

St. John Ev. Lutheran Church, ELCA
5304 North 44th Avenue
Wausau, WI 54401

Telephone: (715-675-6950)

THE MESSENGER

March 2024

From Pastor Maggie

God's Beloved,

Blessings for the month of March, a month of many happenings, especially this year with how the Liturgical Calendar falls. A few things we will observe together are Daylight Savings, The Spring Equinox, Holy Week, and Easter.

With the longer daylight hours, it feels as though the earth is waking from its long winter slumber. A time for us in Wisconsin to wonder, when will the last snowfall be? When will we see those hearty and beautiful spring flowers? The start of spring is a time of anticipation, excitement, and hope.

Which can be wonderful, while at the same time, this can produce anxiety. Wondering if things will turn out how you want them to, while knowing there is always a chance they won't. And in those times, we are invited to turn to God, both in Scripture and in prayer. As we read in Philippians 4:6-7

"Do not be anxious 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 your minds in Christ Jesus."

I often wonder what it looks like to turn to God in prayer with thanksgiving. It is one thing to say those words, but it is another thing to embody those words. And springtime is a wonderful display of what this might look like.

Take if you will, the daffodils. Daffodils break through cold hard ground, and in some places, they even break through snow. Their bright yellow buds open into beautiful flowers, reminiscent to the color of the sun.

It's as if the earth's own sunrays have been harnessed beneath the ground throughout the long cold winter, entombed in its bulb. It's as if the earth's internal sunshine was waiting in darkness, underground, for the right moment to break through with thanksgiving. Daffodils are a reminder of how God works in mysterious ways, in places beneath the surface, in places we cannot see.

And God continues to work in mysterious ways. In our places of darkness, in ways that surpass our understanding, filling us with peace. Peace that lives in Christ even as we journey to the somberness of Good Friday. Because that day was necessary for what is yet to come.

That day allowed Jesus to break through the most impenetrable barrier of all. Creating new rays, for a new sunrise, in a new creation. I look forward to our journey together.

*With Love & Gratitude,
Pastor Maggie Westaby*

“Council Corner”
Shelley Kufahl, Secretary

When I joined St John, I was told that even though St John may not have a lot of money in its checking account, or struggles to pay the bills, or incurs a very large debt (ex: new furnace, new roof), the money will be there as St John’s congregation supports their church. Obviously, this is a true statement. Today, St John does not have any debt or outstanding loans. This is wonderful as many churches have had to combine with other churches or even close due to lack of funds.

Today, our church does not have any loans and is able to pay its expenses. Times may change. During the annual meeting, the congregation voted to accept the current expense budget which totaled \$176,540.05. Last year, the income totaled \$162,598.33 which is less than the expenses of \$173,356.77 and resulted in a net loss of \$10,758.44. If the same amount of income is received, St John will be operating at a loss in 2024 of approximately \$14,000.

To me, that’s a huge amount of money our church needs.

The second-year confirmation students recently had the opportunity to learn how much it costs to run our church. How much does it cost to have a phone and an internet connection for emails and to stream our worship services? The answer \$2,606.88 and doesn’t include TV. Office supplies in 2023 added up to \$1,172.92. If not for a kind member who donated boxes and boxes of paper, the amount would be significantly larger. Every year, there is an increase in electricity and fuel heating costs.

Could some costs be cut or reduced? Yes, janitorial supplies are now picked up as needed instead of being ordered in bulk. The council is looking at other means of ordering worship supplies to help keep costs down. On days, when there isn’t a worship service, the furnace is set at a lower temperature.

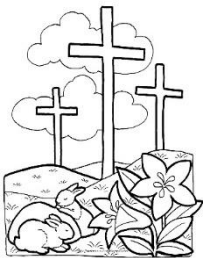
Proverbs 13:11 “Whoever gathers money little by little makes it grow.”

Even giving small amounts can add up to big amounts. Think of it this way, if 100 people, could give just another \$8.00 per month, an additional \$9,600 would help to make up the difference ($\$8 * 12 * 100 = \$9,600$). Just one less latte per month, or one less combo meal at McDonalds. Think of it as an investment. The type of investment that results in intangible dividends in supporting our church.

Now, this does not mean I’m telling you to skip meals or send your children to school without a coat or shoes. Your family and wellbeing come first. I am asking everyone to see if they can give just a little more. Even if small, your donation, when added to other donations adds up to big amounts.

Acts 20:35 “In everything I did, I showed you that by this kind of hard work we must help the weak, remembering the words the Lord Jesus himself said:
‘It is more blessed to give than to receive.’”

Thank you for all that you do!
Shelley Kufahl, Secretary



Annual Easter Egg Hunt: St. John’s Annual Easter Egg Hunt will be on **Sunday, March 24th** following worship! All children are welcome! We will gather the kids after Fellowship to read the Easter story, make a craft, and end with a candy-filled Easter Egg Hunt!

