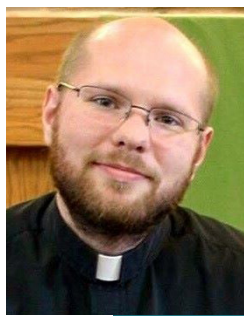


THE MESSENGER

A Monthly Publication of St. John's Lutheran Church, Sterling, IL

April 2025

Choose to love



"You have heard that it was said, 'You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.' But I say to you: Love your enemies and

pray for those who persecute you, so that you may be children of your Father in heaven, for he makes his sun rise on the evil and on the good and sends rain on the righteous and on the unrighteous." (Matthew 5:43-45, NRSVue)

I am a firm believer that the greatest gift God gave creation is our Lord Jesus Christ. The second is the freedom in Christ to choose to love as God loves.

It is sad that the choice to avoid choosing love or, worse, to actively choose to hate is so often a strong temptation. There is no shortage of examples of this, with ongoing wars in so many places and the dignity and humanity of others at home and abroad ignored—not to mention our culture's unceasing appetite for graphic violence in both news and other forms of media.

As much as we would like to convince ourselves we have moved beyond such extremes, they are seemingly

readily apparent. Not surprisingly, this was the same in the time of Jesus. In those times, folks would crowd the Colosseum in Rome to watch Gladiatorial contest or gather outside city gates for crucifixions. Yet even amid the chaos and violence of both then and now, Jesus enters into this world.

The Lord our God and Savior chooses to love where we so often are unable to see it for ourselves or choose it. In those moments the call of the Holy Spirit is to recall the good news of Easter morning. To know and share that the love of God is so beyond measure that death becomes powerless in comparison. When we then choose to love, we are living into the fullness of all God has done and is doing. We acknowledge our intimate role as children of God who have been equipped to love just as Christ does.

With each sunrise and sunset, the choice to love remains. With each rainstorm or sunny day, the choice to love remains. This freedom in Christ to choose to love as God loves cannot be taken away. Moreover, those who would say there is no choice or that love is not an option have already succumbed to the temptation that pulls apart the body of Christ in the world. The thing is, such efforts and temptations have already failed, since upon the cross our Lord chose to love.

Within the empty tomb, we find God again choosing love.

Therefore, "Beloved, let us love one another, because love is from God; everyone who loves is born of God and knows God." (1 John 4:7, NRSVue)

The love of God be with you,

Rev. Jacob M. Lawler

WHAT'S IN THIS ISSUE

Branches News Briefs	2
Council Highlights	3-4
Birthdays & Anniversaries	5
Special Offerings	5
Lilies Order Form	5
Saying Thanks	6
Financial Update	6
Calendar & Events	7
Lent & Holy Week Worship	7
Lenten Self-Denial Offering	8
Nurse Notes	8
Yard Signs for Sale	8
About St. John's	9
Parish Register	9
Announcements	10



St. John's
Evangelical Lutheran Church

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Youth & Family Ministries News



SAVE THE DATE FOR COMMUNITY VBS!

Mark your calendars and make plans to join in **CommUNITY VBS** this summer! Consider having your grandkids or extended family coming to visit during that time and join us for VBS too! **CommUNITY VBS** is offered for **Preschool-5th graders** July 20-24 from 5:30-8:00 pm at **Immanuel Lutheran** (501 8th Ave., Rock Falls). Festivities include a free supper, Bible exploration, music, games, science and arts & crafts! Guard your calendars and plan to volunteer for this life-shaping week too! **PLEASE** mark your calendars and plan to join us or volunteer for **CommUNITY VBS** July 20-24!



YOUTH PALM SUNDAY BREAKFAST

Mark your calendars for **April 13!**

The Youth Palm Sunday Breakfast is coming! This Youth lead event is always a highlight of our congregation. The free-will offering collected during breakfast helps support programming for youth events like the Quake and National Youth Gathering. If you'd like to help with Set-Up, Kitchen Team, Serving, and/or Clean-Up Crew, please see the sign-up outside the sanctuary on the way to the east room.



