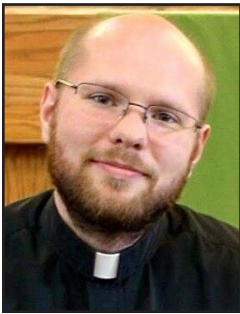


THE MESSENGER

A MONTHLY PUBLICATION OF ST. JOHN'S LUTHERAN CHURCH, STERLING, IL
703 Third Avenue, Sterling, IL 61081 • 815.625.2634 • office@stjohnsonthird.org • StJohnsSterling.org • 

PASTOR'S POINTS

The value of warm thoughts



When I was a college student it seemed like February was always the coldest month of the year. Routinely there seemed to

be a blizzard or polar vortex that would dance around Lake Michigan leaving behind unimaginable snow drifts and icy walkways.

Trips to and from the dormitories for classes or even just to the dining hall felt like arctic expeditions, with students either layering on their coats and scarfs or just embracing the cold and walking straight from their room in only a T-shirt, pair of shorts, and flip-flops. It was intriguing to me how those who arrived at their destination the most bundled up were always shivering and expressing how cold it was, all while those who appeared to be dressed for an afternoon at the beach were up and running, eager to start the next activity.

One year in particular it seemed extra bitterly cold out. The start of

the semester had even been pushed back because a number of students and faculty were physically unable to reach the campus. During the few extra days before the semester started, a group of students was circulating invitations to participate in a polar plunge. For those unfamiliar with a polar plunge, it more or less is picking an extremely cold day to jump into freezing water. Oftentimes this is attached to a fundraiser for someone in need. This time there was a classmate who, if I recall correctly, had a sibling with cancer. I agreed to participate in the event.

When I got there I was already very cold, and the thought of jumping into freezing Lake Michigan made me wonder if this was a safe choice. Yet I had made the commitment and I wanted to make sure I saw it through. A group of friends and I ran down together, right into the ice-tipped waves. The sensation was like hundreds of thousands of tiny little swords hitting one's skin, both invigorating and unbelievably painful all at the same time.

On the walk back to the dorms I thought I was going to die. One of those in my group who was a trained swimmer kept saying, "Just think warm thoughts." The more we talked, the more I was less focused on my freezing limbs and probably a little less focused on my body being in shock.

It seems a little silly to think that "thinking warm thoughts" could help. And yet, isn't it so very true that our mindset has a lot to do with how we not just enter into a situation but also how we move through each upcoming situation?

What are the thoughts we are holding close this day? Are they the kind that motivate us? Do they encourage us to move forward and lean into what might come next?

I pray that we all may be surrounded with warm thoughts. And by God's grace may we continue to pray for the well-being of all in our congregation, community and world.

In peace,

Rev. Jacob M. Gaudin

FEBRUARY 2022

Youth Gathering News	2
Branches News Briefs	2
Sauk Valley UNITE.....	3
Council Highlights.....	3

Nurse Notes.....	4
Birthdays & Anniversaries.....	4
Saying Thanks.....	5
Giving Made Easy.....	5

About St. John's.....	6
Parish Register.....	6
February Calendar.....	7
Go Green With the eMessenger	Back

Youth & Family Ministries news

SUNDAY SCHOOL & YOUTH GROUPS

We will continue to meet in person for Faith Formation groups at St John's. For the safety of our families, all students and teachers are required to wear masks for all indoor activities and events.

Preschool through second grade and third through sixth grade Sunday school classes will meet from 10:45am (or after 9:30am worship) until 11:30am. The third Sunday of each month, these students will meet in the sanctuary for music time with Julie McCord.

We are also e-mailing "At-Home Faith Formation" lessons that coincide with the weekly worship messages for families who are less comfortable with meeting in person.

JUNIOR AND SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL YOUTH

- 10:45-11:30am Sundays, February 6th and 20th with Gerad in the Youth Room
- February 27th: Youth Gathering Getting Ready meeting and lunch from 11:15am to 12:45pm at Immanuel

TRI-CHURCH CONFIRMATION

Confirmation for seventh- and eighth-grade students meets on Zoom from 7 to 8:15pm Wednesdays. Once the COVID-19 positivity rate goes down, we will resume meeting in person at Immanuel in Rock Falls.