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: Jennifer Schwede – 715-432-6079; jenniferschwede@aol.com

Vice President: Karen Ohrmundt – 715-370-0645; tkohrmundt@frontier.com

Treasurer: Perry Kufahl – 715-675-1383; 715-409-0524; pnskufahl@outlook.com

Secretary: Shelley Kufahl – 715-675-1383; 715-409-0524; pnskufahl@outlook.com

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

Tim Ohrmundt – 715-297-0152; anntimohrmundt@gmail.com

Evangelism: Connie Nowak – 715-675-1577; bcdenowak@gmail.com

Fellowship: Barb Paulsen – 715-845-9884; ericbarbp@aol.com

Education: Heidi Teske – 715-536-6134; 715-551-4485; Heidi.teske2007@gmail.com

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

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.

Live Streaming and Photography Notice. When you enter a St. John Church service or event, you will be entering an area where photography, video and audio recording or live streaming may occur. If you prefer not to be recognized on camera, the back row inside the church is not within viewing distance of a camera and communion will typically be only on a wide shot where it may be difficult to recognize congregants. Parents, please note our children’s sermons are being recorded and live streamed. If you do not want your child to be recognized on camera, please refrain from having them participate.

St. John Quilting Wishlist. Left over fabric or never used fabric, light weight denim, cotton or flannel sheets, pillow cases, cotton curtains (unlined), cotton shower curtains. If you are interested, come join us! You can also sew a quilt top from home. Size needed is 60 x 80. They do not need to be fancy. Thank you!

Men’s Breakfast. Pastor Will from Trinity in Stettin and St. Peter’s in Marathon has invited all men from St. John to meet the second Saturday of the month at 9 a.m. At LC Restaurant, in Marathon (Formerly the Village Inn).

Homebound Parishioners. The following parishioners are no longer able to consistently attend worship services. Pastor Maggie visits 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.

Carol Fitzke 237227 N. 120 th Ave. Wausau, WI 54401	Joanne Zahn 4905 Falcon Dr. Wausau, WI 54401	Don & Carol Prochnow 3402 Terrace Court-Room 141 Wausau, WI 54401
Harley Goetsch Rennes Health/Rehab Ctr. 4810 Barbican Avenue Weston, WI 54476	Jim & Barbara Leffin 214 N. 12 th Avenue Wausau, WI 54401	

Attendance Report

	2024	2023
Average Weekly/January	71	74
Average Weekly/Year-To-Date	71	74

March Birthdays

3-2 Otis Fitzke
3-2 Riley LaVake
3-2 Zachary Suliin
3-2 Bob Utech
3-3 Jennifer Bronsteatter
3-3 Tyler Eno
3-3 Logan Heil
3-4 Lynn Buchberger
3-4 Ryan Seubert
3-5 Ron Mootz, Jr.
3-5 Emilee Mootz
3-5 Carol Prochnow
3-7 Leiloni Norman
3-7 Nick Oelke
3-8 Mariah Marquardt
3-9 Mason Mielke
3-10 Steven Erdmann
3-10 Isaac Oelke
3-11 Caleigh Bahr
3-12 Heather Gallenberg
3-12 Justin Grueneberg
3-12 Kate Saari
3-13 Don Voelker
3-14 Mary Kay Van Der Geest
3-15 Janis Mueller
3-16 Linda Grudznske
3-17 Austin Walter
3-18 Dan Hein
3-18 Will Rode
3-19 River Landrath Jepson

March Anniversaries

3-26 Skip & Betty Hoenisch

March Birthdays (Cont'd)

3-19 Stacey Linzmeyer
3-21 Trey Buchberger
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 Ciera Grueneberg
3-25 Mike Stubbe
3-27 Sawyer Knight
3-27 Michael La Vake
3-29 Betty Hoenisch
3-30 Jason Grueneberg
3-31 James Haroldson
3-31 Bruce Radant
3-31 Kylie Stubbe

Upcoming Events:

Sunday, March 3 – 12:00 p.m. – 2:00 p.m. Bowling for all 7th through 12th graders at Days. Come bowl and enjoy pizza, soda, and fun!

Tuesday, March 5 – 6:30 p.m. Council

Wednesday, March 6 – 5:00 p.m. Lent Supper, 6:30 p.m. Lent Service

Saturday, March 9 – 9:00 a.m. Men's Breakfast – LC Restaurant, Marathon

Sunday, March 10 – 11:00 a.m. Adult Study Mark Session 3; Mark Chapter 11 through end of Gospel

Wednesday, March 13 – 5:00 p.m. Lent Supper, 6:30 p.m. Lent Service

Wednesday, March 20 – 5:00 p.m. Lent Supper, 6:30 p.m. Lent Service

Sunday, March 24 – Palm Sunday & Annual Easter Egg Hunt:

All children are welcome! We will gather the kids after Fellowship to read the Easter story, make a craft, and end with a candy-filled Easter Egg Hunt!

Thursday, March 28 – 6:30 p.m. – Maundy Thursday Service (First Communion)

Friday, March 29 – 6:30 p.m. – Good Friday Service

Easter Sunday, March 31 – 8:00 a.m. Worship; 9:00 a.m. Breakfast; 10:30 a.m. Worship

Worship Schedule

Sunday Mornings
9:00 a.m.

Sunday School
10:15 a.m.-11:15 a.m.

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

Pastor Maggie Westaby
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