NOTEWORTHY DATES

Some important dates for grades 6-12:

- April 13: Palm Sunday Breakfast
- April 30 @ 7pm: Community Accompaniment Night (Buddy Bags Packing @ Wesley Methodist)



SUNDAY SCHOOL SCHEDULE

April 6: Lesson-Paul's Letters
April 13: No SS (Palm Sunday Breakfast)
April 20: Easter Egg Hunt (No SS)
April 27: Music & Popcorn



GARAGE SALE DAYS FUNDRAISER

On **Saturday, May 17**, St. John's will be a location again for the community wide garage sale. Item collection has officially begun! A registration for the event will be filed with the Rock Falls Chamber of Commerce, which organizes the event and provides maps showing participating locations. Items donated will temporarily be stored and organized in the **Luther Chapel**. Tables will be set up in the main parking lot for times during the sale. Those wishing to help participate in the fundraiser by donating items for sale please remember that **items may be new or gently used**.

Please do not donate any of the following:

- Car seats
- Beds
- Cribs
- Furniture



APRIL NOISY OFFERINGS

Our April Noisy Offerings will go to Lutheran Social Services of Illinois (LSSI). LSSI serves over 38,000 people annually, providing critical programs for Illinois residents each year, including foster care, mental health services, alcohol and drug treatment, affordable senior housing, residential programs for people with developmental disabilities, home care for seniors, and services that help families who have been impacted by incarceration. In preparation for Good Shepherd/LSSI Sunday (May 4), we'll be collecting a Children's Noisy Offering to help support the ministry of LSSI as it continues to be a ministry responding to the Gospel to bring healing, justice, and wholeness to people and communities.



EASTER CARDS

Sunday School students prepared several Easter cards for shut-ins and those in assisted living. Cards are being distributed throughout April.



PASTOR'S REPORT

- On 3/2, St. John's hosted Tri-Church Confirmation Classes. Students helped make the ashes used for Ash Wednesday.
- On 3/4, St. John's began hosting the Tuesday morning ecumenical text study group. This group meets every Tuesday morning and is composed of pastors, other religious leaders, and laity who study the readings for the upcoming Sunday's worship service. The group is thankful for being able to meet in-person again and for the hospitality provided to use the Luther Chapel.
- A planning meeting for COMMUNITY VBS was held on 3/4 at Immanuel. Volunteers are needed to help with group rotations and music. VBS dates are 7/20-24, with worship service at Grandon on 7/27.
- Preparations for the Palm Sunday breakfast have begun. Thank you to those who have signed up to help as crew leaders. Set-up for the breakfast will be on 4/12 at 10:00 am. The free-will offering collected at the breakfast will support youth programming.
- We have new members. The membership transfer for Taylor Ufkin has been received from Immanuel Lutheran, Dixon. J.D. and Michelle Sanders have petitioned for membership by profession of faith.
- A motion was carried to accept J.D. and Michelle Sanders into membership.
- Multiple rostered leaders have recently been removed from the ELCA roster. These notices arrived from the Bishop's office; copies are being held in the church office. Those who have been removed from the ELCA roster are not approved to preside at or administer sacraments within ELCA congregations or congregations in which we hold Full Communion partnership. Removal from the roster is a serious matter and one not taken lightly. Members who have questions

are encouraged to speak with their pastor. This is a general reminder to all that if there is suspected abuse within a congregation, to immediately report it immediately.

- 5/18: Central Conference Annual Meeting, 2:00 pm at St. John's

SECRETARY REPORT

- A motion was carried to approve the 2/18 minutes of the Congregation Council with two amendments. The date of the Central Conference Annual Meeting is 5/18, not 3/18. The Lenten lunch on 4/2 is being hosted by Worship Arts and the Bell Choir.
- Several thank you notes have been received and can be viewed on page 6 of this newsletter.
- The annual report paperwork was completed and returned to the Secretary of State of Illinois to maintain our status of incorporation with the state.
- The PADS Shelter is hosting a Scrap Metal Drive as a fundraiser on 3/29 from 9:00 am-1:00 pm. Tin, aluminum cans, iron, wire, washers, driers, stoves, bikes, steel, fence posts, and mowers are among the items being collected. Note: They will accept our donation of the refrigerator that we replaced and will make arrangements for picking it up.

FINANCE REPORT

- The Finance Committee approved the February financial reports with clarification on payroll issues to be provided to the committee members after a discussion with Nina.
- The committee raised several questions/comments relating to the reports:
 - It was noted that there was no pension expense for Pastor Jacob. Nancy will check with Nina.
 - Additional payroll issues were raised concerning staff and custodial salaries. Further clarification will be shared with the committee electronically.

