

ST. JOHN LUTHERAN CHURCH MESSENGER

CALLED TO WORSHIP / COMMITTED TO SERVE / CONNECTED IN FAITH

April 2024

A monthly Publication of
St. John Lutheran Church

Worship Schedule

Wednesday Worship

6:00 pm

Sunday Worship

8:00 & 9:15

Sunday School

9:15

Interim Pastor

Pastor Ted Vanderpan

Office Staff

Rae Fimon
Audrey Zellman

Custodian

Wanda Savage

Choir Director

Allison Vandermark

Organist

Eileen Hanlon

Accompanist

Sheila Schmidt

148 S. Chestnut St.
Belle Plaine, MN 56011

952-873-6492
office@stjohnbelleplaine.org
Web: stjohnbelleplaine.org



Wild Game Feed
April 14th
St. John Lutheran Church
5 P.M. dinner
6 P.M. speaker



Open to all who would like to get together for a delicious wild game dinner and get together with others from our wonderful community. Guest speaker will be a member of the Minnesota D.N.R.

Free will donation of \$10.00 at the door to help offset the cost of the guest speaker and help with the cost of the ingredients for food preparation. Please R.S.V.P. the St. John church office so we can get a head count for food preparation amounts.
952-873-6492

First Communion Instruction- Will be held Wednesdays, April 3 and 10. This class is for 5th grade and up students and families who have not yet received the sacrament of communion.



If you would like to begin receiving the newsletter via email please read on.

We are encouraging people to opt-in to begin receiving the newsletter via email. We will be extending this invitation for several months before ceasing to send the paper copy. There will be people in our congregation who do not access this kind of information online or electronically at all. We will continue to mail the newsletter to anyone who wants it.

At a point several months from now we will evaluate the costs of sending the paper copies and make some final decisions. As you probably know, we use a bulk mail permit to send the paper copies. There is a minimum number of copies needed to get the reduced bulk rate. If we fall below that number, the cost to mail a copy will go up. So then, we want to be able to evaluate those numbers as we take the next steps.

It is best if you opt-in the email address of each individual in the household that would like to receive the e-newsletter. To start receiving e-newsletters, please send your request with emails to office@stjohnbelleplaine.org.

Watch for more information as this process unfolds.

From Pastor Ted

I remember well my parent's words, "If you can't say something nice, don't say anything at all."

As a youngster, I had to learn that what I heard through the grapevine was often not exactly accurate. More than once, I interpreted another person's words or actions completely wrong. More than once, I repeated something about another person that hurt them and in the end was not true. I was embarrassed those times I had to own up to what I had said to other people. It was painful when I had to apologize to the one I had spoken about. That is where my parent's wise words came in, "If you can't say something nice, don't say anything at all." But those are not just wise words from my parents. Actually it is God's word, the eighth commandment.

The Eighth Commandment: "You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor."

What does this mean? We should fear and love God so that we do not tell lies about our neighbor, betray him, slander him, or hurt his reputation, but defend him, speak well of him, and explain everything in the kindest way.

When you hear something or question someone's actions, there are some pretty practical, everyday ways of understanding this eighth commandment:

- assume the very best about someone, until you have a chance to talk to them about the matter
- assume they are trying to do their best
- assume they have good intentions
- think the kindest most gracious things you can
- don't repeat bad news
- don't think you know what someone is thinking – ask them

We have often seen sensational stories in the media that are later proven to be untrue or the facts significantly different than first portrayed. If there is a retraction, it is presented almost invisibly – hidden in a small paragraph tucked away in some obscure place. The harm is done.

We have become accustomed to ugly political advertisements that use questionable facts and are more personal attacks than substance. We get used to mud slinging to the point that it just seems normal.

