

## From Pastor Dan

Even though Christmas has passed, I still have Christmas tunes rolling around in my head. They range from Bing Crosby's "I'll Be Home for Christmas" and Mariah Carey's "All I Want for Christmas" to "O Come, All Ye Faithful." Just today, I was humming "O come let us adore him" from aforementioned hymn. At the same time, I was reading an article by Bishop Shelby Spong, a theologian whose perspective I respect. I don't always agree with him, but I respect him. Anyway, as I was humming about adoring Jesus, I was coincidentally reading Bishop Spong respond to a reader's question about just what the heck adoring Jesus is all about. I have included Bishop Spong's reply as the bulk of my article this month; not because I'm lazy (well, maybe I'm a little bit lazy), but primarily because his thoughtful consideration of this question gives us some great direction on our faith journey as we head into a new year. I turn it over to Bishop Spong.

"How do we adore him? In my mind the answer to that query is clear. I adore him not by becoming religious or by becoming a missionary who seeks to convert the world to my understanding of Jesus. I do it rather by dedicating my energies to the task of building a world where everyone in this world might have an opportunity to live more fully, love more wastefully and have the courage to be all that they were created to be. This is the only way I know how to acknowledge the Source of Life, the Source of Love and the Ground of Being that I believe that I have experienced in this Jesus. How can one adore the Source of Life except by living? How can one adore the Source of Love except by loving? How can one adore the Ground of all Being except by having the courage to be all that one can be. It is not possible to seek these gifts for oneself and then deny them to every other life. So our task as disciples of Jesus is to live fully, to love wastefully and to be all that we can be while we seek to enable every other person, in the infinite variety of our humanity, to live fully, to love wastefully and to be all that each person can be. That also means that we can brook no prejudice that would hurt or reject another based on any external characteristic, be it race, ethnicity, gender or sexual orientation. It all seems so simple to me. God was in Christ. That is the essence of what I believe about this Jesus."

Happy New Year and God's peace be with you,

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: Sue Cooley – 715-675-8566; cooley1512@outlook.com  
Treasurer: Arden Mikich – 715-298-3220; ardenmikich@frontier.com  
Secretary: Sue Rakow – 715-675-7213; suszir@aol.com  
Trustees: Laverne Grunenwald – 715-675-6880; mgrunen@yahoo.com  
Don Voelker – 715-675-7062; midmainefarms@hotmail.com  
Evangelism: Duane Askew – 75-675-4111; daskew@airrun.net  
Fellowship: Mike Kluetz – 715-218-1357; mdk@airrun.net  
Education: Connie Nowak – 715-675-1577; bcdenowak@gmail.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.

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

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**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.

Ann Kieckhafer	Orville Anklam	Ellen Kruit
1347 Crystal Avenue	Rennes Health Center	3312 Terrace Court #19
Room 236-1	4605 Valdres Springs Ct.	Wausau, WI 54401
Naperville, IL 60563	#511	
	Schofield, WI 54476	

**St. John's Family Tubing.** We will be tubing with other churches, ***Sunday, January 29<sup>th</sup>*** from 6:00 p.m. – 9:00 p.m. at Sylvan Hills. You must be 42" tall to ride a tube with a maximum of one person per tube. No child may ride in the lap of an adult. Cost is \$9.00 for adults (14 years and older) and \$6.00 for youth (up to 13 years old). You must be 42" tall. Come and enjoy the evening with the hill all to ourselves. If you have any questions you can contact Schmidt at 715 573-7691.

**6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup> & 8<sup>th</sup> grade Jr. High Youth Gathering.** The Synod Jr. High Youth gathering is ***Saturday, February 18<sup>th</sup> – Sunday, February 19<sup>th</sup>***. More details will be coming.

**Community Shabbat Service.** Mt. Sinai Congregation is inviting groups and individuals to their Community Shabbat service ***Friday, January 20<sup>th</sup>*** - 7:30 p.m. – 9:30 p.m. You are welcome to attend and experience a Jewish Shabbat service. The Jewish temple is located at 910 W. Randolph Street here in Wausau. We will meet there.

**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 January will be donated to The Women's Community Center. 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.

### **Washed Clean**

Your morning shower can do more than cleanse your body. Retired pastor Norman Neaves takes time to remember his baptism daily.

“As the water is pouring down on me, I reach up and get water all over my hand. Then I close my eyes and make the sign of the cross on my forehead. ‘I have been baptized in Christ,’ I say to myself quietly. “This day belongs to him. I am called to be Jesus’ representative whatever I am doing and wherever I might go. Give me the grace, Lord, to represent you well and with integrity.”

### **Lessons from a Snowman**

- It's okay to wear white well after Labor Day.
- Simply hanging out in your front yard can be fun.
- Accessories don't have to be fancy or expensive.
- We're all made mostly of water.
- You know you've "arrived" when a song is written about you.
- So what if you're a little bottom-heavy?
- Don't get too much sun.
- Sweating too much can be disastrous!