- The layout of the Budget Performance report is confusing, but there does not appear to be an easy way to remedy the issue.
- Our contact at Rock River Energy emailed us concerning natural gas prices; our contract with Rock River Energy ends this year. We will request rate updates for discussion at the April meeting.
- A question was raised concerning the interest accumulated on the Memorial Account. The Memorial, Bequest, Thrivent Choice Dollars, and Non-Monetary Gifts policy states that the interest will be moved to the general fund at the end of the year. It does not appear that this is happening. Jack Flick will take this topic to the next meeting of the Finance Team.
- The February financials were approved as presented and approved by the Finance Committee.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Partners in Prayer and Care:

- The committee met on 2/26
- Christmas gifts and poinsettias were delivered to 25 shut-in members
- In January, the committee made four nursing home visits
- Flowers will be delivered to shut-ins and nursing home members for Easter on 4/14
- Two get-well cards and one sympathy card were sent to members in December
- The group discussed how to contact inactive members and will ask the council for guidance. This item will be discussed at the next meeting on 3/27.

Social Ministry:

- Cards from the congregation and the Sunday School were delivered for the 2/27 Birthday Buddy, Josh
- Collections of personal care kits began 3/2 and will end 4/13
- Discussions are underway for the possibility of offering an "Artful Party"

Continued on page 4

hosted by Linda Von Holten. The date and all details are being determined. An invitation will be extended to our VBS partners to join the event. Proceeds from the event will be used to support a local charity.

- The next Birthday Buddy party is scheduled for 5/6 and will celebrate Richard
- The next meeting is on 4/12 at 10:00 am in the Luther Chapel

OLD BUSINESS

- Vitality Survey Goals: The goals established last year appear to be well-established. Looking at new goals to move forward with our mission might be in order. After discussion, it was decided to plan a Council Retreat after worship. The first available date appears to be 6/1. Plans will continue and be finalized at the May meeting.
- Committees: This topic has been removed from the agenda as there appear to be no points of discussion.
- Church Roof Campaign: To date, 47 households have donated \$59,420 to support the roof campaign, 84.9% of the \$70,000 goal.
- Stewardship Yard Signs: A sample of the yard sign was available for the meeting. After discussion, a motion was carried to use money from the Stewardship budget to pay for the signs. A motion was also carried to use the profits from the sale of the signs to assist with the budget shortfall. Monies collected from the sale of the signs will be placed in a dedicated reimbursement account until the sale of the signs is complete, at which time the funds will be transferred to the general fund.
- Open/Close Policy Review: A motion was carried to approve the "Opening and Closing the Church for Worship" policy as updated.
- Pathways Program: Topic tabled until the April meeting of the Council.
- St. Paul Transition: St. Paul has established an extended schedule for pulpit supply and coverage. Pastor Jacob and Pastor Bree continue to be available for emergency situations.

NEW BUSINESS

- Approval of Transfers: In February, transfers totaling \$12,800.00 were made. The transfers moved funds from Undesignated Account #8005 to the Sauk Valley Bank checking account. A motion was carried to approve the transfers totaling \$12,800.00.
- Approval of Memorial Expenditure: The main refrigerator in the basement kitchen stopped working. The cost to repair the unit exceeded the replacement cost, so a new unit was ordered for \$2,385.83. The Memorial Committee approved the expenditure, with the money to be taken from several line items. We paid sales tax on this purchase; it would have taken up to a week for the church's tax-exempt status to be entered into the vendor's system. The new unit is in place. Thank you to Brian Luebke, Gary Smith, Ken Smith, Jeff Fisher, Martin Fisher, Dave Geil, and Linda Geil for removing the old unit and placing the new unit. A motion was carried to approve the use of \$2,385.83 of Memorial funds for the purchase.
- Postcard Brochure/Sauk Valley Area Chamber of Commerce: Two sizes of the proposed welcome brochure were presented. A motion was carried to have Self-Help print 500 of the larger-sized brochures at a cost of \$169.43 (0.338 cents each). Rhonda also researched how our outreach efforts could be enhanced by joining the Sauk Valley Area Chamber of Commerce. The annual cost is \$120, and it will afford us opportunities to promote our name and information to the community. A motion carried that St. John's join the Sauk Valley Area Chamber of Commerce.
- Finance Update for Bulletin Insert and Messenger: Jack Flick presented an example of a proposed financial report to be included in the Messenger each month. It details operating expenses, offerings, the operating deficit, the money

transferred from the Behrens account to cover expenses, and the net operating amount. The group felt we should move forward with this monthly publication which will also appear in the weekly bulletin insert.