2022 YOUTH GATHERING NEWS

Current 8th through 12th grade students: **GATHERING REGISTRATION IS CURRENTLY PAUSED DUE TO THE CURRENT WAVE OF COVID-19 CASES.**

Once we have more information from the ELCA Youth Gathering office, we will share with all of the participants.

We currently have 25 youth and adults from Tri-Church registered to attend the youth gathering together in July. Our plan is to travel the morning of July 23rd to Minneapolis. The gathering runs from July 24-28. Our group will return July 28th in the evening.

We will continue to fundraise to offset the cost of this trip. Many of our students applied for and received \$300 scholarships.

Our next "Getting Ready" meeting is Sunday, February 27th from 11:15am to 12:45pm at Immanuel Lutheran Church in Rock Falls. Lunch (pizza, cookies and water) will be provided.

Sign up for the Gathering e-newsletter, G-News, and get the latest updates at elca.org/gathering, facebook.com/youthgathering, instagram.com/elcagathering and twitter.com/elcagathering.

The class finishes their study of the 10 Commandments this month.

If/when we resume meeting in person, the class will move to meeting at St. John's on March 9th from 6:45-7:30pm. During the season of Lent (March 9th through April 6th), students are encouraged to attend mid-week worship services at St. John's at 6pm, then participate in class immediately following.

REMINDER: If your student's school is cancelled or dismissed early due to weather, they will not need to attend Confirmation class that evening.

CHILDREN'S OFFERING

The February Children's offering is going to Sauk Valley UNITE Service Camp. UNITE is a three-and-a-half-day local teen service camp organized by several local congregations in Sterling and Rock Falls that paints houses for homeowners in Sterling and Rock Falls who have a financial need and who cannot physically paint their own home. Our goal is to offer \$500 for 2022. For more information on Sauk Valley UNITE, visit saukvalleyunite.org. Thank you for your ministry of giving.



REGISTRATION NOW OPEN FOR SAUK VALLEY UNITE 2022

UNITE is happening June 22nd-25th! Current seventh through 12th graders and adult volunteers can now register online at saukvalleyunite.org/registration. This year we plan to return to having an overnight event. The UNITE planning team will make a final call in March or April on whether housing/overnight will officially be a part of the camp experience this summer.

The theme for 2022 UNITE is **reNEW** - *Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: The old has gone, the new is here!* (2 Cor 5:17, NIV)

COUNCIL HIGHLIGHTS

PASTOR'S REPORT

Funeral services were held for Dale Heuck on January 8th.

Confirmation classes have been moved to Zoom meetings for the month of January. There have not been enough students to hold classes in person. The hope is to return to in-person classes in February.

Pastor has been working with Nina to put together binders for council so materials are all together, as well as preparing for the Congregational Annual Meeting. With 26 needed, there should be enough in attendance for a quorum. The meeting will also be on Zoom for those who cannot attend in person.

Enough adults have signed up to supervise Youth Gathering; however, ELCA has frozen registrations due to the current surge of COVID-19 cases.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

TREASURER: Teri Holldorf will bring end-of-year figures to the annual meeting.

PROPERTY: The kitchen faucet, garbage disposal and cabinet floors have been replaced. Cleanup of old food, etc., is ongoing. Old blue choir robes are heavily faded and will likely need to be disposed of.

COMMUNICATIONS: Tri-Church received a thank-you note from Lutheran Social Services of Illinois. Tri-

We kick off this year's service event on Wednesday, June 22nd at Bethel Reformed Church in Sterling, with worship led by Dan Scharnhorst and Pete Smith. Dan and Pete will be with us throughout the week, leading worship, sharing stories and hanging out with us. Painting days will be June 23rd-25th. We will be painting three or more homes in Sterling and Rock Falls. Stay tuned to announcements for further details.

If you know of someone who would benefit from UNITE (needs their home painted), please direct them to saukvalleyunite.org to apply. If you'd like to support UNITE but you're not sure how, please email saukvalleyunite@gmail.com.

Church provided gift cards, food and household items to 49 adults with disabilities who live in LSSI group homes, 58 seniors, 110 addicts, and 240 children and teens.

BUSINESS

There are no updates to current COVID-19 guidelines.

Two members are needed to attend Synod Assembly. The digital session will be June 5th and 12th, with an in-person session June 17-18.

