

Ellen Krueger, 3rd Grade

Prairie du Sac, WI

February 2025

Lent 2025

Throughout Lent we will be exploring the topic of radical hospitality. The Bible (and especially Jesus!) has a lot to say about this:

Romans 15:7

Paul encourages Christians to welcome each other as Christ welcomed them, regardless of their differences.

Luke 14:12-14

Jesus instructs people to invite the poor, the crippled, and the blind to their banquets, even though they can't repay them.

The parable of the Good Samaritan (Luke 10)

Jesus shows hospitality to everyone, including those who are often rejected, such as the blind, the lame, and lepers.

How is Jesus calling us, at St. John's Lutheran Church, to show radical hospitality in worship, fellowship, education programming, on the streets of Sauk Prairie, at school and work, and so forth? Join us on Wednesdays at 1pm or 6:30pm for worship as we explore radical hospitality through worship, song, and prayer.

We look forward to learning and growing with you!

Ash Wednesday is March 5, 2025. Worship services will be at 1:00pm and 6:30pm.

PRESENTED BY ST. JOHN'S LUTHERAN CHURCH

PLAY and LAUGH

Game Night

Eat snacks, play old favorites games
or learn a new game!

ALL AGES ARE WELCOME!

**FEBRUARY 28, 2025
6:30 PM - 9:00 PM**

Participants who are under 12 years of age must have a
parent or guardian.

St. John's Lutheran Church
100 Oak St #1548, Prairie du Sac, WI 53578

SAVE THE DATE

Game Night

All are invited to attend St. John's Game Night on Friday, February 28, 2025, from 6:30 – 9:00 pm. We'll have a variety of games for folks of all ages, with prizes! The night is free, so bring a friend and enjoy some laughter and fun. We ask that you RSVP with your attendance at <https://signup.com/go/bPRpiFB>



Parish Planning Council Members:

Executive Director	Nancy Passehl	(608) 219-1936
Assistant Exec Director	Marv Hupp	(608) 370-2657
Secretary	Cathy Yanke	(608) 434-4869
Treasurer	John Brennan	(608) 469-8786
Evangelism Board	Gwen Ringelstetter	(608) 643-6922
Fellowship Board	Cathy McAlexander	(402) 689-5196
Lay Ministry Board	Gina Varley	(608) 544-5002
Member-at-Large	Roger Seymour	(608) 588-3198
Parish Education Board	James Newman	(608) 512-7623
Properties Board	John Ballweg	(608) 220-3894
PR and Social Concerns	Melani Wheeler	(608) 963-9540
Stewardship Board	Todd Wyttenbach	(608) 513-9797
Women of ELCA	Eunice Yanke	(608) 643-8289
Youth Board	Tracy Pape	(608) 544-2727
Youth Member-at-Large	Sean Jager	(608) 434-0755

The Staff:

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

Pastoral Intern: Elise Iverson Uphoff elise@stjohnssaukprairie.org

Director of Music: Ruellene Seymour

ruellene@stjohnssaukprairie.org

Youth Director: Penny Johnson penny@stjohnssaukprairie.org

Financial Director: Bruce Fritsch bruce@stjohnssaukprairie.org

Custodian: John Hines john@stjohnssaukprairie.org

Office Coordinator: Linda Hines linda@stjohnssaukprairie.org

Sunday School Superintendent: Pastor Sally Williams

sundayschool@stjohnssaukprairie.org

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
PAID
Permit No. 23
Prairie du Sac,
Wisconsin 53578



Food, paper products and cleaning supplies may be brought to the table in the gathering area at any time. These items are distributed to many families in the Sauk Prairie community. The food pantry especially needs:

Cereal	Instant Oatmeal
Tuna	Mayo/Salad Dressing
Brownie Mix	Hand Lotion
Baby Food	Diapers (any size)

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 February. The day is in parentheses.

Ginny Nimmow (1)
216 Washington Street
Sauk City, WI 53583

Marilyn Larson
(February 18, 1925)
1050 Prairie St., Room 11
Prairie du Sac, WI 53578



Diane Elsing (19)
2020 Hanksfield Place
Prairie du Sac, WI 53578

Eunice Yanke (24)
S8651 Old Bluff Trail
Prairie du Sac, WI 53578



100th Birthday Celebration

The family of Marilyn Larson invites all of St. John's family to join in a celebration of Marilyn's 100th birthday on February 23 at 9:00am in the fellowship hall. Come help us celebrate Marilyn!

