



*Beau Keller, Second Grade*

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Prairie du Sac, WI

March 2025

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### **Call Committee Update**

If you're wondering whether we've found our new pastor yet, the answer is...Not Yet!

Over the past couple of months, the Call Committee has been hard at work. Just before Christmas, we submitted our MSP paperwork (our formal request to the synod to call a new pastor). In early January, we met with our Synod Representative for a few minor revisions, after which our paperwork was approved.

We then focused on creating interview questions and participated in a mock interview. The practice session went smoothly, and the positive feedback we received has given us confidence for the actual interview process.

We are now waiting for the synod to match us with a candidate. This is the hardest part so far because we have done all that we can to this point, we feel very prepared and now, we wait!

Have you ever waited on the Lord's timing before??? It is an exercise in being patient, trusting and calm. As we all wait together, we ask you to join us in prayer.

*Dear Lord,*

*We come to You with hope and expectation in our hearts. We pray that the Holy Spirit is guiding our future Pastor to us and preparing them for the work You have in store. Help us to be patient as we wait, trusting that Your timing and plan are perfect.*

*Strengthen our faith and remind us that You are at work, even when we can't see it. Please continue to guide us and allow us to lean on support from our St. John's family.*

*In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen.*

The Call Committee is confident in our preparation, and we will continue to keep you updated as the process unfolds. Please feel free to reach out to any of us with any questions you may have.

Thank you for your ongoing support and prayers!

Nancy Passehl, Steve Kindschi, Steve Barritt, Mary Weeks,  
Sean Jager, Kristin Ryan



## LENT 2025

Ash Wednesday is March 5. We will have Ecumenical Worship Services with the Imposition of Ashes at 1:00pm and 6:30pm. Pastor Kathi Matthews-Risley and Pastor Kook Ho will be joining Pastor Sally Williams and Intern Elise Iverson Uphoff in leading the worship. A light lunch will be offered at noon on Ash Wednesday. Cost is \$2.00.

Lenten Worship Services will continue each Wednesday of Lent (March 12, 19, 26; April 2 and 9) at 1:00pm and 6:30pm. Lunch will be served before the 1:00pm service at noon. (No meals in the evening.) All are invited to attend either worship service.

Maundy Thursday worship services will be at 1:00pm and 6:30pm on April 17. 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 April 18. No meals will be served that day.



### **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](mailto:sally@stjohnssaukprairie.org) 370-4501

**Pastoral Intern:** Elise Iverson Uphoff [elise@stjohnssaukprairie.org](mailto:elise@stjohnssaukprairie.org)

**Director of Music:** Ruellene Seymour

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

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

**Financial Secretary:** Bruce Fritsch [bruce@stjohnssaukprairie.org](mailto:bruce@stjohnssaukprairie.org)

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

**Office Coordinator:** Linda Hines [linda@stjohnssaukprairie.org](mailto:linda@stjohnssaukprairie.org)

**Sunday School Superintendent:** Dale Clason

[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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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:

Soup	Crackers
Cornbread Mix	Chili Beans
Dried beans/peas	Chicken Broth
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

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

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

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

	<b>Women of the Church News</b>	
	<b><u>Lydia Circle</u></b> Thursday, March 13, at Dorothy Halverson's, 9456 County Rd. Y, Sauk City	1:00pm
	<b><u>Martha Circle</u></b> Thursday, March 6, in St. John's Library, Ruth Dresser, Hostess	9:30am
	<b><u>Ruth Circle</u></b> Monday, March 10, in St. John's Library, Marian DeGiovanni, Hostess	9:00am
	<b><u>Sarah/Mary Circle</u></b> Tuesday, March 4, in St. John's Library	9:30am

In February, 18 ladies attended Circle meetings (Martha Circle cancelled their meeting because of very slippery conditions). Marian DeGiovanni and Kathy Lester led the Studies for Ruth and Sarah/Mary Circles. Diane Elsing was ill and couldn't lead the Lydia Circle Bible Study, so they improvised and read and discussed their lesson on their own.

In March, Circles will be meeting as shown above and the Bible Studies will be led by Diane Elsing, Mary Weeks, Marian DeGiovanni and Kathy Lester. Any one of the Circles would very cordially welcome new ladies to join them. The lessons are always interesting, and we usually get into great discussions! We are currently doing studies on Faithfulness and in March we will be starting on studies of faith in action through the examples of Peter and Cornelius.

