

ST. JOHN LUTHERAN CHURCH MESSENGER

CALLED TO WORSHIP / COMMITTED TO SERVE / CONNECTED IN FAITH

January 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



Mark it on Your Calendar!

January 28, 2024 will be St. John's Annual Congregational Meeting

8:00 Worship Service

9:15 Sunday School

9:15 Annual Meeting

Reminder that all committee reports for the
annual report are due January 5th.

Thank you

From Pastor Ted

What's Coming In 2024?

It seems I ask myself every new year, "What's ahead? What's going to happen? What do I want to happen? What can I do to make those things happen this year?"

At St. John, we will be doing the same great ministry we have been for decades, actually, for over a century. We will focus our efforts on providing uplifting inspiring worship, great youth and children's ministry, faith growth opportunities for adults and reaching out with Christ's love to the people of Belle Plaine and the surrounding area. But there is one **new, old thing** we want to happen in 2024.

It is time for us to get our committees functioning at a high level again.

I have heard and seen that committee life at St. John took a big hit during covid and has been slow to bounce back. Some committees are not meeting. Some meet only when necessary or sporadically. With the New Year, it is the time to make changes to this situation. Committees provide some vital things for the life of a congregation.

- Committees get people involved in the actual hands-on work of the congregation. The people involved in the committee are the ones best suited to make decisions because they know what is going on in that area of the church's ministry and they care. When committees are active the best decisions are being made and thus the most effective ministry is taking place, and the work can be very rewarding.
- Committees provide a place for people to put their faith into practice. Sure, there is some planning and decision making involved but then, concrete ways to make a difference emerge as the committee puts its plan into action. People actively involved in committees have a way to be involved in things they are passionate about like children and youth ministry, worship life, the larger community or Bible study or small groups or providing social connections, building community, the list goes on and on.
- Committees have a big impact on the direction of the congregation's ministry efforts. Church Councils work best when they empower committees to make decisions and do the work of the church. Pushing as much decision making as possible down to the people who are the hands-on planners and workers avoids the bottleneck some Councils can become. When committees have permission to go do the work of the church within broad boundaries, they can create new ministries for unmet needs, do old things in new ways that bring a freshness to church life, and they have a giant impact on what gets done in the church.
- Finally, committees provide social connections for the people involved. Friendships are created when you work with someone on important matters or matters that are important to you. Generating ideas, the give and take of decision making and putting a plan into action create positive bonds as the goal is accomplished.

We will be organizing committees at our Annual Meeting as in the past. The "**new, old thing**" is that the Council has set a goal of having every committee meet in February to get organized and functioning for the year. The Council will be asking the committees to 1.) Clarify what they understand is their purpose or role in the church, 2.) Plan their committee's own goals or agenda for the coming year, and 3.) Identify the committee's priorities or vision for the next 1 to 3 years. And then empower the committees to go out and do those very things.

Part of this transition time, getting ready to call a new pastor, is making sure our committees are highly functioning groups so that we are ready to move ahead into the promising future God holds for St. John.

Please pray that God would lead us forward in this coming year and into new priorities for our ministry together.



If you have an announcement for the bulletin, please let the office know by noon Thursday so it can be added.

Is your group planning a meeting in the church? Please let the office know so it can be put on the calendar to make sure the doors will be unlocked for you.

The deadline for newsletter articles is the 15th of each month. This is to make sure it get into the newsletter and that the newsletter gets out on time.

TRANSITION UPDATE

Thank you for the great response to my invitation for conversation. I have visited with many of you about St. John and such things as: what you like best, what we do well, what we should be doing, top priorities going forward and lots of just getting to know you stuff. Thank you. My report will come out in time for the Annual Meeting and I plan to give an update about what's next in the transition process at that time. Here's a prayer to consider as we continue to navigate this time of transition.

Gracious God, you have blessed and sustained us for many years and have given us this life together as St John Lutheran Church. Be with us now, we pray, as we enter this new time in our life together. We ask for your guidance through this time of change and transition. Help us to see through the eyes of faith the good future you hold for us. Give us courage to follow where you lead, patience for the in-between time and vision to see a new future. We pray in the name of Jesus who leads us, Amen.



January Children's Ministry Update

Happy New Year! We pray the 2024 year has many blessings in store for you and your family.

We would like to thank all the children who participated in the Christmas program. The program was a unique and fun way for the Sunday School Children to share the story of Jesus' birth. We hope you enjoyed the program as much as we did! A BIG thank you to all of the children, teachers, and all other volunteers. A special thanks to Rachel Kelm and Emily Aust for arranging the program and music.