	Women of the Church News	
	<u>Lydia Circle</u> Thursday, February 13, at Darlene Holl's, 418 Lueders Rd., Apt. 9, Sauk City	1:00pm
	<u>Martha Circle</u> Thursday, February 6, in St. John's Library, Ruth Dresser, Hostess	9:30am
	<u>Ruth Circle</u> Monday, February 10, in St. John's Library, Marian DeGiovanni, Hostess	9:00am
	<u>Sarah/Mary Circle</u> Tuesday, February 4, in St. John's Library	9:30am

Circles will meet in February as shown above. The study is on Faithfulness, written by Denise Rector. This study will be led by Diane Elsing, Mary Weeks, Marian DeGiovanni and Kathy Lester.

We were so pleased that there were 27 ladies in attendance at the all-circle meeting on January 16th. An offering was taken, and the amount was \$162.00.

After a social time of treats and coffee, Intern Elise gave a very interesting talk about her faith journey. She was brought up in a non-churched home. Her mother was a teacher, and father was a tax assessor. She actually has a degree in Civil Engineering from UW-Milwaukee, but since then she has been exploring other avenues to study. She was seriously considering the medical field. She and her husband have 3 children and the cost for that degree is very steep. They attended a Catholic Church, but after a while decided to attend a Lutheran Church in Madison and discovered that this is the church they really wanted to be in. The pastor of that Church encouraged her to become a pastor AND we are so happy she made that decision, and that we have the good fortune of having her do her internship in our church. She feels that the experience of being here has helped her to see the option of becoming a congregational minister.

After that we had a meaningful memorial service for those from St. John's who have died in the past year, including:

Dean Pfaff	Dede Egan	
Vernus Ladd	Rev. Eldor Fruehling	
Evelyn Gorsuch	Sterling Walsh	
Mailyn Gilding	Sandra Frey	
Jean Jessie	Bernice King	
Dick Dobrzynski	Betty Fisher	Janice Carlson

Since Pastor Fruehling was on this list, we invited his daughter, Ruth Ann, to come and light a candle for her father who had been our Pastor for several years. Ruth Ann grew up in our church and of course, the rest of her family. She has lost two of her brothers in the last couple of years, so she also lit a candle for David and Dan. We included people present who would like to light a candle for loved ones who were not members of St. John's. Several people came forward to do that.

We are so happy that we have received \$503.00. in the Pennies for Poverty Jar. This money will go to 6:8, a very deserving organization that does so much for our community. Thank you to all the wonderful people who donated to this cause!

Lydia Circle has been visiting Special Friends during December and January, Ruth Circle will visit them during February and March.

Remember to look in this Visitor for the Special Prayer to be read on February 20th.

There will be a Bible Study Leaders meeting on Tuesday, February 25th at 9:00 a.m.

Bible Study Circle Invitation

Are you interested in joining a Bible Study group? Our Circles would like to add new members. You don't have to know a lot about the Bible, you learn about the Bible as we study. We meet once a month for study and wonderful fellowship. If you have questions, please call Eunice Yanke at 608-643-8289. We would love to see you!

News from the Fellowship Board

We will be cleaning and organizing the kitchen on February 10 at 10AM. Please come help as you are able.

Please continue to volunteer to serve coffee to our church family during the Sunday fellowship time.

Please sign up for dates when you would be able to donate desserts for the Lenten meals. This will help Donna Nelson as she plans and prepares the meals. There will be a sign-up sheet on the kiosk in the foyer

Our Palm Sunday Brunch is approaching. A sign up for food items to donate will be on the kiosk by Ash Wednesday, March 5.

Adult Education

Immigration from a Lutheran Perspective Intern Elise will be leading a book study on Lutheran Perspectives on Immigration January 26-February 9th. If you are able, please read “They are Us” by Deffenbaugh and Bauman. Otherwise, join us for some thought-provoking discussions on our beliefs and what actions we can responsibly take.

Scouting Today! Liz and Luther Leith will present an update on scouting at St. John’s and in Sauk Prairie, in addition to the ways scouting continues to grow and change with our changing communities.

Grief: Signs, Stages, and Stigmas Pastor Sally will lead a series to educate on what the broad topic of grief can entail. You will learn more about the grief process, what modern approaches to grief there are, and gain a better understanding of this complex topic. This is not a grief support group.

2/2/2025	Book Study: Immigration	Elise
2/9/2025	Book Study: Immigration	Elise
2/16/2025	Scouting Today	Liz Leith
2/23/2025	Grief: Signs, Stages, and Stigmas	Sally
3/2/2025	Grief: Signs, Stages, and Stigmas	Sally
3/9/2025	Grief: Signs, Stages, and Stigmas	Sally
3/16/2025	Grief: Signs, Stages, and Stigmas	Sally

SPECIAL PRAYER

We invite you to pray this prayer February 20th,

Dear Lord,

As we step into this new year, we place our hopes and plans in your hands. Help us lean not on our own understanding, but to be guided by your Word and your Holy Spirit living in us. Fill us with peace and purpose; guide us with your wisdom and love. Help us to trust you in all that lies ahead, knowing that you promise to walk with us every step of the way.

