


THE PULSE BEAT



Volume 48, Number 16

June 2023

A WORD FROM THE PASTOR

We can thank God for the nice weather as June moves us into the summer season in this part of Wisconsin! Time to get outdoors for more fresh air if possible, to enjoy the blessings of God's good creation!

In the season of the church year, we find ourselves in the longest time period, called "Pentecost." The green season, a reflection of the growing time; sometimes known as ordinary time as well. The church calendar is now calling these Sundays "Lectionary" Sundays, i.e. "lectionary 10, 11, 12," etc.

This year of 2023, year A, follows the Gospel of Matthew, once we have moved through the readings from John during the Easter season.

Matthew, the longest Gospel, with 28 chapters, is a teaching Gospel, where there are 5 distinct sermons, (at least) that most Bible scholars have identified, including the "Sermon on the mount," in Matthew 5-7.

We follow the Gospel of Matthew from June 11th with Matthew 9 and the calling of disciples, all the way through October 22nd where Jesus teaches us to **"Give to God what belongs to God!"**

The singer Yusuf Islam, a.k.a. Cat Stevens, has said that his music is meant to take people on a journey. "My music is going somewhere," he says. The same can be said of the Scripture readings used in the church's worship, especially in the Gospels.

If we *listen to the Word, as we gather for worship, we also learn that the Word of God is "taking us somewhere" too!* Through the Word of the Gospels, and the rest of scripture, the Holy Spirit intends to lead us through life with the guidance of God, interpreting and re-interpreting the Word, that we sometimes feel we know too well already!

But in the project called "Faithful Innovations," that 4 of us leaders have participated in from last October, through the end of April this year, we have practiced something called "dwelling in the Word." In this practice, we read a particular passage 2 or 3 times through, & our task is to listen for God's voice to speak to us in new ways, through the living word of the Scriptures.

By doing this, we believe God is leading us, in the whole of the larger church, as well as our particular congregation, St. John in Grafton, into a new future.

We ask 3 questions in this practice. They are: 1) What caught your attention? 2) What questions does this passage create for you? And 3) What do you think God might be saying to you or to us through this passage?

By "Dwelling in/on the Word," our church leadership believes, God, through the Holy Spirit, is not leaving us to ourselves, but on the contrary, giving us continued guidance, a sense of direction and purpose, for what God has in mind for us, in the coming days and years, just as we are taught in the Lord's Prayer, the prayer of Jesus, **"your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth (in and through us) as it is in heaven."** As we are guided by the power of the Holy Spirit!

As we move into the summer weather, and the season of "green" days in the church's worship, let us have the confidence of our faith, that Jesus the Risen Savior, does not leave us orphans, but comes to us, *through the power of the Holy Spirit, into the kingdom of God*, and into the future God wants for God's people, US, in this place!

Peace be to you, in these beginning days of summer! *Pastor Jim*

THOUGHTS FROM THE PRESIDENT

Are you a good listener? I like to think that I can be, but I know that there are those times that I'm guilty of needing to be heard, which in turn doesn't make me the listener that I should be.

I love this quote from David Augsburg, author and seminary professor, "For most people, feeling heard is so close to feeling loved that the two are indistinguishable." Isn't that powerful?! Listening is a skill we all need to work on. Whether it's in leadership, in relationships, in friendships or parenthood – we can probably all improve in this area.

Have you been in a conversation with a friend, or a family member, or a coworker that ultimately became one-sided because the person you were talking to chose to finish your sentences for you? Because they feel they know you so well that they think they can anticipate the point you're about to make and walk all over your response? I know I've been guilty of this...with Dale, with my kids, probably even with some of you. In hindsight, I'm sure they get very frustrated with me, and this is a habit I'm really trying to improve. Back to that being a good listener thing again.

To be honest, I've probably had these same kinds of conversations with God, talking *at* him, instead of *to* him, and not waiting long enough to hear His reply. Maybe I hurry through a prayer, suggesting to Him a really good answer...according to me...instead of putting it out there and waiting for His response. In times like this, I need to imagine Him saying, "*You didn't give me a chance to answer. What if that wasn't going to be my response?*" or "*What if you slowed down enough to really hear me when you pray?*"

St. John has committed to join with our partner churches in a new venture. The Mutual Ministry group is being refreshed and renamed and will be referred to in the future as ELCA Partners in Christ, or EPIC. A team is being formed called the EPIC Listening Team, whose purpose is to listen to the broader community, learn more about what God is already up to in the lives of community members, and connect with those who are not already a part of our congregations. Judy McMullin and I have volunteered to be a part of this team, and are looking for another member of St. John who feels that this is something they would be interested in participating in. For some of us, this may feel a little uncomfortable, but it will be a wonderful way to take God's message into the community, and invite the community into our church family. The ultimate goal of the team is to listen to and love our community first, and through doing so, learn how to make our congregational lives more relevant for those who are not already a part of our fellowship.