Our first story theme of 2024 will focus on Jesus's baptism.

Important Dates:

- **Sunday, January 7th:** Sunday School resumes
 - **Sunday, January 21st:** Sunday School Children sing during 8am service
- Annual Meeting during Sunday School Hour - movie, snacks, and activities in youth room for children

2024 HIGH SCHOOL MISSION TRIP is being planned for July 7-12th, 2024 for Students in grades 8-12. (during the 2023-2024 School year)

There is still time to sign up for the 2024 Senior High Mission Trip to Benton Harbor, MI, through Youth Works. Contact Tim or Molly Moonen or Kirk Franck if you're interested.

Watch for ways to support the cost of the trip. You can help now by making a donation for the trip or by buying script cards.



**WORSHIP
VOLUNTEER
opportunities**



We need you!

We have a variety of Volunteer opportunities here at St John's **for all ages** to participate and take an active role in our Worship services! **We first want to Thank the many dedicated volunteers we currently have!!** It's a great way to serve, get to know other members, and get involved to praise the Lord.

We encourage you to consider volunteering for any of the following roles:

- | | |
|----------------------|------------------------|
| Greeters | Worship Video |
| Lay Readers | Ushers |
| Communion Assistants | Altar Guild |
| Powerpoint operator | Coffee Servers |
| | Help serve at funerals |

Please call the Church office at 952-873-6492 to inquire about any of these roles that are important for our church services and Audrey will have a member call you back to explain and answer any questions you have and get you started. We hope to hear from you soon.

Unapproved St. John Lutheran Church Council Minutes
December 11th, 2023

President Ben Aust called the meeting to order at 6:38 p.m.

Present:

X	Pastor Ted	X	Ben Aust		Chris Schultz	X	Albert Koepf
X	Jan Effinger		Teresa Latzke	X	Anne Herrmann	X	Steve Kelm
	Jaime Petersen		Cayla Menke		Tim Moonen		
X	Jerold Stauffacher						

Opening Devotions:

Pastor Ted opened up with a passage from John Chapter 1 and a prayer.

Approval of Minutes:

Members of Council in attendance reviewed the minutes from November 13, 2023 Council Meeting. Motion was made, seconded and carried to approve the meeting minutes from November pending affirmation of absent council members. A motion was made, seconded and carried to approve the agenda for December 11th, 2023 pending affirmation of absent council members.

Pastor Ted Report:

December Pastor's Report

I participated in the ecumenical Thanksgiving Service. I saw St John families and individuals in attendance. I also noted St John members in the choir. Given this was my first service, I think it seems to be a good community event for St John to be involved in. It promotes goodwill between churches and encourages the pastors to work together. Several members mentioned to me how much they appreciated being at the service and seeing the Belle Plaine community come together.

Wednesday night confirmation and worship continues. I have recently had about a half dozen individuals or couples tell me how much they like having young people at the service. These same people have indicated that they enjoy the message being the confirmation lesson and say that they are learning (or re-learning) Old Testament material.

The Connect and Confirmation students and leaders attended Feed My Starving Children for a service night on December 6th.

Wednesday night lessons will shift from the Old Testament to Jesus birth and the New Testament during the month of December.

We had 2 baptisms in November with one of them during Wednesday night worship. The one family I previously mentioned that is interested in joining the church is worshiping regularly on either Sunday or Wednesday.

I contacted people by phone that have had illnesses, medical emergencies or are on the shut-in list. I offer to visit in their home if they would like – so do some do not. We have two members at The Lutheran home that I visit each month as well as a member of one of our church families who is on hospice. I conduct a monthly service at Kingsway and stay after to visit, if the residents stay.

The transition interview process is going well. I have interviews several days each week. Almost all the November slots were taken. The December slots filled up one Sunday after church with young families. I am offering daytime and after-work hours options. I expect to wrap up the visits in December but will offer times in January if it is needed.

I met with the Personnel Committee in December. We are planning to begin meeting monthly.

Staff Reports:

A: Wanda's Staff Report - Members of Council reviewed Wanda's custodian report. Pastor Ted will report back to Wanda addressing any concerns.

B: Rae's Staff Report - Rae's report was reviewed by members of the council. Pastor Ted will report back to Rae addressing any concerns.

C: Audrey's Staff Report - Audrey's report was reviewed by the members of the council. Pastor Ted will report back to Audrey addressing any concerns.

Motion as made, seconded and carried to accept reports as written pending affirmation from absent council members.

