

### **From Pastor Dan**

We are now in the season of Lent. And when we think of Lent, what words immediately pop into our minds? “High tech”, right? Actually, those are likely the last words which come to mind. Nonetheless, I submit to you that a high-tech framework is useful in reevaluating who we are as a church, both universally and locally.

Therefore, I have chosen to center my midweek Lenten messages on the book, *Grace and Gigabytes, Being Church in a Tech-Shaped Culture*, by Ryan M. Panzer. The author works as a learning and leadership development professional in the technology industry and is also a graduate of Luther Seminary. Thus, he is qualified to help us think of the church from a unique and “high-tech” perspective. Surprisingly, this book is not about how we need to rush out and purchase the latest computers and associated gizmos, although there certainly is a place for all that. Rather this book is about the how the culture of the digital revolution can shape and serve the church.

The author presents his premise in four parts: questions, connection, collaboration, and creativity.

- Questions: Is the church, your church, a place which welcomes questions or is it one which primarily wants to provide answers? Tech-shaped cultures are places where questions are encouraged.
- Connection: Is the church, your church, hiding behind barriers, both internal and external? Tech- shaped cultures promote open interaction. Think of an office work space at Google, for example, with no individual cubicles.
- Collaboration: Is the church, your church, a place where 100% of the people do 100% of the work; or is most of the work done by a small group while the rest are content to be innocent bystanders? Tech-shaped cultures encourage and even demand the participation of all in the process of moving ahead.
- Creativity: Is the church, your church, a place where people are willing and able to share their stories of Jesus’s presence in their lives? Do folks even have stories to tell? A tech-shaped culture provides and promotes a creative environment in which different stories can be shared in different ways.

Another Lent is upon us; a time to reflect, reevaluate, and renew. You can do that by giving something up for Lent. However, this long-standing tradition typically engenders as much positive change as New Year’s resolutions. Which is to say, not much. Or this year, we can take a different tack. Using the framework of “questions, connection,

collaboration, and creativity” we can explore what it might mean for us to be church in a new way. Are you with me???

Too bad if you are not ‘cause we are doing it anyway.

Peace,

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: Sue Cooley – 715-675-8566; cooley1512@outlook.com

Vice President: Jan Mueller – 715-675-9558; dmjm5455.wau@gmail.com

Treasurer: Mike Kluetz – 715-218-1357; kluetz787@gmail.com

Secretary: Tammi Smith – 715-581-3892; tammism79@gmail.com;  
tammism@aspirus.org

Trustees: Lee Sillars – 715-218-5041; rdfx1234@gmail.com

Scott Oestreich – 715-675-4360; scottsmachinellc@gmail.com

Evangelism: Lane Bahr – 715-297-0017; lucylane35@hotmail.com

Fellowship:

Education: Connie Nowak – 715-675-1577; 715-432-3837; bcdenowak@gmail.com

Worship: Sue Harris – 715-551-6282; smae53@gmail.com

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### **ANNUAL MEETING**

The annual meeting for St. John is scheduled to take place after worship on Sunday, March 14. On that Sunday, we will have just one worship service at 9:00.

Copies of the congregational annual report are available in the narthex. At the meeting, please be prepared to vote on the budget, vote to fill vacant council positions, and vote to select committees for the pastoral call process.

**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.

## “Council Corner”

### **Prayer for a Pandemic**

May we who are merely inconvenienced remember those whose lives are at stake. May we who have no risk factors remember those most vulnerable. May we who have the luxury of working from home remember those who must choose between preserving their health or making their rent. May we who have the flexibility to care for our children when their schools close remember those who have no options. May we who have to cancel our trips remember those that have no place to go. May we who are losing our margin money in the tumult of the economic market remember those who have no margin at all. May we who settle in for a quarantine at home remember those who have no home. During this time when we cannot physically wrap our arms around each other, let us yet find ways to be the loving embrace of God to your neighbors. Amen.

**Eye on Local Art – Pat Plunkett.** While events are slowly coming alive again, yet, it’s a pretty quiet world. That goes for the art world also. However, if you haven’t visited the Center For Visual Arts yet to see the exhibits, there is still time. All three floors of the CVA contain engaging art to view. Also, after a short road trip to Stevens Point, you can view the latest exhibits at the “Q Gallery” on main street and also at the Riverfront Gallery right on the Wisconsin River in Point. It is said that the exhibits at these venues are great viewing. So, if winter and the pandemic have you down, maybe a gallery can pick you up. Art galleries are well managed regarding the pandemic and offer a relatively safe outing for everyone. So, be safe, be well, God Bless.

**Worship Committee.** Are you interested in being on a committee that would be involved in planning worship services? This would include outdoor, special services etc. Please bring new ideas and suggestions as we move forward in 2021. Please contact Sue Harris, worship chair, at 715-551-6282 or email [smae53@gmail.com](mailto:smae53@gmail.com).

Thank you

**Sunshine Volunteer.** St. John needs a person to take over sending greetings to our parishioners. This includes sending out birthday greetings, get well, sympathy and thinking of you cards. We have a good supply of cards available and church pays for postage. You can send these cards out from your home. Everyone still loves to get “snail mail”. Please contact Sue Harris @ 715-551-6282 or email her @ [smae53@gmail.com](mailto:smae53@gmail.com). I would like to take this opportunity to thank Jody Gehrke for volunteering her service as our Sunshine volunteer. Thank you so much from St. John!