- Special Offerings: An updated listing of Special Offering recipients (2009-2025) was provided. A motion was carried to designate April to the Twin City Homeless Shelter (PADS), May to the Rock River Hospice and Home, and June to Let's Feed Our Children. The motion included designating the funds raised from the "Artful Party" sponsored by the Social Ministry Committee to be designated for the YWCA Domestic Violence Center.
- Sound System: We have been experiencing more frequent issues with the soundboard. The issues are with the EQ (Equalization) within the system. A refurbished board was found on eBay for \$2,499 but had been sold by Monday afternoon. Kyle Morgan also found a new Yamaha Commercial TF5 unit for \$3,000. A quote from Top-Notch Productions was available for review by the Council. Shipping would cost \$45. Kyle stated that this unit would be much more volunteer-friendly. He believes our current unit is 12-14 years old, and the usual life expectancy is about 10 years. There is Memorial money available in the amount of \$3,664.68 that has been designated for Worship & Music; Worship Arts. A motion was carried to approve the purchase of the TF5 Digital Audio Mixing Console at a cost of \$3,045.00 from Top-Notch Productions, with the money held in the designated memorial for worship and music to be used for the purchase.
- April Meetings: The Congregation Council's April meeting is scheduled during Holy Week. A motion by Pastor Jacob carried that the Executive Committee and the Council not meet during April but adhere to the normal May meeting schedule. Any necessary business will be handled electronically.

APRIL BIRTHDAYS & ANNIVERSARIES

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
Indicates 80-plus-year birthdays and 50-plus-year anniversaries.		1	2 Anita Carl Erica Grim	3	4 Dan Bragg	5 Howard Janssen
6	7	8 Arthur Frey*	9 Denise Carl	10 Dan & Cynthia Bragg	11 Dayton Fisher Lauren Jacobs	12 Byron Grassnickle*
13	14	15 Hannah Gawlik	16	17 Andrew Doughty	18	19
20 Nicole Tupper	21	22	23	24 Nancy Breed	25	26
27	28	29 Caylee White Dawn White	30 Kathleen Barton			

APRIL SPECIAL OFFERINGS



The Special Offerings for the month of April have been designated by the Congregation Council to be donated to the Twin Cities Homeless Shelter, formerly the Twin Cities PADS Homeless Shelter. The shelter serves 20-25 guests per night for emergency shelter and as an entry point into other outreach programs. They currently have limited space and funding and are struggling to support those who rely on their services to survive. Please consider a generous donation to support this ministry. Their mission is to help people and be a light to those lost in the darkness. Help them keep the lights on.

LILIES ARE WANTED to decorate the chancel for Easter. You can order on the group order or purchase your own. If you purchase your own lily and plan on picking it up, bring it to the church **no earlier than April 16** and please place a tag on it with your name. Plants can be picked up after the Easter morning service, Sunday, April 20. *Note: Payment should accompany the form. Make checks payable to St. John's Lutheran Church. Deadline to turn in this form is Friday, April 11.*

ORDER INFORMATION

___ (#) Lilies at \$13.00 per plant ___ Will purchase own and bring to church by April 16

All lilies should be white. Please return this slip whether you plan to purchase through the church or on your own.

BULLETIN INFORMATION

From

In memory of (deceased person(s))

In honor of (living person(s) or special occasion)

As a gift:



SAYING THANKS

On behalf of Sterling Buddy Bags Program,
We are grateful for your continued support of the much needed program, providing weekend food for school aged children. With the increasing cost of food these days, it is more important than ever to help where we can.
We are now packing approximately 150 bags each week at a cost of \$500.00. Without generous donations from folks like you we would not be able to sustain our program.
Thank you ALL again and God Bless!