Special offerings will be designated as follows:

- March - Broadway Methodist Food Bank
- April - Nazarene Church Helping Hands food bank
- May and June - Rock Falls United Methodist Bare Necessities pantry.

The council approved a request from Dawn Zigler for \$61 for printed music. The money will come from the Harvey Johnson Memorial, which is designated for worship and music.

At the suggestion of the Memorial Committee, the council approved funds to be moved and combined as follows:

- Alice Davis and Barb O'Brien Memorials moved to the Youth account (designated for Sunday, Children, and Youth and Family Ministry)
- Vera McCormick Memorial moved to Congregational Life account to use for gift baskets for shut-ins.

NURSE NOTES

Ask away

Facing a major procedure or surgery — or even just a checkup — may make you feel anxious or confused. Use these tips to more confidently approach a medical appointment, and to help your care team better meet your needs:

Plan ahead. Pause to think about what you want to get from the appointment. What are your goals? Write down and prioritize questions. Bring your list to the appointment and refer to it.

Engage in discussion and take notes. You can ask questions such as, “How will I receive results from this test?” “Why do you think that’s the problem?” “Would you consider this treatment the best of my options?” and “Are there other options I should consider?” For clarification, summarize what you heard and then ask, “Am I understanding that right?”

Voice your concerns. If you’re worried about anything — such as potential side effects or your ability to follow through with the treatment plan — voice them so that they can be addressed. You can ask for a follow-up appointment to talk further or seek a second opinion from another physician.

Call for backup. Consider bringing a trusted friend or family member with you. Let them know if and when you want them to speak up, take notes or leave the room during the appointment.

Follow up. Ask “What’s the best way to get more information or ask questions after my visit?” That way, if you are confused or need more information, you can get answers.

Asking questions and raising concerns with your care team sets you up for success and enables your team to better care for you.

*From the Mayo Clinic Health Letter.
Submitted by Nancy Rasmussen, Parish Nurse.*

FEBRUARY BIRTHDAYS & ANNIVERSARIES

1

•Addison Preston

2

•Charles Baither
•Ellise Keaschall
•Leanne Miller
•Trevor Sisson
•Henry Workman
•Michael & Druann Bushman

4

•Emma Cooperrider
•Andrew Miller

5

•Robert Collins
•Adin Taylor

6

•John Hall*
•Rod Kleckler
•Janna Klocke
•Michael Kuba
•Blake Ruiz

7

•Jane Dettman
•Ryan Gonzales
•Jocelyn Pink
•Peggy Sucher

8

•Alan McFalls

9

•Marianne Hartshorn*
•Lisa Judd
•Amber Smith
•Brenda Turner

10

•Marilyn Deets*
•Jamie Hay

11

•Dennis Blevins
•Michael Westbo

12

•Tom Amesquita
•Courtney Gillette
•Kennard Green*
•Macsen Reaver

13

•Zachary Stokes

15

•Amanda Armstrong
•Michael Barton
•Timothy Granzow
•Jamie Schmitt
•Bradley & Beth McFalls

16

•Marsha Francis
•Chris Gierhart
•Timmy Hurd

17

•Amanda McCormick

18

•Jonah Gawlik

19

•Mike Doughty
•Suzy Stanley

20

•Cynthia Bragg
•Beth Johnson
•Sandra Wolfe

21

•Andrew Gomer

22

•Diana Hosler
•Alicia LeFevre
•Blake LeFevre
•Kelsey Marsh
•Constance Sciacero
•Ameila Workman

23

•Marilyn Wolf*

24

•RJ Dorathy

25

•Madelyn Pink

26

•Teri Moses
•Kim Sciacero
•Kenneth Smith
•Darci & Ivan Lee Schmitt

27

•Faith Davis

28

•Kelley Breneman
•Geni Clark
•Patricia Loos
•Grae Wolfe

**Indicates 80-plus-year birthdays and 50-plus-year anniversaries.*

SAYING THANKS

Dear St. John's Lutheran Church,
Thank you for hosting our volunteer training. Without your generous use of the basement, we would not have been able to conduct the training due to our healthcare site restrictions. A special thank you to Nina for her coordination and to Mont for helping with our set-up and AV needs.

With thanks,
Rock River Hospice & Home staff

St. John's members,
I appreciate the Christmas bag of goodies and poinsettia. It was a very nice surprise! Thanks so much!