Treasurer:

- A. Script Card Budget - Executive Committees Budget Plan: A discussion was had that resulted in a motion being made to cap the Script Card Inventory at \$3,000 and a report on the impact of this limitation be reviewed in six months. The motion was seconded and carried pending affirmation from absent council members.
- B. ELCA Congregational Audit: The Nominating Committee recommends creating a pool of 5-6 individuals with financial backgrounds to perform the Congregational Audit. Having a pool of individuals allows committee members to roll on and off the committee each year so that one new member joins each year.
- C. Jerold reported offerings continue to be down and while expenses have also been down, he needed to transfer funds that were set aside for Strategic Planning to pay expenses. He also noted that the budgeted donations have not been made. A discussion was had on stewardship and future trends.

Transfers:

- A. In: None
- B. Out: None

Ongoing Business:

- A. Church Roll Update: Audrey started to update the membership status of the youngest members from active to baptized according to the guidelines set forth in the Congregation's Constitution.
- B. Venmo Account: Jerold updated the council members that someone will need to add a line to their account at the approximate cost of \$25 a month in order to complete the Venmo account setup.

New Business:

- A. 2024 Budget:
 - i. Jerold highlighted the changes to the 2024 budget noting the following:
 - ii. Switching Garbage Providers
 - iii. Increase in Banking Fees
 - iv. Increase in Camp Onamia Expenditure
 - v. New IT Support Service Provider
 - vi. New Snow Removal Expenditure
 - vii. Motion was made, seconded and carried pending affirmation from absent council members via email to accept the proposed 2024 budget.
- B. January Council Meeting/Membership list:
 - i. In support of the Annual Meeting on January 28th:
 - i) There will be one service at 8 a.m.
 - ii) The Annual meeting and Sunday School will start at 9:15 a.m.
 - iii) Council will supply Coffee Hour
 - iv) Communication of the Annual Meeting will be included in the Messenger, bulletins, and displayed on website and monitors.
- C. 2024 Committee Goal Setting
 - i. Pastor Ted shared a Goal Setting worksheet for committees that he intends to use as a guideline to provide clarity and structure for committees. Council members in attendance provided favorable feedback.
 - ii. Committees should designate a Chairperson and be informed of their budgets and decision-making authority, if applicable.

Ministry Team Updates:

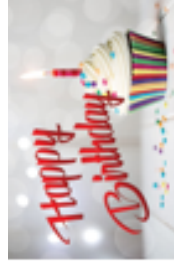
- A. Stewardship Committee - did not meet
- B. Buildings and Grounds Committee - did not meet
- C. Personnel Committee - shared a report on their activities.
- D. Children's Ministry Team - Christmas Program went well.
- E. Small Group/Faith Formation Committee - Requested the Time and Talent sheet be included in the Messenger.
- F. Worship and Music Committee - nothing new to report.
- G. Technology and Communications Committee - A list of updates have been made. A motion was made, seconded and approved to purchase new laptops from the technology budget pending affirmation from absent council members..
- H. Nomination Committee - See Treasurer's Report - ELCA Congregational Audit

Motion was made, seconded, and carried to adjourn the meeting at 8:25 p.m. Meeting was adjourned followed by the Lord's prayer.

Respectfully Submitted,

Anne Herrmann
Council Member

January 2024



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1	2	3	4	5	6
	Eliroy Koepp Hope Lawler Sean Lawler Jenny Petty	Diane Stier		Melissa Arola Brad Latzke	Matthew Fink Aspen Grapentine Steve Latzke Megan Schmidt	
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
Rhett Traxler	Minnie Aust Donna Cooper Violet Holtberg Olivia Jeurissen Weston Mellgren	Jason Grubn		Joyce Chaves Owen Herrmann Jeff Petersen Jodi Savage McKinley Schwartz	Shannon Hansen Montana Meyer Ron Rasmussen Nolan Swenson Troy Armstrong	Kevin Bauleke
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
Sharon Adelmann Dale Schmidt Cindy Schoenbauer	Arlene Latzke	Tanya Edwards Amanda Schultz	Faith Adelmann Scarlett Wolf		Earl Gransee Ryland Johnson Dick Peterson Pamela Shackle	Klara Hager Ashton Holbrook Easton Wolf
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
Tara Henke Isla Sinnamon Amalia Traxler Juliette Traxler	Brian Hillstrom	Scott Hagen Grant Johnson Aaron Leonard Alyssa St. Germain	Blake Andert James Carter Tony Theis Andre Westerfield	Jason Hagen Clara Meierbachtol Maxum Meyer Carol Schultz Joshua Wolf Terry Zellman	Thomas Chaves Jim Kerr Jennifer Korbel Michael Kritzman	Elijah Hoff Noelle Hoff Pierce Nagorski Piper VanZummeren
28	29	30	31			
Trevor Grubn Mark Johnson Teresa Latzke Emily Nagel	Robin Burkman Cole Hanek Stella Hansen	Bryan Holzemer Carter Johnson Garrett Korbel Renee Meuleners	Larry Hanson Charlie Schwartz			