Which brings me back to that pesky eighth commandment. Why is it so critical? What's the big deal? It is critical, especially in a church setting like ours because trust is a commodity without which communities cannot exist, nor continue. When we fail to explain each other's actions in the kindest way, when we fail to assume the best about someone, when we assume someone has ill intentions, trust is broken. It happens in churches. It happens in towns. It happens in families. That pesky eighth commandment is a wonderful gift from God.

*Make sure you join us on Sunday mornings for
Coffee Time from
8:45-9:30 in the
Gathering Area.*



Transition Update - What's next in our transition process?

As was talked about at the Annual Meeting, the next step of the transition process was to get the committees at St John up and running. We said that once the committees are up and running, we could look at forming a Transition Team (TT). The Council has been working on getting committees going during February and March and it has been going well. Most of the committees have met and have set regular meetings. This is good progress and so, during the month of April, the Nominations Committee will begin to identify people who would like to be on the Transition Team.

The TT will lead the congregation in preparing ELCA documents that will be given to pastors interested in St John, sort of an advertising brochure. In the range of 20 plus pages, the document will identify the Belle Plaine and St John communities, through such things as demographic data, key historical events, current trends, current challenges, and key issues today and for the near future. For St John, it will also identify keys to the ministry here such as, ministry priorities for the next 3 to 5 years, strengths, areas we need to strengthen, and 3 to 5 big goals we have as a congregation. Building on the report Pr. Ted wrote based on his interviews, the TT will lead us in identifying and clarifying those things. The TT will take the Synod's process and adapt it to our situation.

So, we will need people that can take the process and create our own tools and way of completing it. This may mean creating surveys, assessments, conducting open forums or any number of other things. The TT will decide how they want to get the project done and then do it. The whole congregation will have several opportunities to participate in the process to give input and feedback. Pr. Ted will be on the TT but will not be the chairperson. The TT will most likely meet approximately every other week working around holidays, vacations, illness and all those other parts of life.

Provided the TT gets started and makes good progress over the summer, they may be able to complete their work around Christmas. If that happens, it is possible that we would be ready to form a Call Committee in conjunction with the 2025 Annual Meeting.

Please watch the Sunday bulletins and verbal announcements in April for more information from the Nominations Committee. If you would like to contact the Nominations Committee immediately contact Dave Bungarden at davidbungarden01@gmail.com .

April Children's Ministry Update

It's hard to believe that it's already April and that there are only 3 weeks left of Sunday School. As we wrap up the 2023-2024 Sunday School year, the Children's Ministry Team would like to extend a few thank yous.



- Thank you, Rachel Kelm, for preparing and directing the Preschool - 4th grade children in music this year! It is truly a blessing to have children grace us with their gift of music as well as individuals who are willing to share their gift of music with the children and congregation.

- Thank you, teachers, for your time and talents you dedicated for the year to ensure children know God. St. John is blessed to have wonderful people work with our children to share their love of God in a variety of ways.

- Thank you, families, for supporting the Children's Ministry. We had many parents volunteer in the classrooms this year and it is a tremendous help for our teachers. If you enjoyed helping in your child's classroom this year, please consider volunteering as a teacher next year!

- Thank you for your generosity! Unlike many other churches, St. John offers a Sunday School Program at NO CHARGE. We appreciate the weekly offerings that your children bring to their classroom. Just \$1 a week can help us to purchase art supplies for the entire year.

Upcoming Events

- Sunday, April 21st: **Last Day of Sunday School & End of Year Sunday School Program**

Unapproved St. John Lutheran Church Council Minutes
March 11th, 2024

President Albert Koepp called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

Present:

X	Pastor Ted	X	Albert Koepp	X	Jim Eggers	X	Steve Kelm
X	Jan Effinger	X	Teresa Latzke	X	Anne Herrmann	X	David Bungarden
	Jaime Petersen		Cayla Menke	X	Tim Moonen	X	Chris Zellman
X	Jerold Stauffacher						

Opening Devotions:

Pastor Ted opened the meeting with a prayer.