Mark your calendars now for April 26<sup>th</sup>! There will be a meeting of Women of the Baraboo Conference at Zion Lutheran Church in Westfield. This involves getting together with ladies from several other Lutheran Churches in our area. We will have more information about this event soon. We can be assured that it will be a very informative meeting with a good guest speaker and a good meal to follow. We will carpool. You have a little time to think about it yet, ...and make plans to attend. You should let Linda in the church office know if you want to attend this event.

We received Thank You letters from WELCA for two things:

- 1) \$150 for the South-Central Synodical Women's Organization for the fourth quarter of 2024-2025.
- 2) \$370 for the ThankOffering.

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

The Bible Study Leaders Meeting for April's studies will be on Tuesday, March 25<sup>th</sup> at 9:00am.

Be sure to read the Special Prayer found in this Visitor on March 20<sup>th</sup>.

## **Adult Education Schedule**

### **Grief: Signs, Stages, and Stigmas, March 2- March 16**

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, modern approaches to grief, and gain a better understanding of this complex topic. This is not a grief support group.

**NO Adult Education, March 23 & 30** Time for Spring Break. Travel safely!

## **Immigration Conversations**

Thank you to all who came to boldly express their faith in our Immigration Book Study! Wow! If this conversation continues to stir in your heart, or you feel called to continue it, contact Intern Elise. A group of interested individuals will be collected, no experience needed. [Elise@stjohnssaukprairie.org](mailto:Elise@stjohnssaukprairie.org)

## **Any Star Wars Buffs in a galaxy not so far, far away?**

Intern Elise is inviting anyone with solid knowledge of Star Wars and a keen eye for recognizing theological themes in the franchise to collaborate on a small project!

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

## **Parkinson's Support Group**

Do you have a diagnosis of Parkinson's disease? Does a loved one or friend? St. John's hosts a Parkinson's Support Group meeting here once a month on the third Monday at 1:00pm. The Support Group wishes to invite interested parties to attend: no fee, no registration necessary. The next meeting will be held Monday, March 17 at 1:00pm at St. John's.



## **Spring Ahead March 9**

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

## Easter Flower Garden

Jennifer Sawle will be in the gathering area between worship services on March 9<sup>th</sup> and March 16<sup>th</sup> to collect money for flowers and donations for Easter. This year we will only be ordering 20 Tulips and 20 Daffodils for the garden around the altar in the sanctuary. You may make a \$5.00 donation in celebration of a special occasion, or in honor or memory of a loved one and the details will be printed in the Easter bulletin. Since we are only ordering a limited number of plants this year, if you wish to take home a tulip or daffodil, it will be on a first come, first served basis after the 10:30 worship service or on the Tuesday following Easter.



## Easter Worship Services

St. John's will hold Easter worship services at 7:00, 8:00 and 10:30am on April 20. 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

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

When: Sunday, April 13, 2025

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.





Dear Friends in Christ,

Back in January I shared the idea of ushering in 2025 with a word rather than a resolution. Here's what I wrote:

*My word is curiosity. Sometimes I'm too quick to give an answer or think I already know the answer. It's easy to make assumptions and keep my blinders on. Curiosity gives me permission to ask more questions, to think more deeply, and better understand a particular position, situation, or person. It also gives me an opportunity to think differently about my faith. What is God up to? How is God calling me to be more curious when I read scripture or while I pray?*

I enjoyed hearing the words that some of you picked for yourselves! Thank you for sharing them with me.

As we move into the season of Lent, I'm wondering how these words might continue to guide our life together. Perhaps you haven't chosen a word and want to (or not!). Word or not, we can still take some time to reflect during this season of the church year.

Our theme this year is radical hospitality, which is way more in depth than how to welcome someone into our building and into the congregation. I invite you to reflect on the following questions through the lens of your word (or just in general):

1. What is God calling me to let go of in my life so that I may offer radical hospitality?
2. How can I live out love and compassion for others?
3. How can I nurture a spirit of radical hospitality during this season?
4. What significance does Christ's death and resurrection have on my understanding of radical hospitality and how do others see that in my daily living?

These are hard questions to answer if we're being honest, and perhaps we find ourselves failing more than succeeding at being disciples. We're in good company though. The Bible is full of stories of the disciples not quite getting it. But let's keep trying. Let's be very intentional about our work this Lenten season.

Grace and forgiveness and love abound. Christ's radical hospitality abounds.

