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# THE PULSE BEAT



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*Volume 48, Number 2*

*February 2023*

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## *A Word from the Pastor*

Given our recent snowfalls, we could almost say that the winter season is only in its infancy. Hopefully, however, it will not grow into any kind of raging power this year!

And while February is the shortest month, it can seem like it is the longest part of winter. Yet, just when we think the time is merely ordinary, God can be at work, even unseen.

Like the time two men were talking in the early 1800's, & thinking things were pretty dull in the community of Hodgenville, Kentucky. It was a February day, & the two men were saying to each other, "no, not much is happening lately." But then one man remembered, "Oh, yes, just the other day, Tom & Nancy had a little baby boy, around Pigeon Creek. They called their new son Abraham, after his grandfather. No, not much going on in the middle of winter."

That child of course was Abraham Lincoln, who became the 16<sup>th</sup> President of the United States, leading the American nation through the terrible civil war years, and into victory! But Lincoln was born in otherwise ordinary days on February 12<sup>th</sup>, 1809.

Which simply reveals that when we think nothing much that matters is going on, God is working through the regular gray & colorless days of winter, as much as in the bright sunshine of summer!

Yes, we believe in and trust, in a God who works in a seemingly regular person, a Son, who came into the world to be one of us, a fellow human being, in order to save this world, which is his own creation.

This Son of God, the human one, son of man, told stories about the underground God, who works under the soil like a mustard seed, taking time & waiting until the time is right to spread around the land, growing into a great bush, to shelter many birds of the air!

This God who meets people on the margins, the outcasts, the blind & the lame, the man with leprosy, and the crippled woman, and who heals them, even in the most ordinary days. And has come to heal and save us as well!

Our God is out to heal & save, us and the world, so we too, can be disciples and healers for someone else! Perhaps many someone else's. Because for God, it may be that there is no ordinary time, no dull days.

Instead the days belong to God ---- its all God time! And you never know just when this traveling, roaming God of ours, will show up in our lives. May God come to meet you, in these Epiphany days of February! And may your winter be blessed!

Peace be to you! *Pastor Jim*

## CHURCH LEADERSHIP

**Pastor James O'Reilly-Christensen**

Office hours: Monday – Thursday,  
9:00 am – 2:00 pm  
920 988-9059 (Cell)

E-mail: [stjohnpastor1@hotmail.com](mailto:stjohnpastor1@hotmail.com)

**Office Manager: Robin Fatla**

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262-377-0410

E-mail: [stjohnsecretary@hotmail.com](mailto:stjohnsecretary@hotmail.com)

Website: [stjohngraffton.org](http://stjohngraffton.org)

**Congregation President** – Sandy Allen

**Vice President** – Dennis Jaeger

**Secretary** – Judy McMullin

**Treasurer** – Peter Viesselmann

**Church Council:**

Dennis Jaeger – Worship  
Sue Dowe – Education/ Youth  
Sharlene Sandquist - Stewardship/ Public Relations

Robin Fatla - Outreach  
Roger Wendorf - Finance  
Joe Porth – Property & Grounds  
Jane Turowski - Financial Secretary

Organist	<b>OPEN</b>
St. John Choir Director	<b>OPEN</b>
Glory Ringers Director	Dale Allen
Flutist	Sandy Allen

**Newsletter staff:**

Robin Fatla & Sheila Kapke

**Newspaper Deadline:**

Articles due by the 3rd Sunday of each month.