In Jesus’ name, Amen.

Fellowship Outing

The Fellowship Committee invites you to share an afternoon with your friends enjoying a production by the group The Looney Lutherans on Sunday, March 23, 2025, at 2:00 PM. This event will be held at the CALCENTER, located in the Reedsburg High School in Reedsburg WI.

"The Looney Lutherans are a trio of wacky gals who use music, comedy and some help from the audience to share their age-old wisdom for living a long and lively life, the Lutheran way- and you don't have to be Lutheran to love it! In this show, the "Loonies" go country in "Hotdish on the Range: All Hat, No Cattle".

This country and cowboy themed show includes segments like "Cowboy Up" (practical tips for living off the land), Lutheran cowboy-ish wisdom, and hilarious parodies of classic country songs like, "I'm Falling to Pieces." Giddyup! "

We have reserved 20 tickets (scattered in small groups) which involve no stairs. The ticket price is \$30 per ticket. Please turn in the money to Linda Hines to reserve your ticket. These **tickets are reserved until February 17**, at which time any unsold tickets will be returned to the theater. Sorry, but we cannot refund any unused tickets.

Feel free to join others in car-pooling or provide your own transportation. St John's will not be providing transportation to the theater.

Any questions may be addressed to St John's Lutheran Church (608.643.2439), Donna Nelson (608.393.4660) or Cathy McAlexander (402.689.5196).



JUST BAKERY
A JustDane Initiative

Drivers Needed for Just Bakery Pick-up

PR and Social Concerns is looking for drivers to pick up Just Bakery items. There are only 6 pick-ups a year. Pick-ups are one Saturday a month in the late morning on the East Side of Madison. St. John's then sells Just Bakery baked goods one Sunday a month. The baked goods are made by those recently released from jail, and who receive job training in the culinary industry to further their employment prospects. Contact Melani if you are interested:

wheelermelani6@gmail.com



Dear Friends in Christ,

There is nothing permanent except change. - Heraclitus

Don't we know it! Over the last year and a half, we said goodbye to Pastor Fred, welcomed Pastor Jason as our Interim Pastor, hired Bruce Fritsch, partnered with Luther Seminary to bring onboard Intern Elise, and now we've said goodbye to Pastor Jason and are moving toward the call process of calling a new Lead Pastor.

Before writing anymore, I want to give thanks to all of you for the ways you welcomed Pastor Jason into your lives and your faith journeys. I am grateful for yours and Pastor Jason's ministry to and with us over the last 15 months. We've shared many moments of hospitality, celebration, grief, laughter, and visioning together in this time together and I give thanks for it all!

So now what do we do? We're in a bit of limbo again and we have some choices to make personally and as a faith community. Do we 1) sit back and do nothing until we have a Lead Pastor, 2) continue on with the status quo or 3) be agents of change?

Options 1 and 2 sound really lovely, don't they? Let's just keep doing the same thing, stop reflecting and discerning who we are as God's Church, and wait until later. But....is that really what we're called to do? The truth is Jesus absolutely took time to rest throughout his ministry. He went away from everyone and stopped what he was doing. But it was always followed by action and change; whether it was challenging the powers that be, connecting with someone alienated from society, or teaching others that status quo is not the way of the kingdom.

So, I guess that means we should pick option 3, my friends. Though this option sounds riskier and requires action on all of our parts.

There are all sorts of wise quotes on the good ol' internet about change, but let's return to our foundation of God's Word instead as we think about change (though I did steal these directly from the internet 😊):

2 Corinthians 5:17: "The old has gone, the new is here!"

Ephesians 4:22-24: "Put off your old self, and put on the new self"

Isaiah 43:18-19: "Behold, I am doing a new thing; now it springs forth"

Ecclesiastes 3:1-8: "For everything there is a season, and a time for every matter under heaven"

As these next months unfold, I invite you to ponder some questions for yourself in the midst of another transition and as always, I love to hear your thoughts on these!

What new knowledge or skills would I like to gain in my faith life?

How might I foster new, and improve old, relationships with people at church?

What new opportunities could I explore here (ushering, teaching, quilting, etc.) and outside of church (food pantry, tutoring, learning Spanish, etc.)?

What support do I need from my pastor and from my church family to do these things?

We are always being called to challenge ourselves and our world while resting in the secure, faithful arms of Jesus. It's only because of Him that we can change in the first place. Let's lean on Jesus as we come together to grow and change in His name!