Peace and blessings,

Hello  
My name is

# Intern

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Where do you go when you need to think? Do you take a walk? Sit on the back deck? Drive in the car with no music? Take a long shower? Ride a horse? We all do this. It's part of being human. Jesus needed it during his 40 days in the wilderness to reflect on God's call for him. We need quiet time to think through big decisions; work through sadness or anger; to plan our next steps; or to just breathe into joy or contentment. It's a practice of *intention* to focus on something.

Lent is the equivalent of this time and space in the church year. Lent is a time set aside to find a bit of time to reflect and take inventory. Tradition suggests that we 'give up' something as a type of fasting for a type of being intentional. Popular items to give up are beer or chocolate. Personally, I never really felt like giving up chocolate made me feel any closer to Jesus. It would have to be something bigger than that, for me. We can also add in something to stimulate our faith and reflection; add in time for dawn prayer, sunset walks, or spiritual talks with a friend...

No matter if we are taking something away or adding something in, the goal is that time and space to think, reflect, and practice our intention of focusing on the ways that God is *already* calling us. God calls us in all sorts of ways from job changes to caring for our parents, to speaking the Gospel truth against injustices and choosing how and where we use our purchasing power.

Here in the northern hemisphere, Lent starts at the end of winter and stretches into the early signs of spring. The increase in daylight will focus me on hope, wonder, and awe. Where will you find that time to think and reflect? As you set your intention on the Lord, remember we are called to accept Christ's salvation, hear where we are already being called, and turn our faces toward the warmth of His shining Light.

In focus,  
Intern Elise

## Congregation's Sermon Feedback

The Intern Committee and Intern Elise are looking for sermon feedback from the congregation. The Lutheran tradition emphasizes the preaching of the gospel and encourages listeners to provide constructive feedback regarding the intern's sermons.

We will have an insert in the bulletin with questions for your responses when Intern Elise preaches on **March 23**. Please include your name so she may contact you if she would like more conversation. Zoom worshippers may send an email with their reflections to Intern Elise at [elise@stjohnssaukprairie.org](mailto:elise@stjohnssaukprairie.org).

Thank you for your support and prayers in growing our interns.



## First Communion Class

Thursday, **April 3, 6-7pm** Save the date. Open to any youth and families exploring communion, and adults interested in a revisiting of the meaning of this sacrament.

Taking the class does not obligate anyone to begin communion, nor is this class a requirement to begin taking communion. This class is meant to explain some of the mystery of this sacrament and help you to make your own decision.

## SPECIAL PRAYER



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

Lord,

Lead us from death to life,

From falsehood to truth.

Lead us from despair to hope,  
from fear to trust.

Let peace fill our hearts, our world and our universe.

Let us dream together, pray together and work together,

To build one world of peace and justice for all.



### **With Sincere Sympathy**

We offer our condolences to the following families this month:

Mike Wernsing, Cristy Cornelius and their family on the death of Mike's mother, Jane Wernsing.

Christopher and Jennifer Stephan and their daughters on the death of Christopher's grandmother, Delores M. Stephan.

Justin and Sarah Jorgenson and their family on the death of Justin's brother-in-law, Craig Hendrickson.

Melani and Brent Wheeler, Josh Wheeler and Mikayla and Tyler Hartmann on the death of Melani's uncle, Gene Mowitz.



### **Baby Congratulations**

We celebrate with Dani and Colin Myhro on the birth of their daughter, Greta Josie Myhro on February 19. Greta joins her big sister Brinley at home. She is also welcomed by grandparents Bob and Josie Fentress, aunt and uncle Megan Tarnutzer and Lucas Miller, and cousins Cora and Sylvie Miller.



### **Baptism**

We welcomed a new sister to the family of St. John's through Baptism in the month of February.

Remi Jean Gustafson, daughter of Michael Gustafson and Emily Blum was baptized on February 16, 2025. Remi's godparents are Jeffery Blum and Ally Holm.

Let us pray for this family as Remi begins her life in Christ.



## New Members

On Sunday, February 16, we welcomed the following people as New Members of St. John's Lutheran Church:

Dianne Brice	Peggy Exterovich	Bruce Fritsch
Sarah Dvorak	Tanner Dvorak	Tripp Dvorak
Timothy Burchard	Janell Burchard	Whitney Robarge
Marla Robarge	Kellan Robarge	Remy Robarge
Amelia Carlson	Violet Carlson	



## 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 underwear – all sizes; boys, girls, men's and women's, and feminine hygiene products – tampons, pads/pantyliners. Look for the red bin in the gathering area by the church office to drop off your donations.

