we have done in the past. Only Lutherdale had the ability to send someone to do so.
- Decided to have VBS August 4<sup>th</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup>. In discussion with Lutherdale to get this locked in.
- We are budgeted correctly for this this year.

**Properties:** Lon Kaderavek reported:

- Getting a painting quote for painting hallways
- All quiet otherwise

**PR & Social Concerns:** Ellen Jorgensen reported:

- Look for Just Bakery between services on February 18th.
- Thank you to the Mobile Meal volunteers for braving the bitter temperatures! Without you, this program would not be possible.
- Submitted annual report.

**Stewardship Board:** Anne Klinkner reported:

- The Stewardship Board Meeting was held on January 16, 2024, via Zoom.
- Work is continuing on the Investment Policy and related documents. The board would like to finalize these documents at our February 2024 meeting.

- Research continues on possible new methods of electronic giving. Vanco will continue to be used by St. John's and the intent is to add additional methods of giving if the new methods are cost effective and accommodate the record keeping process for St. John's.
- FINANCIAL REVIEW FOR 2023. The financial review will be performed on Wednesday, January 24, 2024, from 6:00 PM to 9:00 PM in the library. The auditors will be Jon Caflisch, Gina Wyttenbach and Brian Weeks. Anne will be there to observe, and Donna will be there to answer any questions the reviewers may have. The results of the financial review will be discussed at our March 2024 Stewardship Board meeting.
- Pastor Jason complimented St. John's for conducting an annual financial review. He said it is a good sign of congregational health.
- ANNUAL REPORT. Anne will complete the first draft of the 2023 Annual report Stewardship Board summary and send it to the committee members for review. This report is due to Linda Hines by 1/31/2024.

**Women of ELCA:** Eunice Yanke reported:

- The Joint Circle Meeting had a good turnout. Candles were lit for 22 people during the Candlelight Memorial Service.
- Circles will meet individually for Bible Study during February.
- An invitation for the women of St. John's to come to a Circle was printed in the Visitor.
- The Bible Study Leaders Meeting for March's studies will be on Tuesday, February 27.

**Youth Committee:** Tracy Pape reported:

- Regular meeting was scheduled Feb. 14, however with Ash Wednesday service, we have postponed this meeting until Feb. 21.
- Upcoming agenda items include:
  - Graduation: Sunday, May 19 at late service. Will need to discuss and prepare for flowers, cookies, posters, and gifts.
  - Spring event for youth: If so, what does this look like and what needs to be completed. Who can help with what?
  - Activity for teens: If so, what does this look like and what needs to be completed. Who can help with what?
  - Online engagement: What can we do to support our youth?
  - Float for Cow Chip Parade: Saturday, August 31 if so, we need a float theme
  - ELCA Youth Gathering, New Orleans: Penny has been doing a great job, getting the group of St. John's students traveling to New Orleans together to build friendships. As a reminder we have 6

students and 3 adult chaperones. The group departs July 15 and returns July 20.

**Member at Large:** Roger Seymour reported:

- No report provided.

**Youth member at Large:** Sean Jager reported:

- No report provided.

## **Pastor/Intern Reports**

### **Interim Jason's Report:**

- HUGE thank you St. John's family for throwing me a surprise birthday celebration! You made me feel younger than the 50 years I turned. I felt the love and appreciation as I read the birthday cards, enjoyed the Death Wish coffee, and snacked on a scotcheroo bar. Thank you so much. Special thank you to Pastor Sally, Linda Hines, Donna Nelson, and Nancy Passehl.
- I am happy to begin connecting with the Sunday School classes and Confirmation classes. I plan to make more visits for both of these core groups, offering some teaching and overall presence for them to get to know me, and make those connections strongly.
- The Synod LEAD event scheduled for February 17th continues to come together. I am thankful for the many volunteers and our own PPC who are assisting with preparation as our very own St. John's Lutheran Church is the host site for the event this year.
- Pastor Sally and I continue to share the visitation schedule to see our wonderful folks who are homebound; this month I will be making a concentration of visits to Maplewood and The Pines as well as to individual homes for folks who have not attended worship for some time.
- Thankful for the Synod Interims who are also doing the work of transition and visioning with their congregations they are serving. These wonderful people have been a continued source of education, resources, and wisdom for me, and I look forward to our monthly meetings.
- Transition Team is up and running! I am thankful for the seven individuals who have volunteered to be part of this important process. HUGE thank you to Gary Tomter for chairing this team. Our first meeting was January 30 with our very own SCSW Assistant to the Bishop, Marie Leafblad to offer a roadmap and answer questions from the group. Our first meeting as a group to begin the first phase of "Telling the Congregation's Story" is scheduled for February 6. I am excited to see the team become visible and available as we launch this and as we to continue to

hold St. John's in prayer as this work is vital for the next lead pastor to be called.