In His Strength,



Baptisms in January

We welcomed a new brother and sister in Christ through Baptism in January:

Dominic Charles Travis, son of Dexton Travis and Nicole Woider was baptized on January 5. His sponsors are Sarah and Johnny Fehling, Lacey Markle, Lee Hellenbrand and Brock Markowski.

Rosalind Fay Nelson, daughter of Kevin and Kia (Parins) Nelson was baptized on January 26. Her sponsor is Elliana Parins and her congregational sponsor is Megan Tarnutzer.

Please pray for these new members as they begin their faith journey.

Hello
My name is

Intern

February... Ah, the month of "Love." The way you reacted to that statement could be one of two things: either you cringed a little or your heart warmed. I'm a mix of both. I can't get behind Love being commercialized through Valentine's Day. For me, it loses a lot of meaning. However, it is so wonderful when a month gets set aside with a special focus or intention. For example, in December we celebrate the birth of our Savior, gratitude in November, and our freedom in July.

God's love for us is unconditional. A love that is there for us every day, all year, no matter what. Truly, God's love is greater than anything we will ever be able to do ourselves! Fortunately, this isn't a game of trying to keep up with God's perfect love, because we will fail every time. Instead of trying to keep up, I can rest easy: the Almighty God, who loves perfectly, *wants* to love ME.

God loves YOU all the time, no matter what.

Every single moment, from sipping your coffee to stirring a pan on the stove and getting frustrated by another driver on the road to reprimanding the dog (or cat), are all moments that God is still loving us.

What happens when someone loves you? First, I need you to think of someone who has deeply loved or respected you, and you became a better person because of them (a spouse, someone you dated, parent, friend, mentor). That person loved you into loving! They love you and you become a little bit better. They love you more, you become even better. They keep loving you, until you have been transformed. You have been loved into loving.

God's love, and Christ's sacrifice for you is not *more or better* in February, the month of Love. Instead, it's more about what February means for us to put a little extra love into loving. February is a time for us to accept God's love that loves us into loving and then send that Love out into the world! Who can you love into loving?

With Love, Intern Elise

Thank you from Intern Elise

I am grateful for your thoughtful sermon feedback following my January 12th sermon. It is a joy and blessing to learn with the St. John's community during this year. Questions regarding the internship program? Contact Cliff and Cindy Thompson.



Thank you, Volunteers!

Thank you to the Mobile Meal volunteers for sharing your time and kindness with our neighbors. Without you, this program would not be possible. God Bless –

PR & Social Concerns Committee

Those who delivered meals in January are:

Rich Frey	Kris Frey
Butch Passehl	Jerry Fiene
Holly Kindschi	Deb Treinen
Dan Lovell	Kathy Lovell
Mike Langer	Kim Langer
Kristin Pape	



With Sincere Sympathy

We offer our condolences to the following families this month:

Intern Elise Iverson Uphoff and her family on the death of Elise's mother, Suzanne Iverson.

Donna Knickmeyer on the death of her dear friend, John Goodman.

Clint and Kim Williams and their family and Mary Dodd on the death of Raymond "Ray" Williams. Ray was the father of Clint and the brother of Mary.

Mary and Larry Halweg and family on the death of Mary's father, Donn Frey.

Steven and Melissa Andrews and family on the death of Steven's father, Steve Andrews.

Larry and Cathy McAlexander, Jennifer and Chris Stephan and their family on the death of Larry's mother, Virginia McAlexander. Virginia was grandmother to Jennifer Stephan and great-grandmother to the Stephan girls.

Margaret Diehl, Kevin Diehl and Ginny Nimmow on the death of Margaret's sister-in-law and Kevin's aunt, Nancy Wipperfurth. Ginny was a cousin of Nancy.

Tyler and Mikayla Hartmann, other family members and many friends of Tyler's grandmother, Betty Page.



JUST BAKERY
A JustDane Initiative

Thank you!

Thank you for your generous contributions to Just Bakery during 2024. Your support is greatly appreciated! You make our work possible through your purchases of our Just Bakery items.

You help to sustain the programs that enrich and improve the lives of all our neighbors. With your partnership, we will continue to build a more equitable and inclusive community.

Sincerely, Linda Ketcham, Executive Director



Thank you!

On behalf of the Help Excite Little People (Red Sled) Project, heartfelt thanks for your involvement. We greatly appreciate the generous donations that you shared. This year we were able to provide gifts for 55 families. Many thanks for making the holidays happier for Sauk Prairie Families!

Margaret McFarlane, H.E.L.P. Coordinator



Thank You

Thank you, St. John's Church People,
Your recent gifts totaling \$703.79 will go a long way to help the Leaders reach financial and social stability in our Circles Program. You have thought of us often during 2024 and we thank you so very much!