# Sunday School News

## Sunday School

We are excited to have Dale Clason take over as our new Sunday School Superintendent! Dale has a deep commitment to teaching our children about Jesus. She will continue to work in the library as well. We're excited to keep working with her and finish up the year with great energy and enthusiasm!

Here is the calendar for the rest of the year:

March 2, 9, 16 - class

March 23 and 30 - **no class (Spring Break)**

April 6, 13 - class

April 20 - **no class (Easter)**

May 4 - last day of class

Just a reminder to keep bringing in offering for the students' offering project to help feed children across the globe! Offering can be given to teachers when they arrive or dropped in the worship offering plate (just note on an envelope) on Sundays.

# Middle and High School News

## Confirmation and Lenten Evening Services

For each Wednesday during Lent, students will have a short classroom lesson at 6:00pm. Then, we will attend Lenten worship services from 6:30 to 7:00pm. Please note, there is no class on March 5, Ash Wednesday, and attendance is not required.

**However**, students are strongly encouraged to attend Ash Wednesday Service.

- 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 (Holy Week)

For all other Wednesdays in Lent, students will attend a short classroom lesson from 6:00-6:30pm then attend a worship 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!

**\*\*Please note that the evening meal is no longer being served before confirmation classes.**

## 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 27th at the 10:30am worship service. Parents, Mentors and Confirmands are asked to arrive at 9:30am to prepare for service. We'll have a small reception and professional photographs as well. More information will be coming soon to students via postal and e-mail.

## Serving in March

### **Greeters:**

Mar 2 (Front Doors)	T/G Wyttenbach	John/Ellen Mast
Mar 9 (Front Doors)	Rich/Kris Frey	Doris Lohr
Mar 16 (Front Doors)	Austin Urban	Kiptyn Suchla
(Side Doors)	YOUTH	Henry Dean
Mar 23 (Front Doors)	Paul/Annie Kippley	Ginny Nimmow
(Side Doors)	C/C Thompson	
Mar 30 (Front Doors)	Vi/Don Bohler	John/Ellen Mast

### **8:00am**

### **10:30am**

### **Ushers:**

March 2	Lon Kaderavek Rob Richard Dale Haroldson Cooper Rennicke Lillianna Weittenhiller	Brooke Braund Chesney Braund
March 5 (Wed.)	T/G Varley (1pm)	B/N Passehl (6:30pm)
	Lon Kaderavek	Steve/Patty Barritt
March 9	T/G Wyttenbach Dale Haroldson Kendra Frey	Tom Varley Gina Varley Paityn Hauge
March 12 (Wed.)		
March 16	Lon Kaderavek Dale Haroldson Mason Ramirez Cooper Rennicke	Alyssa Himebauch
March 19 (Wed.)		
March 23	Todd Wyttenbach Gina Wyttenbach Dale Haroldson Alyssa Himebauch	Tom Varley Gina Varley Brooke Braund Chesney Braund
March 26 (Wed.)		
March 30	Dale Haroldson Lon Kaderavek Butch Passehl Mason Ramirez Caden Argall	Kathy Lovell Paityn Hauge Alyssa Himebauch

### **Acolytes:**

### **8:00am**

### **10:30am**

March 2	Kate Endres	Elio Piccinelli
March 9	Willy Pickett	
March 16	Violet Richard	Elio Piccinelli
March 23		Madyn Ludowitz
March 30	Emma Gilchrist	

**Assisting Ministers: 8:00am**

March 2	Jordan Small
March 9	Jordan Small
March 16	Nancy Kaufman
March 23	Donna Knickmeyer
March 30	Jordan Small

**10:30am**

Jordan Small
Clay Hutchins
Jude Hanna
Donna Knickmeyer
Jordan Small

**Readers:**

March 2	Nancy Kaufman
March 9	Jon Neubacher
March 16	Gary Tomter
March 23	Donna Knickmeyer
March 30	Dale Haroldson

**8:00am****10:30am**

Dale Clason
Jama Graves
Denny Dederich
Donna Knickmeyer
Jude Hanna

**Cantors:**

March 2	Liz Ziehlisdorf
March 9	Katie LaVigne
March 16	Ruellene Seymour
March 23	Marv/Janelle Hupp
March 30	Doug Slater