### **Sally's Report:**

- New Members: We received 12 new members, plus 1 transfer (from February) in January. Thank you to Cathy M. for setting up shepherds. We look forward to incorporating this into our new member classes this summer. See Cathy for more information.
- The Pines: I was able to make some more one-on-one visits with our members in the independent living apartments. Many expressed their gratitude for our continued zoom services. It is good to be reminded that they are part of our community even though we might not see them here.
- Synod Council: At our last Synod Council meeting it was announced that we have a new Executive Assistant for Synod Administration. Her name is Tricia Clason. She is the daughter of our member, Dale Clason. She is responsible for event planning, scheduling appointments with the Bishop or Marie Leafblad, and synod council support. Speaking of event planning, thank you to our council members who are helping and/or attending this event.
- Adult Ed: I am excited to be back in the classroom for adult education. We did a brainstorming session after text study to come up with a list of things they want to learn about over the next several months. It will be a combination of text studies, topic series, and speakers.
- Facebook Views: I am looking into how many people are viewing the zoom recordings on Facebook each week to see if it's still worth posting. If we don't post, our musicians will have more freedom in what they can play. Streaming and recording require different licenses.
- Lent: Ash Wednesday is on February 14th. We will have our weekly services on the Wednesdays that follow as usual. This year Pastor Jason and I will be going to Maplewood, Maplewood Village, and all three Pines building to give ashes.

### **Old Business:**

- Sunday Steward sign-up sheet was passed around
- PPC Retreat Follow-up
- Exhibit between services/Lead service
  - There may be displays on Sunday following the event. Greeters are needed. Gina, Anne, Gwen, James and the exec team will greet.
- Transition team update
  - The team has met once and will continue to meet regularly.



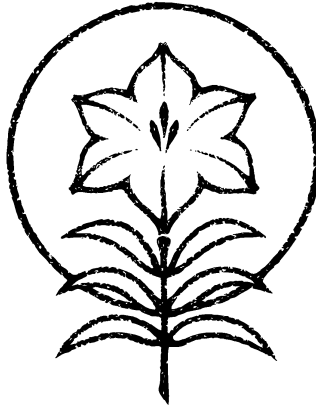
### **New Business:**

- Organ revamping. Needs \$23,657 for repairs that include total cleaning and reviewing. This expense would require a congregational meeting. Organ is worth \$450K. A motion was made to bring to the congregation the request for funds for cleaning and repairing the organ was made by Lon and seconded by Eunice. Motion carried.
- Building security. Discussed adding security cameras and an on-call church cell phone option.

Next meeting is Tuesday, March 5, 2024, at 6:00 pm. Devotion will be given by Gwen. Donna made a motion to adjourn our meeting, and the motion was 2nd by Lon. Motion carried.

Meeting Adjourned at 7:15 pm. with The Lord's Prayer lead by Nancy Kaufman.

Respectfully submitted by Cathy Yanke.



Christ is risen! Jesus is alive, and God has swallowed up death forever. With Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James, and Salome, we may feel astonished and confused, unsure of what to make of the empty tomb. But this is why we gather: to proclaim, witness, praise, and affirm the liberating reality of Christ's death and resurrection. In word and feast, we celebrate God's unending love, and depart to share this good news with all the world. Alleluia!



## **Happy March Birthday!**

*The day is in parenthesis*

### **Our Youngest:**

Zachariah Kaul (21)  
Audrey Plescia (24)  
Beatrix Schreiber (27)

Charlie Herschleb (23)  
Maggie Johnson (25)

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

Maximus Ederer (8)  
Cataleya Lane (11)  
Preston Ott (12)  
August Zasada (13)  
Olivia Naggs (17)  
August Maestri (19)  
Calvin Ganser (29)

Grace Lohr (9)  
Charlotte Ziehlsdorf (11)  
Adeline Newman (13)  
Maverick Fourtner (14)  
Ethan Gilchrist (19)  
Estelle Haffemann (24)

### **Our Youth:**

Sean Jager (10)  
Lillian Ott (17)  
Joe Frosch (21)  
Eamon Walsh (23)  
Ethan Duren (26)

Campbell Kelter (15)  
Byrce Ballweg (18)  
Eliot Carlson (22)  
Isaiah Thompson (24)  
Kendra Frey (29)

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

Ben Levers (3)  
Drew Marshall (11)  
Ethan Kolnik (15)

Bryce Smith (9)  
JJ Wolfe (13)