

### **From Pastor Dan**

I used to be a motivational speaker junky. I had a bookcase in my home filled with the ubiquitous hard-plastic folders enclosing 6 cassette tapes. I am sure that nowadays if you need a Tony Robbins fix, he is available on CD, DVD, or on-line. But back in the day, all motivational programs came in hard plastic folders with 6 cassettes inside.

So one would think that given the volume of motivational material at my disposal, I would have been an unstoppable hard charging, goal setting, deal closing machine. Well, not so much. Now I will freely admit that much of the advice was helpful, but for me it was not life-changing. I distinctly recall sharing my penchant for self-help programs with the Montana Synod candidacy committee as they interviewed me as a prospect for seminary. In response to my aforementioned revelation, one of the committee members responded, "Very often, self-help is no help at all."

I don't know that I totally agree with that conclusion. On the contrary, I think God gives us skills, abilities, talents that we are called to hone and use to the very best of our ability in service of our own welfare as well as in the service of others. Yet, we can only go so far in shaping our future alone. A successful life plan includes others and it also includes God.

In Philippians, Paul, as kind of the first self-help guru, reminds us of our responsibility to take charge of our behavior when he writes, "Finally beloved, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is pleasing, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence and if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things." However, he prefaces this admonition of positive thinking and acting with a reminder of what really matters most; opening ourselves up to the power of God working in your life, "Do not worry about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus." (Philippians 4:4-7)

All those old motivational tapes filling my book case were not a waste of time or money; I got some good information from them. But my life was not transformed. As a Christian I understand and as Christians we all understand that transformation comes through opening ourselves up to God. Yes it is good to do whatever is true, honorable, and just.

But honest life change comes when we come to terms with the reality that, "...the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus."

God bless you all,

Pastor Dan

**Council Members.** Here is a list of Council Members. Please contact them with any concerns or issues you may have. Council meets once a month and welcomes input from the congregation.

President: Randy Knapp – 715-581-5558; rknappeoj@gmail.com

Vice President: Jayne Rowe – 715-302-8295; rowejayne1@gmail.com

Treasurer: Phyllis Seubert – 715-573-9890; grammaphylldogg@gmail.com

Secretary: Tammi Smith – 715-581-3892; tammism@aspirus.org  
 Trustee: Laverne Grunenwald – 715-675-6880; [mgrunen@yahoo.com](mailto:mgrunen@yahoo.com)  
 Evangelism: Heidi Teske – 715-536-6134; Heidi\_scheiderer@yahoo.com  
 Fellowship: Marlene Stubbe – 715-675-2598  
 Education: Amy Marquardt – 715-571-9633; bamarquardt@hotmail.com  
 Worship: Jan Mueller – 715-675-9558; dmjm5455.wau@gmail.com

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**Mission Statement:** “We are called to serve God; serve each other; serve the community; serve the wider church.”

**Serve God** through worship, prayer, and the dedication of our lives to His kingdom. **Serve Each Other** by mutual care and support to encourage everyone to fulfill their God-given potential. **Serve the Community** by making known the good news about Jesus and the love of God by word and deed. **Serve the Wider Church** through prayer and practical support to help spread the good news about Jesus throughout the world.

***Worship Schedule***  
**9:00 a.m. Sunday Mornings**  
***Please join us as we worship our Lord!***

<b>Financial Report for December, 2014</b>			
<b>Year-to-Date</b>			
Income Received	Expenses Paid	Difference	Budget
125,493	129,870	(4,377)	134,088
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<b>Attendance Report</b>			
	<b>2014</b>	<b>2013</b>	
Average Weekly/December	222	209	
Average Weekly/Year-to-Date	131	131	

**Homebound Parishioners.** The following parishioners are no longer able to consistently attend worship services. I visit them to remind them that they are loved by God and loved by their community of faith, St. John. Sometimes it is helpful to hear those reminders from someone in addition to me.

Betty Tietz 4602 Barbican Ave., Room 106 Weston, WI 54476 715-393-0215	Ann Kieckhafer 1347 Crystal Avenue Room 236-1 Naperville, IL 60563	Orville Anklam Rennes Health Center 4605 Valdres Springs Ct. #506 Schofield, WI 54476
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**Lenten Meals.** Lent begins with Ash Wednesday on February 18. It's time to begin planning the Lenten meals. Please consider sharing your time and talents in any one of the following areas – cooking a meal, donating a salad, dessert or bars; helping with set-up and clean-up. The sign-up chart will be located in the narthex. All help is appreciated.

**Men's Brotherhood.** The next meeting for Men's Brotherhood will be Thursday, February 12, at noon. (A soup luncheon will be provided.) Our guest speaker will be Duane Mueller. All men of the congregation are invited!

**Annual Meeting.** Our Annual Meeting will be held on Sunday, February 8, 2015, following the 9:00 a.m. worship service. (All confirmed members are eligible to vote at this meeting.)  
The Cemetery Association meeting will be held following the Annual Meeting.

**News from South Africa.** Francinah Seleke called. She and Johannes are fine. They have had some rain but it is still very hot there. She called me on the cold Monday in January when our schools were closed due to the low windchill!

She said the hot weather kept people inside and some were missing church.

Francinah is the Rietpan Church Council President. She also teaches the Confirmation classes. They have a new Bishop who oversees the 14 parishes in Madikwe Circuit. The pastors are now attending a 2-day workshop on becoming more effective pastors.

There had been a S.A. Postal Strike but that ended. One day she received 3 letters from me, all delayed because of the strike. Did any of you receive a phone call on Christmas Day? Precious called several people from St. John that day. She left a message on our phone. Francinah sends greetings from Rietpan Lutheran Church and thanks St. John for your prayers. Ginny Kirsch.

**Reminder!** If you are in the hospital and would like Pastor Dan to visit, **PLEASE CALL** and let him know. Because of privacy issues, the hospital will not notify him or the church that you are there.

**Food Pantry.** The food items collected for the food pantry in February will be donated to The Neighbor's Place. Your donations are appreciated. If you are able to help out with delivering these items to the local organizations, please contact the church office.

**Council Meeting Minutes.** Copies of the minutes from the most recently held Council meeting are by the mailboxes. Please feel free to pick up a copy. If more are needed, please contact the church office.

**Announcements.** If you would like to have an announcement included in our weekly bulletin or newsletter, please submit the information in writing and put it in either Pastor Dan's mailbox or the administrative assistant's mailbox located in the narthex. If it is more convenient for you, you can submit your announcements via e-mail to [stjohnwausau@msn.com](mailto:stjohnwausau@msn.com). The deadline for submitting announcements for the Sunday bulletin is the Thursday before by 9:00 a.m. The deadline for the newsletter is indicated on the monthly calendar.