You are Loved-You are Worthy-You are Enough
First Presbyterian Church
Sterling Buddy Bags
Mary Jo Edge & Wanda Martens

To the St. John's Lutheran Church Family:
Thank you so much for your generous donation to Northwestern Illinois Center for Independent Living (NICIL). Since NICIL began in 1985 we have provided services to people with disabilities and their families within our 5 county area. Our mission is to empower people with disabilities by supporting the individual and their community with the skills and knowledge to live independently. Your generous gift of \$120.00 will enable us to continue to support the unique needs of our consumers.
On behalf of the Board of Directors, our customers, and the team at NICIL we thank you for your support.

Sincerely,
Emily Witt
Executive Director

Thank you to Pastor Jacob & church family for the Christmas poinsettia and gift bag. Also, thank you to Pastor Leo for the phone calls and prayers.
Barb Johnson

Dear St. John Lutheran Church,
Thank you for your generous gift of \$60.00 to ministries of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America through ELCA Good Gifts.
"[Jesus said,] 'Which of these three, do you think, was a neighbor to the man who fell into the hands of the robbers?' [The lawyer] said, 'The one who showed him mercy.' Jesus said to him. 'Go and do likewise.' (Luke 10:36-37)
As a church, we are freed by the transformative life of Christ, and this freedom emboldens us to love and serve our neighbors just as Christ has shown us. Your gifts to the ministries of the ECLA help people around the world feel the power of God's love.
Your Good Gift is a very good gift indeed. Through resources such as seedlings and seminary courses, vaccinations and vegetable gardens, Bibles and blankets, you equip God's people — around the world and around the corner — with what they need to live abundant lives.
Thank you for your gracious gifts. The glory of God shines through you.

With gratitude,
Rachel Wind
Executive for Development

A thank you for the cards, flowers, and plants as well as the pastor's visits during my stay at Allure.
Vivian Johnson

FINANCIAL UPDATE

With guidance from the Finance Committee and approval by the Congregation Council, the following is the financial operating situation for St. John's. The following information will be published each month for the remainder of 2025. Any questions should be directed to the members of the Finance Committee.

St. John's Operating Performance	As of February 28, 2025	Year-to-Date 2025
Total Offerings	\$12,207.89	\$28,740.94
Operating Expenses	\$25,945.25	\$53,369.70
Operating Deficit	(\$13,737.36)	(\$24,628.76)
Transfer of Money from the Behrens account to cover expenses	\$12,800.00	\$12,800.00
Net Surplus/(Deficit)	(\$937.36)	(\$11,828.76)

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
*HC=Holy Communion		1 9:30-Text Study	2 11:15-Lenten Lunch @ St. John's 12:15-Worship 5:00-Lenten Supper @ Immanuel 6:00-Worship @ Immanuel	3 4:30-Bells Practice 7:00-Al-Anon	4	5
6 <i>FISH Collection</i> 9:30-Worship Acolyte: Kiersten B. Asst.: Shawn Wolfe 11:00-Confirmation Class @ St. Paul	7 6:00-Menz Group 6:00-Finance Committee mtg.	8 9:30-Text Study	9 11:15-Lenten Lunch @ St. John's 12:15-Worship 5:00-Lenten Supper @ Immanuel 6:00-Worship @ Immanuel	10 4:30-Bells Practice 6:30-Moving Beyond the Page 7:00-Al-Anon	11 Lily Orders Due	12 10:00-Social Ministry mtg.
13 <i>Palm Sunday</i> 9:30-Worship Acolyte: Logan W. & Caylee W. Asst.: Denise Norman Palm Sunday Breakfast	14	15 9:30-Text Study	16 1:30-Parkway HC 2:30-Heritage Woods HC 3:30-Morningside HC	17 <i>Nwsltr. items due</i> 2:30-Allure of Sterling HC 3:30-Citadel HC 4:30-Bells Practice 6:00-Maundy Thursday Worship 7:00-Al-Anon	18 6:00-Good Friday Worship	19
20 <i>Easter Sunday</i> 9:30-Worship Acolyte: Sarah D. & Brynna C. Asst.: Denise Carl	21 <i>Church Office Closed</i>	22 9:30-Text Study 6:30-NAMI group	23 6:00-Worship	24 4:30-Bells Practice 7:00-Al-Anon	25	26
27 9:30-Worship Acolyte: Caylee W. Asst.: Chris Rucker	28 6:00-Tri Church meeting	29 9:30-Text Study	30 6:00-Worship			

LENT AND HOLY WEEK WORSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

The congregations of St. Paul, St. John's & Immanuel (Tri Church) welcome everyone to worship this Lent and Holy Week! Throughout Lent, we will be Turning Toward God's Abundance as we explore God's Faithfulness, Mercy, Compassion, Forgiveness, and Love!