January 2024

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1 New Years Day Office Closed	2 11:00 Lutheran Home Service 1:30 pm Kingsway Service	3 12:00pm Student Council Retreat 6:00 pm Worship Service	4 5:00 pm TOPS	5 Deadline for Annual Report items	6
7 8:00 & 9:15 Worship Services 9:15 Sunday School 4:30 pm Girl Scout meeting 4:30 pm Girl Scout meeting	8 6:30 pm Boy Scout meeting	9	10 4:00 pm Book Club 4:30 pm Personnel Committee 5:20 pm Pizza 6:00 pm Connect/Confirmation 6:00 pm Worship Service 7:00 pm Worship Choir	11 5:00 pm TOPS	12	13
14 8:00 & 9:15 Worship Services 9:15 Sunday School 4:30 pm Girl Scout meeting	15 Newsletter Article Deadline 6:30 pm Boy Scout meeting 6:30 pm Church Council	16	17 5:20 pm Pizza 6:00 pm Connect/Confirmation 6:00 pm Worship Service 7:00 pm Worship Choir	18 5:00 pm TOPS	19	20
21 8:00 & 9:15 Worship Services 9:15 Sunday School 1:00 pm Cub Scout Pack meeting	22 6:30 pm Boy Scout meeting	23	24 4 5:20 pm Pizza 6:00 pm Connect/Confirmation 6:00 pm Worship Service 7:00 pm Worship Choir	25 5:00 pm TOPS	26	27
28 Annual Meeting 8:00 Worship Service 9:15 Sunday School 9:15 Annual Meeting	29 6:30 pm Boy Scout meeting	30	31 5:20 pm Pizza 6:00 pm Connect/Confirmation 6:00 pm Worship Service 7:00 pm Worship Choir			



January Altar Guild: Jan Effinger & Zoe & Andi Otting

January 7 Worship Assistants	
Coffee Hour:	January 10 Pizza Helpers: January 10 Pizza Patrol:
8:00	9:15
Greeters: Kevin & Sandi Wolpern Lay Reader: Sandi Wolpern Communion Assistants: Jerod & Kathy Stauffacher, Dave Latzke Ushers: James & John Karl, Dan Herrmann, Tim Bristlin	Greeters: Kenny & Wendy Theis Lay Reader: Phoebe Einertson Communion Assistants: Pehoebe Einertson, Peg Longhenry, Cindy Schoenbauer Ushers: Scott & Tricia Ruud , Alex Ruud, Griffin Ruud, Jerry Meger

January 14 Worship Assistants	
Coffee Hour:	January 17 Pizza Helpers: Molly Holm, Mandy Posthumus January 17 Pizza Patrol:
8:00	9:15
Greeters: Sharon Adelman Lay Reader: Angie Kahle Communion Assistants: Sharon Adelman, Greg & Linda Schwichtenberg Ushers: Brian Schmidt , Jonathan Schmidt, Jason Schmidt, Doug Hillstrom, Dave Latzke, Jerold Stauffacher	Greeters: Brent & Wendy Koepf Reader: Brent Koepf Communion Assistants: Brent Koepf, Tim Moonen, Sara Bungarden Ushers: Brent Koepf , Mitchell Koepf, Jackson Stauffacher, Justin Stauffacher, Tim Moonen

January 21 Worship Assistants	
Coffee Hour:	January 24–Pizza Helpers: Shara Hiles, Aimee Cecka January 24– Pizza Patrol:
8:00	9:15
Greeters: Lowell & Laurie Hiles Lay Reader: Mindy Chevalier Communion Assistants: Angela Faucette, Marc & Mindy Chevalier Ushers: Brian Schmidt , Jonathan Schmidt, Jason Schmidt, Doug Hillstrom, Dave Latzke, Jerold Stauffacher	Greeters: Sue Koenig Lay Reader: Steve Schroeder Communion Assistants: Steve Schroeder, Lynn Jeurissen, Renee Meuleners Ushers: Brent Koepf , Mitchell Koepf, Jackson Stauffacher, Justin Stauffacher, Tim Moonen