"My dear brothers and sisters, take note of this: Everyone should be quick to listen, slow to speak and slow to become angry." James 1:19

I hope God doesn't get too frustrated with me. But I will definitely try to remember to be quiet and let Him finish His sentences when we talk. I hope you all try to do the same!

Hugs and blessings, *Sandy*

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

Office Manager: Robin Fatla

Church office hours: Monday – Friday,
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262-377-0410

E-mail: stjohnsecretary@hotmail.com

Website: 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
Robin Fatla – Outreach
Roger Wendorf - Finance
Joe Porth – Property & Grounds
Mary Ellen Levra - Public Relations
Jane Turowski - Financial Secretary

Organist

St. John Choir Director

Glory Rings Director

Flutist

OPEN

OPEN

Dale Allen

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

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FaceBook: St. John Lutheran Church-Grafton, WI

GENERAL INTEREST NEWS



James Allen, Karen Baerbock (cousin of Bob Butt), Clarice Buchholz (Mary Jaeger's mother), Anna Bullio (great-granddaughter of Florence Van Cleave), Emily Carney (friend of Kylene Wright), Marian Carraway, Cathy Collins (Florence Van Cleave's daughter),

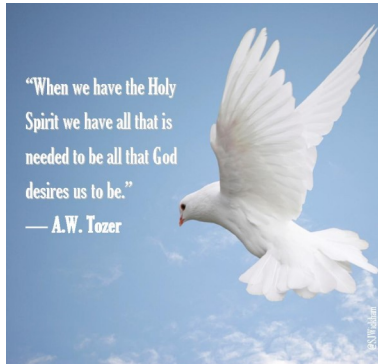
Amanda Combs (friend of Laura Christenson), Don & Nan Donner (friend of Diane & Roger Wendorf), Pastor Dale Erickson, Amy Fisher (Robin Fatla's niece), Henry Frier (Marian Witte's son-in-law), Michael Horton (brother of Tara & Jeff Kapke), Mary Jaeger, Joanne Levenick, Rosemary Litvinoff (Jim's mother), Scott Maronde (nephew of Gary & Sue Haas), Ken Matthews (Kayla Matthews' father-in-law), 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, Jennifer Wendorf (daughter-in-law of Roger and Diane), 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



April Heusdens received her degree in accounting from Lakeland University on May 13th.

Alex Mentzel earned an M.S. in counseling from the University of Wisconsin - Whitewater on May 13th. He was hired - BEFORE graduation - as a psychotherapist with the Pauquette Center for Psychological Services in Portage, WI.

Joshua Reindl graduated from UW-Madison on May 13th with a major in Bio-Chemistry.



DID YOU KNOW...

...that four members of the St. John Task Force (Pr. Jim, Sharlene Sandquist, Sandy Allen, Judy McMullin) have completed the third and final training of the Faithful Innovations Process offered by the Greater Milwaukee Synod? So now what happens? Did we learn some magic tricks to help get more people into the pews? Oh, if only it could be so simple... The Task Force of St. John will continue to meet regularly and look at ways to deepen current members' walk with Christ as well as implement some of the suggestions we learned about in the training. This may involve asking you, St. John members, to be willing to participate in some exercises that may take you out of your comfort zone. We ask that you be open to new experiences as we all look at the changing face of the church...

...and DID YOU KNOW...

...that a newly formed Goals Team had its first meeting in April and will be working with Pr. Jim? Purpose statement:

The St. John Goals Team will develop a shared vision between the pastor and congregation, setting realistic goals for growth in varied ways with review and evaluation on a regular basis.

The Goals Team will meet three times per year. The next meeting will take place at 10:00am on June 15th. If you have any suggestions, questions or concerns please contact any of the team members: Sandy Allen, Marion Meyer, Jim or Carole Litvinof, Judy McMullin.

Sincerely, *Judy McMullin* - Spiritual Renewal Task Force Chair

DADS are a BLESSING

Surprise your dad or another special man with this Father's Day gift.