Approval of Minutes:

Members of Council reviewed the minutes from February 12th, 2024, Council Meeting. Motion was made, seconded, and carried to approve the meeting minutes from February. A motion was made, seconded and carried to approve the agenda for March 11th, 2024, with a change to add two items to New Business.

Pastor Ted Report:

Lent – I have had lots of positive feedback about Lenten suppers and worship. One of the items I mentioned in my Transition Interview Report was that people wanted more “fellowship” opportunities. They felt this was something that has been missing since covid. While they are asking for more than Lenten suppers and worship, I do think the positive response reflects this desire in the congregation. Our speakers have been well received and we have just a couple left. Sue Volek, Heidi Vanderpan and Haven Moonen have spoken. Savannah Berg and Andrea Adelman will speak in the next two weeks.

First Communion – I have scheduled First Communion classes for Wednesday, April 3 & 10. Families will have the option of celebrating their child’s first communion on either Sunday, April 14th or Wednesday, April 24th. All students will be recognized at each service. I will hold another set of classes early next fall.

Committees – I have seen good energy around launching our committees. I have met with the Worship, Personnel, and Stewardship Committees and we have a regularly scheduled meeting set. I believe the Facility and Grounds Committee is meeting on the first Monday. I am not aware if the Technology or Finance Committees have met. Other committees only meet as needed such as Foundation, Memorial, Audit and Nominations. We wanted to get the committees relaunched and function before forming the Transition Team. I think we are on our way and making the progress we need to form the TT in May.

Transition – We are nearing our readiness to launch the Transition Team. We are on track for the Nominations Committee to meet in April to identify candidates and for the Council to appoint a team in May. I expect the TT will get quite a bit of work done over the summer and be ready to get the congregation involved with the start of the school year. Provided the TT gets started and makes good progress over the summer, I think they may be able to complete their work at Christmas. That makes me hopeful that we can launch a Call Committee in conjunction with the 2025 Annual Meeting.

Staff Reports:

- A: Wanda’s Custodian Staff Report. Members of Council reviewed Wanda’s custodian report.
The front automatic door issue has been fixed for now. The broken hymnal book holders have been repaired.
It was brought to the council's attention that when the building is being used as a donation (not rented) the area is not being cleaned up after use. This is required if they use it they will have to clean up after themselves. Members of the grounds and facilities will work with Rae and Audrey to revise an agreement.
- B: Rae’s staff report was reviewed by members of the council. Rae stated that she has been working with Jerold on the 2024 Budget input into the Icon software and summarized all Annual Report numbers.
- C: Audrey’s Staff Report was reviewed by the members of the council. She is working on the database update (Church Roll). Audrey is attending Coffee time and discussing new ways to get people involved in hosting coffee time and new ways to advertise who is serving. Currently working with the Faith formation group to update the volunteer lists.

Treasurer:

Jerold presented the monthly financial reports and answered questions from Council members.

Transfers:

- A. In: None
- B. Out: Jim and Diane Kerr to Centennial Lutheran Church in Henderson, MN.

Ongoing Business:

- A. Church Roll Update: It was discussed in Audrey's staff report.
- B. Venmo Account: The council tabled until next month's meeting.
- C. Treasurer's Role: A meeting has been scheduled with the Personnel Committee to discuss.

New Business:

