

## From the Pastor

As time continues its seemingly faster and faster pace through our lives (I guess that actually makes sense in that the universe continues to expand at an increasingly faster rate); anyway, as time seems to zoom by, we find ourselves on the doorstep of Lent which begins with Ash Wednesday on February 14. This year, St. John will once again participate with four other ELCA congregations in a mid-week round robin Lenten worship program.

The theme of this year's services is "A Lenten Journey to the Easter Vigil." Huh? Okay, the Easter Vigil, which very few churches celebrate (including us), is on Saturday evening before Easter Sunday. The ELCA explains it as a celebration "...with Christ from darkness to light, from bondage to freedom, from death to life." The service involves a bonfire and worship which moves from one place to another. It is kind of cool, but logistically challenging. However, we are going to provide a taste of the service with readings from the Easter Vigil at our mid-week services.

I will be with you at the Ash Wednesday service. The following Wednesday, Pastor Ann Klavano, the interim pastor at Bethlehem Lutheran in Kronenwetter, will preach on "Creation." Next, will be Pastor Phil Bogen of Trinity Stettin preaching on "Deliverance at the Red Sea." Wednesday, March 7, Pastor Jen Dahle of St. Stephen will preach on "Salvation freely offered to all." The following week, Pastor Niveen Sarras of Immanuel will preach on "Deliverance from the fiery furnace." Finally, I will conclude the series on March 21 with a sermon on the "Flood."

This year's series will give you an opportunity to get a taste of the Easter Vigil service from the perspective of different local pastors. The pastors tell me they enjoy worshipping with different congregations, as do I. And many of you have told me you enjoy worshipping with different pastors; a win-win. So, don't let the inevitable march of time sneak up on you this year. Mark your calendars for the mid-week Lenten worship series. It will be worth your time.

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; rknapp@eojohnson.com  
Vice President: Sue Cooley – 715-675-8566; cooley1512@outlook.com  
Treasurer: Curt Cooley – 715-675-8566; usfcool@gmail.com  
Secretary: Tammi Smith – 715-581-3892; tammism79@gmail.com; tammism@aspirus.org  
Trustees: Lee Sillars – 715-218-5041; lsillars@aol.com  
Don Voelker – 715-675-7062; midmainefarms@hotmail.com  
Evangelism: Duane Askew – 715-675-4111; daskew@airrun.net  
Fellowship: John Marquardt – 715-675-3300; johnnym54401@gmail.com  
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	Ellen Kruit	Harriet Wanner
1347 Crystal Avenue	1821 N. 4 <sup>th</sup> Avenue	1240 Merrill Ave.
Room 236-1	Room 215	Apt. 2
Naperville, IL 60563	Wausau, WI 54401	Wausau, WI 54401

**Offering Envelopes.** The offering envelopes for 2018 are now in everyone's mailbox in the narthex. Please stop by and pick them up.

**Annual Meeting.** Our Annual Meeting will be held on Sunday, February 11, 2018 following the 9:00 a.m. Worship service. All articles to be included in the Annual Report are due to the church office **no later than Monday, January 8, 2018.** (The Cemetery Association Meeting will follow the Annual Meeting.)

**Lent.** Lent is just around the corner and with it comes the Lenten suppers. There will be 6 suppers in all, starting with the first one on Ash Wednesday, February 14<sup>th</sup> (which also happens to be Valentine's Day). The sign-up sheet is in the Narthex and there are several open items. If you have not signed up, please consider putting your name to bring an item or assist. Proceeds from the Lenten suppers have been designated for the ELCA National Youth Gathering in Houston, TX July 2018.

The Lenten suppers will be followed up by the Easter Breakfast on Sunday, April 1. A sign-up sheet will be in the Narthex. Proceeds are designated for the Parking Lot Fund; the thermometer in the Narthex registers how much has been paid off at this point. The congregation has been very generous with donations, but we still have a significant outstanding balance. Every little bit helps, so please consider donating to help St. John reach our goal.

**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 will be donated to Maine School. Your donations are appreciated. If you are able to help out with delivering these items to the school, 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.

### Meeting Needs

“My neighbor’s material needs are my spiritual needs,” said 19<sup>th</sup> century theologian Israel Salanter. In other words, when someone else suffers hunger and poverty, when people endure a natural disaster and lack shelter, when another human being is sick or injured – in all such cases, God calls us to action. And God knows that whatever we do to meet those material needs will meet our spiritual needs at the same time.

It might be our spiritual need to expand our horizons into neighborhoods, cultures or situations where we’re uncomfortable. We might need to grow in love for people different from us. By serving others, we might find our own sagging spirits nurtured with a sense of well-being or even joy. And as we reach out to help, surely we’ll notice others doing the same thing, and our spiritual need for renewed faith will be met.

-----Heidi Mann

**February Birthdays**

2-2 Nathan Fitzke  
2-4 Dawson Nowak  
2-5 Kyle Koenig  
2-6 Lorie Anderson  
2-6 Louie Reissman  
2-8 Brian Anderson  
2-8 Matt Harris  
2-9 Dylan Detert  
2-9 Terry Kickbusch  
2-10 David Ugoretz  
2-11 Randy Graveen  
2-12 Charles Zahn  
2-13 Luke Harris  
2-14 Paul Linzmeyer  
2-15 Robert Hoff  
2-17 Ron Schuster  
2-18 Donna Treu  
2-24 Bob Rode  
2-25 Paul Anderson  
2-27 Tara Pasholk  
2-27 Brooke Schindler  
2-28 Susan Knight  
2-28 Ellen Kruit

**February Anniversaries**

2-2 James & Jeanne Klinger  
2-14 Keith & Karen Kolbe  
2-22 Dale & Barb Nass