6:8 Circles Program Directors

thank you

Thank you for your recent financial contribution of \$500 to Lutheran Campus Ministry. Providing and cultivating a place to belong and a community that uplifts and supports students is at the heart of our ministry. Your gift is received with deep gratitude.

Rev. John Worzala Dumke, Interim Campus Pastor

Those Serving in February

Greeters:

Feb. 2 (Front door)
(Side door)

Feb. 9 (Front door)
(Side door)

Feb. 16 (Front door)
(Side door)

Feb. 23 (Front door)
(Side door)

8:00 a.m.

T/G Wyttenbach
C/C Thompson

Rich/Kris Frey

Austin Urban
YOUTH

Paul/Ann Kippley

10:30 a.m.

John/Ellen Mast

Doris Lohr
Ginny Nimmow

Kiptyn Suchla
Austin Urban

G/D Westphal
Doris Lohr

Ushers:

February 2

February 9

February 16

February 23

8:00 a.m.

Dale Haroldson
Rob Richard
Milo Lueck

Emma Gilchrist

Dale Haroldson
Todd Wyttenbach
Gina Wyttenbach
Kendra Frey
Cooper Rennie

Lon Kaderavek
Butch Passehl
Hudson Ballweg
Joslyn Schultz

Todd Wyttenbach
Gina Wyttenbach
Dale Haroldson
Cooper Rennie

10:30 a.m.

Evelynn Brennan
John Brennan

Laura Hutchins
Brooke Braund
Chesney Braund

Tom Varley
Kathy Lovell
Henry Dean

Laura Hutchins
Hudson Ballweg

Acolytes:

February 2

February 9

February 16

February 23

8:00 a.m.

Charlie Lueck

Charlie Lueck

Willy Pickett

10:30 a.m.

Kiptyn Suchla

Madyn Ludowitz

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

February 2

February 9

February 16

February 23

Donna Knickmeyer

Jordan Small

Jordan Small

Janelle Hupp

10:30 a.m.

Donna Knickmeyer

Clay Hutchins

Jude Hanna

Clay Hutchins

Readers:

February 2
 February 9
 February 16
 February 23

8:00 a.m.

Donna Knickmeyer
 Carrie Richard
 Marilyn Herschleb
 Crystal Lautenbach

10:30 a.m.

Donna Knickmeyer
 Jude Hanna
 Kathy Lovell
 Doris Lohr

Cantors:

February 2
 February 9
 February 16
 February 23

8:00 a.m.

Melani Wheeler
 Becky Weittenhiller
 Chris Stephan
 J/K Ochsankehl

10:30 a.m.

Melani Wheeler
 Lisa Davis
 Chris Stephan
 J/K Ochsankehl

Communion

February 2
 February 9
 February 16
 February 23

Set-Up

Rich/Jane Calenzo
 Rodney/Marsha Key
 YOUTH
 Jayne Carlson

Clean-Up

Donna Knickmeyer
 Roger/Marcia Howard
 YOUTH
 Gerry/Deb Westphal

Communion Assistants 8:00 a.m.

February 2
 February 9
 February 16
 February 23

Patty Barritt
 Kris Frey
 Charlie Lueck
 Jayne Carlson

10:30 a.m.

Gerry Westphal
 Audrey Luetscher
 YOUTH
 Dale Clason

Technology Team

February 2
 February 9
 February 16
 February 23

8:00 a.m.

Ellen Jorgensen
 Ellen Jorgensen
 Ellen Jorgensen

10:30 a.m.

Himebauch Family
 Himebauch Family
 Sandberg Family
 Sandberg Family

Sunday Stewards

February 2
 February 9
 February 16
 February 23

8:00 a.m.

Cathy McAlexander
 Cathy Yanke
 Nancy Passehl
 Melani Wheeler

10:30 a.m.

John Ballweg
 James Newman
 James Newman
 Roger Seymour

Coffee Servers

February 2
 February 9
 February 16
 February 23

Steve and Patty Barritt
 Larry and Cathy McAlexander
 Doug and Donna Nelson

The Power of Giving

Each month, the Stewardship Board will be highlighting a different part of our church that our giving helps pay for. This month it is Our Building.

Our house of worship has many of the same expenses that each of our homes have: electricity, heat, water, and upkeep, but at a much larger scale. Our goal is to always keep St John's as a beautiful, welcoming space, inside and out. It takes all of us working together to keep the lights on and to make sure that our building lasts for generations.

Giving to St. John's

St. John's Venmo: <https://www.venmo.com/u/StJohnsPds>



Paypal



St. John's Paypal:

https://www.paypal.com/donate/?hosted_button_id=HXZCYWTV6CYEA



Stock the Schools

In our continuing partnership with the Sauk Prairie School District, the following items are requested to help stock the shelves in our schools to help our students. February's list: individually packaged granola bars, crackers, popcorn, applesauce, fruit cups, dried fruit, pretzels, Goldfish or Cheez-its.