What you need:

- Photos of you and your loved one (together, if possible)
- Scissors
- 8.5" x 11" paper
- Glue stick
- Marker
- 8.5" x 11" photo frame



What you do:

1. Cut photos into shapes (hearts, circles, etc.).
2. Arrange photos on the paper, leaving room for a message, and glue them down.
3. Write: "I'm blessed as can be. My heavenly Father has given me the best _____ [dad, uncle, friend] in the world, and he belongs to me!"
4. Place your picture message in the frame.
5. Give your gift to show love and appreciation.

STEWARDSHIP CORNER - STEWARDS OF JUSTICE

GOD CALLS US TO LOVE OUR NEIGHBOR

We continue our practice of stewardship by looking out to see the many ways that God is calling us to love our neighbors both near and far. Throughout the Bible we hear God's commandment to love God and our neighbor not just with our words, but with our actions. When we share the abundance that God has entrusted to our care with our neighbor, we not only love our neighbor, but we also love God.

We are called to be good stewards of God's justice. We are a church that is a catalyst, convener and bridge builder. Our faith calls us to share a common vision to uphold human dignity and to love, walk alongside and serve people, particularly those who are facing poverty. As the prophet Isaiah cries "*learn to do good; seek justice, rescue the oppressed, defend the orphan, plead for the widow*" (Isaiah 1:17). It is not good enough to talk about justice, but to act justly - crossing boundaries for the sake of the neighbor.

WHO IS OUR NEIGHBOR?

We often think of neighbors as those living next door or across the street. Maybe not surprisingly, the dictionary includes "one's fellow human being" in its definition of neighbor (www.dictionary.com). Jesus, too, calls us to think more globally when we think of neighbors. In Luke 10, we read the familiar parable of the Good Samaritan. In Biblical times, Jews and Samaritans were enemies, so Jesus saying that a Samaritan stopped to render aid to an injured Jew was even more astonishing to the crowd listening to the parable.

With the lens of God's justice, we are to look for those most in need and share the abundance that God has entrusted to our care. God calls us, like the Samaritan, to reach across boundary lines, setting aside our differences, to live lives of love.

CONQUERING INJUSTICE AND OPPRESSION

Injustice takes many forms. It's not limited to war time atrocities committed in some far off land that we sometimes see on the news or read about. Even in this country, there is considerable press coverage about racial and economic disparity. For those who may not have been direct survivors of oppression, it can be hard to imagine what it might be like to be oppressed or impoverished.

(Many people in the United States) "have food, shelter, clothing, a source of income, transportation, educational and job opportunities, health care and freedoms. Yet, there are still many inequities and injustices in our own country. How do we understand and use our opportunities and privileges to work for justice for others? Do we advocate for the neglected and poor in our spheres of influence or do we walk past? Managing our opportunities and privileges is a part of being and becoming God's 'good and faithful stewards.' God has entrusted much to us and much is expected."

CAROL WATSON, Stewardship Chair, Peace Lutheran Church, Tacoma Wash.

Consider the following manifestations of injustice.

- * Bullying
- * Racism
- * Gender inequality
- * Homelessness
- * Food insecurity
- * Unsafe communities
- * False imprisonment
- * Inferior or unaffordable medical care
- * Bias based on sexual orientation
- * Cultural and ethnic prejudice
- * Religious persecution
- * Failure to pay a living wage
- * Lack of affordable housing
- * Insufficient access to quality education
- * Inadequate legal representation

Can you think of others? How can we better understand the power systems present in our society and develop skills to interrupt old patterns and dismantle social and economic injustices in our communities?

FAITH IN ACTION AT ST. JOHN

In James 2, we read that God wants us to live out our faith through action. *“Faith by itself, if it is not accompanied by action, is dead”* (James 2:17). Living out our faith through our daily actions helps us grow stronger in our faith and builds relationships.

Here at St. John, we put our faith in action in many different ways.

- * providing backpacks and schools supplies for students through the annual city-wide drive.
- * providing food to families and individuals experiencing food insecurity through donations to Family Sharing and the Saukville Food Pantry. We also provide supper meals for a week for clients of Family Promise on a regular schedule with other churches.
- * the quilters provide warm quilts for those in need, such as the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation and Mr. Bob’s Under the Bridge.
- * fighting hunger globally through donations of money to ELCA World Hunger.

To everyone who donates time, goods, and money to support these outreach ministries at St. John, **THANK YOU!** You really make a difference in the lives of many. Still, there is so much more we can do, both individually and as a faith community.

Ask:

- * Who in this community is most in need and what can I do to help them?
- * How is God calling me to be an advocate for those experiencing social and economic injustice?