**8:00am****10:30am**

Liz Ziehlisdorf
Katie LaVigne
Lisa Davis
Doris Lohr
Doug Slater

**Communion**

March 2	Holly/Steve Kindschi
March 9	Jane/Rich Calenzo
March 16	George Colby
March 23	Jayne Carlson
March 30	A/L Van Landuyt

**Set Up****Clean Up**

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

**Communion Assistants 8:00am**

March 2	Patty Barritt
March 5 (6:30pm)	
March 9	Kris Frey
March 16	Violet Richard
March 23	Jayne Carlson
March 30	Mary Weeks

**10:30am**

Kathy Lovell
Mary Weeks
Audrey Luetscher
YOUTH
Dale Clason
Kathy Lovell

**Coffee Servers**

March 2	Dottie Maly and Linda Michaels
March 9	
March 16	John and Linda Hines
March 23	Steve and Patty Barritt
March 30	



**Technology:**

March 2

March 5 (Wed.)

March 9

March 12 (Wed.)

March 16

March 19 (Wed.)

March 23

March 26 (Wed.)

March 30

**8:00am**

Ellen Jorgensen

Lee LaVigne

Bryce Argall

P. Johnson (1pm)

Lisa Davis

Ellen Jorgensen(1pm)

Ellen Jorgensen

Lee LaVigne

P. Johnson (1pm)

P. Johnson (1pm)

**10:30am**

Sandberg Family

Bryce Ballweg (6:30pm)

Ellen Jorgensen

Bryce Ballweg (6:30)

Sandberg Family

YOUTH (6:30pm)

(6:30pm)

**Sunday Stewards:**

March 2

March 9

March 16

March 23

March 30

**8:00am**

Tracy Pape

Todd Wyttenbach

Gwen Ringelstetter

Todd Wyttenbach

Gwen Ringelstetter

**10:30am**

John Ballweg

Gina Varley

James Newman

Gina Varley


**JUST BAKERY**  
A JustDane Initiative
**Drivers Needed for Just Bakery Pick-up**

St. John's PR and Social Concerns Board 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 Wheeler if you are interested: [wheelermelani6@gmail.com](mailto:wheelermelani6@gmail.com)

**Communion Set-up and Clean-up**

There is a new sign-up sheet on the kiosk to sign up for setting up communion and cleaning up communion after the worship services. Also look for the sheet to sign up for Maundy Thursday and Easter services.

Please check it out and fill in the time slots.

## **Fellowship Board Notes**

Church members cleaned and reorganized the kitchen. A huge thank you to everyone who helped with this project.

We honored Pastor Jason at a Farewell Coffee on January 26, which was his last Sunday serving us as Interim Pastor, as well as being his birthday. Our prayers and best wishes go with him.

New church members were honored at fellowship coffee time on February 16. Welcome to our church family. We are anxious to get to know you better. Our treats were provided by Hank Elsing in honor of Diane Elsing's birthday! Thank you, Elsing family.

The Fellowship Board will provide cookie bars for the church-wide Game Night, February 28. Please come and join us for a time of fun and fellowship.

Several church members have purchased tickets to attend a play presented by the "Looney Lutherans" at Reedsburg. They are looking forward to a fun-filled event.

Palm Sunday brunch will be served on April 13. The sign-up sheets will be posted by March 5.

We continued our discussion of the choice of cups to use for Fellowship time. We are considering many factors including the cost/benefit financially, environmentally, and socially, as well as the impact of clean up for our persons serving coffee each week. Be assured we are prayerfully considering all aspects of this choice.

We have purchased an additional coffee urn and warmer to facilitate serving larger numbers at funerals and other events as needed.



## **Coffee Cups vs. Carbon Footprint**

The Fellowship Board is inviting St. John's to help reduce our carbon footprint by bringing your own travel mugs to coffee on Sunday mornings. We will still provide Styrofoam or paper cups for coffee, juice and water, but wish to reduce our use of the Styrofoam that we are using.

## **Coffee Servers Needed**

Please continue to sign up to serve coffee. We can help you with any questions you may have. Contact Donna Nelson ([emaildonnanelson@gmail.com](mailto:emaildonnanelson@gmail.com)) or Cathy McAlexander ([ljcmc@aol.com](mailto:ljcmc@aol.com)). The sign-up sheet is on the kiosk.

*Thank  
You*

Thank you for all the wonderful birthday wishes sent to me for my 92<sup>nd</sup> birthday!