January 28 Worship Assistants	
Coffee Hour: 8th Grade Confirmation Class	January 31- Pizza Helpers: January 31– Pizza Patrol:
8:00	9:15
Greeters: Brian & Jonathan Schmidt Lay Reader: Bryn Davis Communion Assistants: Nick & Bryn Davis, Terry Siemon Ushers: Marc & Mindy Chevalier , Abby Kubes, Joshua Sparby, Lydia Sparby	Annual meeting

Financial Corner

St. John Financial Results Eleven Months Ended November 30, 2023 and November 30, 2022

General Operating Fund			Year Over Year
	November 30, 2023	November 30, 2022	Increase (Decrease)
Income *	\$ 293,630	\$ 359,456	-18%
Expenses:			
Personnel	(214,672)	(198,103)	
Office	(15,246)	(16,702)	
Property & Maintenance	(51,037)	(41,148)	
Ministry	(21,671)	(20,357)	
Other	(3,547)	(6,087)	
Benevolence:			
Minneapolis Area Synod	(12,100)	(13,100)	
Camp Onomia	(2,750)	(3,000)	
Cristo Obrero	-	(2,000)	
Foodshelf	-	(1,500)	
Missionary	-	(2,000)	
Belle Plaine Fire Dept	(300)	(300)	
Lutheran Social Services	(1,500)	(1,500)	
Net Receipts / (Expenditures)	\$ (29,193)	\$ 53,659	
Cash Balance at January 1 (excl. all loans)	\$ 69,619	\$ 7,829	
Net Income / (Expenditures)	(29,193)	53,659	
Misc. cash not affecting income	719	162	
Cash Balance at November 30	\$ 41,145	\$ 61,650	

* 2022 Includes \$40K Employee Retention Credit (ERC). 2023 is down 8% from 2022 without considering ERC.

Property Improvement Fund

	November 30, 2023	
Income (Donations, Rent, Investments)	91,256	
Expenses (Prop Taxes, Repairs, Ins, Mortg Interes)	(74,346)	Includes \$43.5K for three new HVAC units
Net Receipts / (Disbursements)	16,910	
Hayden House Loan Balance at January 1	125,664	
Principal Payments	(3,800)	
Hayden House Loan Balance at November 30	121,864	
Liquid Assets at November 30, 2023	179,410	

CALLED TO SERVE THROUGH OUR GIVING	
Offering Received the week of	
November 23-29 General Fund—\$2,789 Improvement Fund—\$671	November 30– December 6 General Fund—\$7,426 Improvement Fund—\$1,330
December 7-13 General Fund— \$7,402 Improvement Fund- \$3,727	December 14-20 General Fund— \$5,534 Improvement Fund- \$190

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

Mark it on Your Calendar!
January 28, 2024 will be St. John's Annual Congregational
Meeting
 8:00 Worship Service
 9:15 Sunday School
 9:15 Annual Meeting

HEGGIES SINCE 1988 PIZZA	
Description	Large Price (12" approx)
Double Cheese The ultimate cheese-lover's pizza, topped with cheddar and mozzarella.	\$11.00 20 oz.
Pepperoni Covered from edge to edge with pepperoni and mozzarella cheese.	\$11.00 21 oz.
Sausage and Pepperoni Featuring sausage, pepperoni and mozzarella cheese.	\$12.00 26 oz.
Six Pack Made with 4 meats and 2 cheeses. Loaded with sausage, pepperoni, Canadian bacon, bacon, cheddar and mozzarella.	\$13.00 30 oz.
Chicken Alfredo Made with garlic chicken, creamy alfredo sauce and mozzarella cheese on a thick, seasoned, hand-stretched crust.	\$13.00 29 oz.
Breakfast Pizza Made with country sausage, bacon, scrambled eggs, green onions, cheddar, mozzarella and country gravy.	\$13.00 27 oz.
Cauliflower Crust Sausage & Pepperoni Cauliflower crust pizza topped with sausage, pepperoni, and mozzarella cheese	\$14.00 22.2 oz.
Cauliflower Crust Margherita Cauliflower crust pizza topped with tomato, basil, garlic and sliced mozzarella cheese	\$14.00 17.6 oz.

Heggies Pizza

The mission trip group will be selling Heggies Pizza now through January 17th, with delivery January 31.

Check out the list and contact Molly and Tim Moonen or Kirk Franek to order.

Please support the 2024 Mission Trip.