- A. Script Cards: A discussion was had to review the purchase of script cards for the mission trip fundraiser. The council members made a motion, seconded and carried to approve that the mission trip leaders will work to reduce script card inventory and discontinue script card fundraiser.
- B. Buildings and Grounds:
 - a. The council reviewed the items they are purchasing for Property Improvement:
 - i. A price was established for the purchase of tables and chairs for the gathering area and Sunday school rooms.
 - ii. An estimated price was received to start on the patio in front of Church.
 - iii. New flooring for the gathering area.A motion was made, seconded, and carried to approve the expenditure of the building and grounds purchase of items up to \$75,000.
 - b. Tim mentioned to the council that there have been a couple of donations given to the church.
 - i. A donation was given to pressure wash the brick on the building.
 - ii. A donation was given to purchase seat cushions for the pews.
 - c. Tim met with American Glass and Mirror to receive an estimate to replace the broken window in the steeple and price out the replacement of the doors in the back.
- C. A discussion was had to bring back the option to opt in to receive an electronic version of the Church Newsletter. Pastor Ted will report back to Rae and Audrey addressing the start of electronic newsletters.
- D. Pastor Ted proposed that the Church Council appoint a Church Property Task force. The task force will oversee obtaining statements from the city regarding a parking lot, investigate purchase and sale of property, identify options to move towards the church building a parking lot, and bring a preferred proposal to the council. A motion was made, seconded, and carried to approve that the church council will appoint a task force to investigate options for the best use of our existing church properties for the purpose of a future church parking lot.

Ministry Team Updates:

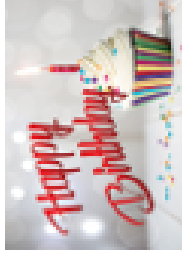
- A. Personnel Committee: The members of the council reviewed the quarterly report. They have completed the following accomplishment.
 - a. Working on a Personnel Handbook.
 - b. Completed all employee reviews.
 - c. Staff covered and discussed Grievance Policy.
 - d. Developed a communication plan for worship volunteers.
 - e. Developed a plan and timeline for the Monthly Newsletter.
 - f. Developed a plan to keep the website current.
- B. Children's Ministry Team: The council members reviewed the quarterly report. They have completed the following accomplishment.
 - a. Sunday school hosting social hour has been successful.
 - b. Positive feedback on the children starting in church and aligning lessons to sermon.
 - c. Discussed different VBS options.

The council brought up organizing and branching out each youth group. Cayla, Jaime, and Teresa from the council will be working on organizing these groups with the Children's Ministry Team.

Motion was made, seconded, and carried to adjourn the meeting at 8:51 p.m. Meeting was adjourned followed by the Lord's prayer.

Respectfully Submitted,
Teresa Latzke, Secretary

April 2024



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1	2	3	4	5	6
	Dominick Rosario Henrik Shutes	Derek Gruhn Travis Latour Katy Potter Deana Siekmann	Angela Koepp Melissa Seaver Bonnie Vinkemeier Andy Weldon	Piper Potter Katelyn Schmit	Larissa Ruud Riley Stier Graham Teas	Lilie Adelman Jesse Lutterman Milton Meierbachtol Ann Pederson April Stier
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
	Lana Hanson Nathan Muehlenhardt Alec Ruud Danika Schroeder	Will Steinhagen	Beth Beuch Cassie Funk Jake Mercado Colin Sammons Alicia Shutes	Vivian Hermann Alex Hoff	Klint Bristlio Nicole Schultz	Teresa Bratsch LeAnn Dahn Peyton Schwichtenberg Kya Williamson
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
Grayson Klaverkamp Tyler Moylan Clint Widmer	Joseph Adelmans Cooper Hasek Allison Skluzacek	Emma Martin Cody Schultz	Matthew Kes		Sophia Petersen Sabrina Sammons	Judy Brown Sally Simcox
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
Armando Jo Rosario Bruce Volek	Jackson Lillmoen	Armin Dahn Sandy Schultz Bonnie Tromnes	Hunter Hornaman Larry Ruehling Jase Sanoye	Bennett Grant Jackson Korbel Nolan Lutterman	Christopher Hiles Diane Latour Jannie Lindahl Chris Stier Samantha Tharaldson	Andreas Andert Nathan Jackels
28	29	30				
Kade Skelley	Isabella Koepp Dominica Wolf	Jennifer Fairbanks Colt Henke Bailey Kes				