THANKS

Thank you all for your donations of winter coats to Sauk Prairie students! It is greatly appreciated. The need is real, and you answered the call. Thank you for helping us meet the basic needs of our students.

The SPSD School Social Workers

Sunday School News

Sunday School Bake Sale

The Sunday School students of the 5th and 6th grade will hold a Bake Sale on Sunday, February 9, beginning at 9am. All monies collected will go to the ELCA's Good Gifts God's Global Barnyards program. The students appreciate your support for this project and are eager to share with you all the work they have put into making the bake sale a success. Please stop by and greet the students.

Children's Library

Have you had a chance to check out the Children's Library in the Sunday School hallway yet? It is in Room 3 and just waiting for you to explore.

Dale Clason and Audrey Luetscher greatly enjoy working with the Sunday School students, reading books, making crafts and checking out books and videos for taking home.

Visit the Library soon!

Sunday School Offering

Just a small reminder that the Sunday School offering will be sent to ELCA Good Gifts for their program to help with nutritional needs for children around the world. Can you give a small amount to help in a big way?

Confirmation News

Confirmation Meal

Due to the difficulty in finding sufficient volunteers to keep the confirmation meals going, we are cancelling the Wednesday night meals beginning Wednesday, March 5th through the end of the school year. We are very grateful to Donna Nelson, Jen Urban, and Roger Seymour for their faithful service to our confirmation families for so many years as well as our other volunteers who were able to donate their time. We will revisit the idea of a weekly meal for next fall.

Ninth Graders Living Lutheran

This confirmation year, ninth-grade students are learning the ways in which they can be Living Lutheran as a member of St. John's church. This year, we've started having ninth graders get involved with the Sauk Prairie community for these lessons. During the Fall, students participated in game-nights at The Pines Assisted Living residence. In January, students volunteered with the Sauk Prairie Food Pantry. In February, we'll wrap up our community engagement with a game-night at Maplewood Village on Wednesday, Feb. 12, 2025, from 6:00-7:00pm. You would be proud to see these young teens represent St. John's as caring and engaging partners in the community!

Mentor Night

St. John's confirmation students and mentors should plan to meet on Wednesday, February 19, 2025, for the next Mentor Night. Watch your email for the lesson, which will arrive on the Sunday prior. Mentors and students can meet anywhere, or even use an online meeting, to complete the lesson. There is no class and no meal at St. John's that night.

Confirmation and Lenten Evening Services

Please help your student prepare for the upcoming season of Lent, when St. John's will have the confirmation students lead the Evening Services. Please note, there is no class on March 5, Ash Wednesday, and attendance is not required. However, students and families are strongly encouraged to attend Ash Wednesday Service.

For all other Wednesdays in Lent, students will attend a short classroom lesson from 6:00-6:30pm, then attend service from 6:30pm-7:00pm. Parents, family, friends, and mentors are invited to attend Lenten Evening Services and support your students as they lead!

- Wed March 5 Ash Wednesday
- Wed March 12 Ninth Grade
- Wed March 19 Eighth Grade
- Wed March 26 Spring Break
- Wed, April 2 Seventh Grade
- Wed, April 9 Ninth Grade
- Wed, April 16 No Confirmation



Global Health Ministries

The origins of GHM are rooted in Lutheran missionaries who lived and worked in the red dirt of Madagascar, in Liberia, Tanzania, and Cameroon. Global Health Ministries is an independent Lutheran nonprofit (501c3) established in 1987 and specializes in building Lutheran health systems and to “support and assist our overseas Lutheran churches in realizing the full potential of Christ’s healing ministry,” serving some of the most vulnerable people in the world.

The kits we send to GHM each spring are Hospice Kits and Newborn Kits. Our volunteers are ready to pack these kits and would greatly appreciate your help in collecting the items needed:

Hospice Kits include:

- One wash cloth
- One bath-size bar Ivory soap
- One adult toothbrush
- One “pick” style comb
- One nail clipper
- Six Band-Aids
- One 4-oz petroleum jelly
- One pair kitchen-type gloves

Newborn Kits include:

- One wash cloth
- One bath-size bar Ivory soap
- One newborn T-shirt
- One newborn stocking cap
- Two diaper pins
- Two cloth diapers

Parish Planning Council Minutes January 7, 2025

Present: Nancy Passehl, John Brennan, Cathy Yanke, Sally Williams, Eunice Yanke, Tracy Pape, Roger Seymour, Gina Varley, James Newman, Gwen Ringelstetter, John Ballweg, Cathy McAlexander, Melanie Wheeler

Absent: Jason Hill, Elise Iverson Uphoff, Marv Hupp, Sean Jager

Call to Order/Opening Remarks:

Meeting was called to order at 6:10 p.m. by Nancy Passehl. Nancy P asked for approval of the agenda. Motion to approve was made by Eunice and seconded by Tracy. Motion carried. A devotion/prayer was then given by Eunice.