During the remaining Wednesdays in Lent (April 2 & 9), Tri Church welcomes you to enjoy a soup, sandwich, and salad lunch at 11:15 am followed by worship at 12:15 pm at St. John's. After the service, anyone who missed lunch can pick up a to-go meal. St. John's is located at 703 Third Avenue in Sterling.

Tri Church midweek evening options include Simple Suppers at 5 pm with worship at 6:00 pm on Wednesdays at Immanuel. Immanuel is located at 501 8th Avenue in Rock Falls. All are welcome!

TRI CHURCH HOLY WEEK WORSHIP OPPORTUNITIES—ALL ARE WELCOME!

St. Paul: Good Friday, 4/19. Gather for a potluck in the fellowship hall at 5:30 pm as we recognize the last supper of Jesus with His disciples. Following our meal together, we will move to the sanctuary for a Good Friday Tenebrae service (beginning at about 6:15 pm). Gabby Law will have an activity for the children during this part of the evening.

St. John's: Maundy Thursday and Good Friday (Stations of the Cross) services at 6:00 pm. Also, join us on Easter Sunday at 9:30 am.

Immanuel: Maundy Thursday Worship is at 12:15 & 6:00 pm; Good Friday Worship is at 12:15 & 6:00 pm.

LENTEN SELF-DENIAL OFFERINGS



The Lenten Self-Denial Offerings have been designated by the Congregation Council to be donated to the Sterling Buddy Bag Program. The need for this community food program becomes more pronounced each month. Food insecurities in our community are related to housing insecurities, and both affect our school-age children. The food is simple, nutritious and something children can prepare without too much effort. The program is sponsored by community churches, public schools, and the Coalition for Community Services (ICCS). Most of us have plenty of food on our tables, but that is not the case for many families. Please consider a generous donation to support this ministry and the growing need for families in our community.

NURSE NOTES

A choking hazard

When someone around you is choking and the person can cough forcefully, let them keep coughing. That might naturally remove the stuck object.

If the person is conscious but can't cough, cry or laugh forcefully, start first aid, then call for emergency medical help. The American Red Cross recommends the following steps for adults and for children older than age 1:

Give 5 Back Blows—Stand to the side and just behind the person. Place your arm across the person's chest and bend them at the waist to face the ground. Strike five separate times between their shoulder blades with the heel of your hand.

Give 5 Abdominal Thrusts (Heimlich Maneuver)—If back blows don't remove the object, give five abdominal thrusts:

- Stand behind the person, placing one foot slightly in front of the other. For a child, kneel down behind. Wrap your arms around the person's waist. Tip the person forward slightly.
- Make a fist with one hand. Put it just above the person's navel.
- Grasp your fist with one hand. Press into the stomach with a quick, upward thrust as if trying to lift the person up five times.

Alternate between five blows and five thrusts until the blockage is dislodged or until help arrives. If the person loses consciousness, begin CPR instead.

If you're alone and choking—Call for emergency help right away. Then, give yourself abdominal thrusts:

- Place a fist slightly above your navel.
- Grasp your fist with the other hand.
- Bend over a hard surface. A countertop or chair will do.
- Shove your fist inward and upward.

From Mayo Health. Submitted by Nancy Rasmussen, Parish Nurse.

ST. JOHN'S YARD SIGNS

Please help support the ministries of St. John's by purchasing a yard sign! These durable and colorful signs will be available toward the end of March and through mid-April before and after Sunday church service. They are \$25 each. For additional information or to purchase a sign, please contact Stewardship Committee co-chairs.