Pray:

God of justices, we remember before you those who suffer anxiety from lack of work and all who it is easy to forget: those who are homeless, destitute, sick, isolated, and all who have no one to care for them. Help us to see the face of Christ in those who are in need, and in serving them to serve you. Guide the people of this land to use our wealth and resources so that all people may find suitable and fulfilling employment and receive just payment for their labor. Give us generous hearts so that those living in poverty may have adequate food, clothing, and shelter. By your Spirit move us to affirm the dignity of all people and to work for just laws that protect the most vulnerable in society. Use us to bring help and healing to those who are broken in body or spirit, that they may have comfort in sorrow, company in loneliness and a place of safety and warmth; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Sharlene Sandquist, St. John Stewardship Chairperson

(Portions of this article were taken from the ELCA publication, *Stewards of God’s Love: A year-round guide to stewardship in your congregation.*)

**St John Evangelical Lutheran Church
Financial Summary For April 2023**

	April 2023			Year To Date 2023		
	<u>Actual</u>	<u>Budget</u>	<u>Actual Over (under) Budget</u>	<u>Actual</u>	<u>Budget</u>	<u>Actual Over (under) Budget</u>
Unified Income	\$ 13,227	\$ 15,200	\$ (1,973)	\$ 41,124	\$ 51,500	\$ (10,376)
<u>Expense Summary:</u>						
Education	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 72	\$ -	\$ 72
Outreach	\$ -	\$ 42	\$ (42)	\$ (45)	\$ 167	\$ (211)
Worship	\$ 1,098	\$ 1,000	\$ 99	\$ 3,371	\$ 3,183	\$ 188
Youth	\$ -	\$ 125	\$ (125)	\$ -	\$ 500	\$ (500)
Stewardship	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 201	\$ 200	\$ 1
Public Relations	\$ 155	\$ 300	\$ (145)	\$ 380	\$ 540	\$ (160)
Property	\$ 1,899	\$ 2,058	\$ (159)	\$ 10,637	\$ 9,633	\$ 1,004
Finance (incl.Mission Support)	\$ 8,739	\$ 8,545	\$ 193	\$ 48,528	\$ 48,450	\$ 78
Total Expenses	\$ 11,891	\$ 12,070	\$ (179)	\$ 63,144	\$ 62,672	\$ 472
Net Income (Deficit)	\$ 1,336	\$ 3,130	\$ (1,794)	\$ (22,020)	\$ (11,172)	\$ (10,848)

Comparative 2022 Figures:

Unified Income	<u>@ 4/30/2022</u>
Total Expenses	\$ 43,569
Net Income (Deficit)	\$ (58,685)
	<u>\$ (15,116)</u>

Major Differences 2023 vs. 2022: Income year-to-date 2023 is \$2,400 less than last year.
Expenses year-to-date 2023 are \$4,500 more than last year.

Major year-to-date expense item differences:

- Gas heat & electricity combined \$710 higher than last year.
- Overall wages expense \$2,600 higher than last year.
- Mission support payments \$600 higher than last year.

Thrivent Choice Gifts Rec. 2023:	\$1,243
Memorial Gifts Received 2023:	\$25
Budgeted Mission Support 2023:	\$12,920 (All paid in February 2023)
Added Mission Support 2023:	\$0

	<u>@ 4/30/2023</u>	<u>@ 4/30/2022</u>
Assets At End Of Month	\$ 157,819	\$ 193,989

Assets Are Needed to Support The Following Funds:

Audio Fund (formerly Cassette)	\$ -	\$ -
Contingency Fund	\$ 23,312	\$ 32,371
Family Promise Fund	\$ 484	\$ 441
Fully Funded	\$ 428	\$ 447
Library Fund	\$ 505	\$ 505
Memorial Fund	\$ 133,791 <(incl. \$6,761 restricted)	\$ 144,824 <(incl. \$6,761 restricted)
Mercy Fund	\$ 2,760	\$ 2,260
Music Fund	\$ 162	\$ 162
Organ Repair Fund	\$ -	\$ -
Outreach Fund	\$ 453	\$ 2,379
Pastoral Education Fund	\$ 2,150	\$ 2,276
Property Fund	\$ 10,586	\$ 7,221
Scholarship Fund	\$ 1,839	\$ 2,189
Sign Fund (closed Jan. 2023)	\$ -	\$ 7,643
Youth Fund	\$ 3,371	\$ 6,389
Paycheck Protection (PPP)Loan	\$ -	\$ -
Total Fund Requirements	<u>\$ 179,840</u>	<u>\$ 209,105</u>
= Asset Excess (Shortage)	<u>\$ (22,020)</u>	<u>\$ (15,116)</u>
(Excess = budget surplus; Shortage = budget deficit)		