**Church Phone Numbers:**

Office: 262-377-0410 Fax: 262-377-0410  
Pastor: 920 988-9059

**E-Mail:** (office) [stjohnsecretary@hotmail.com](mailto:stjohnsecretary@hotmail.com)  
(pastor) [stjohnpastor1@hotmail.com](mailto:stjohnpastor1@hotmail.com)

**FaceBook:** St. John Lutheran Church-Grafton, WI

## GENERAL INTEREST NEWS



James Allen, Karen Baerbock (cousin of Bob Butt), Barb Beckner (friend of Judy McMullin), Clarice Buchholz (Mary Jaeger’s mother), Anna Bullio (great-granddaughter of Florence Van Cleave), Emily Carney (friend of Kylene Wright), Marian Carraway, John Clausen, Cathy Collins (Florence Van Cleave’s daughter), Amanda Combs (friend of Laura Christenson), Kathy Darga (Carole Litvinoff’s sister-in-law), Don & Nan Donner (friend of Diane & Roger Wendorf), Pastor Dale Erickson, Madelyn Gaulke, Anthony Gazelinski (Suzette Travis’ grandson), Maria Nehls, Paige Peirson (friends of Jesse Schauer), Wanda Gindt (friend of Bob & Carol Butt), Rick Gonzalez, Sue Haas, Jeanne Hass, Michael Horton (brother of Tara & Jeff Kapke), Mike Immekus (Harold’s brother), Mary Jaeger, Joanne Levenick, Rosemary Litvinoff (Jim’s mother), Scott Maronde (nephew of Gary & Sue Haas), Ken Matthews (Kayla Matthews’ father-in-law), Tim McCloskey, Chuck & Cary Mueller (friends of Glenn Sievers), Alice Murphy (family of MerryLou Green), Sugeily Pineiro-Garcia, Karen Rautenberg (Sue Dowe’s mother), Tom Rogahn, Kathy (sister of Jackie Rogahn), Harvey Salger, Larry Samarija, Wendy Tomter, Wendy Werner (Sandy Allen’s sister-in-law), Marian Witte **Military personnel:** Kyle Christenson, Andy David **“Home away from home” members:** Jeanine Burhop (sister of the late Marilyn Speranza) – Lasata; Tim McClosky & John Clasen – at home with sister Merry Lou Green

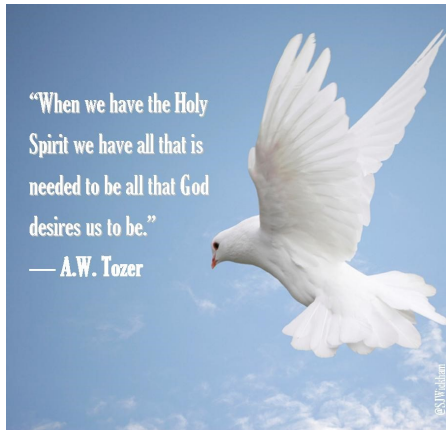


The newly elected Church Council and appointed officials were installed on Sunday, January 29th:

**Sandy Allen** - President,  
**Dennis Jaeger** – Vice President/ Worship Chair,  
**Judy McMullin** – Secretary,  
**Peter Viesselmann** – Treasurer, **Sue Dowe** – Education/ Youth, **Roger Wendorf**, Finance,  
**Robin Fatla** – Outreach, **Joe Porth** – Property,  
**Sharlene Sandquist** – Public Relations/ Stewardship,  
**Jane Turowski** – Financial Secretary

Congratulations and thank you for offering your gifts to the service of the Lord at St. John.

Many thanks to **Sheila Kapke** who completed her 3-year term as Secretary.



### DID YOU KNOW...

...that your St. John Spiritual Renewal Task Force is participating in a nine month program offered by your Greater Milwaukee Synod called “Faithful Innovations”?

#### Why should you care?

Well, St. John, along with many other congregations, is seeing a decline in membership and church attendance. So, what are we going to do about it? IS there anything that can be done about it? As part of the program we have been assigned a coach, Pr. Brian Hooper, to guide us in the process. Your Task Force is focused on two main goals:

#1 - What excites believers to want to deepen their faith and how can the church facilitate it?

#2 - Where is God leading this congregation into the future?

These are two hard, complicated questions. As part of the Faithful Innovations program we’re looking at where God is at work outside as well as inside the walls of our church building.

Are we willing to go outside of our comfort zone to grow our faith in new ways? Does the future of St. John involve partnering in some way with another congregation? The Task Force will continue to explore options in 2023. We’re excited to see where God is leading us. Stay tuned...