April 2024

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1	2	3	4	5	6
	5:30 pm Worship Committee meeting 6:30 pm Boy Scouts 6:30 pm Personnel Committee meeting	11:00 Lutheran Home Service 1:00 pm Quilting 1:30 pm Kingsway Service	5:20pm Pizza 6:00 Worship Service 6:00 pm Connect/Confirmation 6:45 pm 1 st Communion Instruction 7:00 pm Worship Choir	5:00 pm TOPS		
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
8:00 & 9:15 Worship Services 9:15 Sunday School 10:30 Private Party in Gathering Area 4:30 pm Girl Scout meetings	6:30 pm Church Council 6:30 pm Boy Scouts	1:00 pm Quilting 5:00 pm WELCA meeting	10:00 Bus Company Training 4:00 pm Book Club 5:20pm Pizza 6:00 Worship Service 6:00 pm Connect/Confirmation 6:45 pm 1 st Communion Instruction 7:00 pm Worship Choir	5:00 pm TOPS		
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
8:00 & 9:15 Worship Services 9:15 Sunday School 12:00 – 7:00 Wild Game Feed	6:30 pm Boy Scouts	1:00 pm Quilting 6:30 pm Stewardship Committee meeting	5:20pm Pizza 6:00 Worship Service 6:00 pm Connect/Confirmation 7:00 pm Worship Choir	5:00 pm TOPS		
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
8:00 & 9:15 Worship Services Last Day of Sunday School 4:30 pm Girl Scout meeting	6:30 pm Boy Scouts	6:30 pm Cub Scout Pack meeting	5:20pm Pizza 6:00 Worship Service 6:00 pm Connect/Confirmation 7:00 pm Worship Choir	5:00 pm TOPS		
28	29	30				
8:00 & 9:15 Worship Services	6:30 pm Boy Scouts					



April Altar Guild: Sandra Schultz

April 7 Worship Assistants	
Coffee Time: Randy & Deb Kruger	
April 10 Pizza Kitchen Helpers: April 10 Pizza Patrol:	
8:00	9:15
Greeters: Joyce Nyblom Lay Reader: Deana Siekmann Communion Assistants: Deana & Brian Siekmann, Jan Effinger Ushers: James & John Karl, Dan Herrmann, Tim Bristlin	Greeters: Anita Lambrecht Reader: Beth Beuch Communion Assistants: Beth Beuch, Steve Schroeder, Dave Bungarden Ushers: Dave & Sara Bungarden, Ron & Dianne Rasmussen

April 14 Worship Assistants	
Coffee Time: Henning & Theis Families	
April 17 Pizza Kitchen Helpers: Amanda Bert, Trisha Anderson April 17 Pizza Patrol:	
8:00	9:15
Greeters: Terry & Angie Kahle Lay Reader: Angie Kahle Communion Assistants: Rob & Sandy Schultz, Kirk Franck Ushers: James & John Karl, Dan Herrmann, Tim Bristlin	Greeters: Ron & Diane Rasmussen Lay Reader: Linda Reuben Communion Assistants: Linda Reuben, Chris & Annette Moylan Ushers: Dave & Sara Bungarden, Ron & Dianne Rasmussen

April 21 Worship Assistants	
Coffee Time: Sunday School Treats	
April 24 Pizza Kitchen Helpers: April 24 Pizza Patrol:	
8:00	9:15
Greeters: Lowell & Laurie Hiles Lay Reader: Jodi Savage Communion Assistants: Jodi Savage, Matt & Kristin Stier Ushers: Brian Schmidt, Jonathan Schmidt, Jaso Schmidt, Doug Hillstrom, Dave Latzke, Jerold Stauffacher	Greeters: Cindy Schoenbauer, Jenny Petty Lay Reader: Phoebe Einertson Communion Assistances: Phoebe Einertson, Teresa latzke, Sara Bungarden Ushers: Scott & Tricia Ruud