Lois LeFevre

Dear church family,
2021 has been such a difficult year, but it's nice to know my church family is still there for me to lean on. Thank you so much for remembering me with your gifts.

Always in my heart,
Gloria Heuck

A great big "thank you" to all the organizations who so kindly put together an amazing bag of Christmas treats. The poinsettia is beautiful and a daily reminder of God's love. The pocket prayer shawl is unique and can be tucked in my pocket or purse. And what a good idea to include some thank-you cards and stamps. Thanks to the children for their part in the Christmas cheer! May the season of love and kindness prevail throughout the coming year.

Sending love,
Ruth Deets

Thank you all so much for the nice surprise Saturday morning! Beautiful poinsettia and all the goodies! Wishing everyone a beautiful holiday season!

Thanks again,
Jannet Taylor

Thank you for your thoughtfulness during the holiday season. The plant was lovely and the bag of goodies was appreciated. It was a very nice surprise.

Donna Siebert

Thank you for your thoughtfulness and goodies and the beautiful poinsettia. It brightens up my room and my heart to know that you care.

Sincerely,
Harry Stoudt

Dear St. John's family and Sunday school,

Thank you so much for thinking of me during the holidays this year. It's been a long time since I've seen all of you. I do get down once a month for services here at Heritage Woods. I sure enjoy the services. My gifts at Christmas were sure a great joy and again, thank you so much!

Happy New Year!
Judy Draper

Thank you very much for the Christmas gift. It was a very nice surprise and very appreciated.

Blessings,
Marilyn Deets

GIVING MADE EASY

3 SECURE WAYS TO MAKE YOUR DONATION



ONLINE
StJohnsOnThird.org



MOBILE
Tithe.ly app



IN PERSON
Check or cash

All donations will be included on your yearly contribution statement.

PURPOSE STATEMENT

The purpose of St. John's Evangelical Lutheran Church is to continue discovering God's will for us in His kingdom through prayer, Bible study and building relationships.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

1. Jesus is our Lord and Savior.
2. We make prayer, Bible study and dialog the center of our decision making.
3. We are willing to change as we discover God's mission for us.
4. We invite everyone. Jesus said, "Go therefore and make disciples of all nations." ~ Matthew 28: 19a
5. We recognize and give thanks for our blessings.
6. We act for the discovery and fulfillment of God's mission.

COUNCIL AFFIRMATION STATEMENT

The Council affirms that ministry is a core tenant of our Mission and that established ministries will continue and the opportunity for expanding into additional ministries will be evaluated when presented. The Council fully understands the complex nature of ministry, but as long as God's people are willing to engage in good works, we will do everything in our power to support those ministries.

PARISH REGISTER

DEATHS

- None

WEDDINGS

- Paul Heppel & Brock Hollowell 2/1

BAPTISMS

- None

MEMBERS RECEIVED

- None

MEMBERS REMOVED/TRANSFERRED

- None

CHANGE OF ADDRESS

- None

STAFF BIRTHDAYS

- None

WHO'S WHO AT ST. JOHN'S

PERSONNEL

Rev. Jacob Gawlik, Senior Pastor
Rev. Leo Patterson, On Call/Visitation Pastor
Gerad Von Holten, Director of Youth & Family Ministries
Rev. Mark & Rev. Cynthia Rich, Missionaries to Tanzania
Dawn Zeigler, Minister of Music & Bell Choir Director
Julie McCord, Praise Sunday Director
Nina Peters, Office Manager
Andrew Stutzke, Systems Administrator
Kyle Morgan, Technical Director
Mont Cessna, Facility Maintenance
Stahr Media, Newsletter & Website
Nancy Rasmussen, Parish Nurse
Jan Klocke, council rep to Tri-Church

CONG. COUNCIL

- Dave Geil, president*
- Denise Norman, vice president*
- Kandra Cook, secretary*
- Teri Holldorf, treasurer*
- Andrew Doughty
- Jan Klocke
- John Lichner
- Chrissy Murphy
- Shawn Wolfe

**Exec Committee member*

CHRISTIAN ED

- Tammy Doughty
- Brian Luebke
- Chrissy Murphy

CONG. LIFE

- Denise Norman, chair
- Lois Anderson-Rowzee
- Michelle Gawlik
- Nancy Rasmussen
- Pat Redfield
- Jannet Taylor