Secretary Minutes:

The December minutes were submitted online by Cathy Yanke. A motion to approve minutes was made by Gina and seconded by John Ballweg. Motion carried.

Treasurer report:

The committee reviewed and discussed the December 2024; Treasurer Report submitted by John Brennan.

December report numbers

Current Month Income	Year-to-date Income	Current Month Expenses	Year-to-date Expenses	Year-to-date Budget
\$59,559	\$491,547	\$54,031	\$583,881	\$613,264

- The fiscal year ended (-\$92,334) with expenses higher than income. A recent donation has adjusted the number down, but we are still negative for 2024.
 - Thanks to Donna Nelson and Bruce Fritsch for all of their hard work on end of year preparations. In comparing last year's cash in accounts with this year, comparing them favorably. Down but not, disastrous.
 - We expect expenses for the calling process. Travel, hotels, food, and general costs of bringing someone to town. Some of these costs could be offset by the lack of a lead pastor salary for February and each month we do not have a pastor.
- A motion to approve the financial report was made by Gwen and seconded by James. Motion carried.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Evangelism: Gwen Ringelstetter reported:

- Working on Grad. Kits, New Member Folders, Children will wiggle, Sent out 6 postcards to visitors.
- Remembering Betty Risley, former St. John's Property Chair

Fellowship: Cathy McAlexander reported:

- Church members were invited to share their "overabundance" of Christmas goodies during fellowship time on December 29.
- An additional warmer and big pot were purchased for the current coffee station.

Lay Ministry: Gina Varley reported:

- Discussed Intern Elise's home baked communion bread. All agreed it was a nice change from the wafers. It was decided to start out using the bread once a month on the last Sunday to see how it goes.
- Intern Elise also shared that the communion vessels are in need of replacement due to rust and overall wear and tear. We discussed getting homemade pottery/stoneware either from Etsy or a local potter.
- Christmas Eve candle set-up will be after 10:30 service on December 22nd.
- We will wait to discuss future worship schedules until we have a new lead pastor.
- Ash Wednesday is March 5th and Easter is April 20th.

Parish Education: James Newman reported:

- Penny and I met on Tuesday December 10th. All discussion was focused on what was happening in December.
- Preparation made for the Sunday School Christmas program that happened on December 15th.
- Discussion of confirmation's December activities including the Caring Tree, caroling at the Pines and Maplewood, playing bunco at the Pines, and potato peeling for the community meal. (at Thanksgiving)

Properties: John Ballweg reported:

- Mayberry Electric checked the circuits for the outside lights around the Fellowship Hall on December 20th. Both circuits are fine, so we turned power on again - and found that only 6 of 16 bulbs still work. Rather than replace them with metal halide bulbs again, we'll convert to LED. Mayberry reported that LED bulbs are back-ordered as of January 2nd.

· Due to intermittent problems with no heat in the Fellowship Hall, Baybrookes replaced the thermostat on December 30th. There was no heat on January 4th, so Baybrookes checked the rooftop unit and found an error code with one of the circuit boards. The code was cleared and the unit started heating again. Although we had heat through the weekend, Baybrookes will investigate the circuit board further and advise if it needs to be replaced.

PR & Social Concerns: Melanie Wheeler reported:

· No report provided.

Stewardship Board: Chair (open) reported:

· No report provided.

Women of ELCA: Eunice Yanke/Ruth Dresser reported:

· Combined Circles meeting Thursday, January 16 at 10am. We will hear from Intern Elise and then have the annual Candlelight Memorial service.

· ThankOffering donations totaled \$370.

· Pennies for Poverty Jar donations totaled \$503.79 and will be sent to 6:8 of Sauk Prairie.

· Christmas Cheer of \$200 was sent to Hope House of Baraboo, WI

· Christmas Cheer of \$200 was sent to Special Olympics.

Youth Committee: Tracy Pape reported:

· On December 4, 2024, a group of confirmation students and adults participated in a charitable event by shopping for families in need for the Sauk Prairie Caring Tree. The Caring Tree supports families during the holiday season by providing gifts. This act of service helped those in need and allowed the students to experience the joy of giving back to their community.