I feel so privileged to be a blessed member of St. John's for 70 years! I became a member on February 22, 1955, when I married Ken Yanke. I have seen many changes during that time – the people who have left us, the many different folks I have worked with on committees and all the volunteer opportunities I have had through St. John's. Thank you for your care and friendship.

Eunice Yanke

♥THANK you!

Dear Church Family,

Blessings to all. Thank you so very much for helping me celebrate my 100<sup>th</sup> birthday! I am glad that we can use the fellowship hall for my family to gather for large occasions. You are all just a blessing to me! St. John's is a wonderful church!

Love to all, Marilyn Larson

*Thank you* 

Thank you to the members of the Wisconsin Horn Quartet for sharing your musical talent with us during our March 2 worship services. The members of the group are Julia Bird, Katie LaVigne, Rebecca Schroeder and MaryJo Wilson. Thank you for enhancing our worship services!

# PARISH PLANNING COUNCIL MINUTES

DATE: February 4, 2025

**Present:** Nancy Passehl, Marv Hupp, John Brennan, Cathy Yanke, Elise Iverson Uphoff, Eunice Yanke, John Ballweg, Tracy Pape, Roger Seymour, Gina Varley, James Newman, Gwen Ringelstetter

**Absent:** Sally Williams, Cathy McAlexander, Melanie Wheeler, Sean Jager

## Call to Order/Opening Remarks:

Meeting was called to order at 6:00 p.m. by Nancy Passehl. Nancy P asked for approval of the agenda. Motion to approve was made by Eunice and seconded by Gina. Motion carried. A devotion/prayer was then given by Marv.

## Secretary Minutes:

The January 2025 minutes were submitted online by Cathy Yanke. A motion to approve minutes was made by James and seconded by Tracy. Motion carried.

## Treasurer report:

The committee reviewed and discussed the January 2025, Treasurer Report submitted by John Brennan.

January report numbers

Current Month Income	Current Month Expense
\$ 69,725	\$ 62,980

Treasurer report design will be adjusted beginning next month. A motion to approve the financial report was made by Eunice and seconded by James. Motion carried.

## COMMITTEE REPORTS

**Evangelism:** Gwen Ringelstetter reported:

- 15- 2024 Graduation kits delivered.
- New member folders to do next. February 16 is New Member Sunday.

**Fellowship:** Cathy McAlexander reported:

- Need to discuss cost/benefit of styrofoam/vs paper coffee cups/vs use of glass coffee cups. John B is pricing his source of cups, as well as Donna has been pricing cups at Gordon Food Service.

- If glass cups are used dishwashing is involved. As hard as it is to have people volunteer to serve coffee, I'm afraid this would deter many.
- I'm sure the paper cups will be a significant increase in cost and that must be factored in.
- I am strongly in favor of reducing styrofoam, but in view of the church finances, we must be responsible, both in cost and the environment.

**Lay Ministry:** Gina Varley reported:

- Annual report is complete.

**Parish Education:** James Newman reported:

- The Sunday School Christmas program had a good turnout in December
- Confirmation is volunteering at the food pantry, had a youth night last Wednesday, and will be playing bunco at Maplewood in February.
- We would like to make a special point to say how very proud we are of our confirmation students this year. They are interacting excellently with the elderly.
- Unfortunately, we have to end the Wednesday night meals after the end of February. This is due to a lack of consistent volunteer help. We plan to revisit this for the 2025/2026 school year.
- Elise is leading Adult Ed. She has given a report on her trip to the border and is currently leading a book study focused on immigration.
- James got in Contact with Lutherdale to secure VBS for the summer.

**Properties:** John Ballweg reported:

- Heating and lighting issues have been addressed over the past 6 or so months - nothing further planned at this time.
- We will replace the lock on the storage shed door and distribute new keys as needed.
- There is a punctured hole in the rubber membrane roof - will meet with somebody from Strander Roofing this month to evaluate it and get on their schedule when the weather warms.
- The walls in the pastor's office will be repainted after Jason leaves and before we have a new lead pastor in place.
- We'll meet with somebody from Willow Creek Flooring on Feb 5th to evaluate what appears to be excess glue that's wicked up through the joints between the carpet squares - and what can be done about it.