April 28 Worship Assistants	
Coffee Time:	
May 1 Pizza Kitchen Helpers: May 1 Pizza Patrol:	
8:00	9:15
Greeters: Carol Schultz Lay Reader: Albert Koepf Communion Assistants: Jerold & Kathy Stauffacher, Sharon Adelman Ushers: Brian Schmidt, Jonathan Schmidt, Jason Schmidt, Doug Hillstrom, Dave Latzke, Jerold Stauffacher	Greeters: Kevin & Sandi Wolpern Lay Reader: Sandi Wolpern Communion Assistances: Sandi Wolpern, Abby Kubes, Lynn Jeurissen Ushers: Scott & Tricia Ruud

Financial Corner

St. John Financial Results Two Months Ending February 28, 2024 and February 28, 2023

General Operating Fund			Year Over Year
	February 29, 2024	February 28, 2023	Increase (Decrease)
Income	\$ 53,326	\$ 46,578	14%
Expenses:			
Personnel	(38,459)	(39,897)	
Office	(3,702)	(2,433)	
Property & Maintenance	(7,365)	(8,199)	
Ministry Teams	(2,035)	(2,394)	
Other	(1,752)	(1,095)	
Benevolence:			
Minneapolis Area Synod	(2,200)	(2,200)	
Camp Onomia	(500)	(500)	
Net Receipts / (Expenditures)	<u>\$ (2,687)</u>	<u>\$ (10,140)</u>	
Cash Balance at January 1	\$ 48,424	\$ 69,619	
Net Income / (Expenditures)	(2,687)	(10,140)	
Misc. cash not affecting income	(123)	(127)	
Cash Balance at end of February	<u>\$ 45,614</u>	<u>\$ 59,352</u>	

Property Improvement Fund

	February 29, 2024	February 28, 2023
Income (Donations, Rent, Investments)	15,039	21,521
Expenses	<u>(2,969)</u>	<u>(4,684)</u>
Net Receipts / (Disbursements)	<u>12,070</u>	<u>16,837</u>
Hayden House Loan Balance at January 1	121,503	125,664
Principal Payments	<u>(695)</u>	<u>(656)</u>
Hayden House Loan Balance at February 29	<u>120,808</u>	<u>125,008</u>
Liquid Assets at February 29	<u>203,965</u>	<u>182,581</u>

CALLED TO SERVE THROUGH OUR GIVING	
Offering Received the week of	
February 15-21 General Fund—\$4,241 Improvement Fund—\$1,350	February 22-28 General Fund—\$5,177 Improvement Fund—\$616
February 29– March 6 General Fund— \$6,031 Improvement Fund- \$910	March 7-13 General Fund— \$4,521 Improvement Fund- \$4,885
March 14-20 General Fund— \$3,037 Improvement Fund- \$560	

St. John Lutheran Church
148 S. Chestnut St.
Belle Plaine 56011

Non-Profit Organization
U.S. Postage Paid
Permit No. 16
Belle Plaine, MN 56011

Change Service Requested

St. John is one of 4 area churches that help deliver meals within the city limits of Belle Plaine.

Each church takes 1 week a month to deliver meals Monday through Friday.

We need 5 volunteers to help 1 day for 1 hour per month.

If you can help, please call:
Marlys Koepp at 952-873-4445

Or

The church office at 952-873-6492



St. John's High School Mission Trip youth will be hosting a fund raising garage sale May 2nd, 3rd, and 4th. The sale will be held in the youth room. Please bring donations up to two weeks prior and leave them downstairs in the youth room. All left over merchandise (with the exception of books) will be donated to VINE thrift store in Mankato. VINE provides a wide range of services for aging adults. Books will be donated to Hennepin County Medical Center's sharing library.

Clean out your closets, donate what someone else could use, come back to shop, and help our kids too!

We Aren't Able to Accept:

• Mattresses, box springs, computers and related electronic equipment, tube televisions, gas appliances, paint, chemicals, hutches, rugs, bed frames, headboards, footboards, curtain rods and blinds, car seats, entertainment centers, or exercise equipment.