

February 2024 Newsletter

Pastor's Message:

Dear Partners in the Gospel,

There's God's world out there-where some things are downright bad, and some things are better than they seem! There are definitely conflicts and destruction going on that are just awful, and evil. Wars in Gaza and Ukraine come to mind. Culture wars (for what purpose?) also come to mind. This past year was the warmest on record, with the largest wildfires on record. That's not good news.

On the flip side, crime in general is not rising overall, despite what many people think! The economy has not tanked like many people expected. Poverty around the world has been shrinking. A first of its kind Malaria vaccine has arrived!

The future does not offer a rosy scenario, or a gloom and doom one. But the future is a call for people of faith to live like this actually is God's world, and we really are God's people! The letter of 2nd Peter addresses serious 'end of the world' thoughts. And Peter asks this question: What sort of persons ought you to be in leading lives of holiness and godliness, waiting for and hastening the coming of the day of God?

That's always a good question! What sort of persons ought we to be? People who are eternal optimists? People who are angry and anxious? People who are cynical? People who have all the answers? People who find the future to be scary? None of the above?

Peter supplies the obvious answer: We're to be those who lead lives of holiness and godliness today, tomorrow, and the next day, regardless of what else is going on in the news cycle, in the natural world, or within our own lives and households.

Ash Wednesday arrives early this year (Feb. 14! That means Easter comes early too!) I always think of the season of Lent as a time for asking good questions, and doing some good reflecting, and taking note of what is going on in the world around us, and discerning where God is at work, and where God seeks to put us to work.

We'll use our time together in Lent to focus on what kind of persons we can be, and what sort of lives we can live, since we are God's beloved children! That may help us make a difference in this needy, amazing, troubled, promising world-which God still manages to love!

-Pastor Paul

Wednesdays in Lent=Ash Wednesday is on Valentine's Day! Join in worship at 11:00 or 6:30, and we'll start on our series called *Clothe Yourselves with Christ!* We'll follow Paul's instructions in Colossians 3 to put on kindness, humility, meekness, and love! We're bumping up our evening service time a bit and hope that works for you!

Wednesday lunches will begin on Feb. 21 after the 11am service.

What about Wednesday suppers? We can keep it simple and quick, at 6pm! Anyone interested? Would you be able to bring something? We'll have sign-ups out!

Year to Date December 2023

+YTD General Fund

Receipts: \$ 243,768

Expenses: \$ 225,171

Thank you for your regular offerings and to those who have signed up for electronic giving. We sure did generous giving in 2023!

+YTD Building & Grounds Fund:

Receipts: \$ 51,500 Expenses: \$ 16,617

+YTD Missionary Sponsorship:

\$ 13,100 Goal for 2023: \$6,000

+YTD ELCA Benevolence:

\$ 23,967 Goal for 2023: \$15,000

+YTD Good Samaritan (Needs some help!)

\$ 14,548 (We've had some significant needs)

Fat Tuesday at Culver's in Jackson! From 4pm -7pm on the 13th, we'll have a fundraiser to provide backpack meals for kids at Jackson School. We'll also need some teens/families/adults to wait tables that evening and represent St. John's! *This is one of our community outreach activities.*

Veterans' Group meets Tuesday February 13 at 9am in the Upper Room! *While we're thinking about those who serve, remember service members: Aaron Reid, Ben Brandt, Nadea Oestrich, and recruit Logan Lemberger (USMC basic training), in your prayers! When we get an address for Logan, you can send a note of encouragement!*

Your "Noisy Offerings" and the proceeds from the Bake Sale made possible these ELCA World Hunger gifts (from the Good Gifts catalog): 1 goat, a flock of chicks, a rooster, a piglet, Sunday School supplies for 5 kids, mosquito nets for beds, 3 blankets, water filter, food backpack, feed 10 people at a shelter, healthcare for 2 kids, fruit tree seeds, garden tools. *Thanks to kids and adults for these small gifts that make a difference!*

Fitness and Fellowship" continues to meet through the winter at 9am on Wednesdays. Gather in the lower level. Friends are welcome, of course!