6/1 Sue Ellen Nelsen
 6/2 Eric Turowski
 6/2 Ryan Liebergen
 6/2 Dennis Jaeger
 6/6 Beverly Green
 6/17 Jeff Boelkow
 6/19 Alex Dowe
 6/27 Liz Gonzalez

6/6/1992 Steve & Kristin Schauer
 6/21/1997 Erich & JoAnn Dowe
 6/22/2003 Jeff & Tara Kapke
 6/30/1984 John & Jane Turowski

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

COMMUNITY EVENT

Salad Luncheon

Sponsored by St. Paul

Women's Guild

Wednesday, June 7

11 am - 1 pm

St. Paul Lutheran Church

701 Washington St., Grafton
 Salad buffet plate, drink & dessert

\$10.00

For groups of 6 or more, make reservations by calling Deb at 262 707-8992

WORSHIP ASSISTANTS

Assisting Minister:

June 4 - Robin Fatla
 11 - Dennis Jaeger
 18 - Gary Haas
 25 - Bob Butt

Lector:

June 4 - Sandy Allen
 11 - Bob Butt
 18 - Carol Butt
 25 - Sue Dowe

Usher:

June 4 - Peter Viesselmann
 11 - Bob Butt
 18 - Tom Rogahn
 25 - Jim & Carol Litvinoff

Altar bouquets:

June 4 - Marion Meyer/ Kim Galioto (Jeanne Hass)
 11 - Mary Ellen Levra/ **OPEN**
 18 - Marian Witte/ Jeanine Burhop
 25 - **OPEN/ OPEN**

Fellowship:

June 4 - **OPEN**
 11 - **OPEN**
 18 - **OPEN**
 25 - **OPEN**

Counting Team:

June 4 - Borgne McClelland Team
 11 - Sheila Kapke Team
 18 - Dennis Jaeger Team
 25 - Jim Litvinoff Team



Another church clean-up day is scheduled for

**Saturday, June 3rd
 from 9:00 - noon**

to finish as many more projects as possible. Many hands make light work so take an hour or two to help take care of your church.

Lunch will be provided – just bring your own beverage.



<i>Sun</i>	<i>Mon</i>	<i>Tue</i>	<i>Wed</i>	<i>Thu</i>	<i>Fri</i>	<i>Sat</i>
				1	2 Pastor's day off	3 9:00 am - Church clean-up Pastor Jim at Synod Assembly - Italian Comm. Center
4 9:30 am - Healing service/ Holy Communion 10:30 am - Fellowship hour	5	6 10:00 am - Bible study at Village Pointe Commons 12:10 pm - Pastor Jim leads worship at Grace, Thiensville 6:00 pm - Pastor's prayer group	7 Noon - Pastor's Lunch	8	9 Pastor's day off	10
11 9:30 am - Holy Communion 10:30 am - Fellowship hour	12	13 12:10 pm - Pastor Jim leads worship at Grace, Thiensville	14 Noon - Pastor's Lunch 6:30 pm - EPIC Team	15 10:00 am - Goals Team	16 Pastor's day off	17 Robin on vacation through the 24th
18  9:30 am - Holy Communion 10:30 am - Fellowship hour 10:45 am - Church Council	19	20 10:00 am - Bible study at Village Pointe Commons 12:10 pm - Pastor Jim leads worship at Grace, Thiensville 6:00 pm - Pastor's prayer group	21 Noon - Pastor's Lunch	22	23 Pastor's day off	24
25 9:30 am - Holy Communion 10:30 am - Fellowship hour	26	27 12:10 pm - Pastor Jim leads worship at Grace, Thiensville	28 Noon - Pastor's Lunch	29 Pastor Jim on vacation through July 5th	30 Pastor's day off	

June 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.

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”



Our heavenly Father

Father’s Day is the perfect time to remember God, our heavenly Father. What does the psalmist say about him?

Directions: Complete Psalm 89:26 by placing the correct vowels in the blanks.



“H_ w_ll c_ll _ _ t _ t_ m_,
‘Y_ _ _ r_ m_ F_th_r, m_
G_d, th_ R_ck m_ S_v_ _r.”

Ps_lm 89:26, N_V

Answer: “He will call out to me, ‘You are my Father, my God, the Rock my Savior.’” Psalm 89:26, NIV