**PR & Social Concerns:** Melanie Wheeler reported:

- Discussion about possible time change/ date change in meetings. Maybe Tuesdays, but move to 6:15 or 6:30PM
- JUST BAKERY. Intern Elise suggested an article in the Visitor to ask for volunteer drivers for the pick-up. This was successful. Talked to the contact person to start back up again in March.
- Verified food pantry deliveries. Work with the confirmation program to pack in boxes and then others to volunteer there that Wednesday. Will probably need to put a sign up that in general, we cannot accept medications/vitamins or expired/opened items.
- Discussed the new St. John's Buttons from our budget. Also new name tags for the council to wear (I LOVE THEM)
- Intern Elise introduced the Gun Violence program and the mental health component. I will reach out to some contacts I know to help promote this.
- Received an envelope from The Good Neighbor Clinic for donations. Will discuss how to handle this at the Council meeting.
- THANK YOU to Kris and Richard Frey for delivering meals on that VERY COLD day last week!

**Stewardship Board:** (Cathy Yanke/Todd Wyttenbach) reported:

- What did we end up the year at for finances? (\$92K). \$42K received in 2025. Linda will work with Sally to complete a thank you.
- Additional year-end donations were made to: 1) Habitat \$1,000; 2) Seminary Assistance \$2,000; 3) SP High School Scholarship \$500; 4) Campus Ministry \$1,000
- Budget ideas—these suggestions started at the PPC meeting. Considering changes to categories for most boards for petty cash, for Properties Board—add repairs and maintenance for parsonage subgroup. Should quilting be under Women ELCA or Fellowship?
- Publish ideas for request of giving money for bulletins and Visitor. Provide ideas of what money is used for and income/expense each month. Consider a visual poster in the gathering area which highlights what we are focusing on that month.
- Envelopes for giving—suggest having people request them. Continue with formal offering or change to a basket in the back of church. Consider ideas on how to get unpicked-up envelopes to the church members.
- Update on Vanco, Paypal and Venmo giving? We are receiving about \$12K/month through Vanco's Simply Giving. Others are growing while most money is still received via envelopes.
- Audit—suggest 4-5 people? 2024 crew. Brian Weeks (no) Jon Caflisch, Crystal and Gina. Who agreed for 2025 audit? Cathy will continue to recruit.

- Board chair ideas—Todd agreed to a short-term chair role with assistance since it is hard to lead a group you have not been a part of yet.

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

- Circles will meet at their regular times during February
- January's All-Circles Meeting went well. 27 ladies were in attendance. Pastoral Intern Elise led the meeting with a talk about her faith journey. She is very happy to be serving and learning at St. John's.
- The Annual Memorial Candlelight Service was also held at the All-Circles Meeting. Candles were lit for those who passed away during 2024. Once again, a very moving ceremony.
- \$503 was collected in the Pennies for Poverty Jar and sent to 6:8 of Sauk Prairie.

**Youth Committee:** Tracy Pape reported:

- Important upcoming events, including Affirmation of Baptism and Graduation Sunday. Penny provided an update on these milestones and asked for volunteers to help create picture boards showcasing these graduates.
- Penny also shared that she's working with the Evangelism Board to send care packages for the SPHS 2024 graduates. The group brainstormed ideas for items to include in the care packages.
- An outline of the Youth Night | Confirmation Students (January 29) was also shared. This event, coordinated with Parish Education, was aimed at bringing together all confirmation students for a fun and meaningful evening.
- The committee reviewed Confirmation Retreat options; however, due to scheduling conflicts and budget constraints, this event will not be possible at this time, students are welcome to coordinate on their own if interested.
- Preparations for St. John's Game Night on February 28, 2025, are underway. Details and sign-up were shared with the congregation, and the event is open to all. The Game Night will run from 6:30 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. at St. John's, with a variety of games, laughter, and fellowship.
- Penny and the freshmen confirmation students have a community-focused event on February 12, 2025.
- Game Night at Maplewood Village: A social event designed to help students build relationships and have fun within their community.
- Looking ahead, Confirmation students will assist in the upcoming Ash Wednesday service on March 5, 2025.

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

- No report provided.

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

- This website is for the high school athletics calendar to show what St Johns youth may be involved in:

<https://badgerconference.org/public/genie/77/school/4/date/2025-02-03/view/month/?categories=426>

- This Friday is SP's "Rock The Gym" night at the high school. It is a basketball event that includes a silent auction, a 50/50 raffle, and it features the school's pep band.