*Judy McMullin* - Spiritual Renewal Task Force Chair

### Note from Task Force Chair

I would like to thank members of the Task Force: **Bob & Barb Eichmann, Roger & Diane Wendorf, Sharlene Sandquist, Sandy Allen, & Robin Fatla**, for their commitment to leading St. John into the future, whatever that may hold. There is neither a quick or easy solution to the place in which St. John finds itself. The shrinking of church attendance is not just a congregational problem but is happening within other denominations and faiths as well. I’m encouraged by the formation and regular meeting of the five Mutual Ministry pastors along with lay leaders collaborating in shared ministries. The St. John Task Force will work in conjunction with this partnership group in our common desire to discern the best path for St. John Congregation. Please feel free to contact any member of the Task Force with comments or questions. Sincerely, *Judy McMullin*

**OUTREACH**



The Outreach Team will again be sponsoring **Gratitude Baskets** for 2 local care facilities: **Aurora Cancer Care** (associated with Aurora Hospital in Grafton; and **Lawlis Family Hospice** (associated with Ascension Columbia St. Mary’s Hospital, Mequon).

Donations of home baked or purchased sweets, candy, snacks, thank you cards, etc. will be accepted through Sunday, February 12<sup>th</sup>. Baskets will be delivered on Valentine’s Day. **Donations can be brought to the office any time.**

Please contact Robin Fatla if you have any questions.



On the National Football League’s Super Bowl Sunday, February 12th, the Outreach Team is asking for **cans of soup** for the “Souper Bowl of Caring”

Any kind, size can of soup will be welcome.

These gifts will be donated to the Family Sharing Food Pantry.

**Please bring your donations by February 12th!**

**GENERAL INTEREST NEWS**



HEALING SERVICE

February 26  
9:30 am worship service

**Annual Chili Dinner**



Sunday, February 19, 2023

**DRIVE-THRU ONLY**

11:00 am - 2:00 pm

\$10 per quart - includes crackers

**NO ADVANCED ORDERS  
WILL BE TAKEN.**

Pastor Jim will be leading a First Communion class on Sundays, February 5th and 12th at 10:45 am for 1 hour.

If your child is at an age that you believe they can understand the meaning of The Holy Supper, please let Pastor Jim know that they will be attending.



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**STEWARDSHIP CORNER**

This month, my topic is **Stewardship of Time**. How many times have you come to the end of the day and said to yourself “where did this day go? I haven’t done near what I planned to do today.” I find this happening to me more times than I like. So, this topic is especially for my consideration as well as for you, the members of St. John.

“From birth to death marks a finite span of days in which we live, breathe and have our lives. Each moment is precious, as Psalm 90:12 makes clear. ‘Teach us to count our days, that we may gain a wise heart.’

How we spend our time may be the most crucial stewardship question of all. After all, income levels and talents differ widely by individual, but everyone is given the same number of minutes and hours in a day. How we use them says a lot about our priorities and values.

When we choose to give our time to church, to neighbor, to a ministry that works for God’s purposes, we are stewarding our time wisely.”\*

**SUPER WOMAN (OR MAN)!** In Proverbs 31, we read a tribute to a more-than-capable wife. This woman sounds more like a super hero than a real person! In the original Hebrew language, this poem is an alphabetical acrostic where each line begins with a successive letter in the Hebrew alphabet. We can read this passage as a picture of the ideal woman who embodies in human form the virtues of wisdom. Not only does she provide for her family’s personal needs, the woman portrayed in Proverbs is a business person, making independent, wise financial decisions. She also supports the needy. Military language suggests a strong protective role. This woman personifies wisdom, and wisdom trumps mere beauty. Talk about a super mom (and a great steward of her time)! After reading the passage, what strikes you about the description of this capable woman, written more than 2,000 years ago? What themes in this proverb ring especially true today? Why?