Crossways Camps Registration is open! Students finishing 6th, 7th, 8th grades are expected to come to Confirmation Camp the week of July 7-12. Other ages can sign up for a half-week or full week of camp at Imago Dei Village, Pine Lake, or Waypost camps. *If you have a kid who is eager to go, let's find a date and encourage some others to register as well!* www.crosswayscamps.org

We'd love to have some additional volunteers to usher and greet at worship! Let Nancy know if you prefer 8:00 or 9:45 service. *Thanks to all of you who play a role in welcoming and in worshipping!*

If you'd like a copy of the Annual Report emailed or mailed to you, let us know!

Monday Study at 9am meets with Pastor in the Upper Room. We could include you at home via Zoom as well, if you'd like to participate that way! Let Pastor know.

Quilters will begin meeting 2 times each month to work on their 2024 quilt project. February meetings will be at 10:00 on Monday February 5th and 19th.

Our wonderful "getting to know you" page has taken a little break. Thanks to Amy Reid for enlisting and editing those biographies of members! Watch for the next edition. Let's take some quick snapshots of St. John's and the year past and the year ahead for this "getting to know you page!"

2023 was a good year in many respects!

+Attendance is back to near pre-pandemic levels. Online worshippers add to that.

+Sunday School is growing again! We thank Christy Abt and Chris Guslick-our two main leaders-for their devotion to the kids; and for you parents who are finding the time in your busy weekends to bring kids. Thank you for thinking of families you know whom you can invite!

+We thanked Cassidy Bohling and Michael Novotny for being our Youth Ministry Interns for several years, when it was really challenging to gather students. Right now, Jamie Reidy is taking the lead, and welcomes teens and adults who will help us focus on students and activities that help them grow as a group, and as persons.

+We're helping support Michael Novotny in his year of service in the UK, with our ELCA Young Adults in Global Mission program!

+We did some really good 'extra mile' giving in 2023, which we hoped would happen after paying off our building loan! Our ELCA Mission Support and Missionary Sponsorship giving grew significantly. And our General Fund and Building Fund did fine too! Thank you! Asante sana! (Swahili for 'thank you very much!')

+We welcomed Leanne Ports to fill a council seat vacated by Jennifer Binversie. Leanne's role and interest on council is to head-up our Community Outreach Team, and she's also committed to organizing folks who will visit shut-ins.

+One of our own-Linda Grosser-serves on our Greater Milwaukee Synod Council, and the Executive Committee! That's a big job, and helps remind us that we're part of the larger church nearby, across the country, and around the world.

+Speaking of our Greater Milwaukee Synod, you folks made possible \$29,000 in giving and pledges towards our Synod's "Equipping the Saints" campaign. And that campaign is helping equip congregations and individual leaders for serving in these changing times. Thank you again, for such generosity!

+A "Fitness and Fellowship" group began meeting on Wednesday mornings!

Looking into 2024:

+We have two Eagle Scout candidates refining two different proposals for projects on our grounds: Sam Eisenhauer envisions a nifty Fire Circle/Outdoor Small Group gathering space/worship space on the south edge of the main parking lot. (More to come on that!)

And Kyle Rusinski, with input from Dan Johnson (a Life-Scout himself!) is putting together ideas for a Prairie Garden, probably for the southwest corner of our property that could also double as a place where cremains (ashes) could be respectfully spread-for those who don't want or need a burial space. Prairie space-once established-needs little care, and will save us on mowing, too!

Watch for more details, and then encourage these young people along!

+We're exploring some energy saving upgrades with the help of "Focus on Energy". We're also checking on the feasibility of a small solar project, both to care for God's creation, and to help over time with our energy use!

+Property Committee will look into the last 'unfinished' part of our building, which is the 'new' basement ceiling. And then, we also will address some deferred maintenance items on what we have.

+Angel Bialk continues to be our parsonage 'tenant' and appreciates that space being our home. She makes a monthly contribution to the church. And special thanks to Keith Heidtke and helpers who replaced a few of the nearly 100 year old windows remaining in that durable structure!