## **Pastor/Intern Reports**

**Lead pastor report:** n/a

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

- Marv, Nancy, Dan Odden, and I are attending the synod's LEAD event in February and will report back to the council and congregation in March.
- A Joint Statement on Immigration from our Bishops in Wisconsin and Upper Michigan was released last week. I will make copies for PPC and for the congregation to read. It is important that we understand and can speak to the statement of the ELCA on the many different policy changes and find ways to serve those who will suffer as a result.
- Please read this and help to share correct information. In response to some questions regarding Pastor Jason's departure:
  - The policy of the ELCA (constitution) and its churches is that interim pastors are not to stay on as called pastors where they have served unless otherwise pre-determined by the Bishop and Synod Council. The agreement among them which was communicated to Pastor Jason and the Exec Board was that he was not eligible to serve here.
  - Pastor Jason did not stay until we hired a new pastor because his work as our interim pastor was completed - he led us through the transition team's work and put together the call committee. We are grateful for his time and his work among us, but these two points are why he could not stay.
- The Sauk Prairie School District is using our building on Wednesday, February 19 for a training session for an emergency situation. It is possible that emergency vehicles will arrive and park on our property. Don't be alarmed! The office will be open for business the whole day, but please know that there will be a lot of activity from about 12-5pm.



### **Intern Elise's Report:**

- In January Intern Elise traveled to El Paso, TX and Las Cruces, NM for an immersion trip with Border Servant Corps in the US Borderlands to learn about the immigration process. Since her return she has presented the trip experience and begun a book study on "They are Us" for Adult Forum. Adult Forums have been well attended.
- Intern Elise's mid-point evaluation, completed by Pastor Sally, the Internship Committee, and Intern Elise, has been submitted to Luther Seminary, the South-Central Synod, and recorded at St. John's.
- Intern Elise continues to develop her preaching, exploring new styles, and preparation methods. She continues to work with Council Committees and teach 9th grade confirmation. Intern Elise is balancing the needs of her family, grieving the death of her mother, and preparing for the second half of her internship at St. John's.

### **Old Business:**

- Name tags for PPC- on board by sink in foyer—please try to use
- Call team update—The synod has started recruiting
- Steward sign up for March and April

### **New Business:**

- Intern Elise attended a training session for churches. Consider forming a safety committee to discuss ways to increase safety if needed.
- Discussion of coffee cups for Sunday am – led by Cathy M—discussion held in Cathy's absence
- Cover for those with absences coming up /prayers—Tracy is willing to take on secretary duties for March and maybe April.
- Retirement--Linda Hines will retire on June 15 after 27.5 years

### **"Parking Lot" Items:**

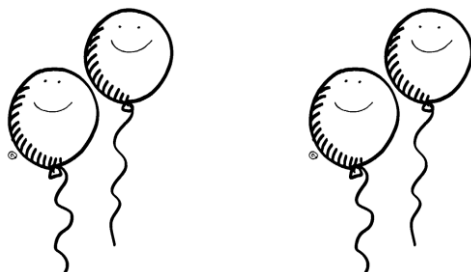
#### **· One service – Lay Ministry**

- 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, March 4, 2025, at 6:00 pm. Devotion will be given by John Ballweg. James made a motion to adjourn our meeting, and the motion was seconded by Tracy. Motion carried.

Meeting Adjourned at 7:12 pm. with The Lord's Prayer lead by Nancy P.

Respectfully submitted by Cathy Yanke



## **Happy March Birthday!**

*The day is in parenthesis*

### **Our Youngest:**

Harper Karczewski (15)	Weston LaBerge (19)
Zachariah Kaul (21)	Maggie Johnson (25)

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

Maxximus Ederer (8)	Grace Lohr (9)
Cataleya Lane (11)	Charlotte Ziehlsdorf (11)
Adeline Newman (13)	August Zasada (13)
Maverick Fournier (14)	Ethan Gilchrist (19)
August Maestri (19)	Charlie Herschleb (23)
Estelle Haffemann (24)	Audrey Plescia (24)
Beatrix Schreiber (27)	Calvin Ganser (29)

### **Our Youth:**

Sean Jager (10)	Preston Ott (12)
Lillian Ott (17)	Byrce Ballweg (18)
Joe Frosch (21)	Ethan Duren (26)
Kendra Frey (29)	

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

Ben Levers (3)	Bryce Smith (9)
Drew Marshall (11)	JJ Wolfe (13)
Ethan Kolnik (15)	Eliot Carlson (22)
Eamon Walsh (23)	