**REMEMBER THE SABBATH** Before we stress over how little we accomplish when compared to the wise woman in Proverbs, we must recall God’s commandment: Remember the Sabbath day, and keep it holy. Six days you shall labor and do your work. But the seventh day is a Sabbath to the Lord your God; you shall not work.... (Exodus 20:8-10). Time management and efficiency experts remind us that increased fatigue leads to decreased efficiency and effectiveness. When we’re exhausted, we may display quick tempered, sloppy, or even dangerous behavior. God doesn’t expect perfection or endless busyness from us. On the contrary, wise stewardship of our time includes finding time for rest, renewal, and joy.

**PERSONAL FOCUS** Over the course of a typical week, track where your time goes. At the end of the week, add up how many hours you spend doing specific activities (sleeping, cooking, studying, working, exercising, etc.) Review your time audit results and reflect inward: Do these hours match your values? How might you better use this time to love God and your neighbor? Consider pledging a percentage of your time that you plan to give over this year inside and outside of this congregation.

**PRAYER:** God of all times and all places, thank you for periods of refreshment and peace in the course of our busy lives. Help us use our leisure for the renewal of our bodies and minds so that our spirits may be opened to the needs of others. Give us diligence to seek you, wisdom to perceive you, and patience to wait for you. Grant us minds to meditate on you, eyes to behold you, ears to listen for your word, hearts to love, and lives to proclaim you. In Jesus’ name we pray. Amen.\*\*

*Sharlene Sandquist*, Stewardship Chairperson

Portions of this article were taken from:

\*Stewardship: A Disciple’s Path by Robert C. Blizzard

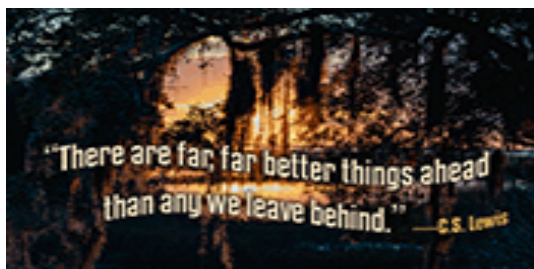
\*\* the ELCA publication, Stewards of God’s Love; A year-round guide to stewardship in your congregation.



2/1 *Sharlene Sandquist*  
 2/4 *Hunter Pritzlaff*  
 2/7 *Jim Litvinoff*  
 2/7 *Jeanine Burhop*  
 2/7 *Delaney Allen*  
 2/11 *Steve Christensen*  
 2/12 *Donna Dowe*  
 2/15 *Mari Schmidt*  
 2/15 *Judy McMullin*  
 2/19 *Josh Hyuck*  
 2/20 *Ashley Crowell*  
 2/21 *Bob Eichmann*  
 2/27 *Jesse Schauer*  
 2/28 *BreAnna Porth*

2/12/2005 *Dennis & Nerissa*  
*Heusdens*

Please notify Church Office if we have missed someone. Thank you!



## WORSHIP ASSISTANTS

### Assisting Minister:

February 5 - Gary Haas  
 12 - Robin Fatla  
 19 - Bob Butt  
 22 - **Ash Wednesday** - Dennis Jaeger  
 26 - Gary Haas

### Usher:

February 5 - Bob Butt  
 12 - Jim & Carole Litvinoff  
 19 - Fritz Dowe  
 22 - **Ash Wednesday** - Peter Viesselmann  
 26 - Sue Dowe

### Lector:

February 5 - Carol Butt  
 12 - Sue Dowe  
 19 - Gary Haas  
 22 - **Ash Wednesday** - Robin Fatla  
 26 - Dennis Jaeger

### Altar bouquets:

February 5 - Jeanine Burhop/ **OPEN**  
 12 - Jeanne Hass (2)  
 19 - **OPEN/ OPEN**  
 26 - **OPEN/ OPEN**

### Fellowship hour:


February 5 - **OPEN**  
 12 - Evie Tetzlaff/ Marion Meyer  
 19 - Mark & Mary Ellen Levra  
 26 - **OPEN**

### Counting Team:

February 5 - Borgne McClelland Team  
 12 - Sheila Kapke Team  
 19 - Dennis Jaeger Team  
 26 - Jim Litvinoff Team

Treasurer, Peter Viesselmann, would like to invite you to become a member of a counting team!  
 It takes only **1 hour of your time per month.**  
 Enlist a couple of your Fellowship Hour buddies to form a team and help with this task 1 hour a month - you can bring your sweets and coffee with you.  
 Contact Peter to offer your service.