ENDOWMENT

- Mike Doughty, chair
- Art Frey
- John Lichner
- Rhonda Stutzke
- Shawn Wolfe

FINANCE

- Teri Holldorf, chair
- Nancy Breed
- Druann Bushman
- Mike Doughty
- John Lichner

FUNERAL

- Dave Geil, chair
- Linda Geil, chair
- Druann Bushman, chair

MEMORIAL

- Dave Geil, chair
- Brian Luebke
- Nancy Rasmussen
- Jannet Taylor

PERSONNEL

- Denise Norman, chair
- Lois Anderson-Rowzee
- Dave Geil

PROPERTY

- Dave Geil, chair
- Art Frey
- Tom Leesman
- Ken Smith

SOCIAL MINISTRY

- Vacant

STEWARDSHIP

- Jan Klocke, chair
- Nancy Rasmussen

WORSHIP ARTS

- Dawn Zeigler, chair
- Denise Carl
- Shawn Wolfe

WORSHIP TECH

- Anita Carl
- Dan Eads
- Charlene O'Connell

SJLC Activities ~ Feb. 2022

February Open/Close:
Shawn Wolfe

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
		1 1:00-Heppel/ Hollowell wedding	2 6:00-Worship 7:00-Confirmation (Zoom)	3 <i>Lunch/Dinner with Pastor Jacob</i> 7:00-Al-Anon	4	5
6 <i>FISH collection</i> 9:30-Worship <i>Acolyte: Alena T.</i> <i>Assistant: Mike Doughty</i> 10:45-Sunday School 10:45-Youth Group 10:45-Pastor's Bible Study	7	8	9 6:00-Worship 7:00-Confirmation (Zoom)	10 <i>Lunch/Dinner with Pastor Jacob</i> 4:15-Exec mtg 7:00-Al-Anon	11	12 9:30-Prayer Shawl Coffee Hour
13 9:30-Worship <i>Acolyte: Brynna C.</i> <i>Assistant: Teri Holldorf</i> 10:45-Sunday School 10:45-Pastor's Bible Study	14	15 6:00-Council mtg	16 <i>Newsletter due</i> 1:30-Parkway communion 2:30-Heritage Woods communion 3:30-Morningside communion 6:00-Worship 7:00-Confirmation (Zoom)	17 <i>Lunch/Dinner with Pastor Jacob</i> 2:30-Regency communion 3:30-Citadel communion 7:00-Al-Anon	18 <i>Office closed</i>	19
20 9:30-Worship <i>Acolyte: Ryan M.</i> <i>Assistant: Dotty Frey</i> 10:45-Sunday School 10:45-Youth Group 10:45-Pastor's Bible Study	21	22 6:30-NAMI group	23 6:00-Worship 7:00-Confirmation (Zoom)	24 <i>Lunch/Dinner with Pastor Jacob</i> 9:00-Newsletter assembly 7:00-Al-Anon	25	26
27 9:30-Worship <i>Acolyte: Alicia L.</i> <i>Assistant: Denise Norman</i> 10:45-Sunday School 10:45-Pastor's Bible Study 11:15-Youth Gathering Getting Ready meeting (Immanuel)	28	SAVE THE DATES: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> March 2: Ash Wednesday March 12: Northern Illinois Synod Congregational Resourcing Event (Zoom) 				



Help us go green by signing up for

The eMessenger

ST. JOHN'S NEWSLETTER IN FULL COLOR DELIVERED
STRAIGHT TO YOUR EMAIL INBOX EACH MONTH!

- Saves on expensive paper, ink and postage
- Always delivered before the first of the month

Sign up today at groups.google.com.

Search for St. John's E-Messenger and click "Join group."

Questions? Email messenger@stjohnsonthird.org.

The Messenger is a monthly publication
of St. John's Lutheran Church, a church
of the Northern Illinois Synod of the
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.
Join us for worship at 9:30am Sundays
and 6:00pm Wednesdays.
If you would prefer to receive The
Messenger via email, contact the church
office at office@stjohnsonthird.org.

return service requested

St. John's Lutheran Church
703 Third Avenue
Sterling, IL 61081

NONPROFIT ORG.
U.S. POSTAGE PAID
STERLING, IL
PERMIT NO. 218