· On December 11, 2024, the Confirmation students visited two nursing homes to spread joy by caroling and delivering homemade baked goods, bringing smiles to many faces. After caroling, the groups gathered back at church to enjoy hot chocolate and treats, celebrating the season of giving together. It was a heartwarming occasion that embodied the true spirit of Christmas.

· Upcoming Events: Game Night February 28, 2025, 6:30 p.m. - 9:00 p.m. at St. John's

Join us for a fun-filled evening of games, laughter, and fellowship! This exciting event is sure to be an unforgettable night. Whether you're into board games, card games, or just enjoying the company of others, there's something for everyone!

The Sign-Up Genius will be shared in mid-January – be sure to keep an eye out for more details on how to get involved.

- Penny and the freshmen confirmation students plan in January and February 2025 to Volunteer at the Sauk Prairie Food Pantry and sponsor a Game Night at Maplewood Village. These types of events are excellent for teaching students the values of kindness, service, and fellowship as part of their confirmation journey.
- Next meeting is January 8, 2025.

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:

- No report provided.

Sally's Report:

- Starting to work on Elise's 6-month evaluation. We continue to hold her in our prayers upon the death of her mother, Suzanne Iverson.
- Several baptisms are being scheduled for the next couple of months. Please introduce yourselves to these young families.
- With Pastor Jason's upcoming departure there will be a shift in preaching and visitation schedules as well as other responsibilities. Thank you for your patience in this transition! Please join us between services on Jan 26 to give thanks for Pastor Jason's ministry.
- Please continue to think about and invite people to consider the positions of stewardship board and Sunday School superintendent(s).

Intern Elise's Report:

- Currently on a trip to the Borderlands of Texas, New Mexico, and Mexico to learn about the immigration process and meet migrants to the US.
- Preparing for a book study on Lutheran perspectives on immigration and sharing of this trip for adult forum
- Preparing my section of the 6-month evaluation
- Continuing to teach 9th grade confirmation, and interact with several church groups

Old Business:

- Stewardship Board—a board chairperson is needed.
- Call Team Update—a meeting with the synod yielded compliments to the group for completion of the paperwork for the call and it has been accepted. Recruiting by the synod will begin.

New Business:

- Nancy continues to carry on the theme of "transparency" as her word for 2025. She shared with the group an article on transparency in church leadership which is a core component of building trust and accountability within the church community. This followed with talk about how we can learn from each other. One difficult thing for some of us is knowing what gets charged to which board. Please bring examples of charges for your board and why they are charged to you.
- Annual report. We complete two annual reports. One for the ELCA that is completed by Linda and John Brennan and Bruce. The other is an in-house annual report that includes information about each board and their successes for 2024. Sally will send the 2023 annual report to use as a guide. Information is due Feb 2.
- Name tags for council. Elise has found name tags that support our "welcome to St John's" buttons. These tags will include our names and be attached to a magnet, making them easier to read.
- Internship 2025-2026 update.
- Pastor Jason's final Sunday with us will be January 26 and his last day in church will be January 31.

“Parking lot” items:

- Welcoming
- One service – Lay Ministry
- RIC – Conversations to begin after the lead pastor is hired
- TNT – bucket list of items brought up by members that need additional discussion

Next meeting is Tuesday, Feb 4, 2025, at 6:00 pm. Devotion will be given by Marv. Tracy made a motion to adjourn our meeting, and the motion was seconded by James. Motion carried.

Meeting Adjourned at 7:40 pm. with The Lord's Prayer lead by Nancy P.

Respectfully submitted by Cathy Yanke.



Happy February Birthday!

The day is in parenthesis

Our Youngest:

Tate Stuetgen (3)
Harlan Slotty (24)

Harlow Goodwin (22)
Jack Conger (25)

Our Sunday School Students:

Lucas Treffert (1)
Gage Fournier (6)
Lincoln Ott (8)
Addison Schulenburg (11)
Audrey Conger (14)
Molly Williams (19)
Hannah Bischoff (22)
Annabelle Sweeney (23)
Mason Williams (27)

Mabel Johnson (5)
Avery Brunner (8)
Tenley Sorg (8)
Otis Johnson (13)
Evelyn Hegge (14)
Lucy Pickett (21)
Cashton Lane (22)
Gavin Johnson (25)

Our Youth:

Kylie Hutchins (15)
Landon Pape (16)
Ezra Bauer (22)
Evelynn Brennan (26)
Kate Wernsing (28)

Brynn Kruchten (15)
Kate Himebauch (19)
Cheyenne Pffaf-Zasada (24)
Kiptyn Suchla (26)

College and Career-age Young People:

Jonah Richard (6)
BrookLynn Baier (16)
Haylee Goetsch (21)
Audrie Nurkala (28)

Courtney Lautenbach (7)
Colin Wernsing (18)
Will LaCour (21)