Rhonda Stutzke at (815) 441-3264

Aislinn O'Connell at a.shae.oconnell@gmail.com



WHAT WE BELIEVE

PURPOSE STATEMENT

St. John's is a Lutheran family striving to build relationships that will serve our community and God's World

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

None

BAPTISMS

None

CONFIRMATION STUDENTS

None

MEMBERS RECEIVED

Taylor Ufkin, J.D. and Michelle Sanders

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

Daudi & Kellen Msseemmaa, Missionaries to East Africa

Dawn Zeigler, Minister of Music & Bell Choir 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

Council Rep for Tri-Church, Paul Wolfe

CONG. COUNCIL

Paul Wolfe, president*

Jack Flick, vice president*

Denise Norman, secretary*

Larry Kradle

Marci Fisher

Rhonda Stutzke

Karen Wolfe

Aislinn O'Connell

Tammy Doughty

*Exec Committee member

CHRISTIAN ED

Michelle Gawlik

Chrissy Murphy

Jan Klocke

Denise Carl

Mont Cessna

STEWARDSHIP

Rhonda Stutzke

Aislinn O'Connell

PERSONNEL

Denise Norman, chair

Rev. Jacob Gawlik

Dave Geil

Nancy Rasmussen

FINANCE

Nancy Breed

Druann Bushman

Mike Doughty

Jack Flick

Dave Geil

FUNERAL

Dave Geil, chair

Linda Geil, chair

Druann Bushman, chair

MEMORIAL

Dave Geil, chair

Rev. Jacob Gawlik

Brian Luebke

Nancy Rasmussen

Jannet Taylor

PROPERTY

Dave Geil

Art Frey

Tom Leesman

Ken Smith

Mont Cessna

Doug Zientara

WORSHIP ARTS

Shawn Wolfe, chair

Dawn Zeigler

Denise Carl

Rev. Jacob Gawlik

Karen Wolfe

SOCIAL MINISTRY

Paul Wolfe

Shari Baker

Marsha Keime

Larry Kradle

Denise Norman

Amy Smith

Gary Smith

Sharon Zinanni

WORSHIP TECH

Dan Eads

Charlene O'Connell

PARTNERS IN PRAYER & CARE

Shari Baker

Stan Rasmussen

Nancy Rasmussen

Larry Kradle

Sharon Zinanni

Pat Redfield

Rev. Jacob Gawlik

Art Frey

PERSONAL CARE KITS

The Social Ministry Committee will begin collecting personal care kits on March 2. Once again, we will donate the kits to the First United Methodist Church in Sterling for distribution at their Food Bank and in conjunction with their Free Breakfast Program. The folks at First Methodist appreciate our desire to minister with them by supplying these kits!

Donations for this purpose are welcome if you prefer that the committee shop and assemble on your behalf. Please include these items in each of the kits:

- One nail file/emery board
- One sturdy comb
- One adult-size toothbrush in its original packaging*
- Two bath-size bars of soap in the original wrapping
- One small bottle of shampoo
- One full-size tube of toothpaste
- One light-weight bath-size towel (we recommend a dark color)
- One washcloth (again, we recommend a dark color)

**Toothbrush multi-packs may be used by sealing each toothbrush in a business-size envelope*

Assembly instructions: Fold the towel in half. Place the remaining items in the towel, fold and roll so nothing falls out, and secure them with yarn, ribbon, string, or rubber bands.



ELCA WORLD HUNGER COMMITTEE SPEAKER

Hunger has been a persistent challenge in our world. As Christians, we are called upon to follow the example and teachings of Jesus to help people in need. Beginning in 1974 the Lutheran Church in America has given special attention to reducing hunger for fifty years. While the money donated by a single congregation such as St. John's may be small, when combined with the gifts received at congregations across the country, between \$20 and 24 million is raised each year, resulting in many great projects. The ELCA is using this 50th anniversary year to increase explanations to congregations how the contributions have been used and to seek increased giving to its Hunger Appeal.

Dr. Norm Moline, Professor Emeritus of Geography at Augustana College and member of our synod's world hunger committee, will be at our church on April 6 for an adult education program. He will review how our dollars are used for some "good news" projects. He will stress that if we move beyond the big numbers of starving people and focus on individuals who can be helped, we can realize how life-giving our gifts can be. AND he will thank this congregation for its regular participation in this hunger appeal.



MOVING BEYOND THE PAGE

Join us for faith, fellowship, and book study on March 27 and April 10 at 6:30 pm in the church library. We will be discussing *Receiving Jesus* by Mariann Budde. On April 10 we will also be deciding on the next book for discussion starting May 8. Please speak with Pastor Jacob to learn more.



ST. JOHN'S LUTHERAN CHURCH

703 Third Avenue, Sterling, IL 61081

Join us for worship at 9:30am Sundays and 6:00pm Wednesdays.