**Council.** The church council nominating committee is looking for folks interested in serving on the church council. Positions that are up for election at our 2021 annual meeting are vice president, secretary, fellowship, parish education and trustee. We ask you to prayerfully consider serving your congregation on the church council. You are welcome to contact Jan Mueller at 715-675-9558 with questions on any of the council positions or if you would like to serve.

**ANNUAL MEETING.** I know some of you are wondering in this mixed up year, when we will have the annual meeting. Our constitution is quite specific about the when and how this is to happen. Normally we have to have it between the third Sunday in January and second Sunday in February. In the constitution C10.04 states, thirty voting members constitutes a quorum and C10.05 states Voting by proxy or by absentee ballot shall not be permitted. Also the bylaws state in part V “The President, Vice-President, Treasurer or Secretary shall have the power to postpone the annual meeting due to acts of God for two weeks or More.” Therefore the council as a whole has agreed to postpone our meeting to what we hope is the earliest possible time to meet safely in person. We are tentatively planning this meeting for **March 14, 2021**. The reports will be made available 2 weeks ahead of this- available at church. We have asked the outgoing council members to remain and they have agreed. We will also try to find people who are willing to take their positions. This is not ideal and we all wish we could do this sooner and safer, but we feel we cannot at this time. Any questions regarding this please call Sue Cooley.

**Pastoral Visits.** If circumstances conspire to put you in the hospital or if you are directed to a temporary nursing home stay, please let Pastor Dan know by calling the church (715-675-6950), or Pastor Dan’s cell phone (715-212-7359), or sending

Pastor Dan an email at [dtsire@msn.com](mailto:dtsire@msn.com). However, because of current COVID-19 restrictions, pastoral visitations are limited. Yet, Pastor Dan can still maintain contact via phone or email.

### **VISION FOR ST JOHN**

St. John Evangelical Lutheran Church, Village of Maine, Wausau, WI is a country church with an average Sunday worship attendance of about 100 folks. We are affiliated with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. Yet, more than numbers or affiliations, we are a congregation which welcomes all who seek meaning and hope in their lives through all the possibilities of a connection to the love of God in Jesus Christ. At our core, we value and nurture relationships.

#### **We Value and Nurture Relationships With our God**

- “He (Jesus) said to him, ‘You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind.’” (Matthew 22:37 NRSV)

#### **We Value and Nurture Relationships with Each Other**

- “I came that they may have life, and have it abundantly.” (John 10:10 NRSV)

#### **We Value and Nurture Relationships with our Community**

- “I give you a new commandment, that you love one another. Just as I have loved you, you also should love one another.” (John 13:34 NRSV)

#### **We Value and Nurture Relationships with Ourselves**

- “For this reason...we have not ceased praying for you and asking that you may be filled with the knowledge of God’s will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding...” (Colossians 1:9 NRSV)

**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.

Harriet Wanner  
3107 Westhill Drive  
Wausau, WI 54401

Carol Fitzke  
237227 N. 120<sup>th</sup> Ave.  
Wausau, WI 54401

Harley Goetsch  
Rennes Health/Rehab Ctr.  
4810 Barbican Avenue  
Weston, WI 54476

**Financial Report for December, 2020**

	<b>December</b>	<b>Year-to-Date</b>
<b>Income Received</b>	<b>\$7,411</b>	<b>\$7,411</b>
<b>Expenses Paid</b>	<b>\$12,637</b>	<b>\$12,637</b>
<b>Difference</b>	<b>(\$5,226)</b>	<b>(\$5,226)</b>

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**Attendance Report**

	2021	2020
Average Weekly/January	143	111
Average Weekly/Year-to-Date	143	111

**March Birthdays**

3-2 Otis Fitzke  
3-2 Matthew Rowe  
3-2 Zachary Suliin  
3-3 Jennifer Bronsteatter  
3-3 Tyler Eno  
3-3 Logan Heil  
3-4 Lynn Buchberger  
3-4 Ryan Seubert  
3-5 Carol Prochnow  
3-6 Ashley Bunge  
3-7 Nick Oelke  
3-8 Mariah Marquardt  
3-10 Steven Erdmann  
3-10 Isaac Oelke  
3-10 Henry Welch  
3-11 Caleigh Bahr  
3-12 Heather Gallenberg  
3-12 Kate Saari  
3-13 Don Voelker  
3-15 Jan Mueller  
3-17 Austin Walter  
3-18 Dan Hein  
3-18 Will Rode  
3-19 Stacey Linzmeyer  
3-20 Arden Mikich  
3-21 Trey Buchberger  
3-21 Clifford Knapp  
3-21 Sara Stubbe  
3-22 Barbara Jo Kopp  
3-23 Marlene Bahr  
3-23 Brenda Knudsen  
3-23 Nicole Woodmansee  
3-24 Benjamin Grueneberg  
3-25 Mike Stubbe  
3-26 Kay Knapp  
3-27 Michael LaVake

**March Anniversaries**

3-26 Skip & Betty Hoenisch

**March Birthdays (Continued)**

3-29 Betty Hoenisch  
3-30 Jason Grueneberg  
3-31 James Haroldson  
3-31 Bruce Radant  
3-31 Kylie Stubbe