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1  Noon - Pastor's Lunch  5:15 pm - Confirmation class	2	3 Pastor's day off	4
5 9:30 am - Holy Communion 10:30 am - Fellowship hour 10:45 am - First Communion Class	6	7	8 Noon - Pastor's lunch at St. John  1:00 pm - Renewal Task Force  5:15 pm - Confirmation class	9	10 Pastor's day off	11
12 9:30 am - Holy Communion  10:30 am - Fellowship hour  10:45 am - First Communion	13 9:00 am - Quilting  1:00 pm - Sarah Circle Bible study	 10:00 am - Bible Study at Village Pointe Commons  6:00 pm - Pastor's prayer group	15 Noon - Pastor's lunch at St. John  5:15 pm - Confirmation class	16  11:00 am - Worship Committee Zoom meeting	17 Pastor's day off	18
19 9:30 am - Healing liturgy- Holy Communion - 1st Communion  <b>11:00 am - 2:00 pm Drive Thru Chili Dinner</b>	20	21	22 Noon - Pastor's lunch at St. John  Ash Wednesday Worship times: 11:00 am 6:30 pm	23 9:00 am - Coalition Partnership Group At Trinity	24 Pastor's day off	25
26 9:30 am - <b>Healing Service</b> Holy Communion  10:30 am - Fellowship hour  10:45 am - Church Council	27 9:00 am - Quilting	28  10:00 am - Bible Study at Village Pointe Commons  6:00 pm - Pastor's prayer group	 February 19			



Circle Meeting in February:

Sarah Circle: Monday, February 13, 1:00 PM at church



QUILTING DATES Monday February 13 & 27 9:00 - noon

The Worship Committee is looking for willing hands to help re-establish the Altar Guild. Find a friend, spouse, child to help you 1 weekend a month to prepare the chancel for Sunday worship. Please contact Sandy Allen or Robin Fatla to offer your service.



Why should we observe Lent? This 40-day season of repentance and reflection that begins on Ash Wednesday has three important purposes. Lent helps us STOP, LOOK and LISTEN.

We observe Lent because it tells us to STOP and rest awhile — and to stop sinning. Lent tells us to LOOK inward for an honest self-examination, to look upward to see the cross of Jesus with healing and love, and to look forward to the hope of the Resurrection. And we observe Lent because it tells us to LISTEN — to the voice of God, the words of Christ and the movement of the Holy Spirit.

STOP, LOOK and LISTEN! These commands that are so crucial for travel safety are also important for our journey through Lent.



Ash Wednesday

February 22
Worship service:
11:00 am
6:30 pm



# February 2023 Pulse Beat



1193 Lakefield Road  
Grafton, WI 53024

*"In God's Word, Serving You and the World"*

### Worship Schedule

- Sunday Morning - 9:30 a.m.
- Education hour - 11:00 a.m.

**IT IS OUR MISSION** as people called by God into the Congregation of St. John Lutheran Church to:

- Proclaim the Gospel in worship and daily life.
- Study and teach God's Word.
- Fellowship among people of this congregation.
- Serve people in our surrounding community.

This is the **MISSION** and **MINISTRY** that we accept as fellow Christians at St. John Evangelical Lutheran Church of Lakefield.

*"Faithfully Serving Christ Since 1866"*

# Puzzle!

Draw lines to separate the words in the heart outline. Then, starting with "Love," write the words in order inside the heart to complete the two greatest commandments.

Answer: "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your mind and with all your strength and with all your mind; and, Love your neighbor as yourself." Luke 10:27, NIV