+We put Crossways Camps and Lutheran Social Services back in our 'budget' for an annual gift to each of these partners in ministry. We have the funds to do that!

+We'd love to see if there are a group of young adults, or guys, or women, or moms who would like to form some sort of group for fellowship, growth, and service. Anyone game?

February Anniversaries

Congratulations!

February 20 Dale and Laura Reisinger 31 years
 February 20 Bill and Donna Rudd 64 years

February Those Who Serve
 Thank you everyone!

		2/4/2024	2/11/2024	2/18/2024	2/25/2024
Readers	8:00	Laura Bartelt	Brennan Family	Lee Anne Runnels	Megan DeChant
	9:45	Amy Reid	Rueben Heidtke	Laura Hahn	Mary Jost
Communion Assistants	8:00	Laura Bartelt	Brennan Family	Lee Anne Runnels	Megan DeChant
		Staci Bohling	Brennan Family	Jenny Brandt	Eileen Mack
	9:45	Sarah Stoecker	George Liberatore	Jim Hahn	Duane Plath
		Amy Reid	Dianne Liberatore	Laura Hahn	Darleen Wanta
Ushers	8:00	Skip Bartelt	Darleen Wanta	Joel Heidtke	Joel Wolf
		Staci Bohling	Joel Heidtke	Dave Williams	Dave Williams
	9:45	Keith Heidtke	George Liberatore	Jamie Reidy	Kelly Strnad
		Duane Plath	Joe Liberatore	Staci Benz	Will Strnad
Greeters	8:00		Brennan Family	Pam Stahl	Wendy Wolf
	9:45	Nancy Kinter	Duane Plath	Perry Benz	Nancy Kinter
Power Point	8:00	Wendy Wolf	Wendy Heidtke	Wendy Heidtke	Scott DeChant
	9:45	Darleen Wanta	Sam & Ed	Scott DeChant	Darleen Wanta
Recording	9:45	Scott K.	Sam & Ed	Jenny	Scott K.

February Birthdays

Happy Birthday!

February 1 Peggy Krueger
 February 2 Julie Korneli
 February 3 Carol Messner
 Tage Siegert
 February 4 Kevin Bukovic
 Jim Meyers
 February 5 Bill Stephan
 February 6 Christian Meyers
 February 7 Danielle Priebe
 Brock Siegert
 February 8 Mason Micksch
 February 10 Barb Pueringer
 Caitlin Reisinger
 February 11 Dianne Liberatore
 February 12 Cole Stoecker
 Sarah Stoecker
 February 13 Myla Apel
 Louis Ayers
 February 14 Aubree Benson
 Brayden Byrne
 Dakota Garbade
 Robin Kutzora
 February 17 Randy Groth
 Jayce Liberatore
 February 18 Gary Earl
 Todd Seatz
 February 19 Carey Cameron
 Pat Micksch
 February 20 David Frank
 Kelly Lloyd
 February 21 Sharon Boldt
 Sean Mickie
 February 22 Carol Cler
 Lila Gierach
 February 26 Kathy Dalton
 Dale Dhein
 Angela Priebe
 Annette Quevy
 Paul Stahl
 Peter Uhlig
 February 27 Jackson Wagner
 February 28 Mason Hein
 Linda Tomaz
 February 29 **(His 20th!)**
 George
 Liberatore

Happy Birthday

St. John's Lutheran Church
2881 Division Road
Jackson, WI 53037

Your 2023 Financial Statements Are Enclosed

At St. John's we're privileged and challenged to *Welcome, Worship, and Witness* in Christ's name. Thank you for being part of this faith community and for the serving you do to the glory of God!

Visit us at www.stjohnsjackson.net

Like us on Facebook www.facebook.com/stjohnsjackson

Pastor Paul Mittermaier – pastorcarguy@gmail.com

Office hours: M-F 9:00am-1:00pm 262-677-3176

officestjohnsjackson@gmail.com

Worship Services: Saturday 5:00 pm

Sunday 8 & 9:45 am with Holy Communion

Facebook Live at 9:45 am on Sunday

