


THE PULSE BEAT



Volume 49, Number 2

February 2024

A WORD FROM THE PASTOR

Here we are in the 2nd month of the new year 2024, and the church year season of Lent is about to begin early this year. After our massive snow, followed by very cold weather in January, perhaps we can look for more merciful weather the last part of winter!

I don't really have to remind you that the faith community of St. John in Grafton/Lakefield will soon be moving into new territory this year. By that I mean, a transitional time of my July retirement. And then a new interim time of pastoral, spiritual leadership which is uncertain, just what such a time will look like!

Eight years ago, we celebrated our 150th anniversary as a congregation! Many things have changed our circumstances since then, including an unanticipated Covid-19 pandemic, which devastated our nation!

And yet we know, our God finds ways to continue sustaining, as well as changing the role of the church (body of Christ) in a particular setting. The Holy Spirit leads the church of Christ into new areas of loving God & neighbor, through unexpected renewal!

In Matthew 19, the disciples are wondering what the future holds for them. Jesus replies, saying: **“At the renewal of all things. . . you who have followed me, will receive a hundredfold, & will inherit eternal life.”** (Though he adds, some things will change). **“But many who are first will be last, & the last will be first.”** (Matthew 19:28-30 parts).

So we can expect change to happen, as part of life, yet according to God's sometimes surprising purposes, rather than what we think is going to happen!

Therefore, like Jesus says, **“At the renewal of all things,”** including St. John Lutheran Church, God is working out God's own purposes, with the best result in mind, for our community, and for our congregation as well, through the Holy Spirit, the wind & breath of God, which blows us in new directions, to where we need to go! And God will give us the faith to follow!

Peace & Blessings, *Pastor Jim*

THOUGHTS FROM THE PRESIDENT

February is traditionally known as the “month of love.” Valentine’s Day is right around the corner, and we see lots of pink and red hearts, chocolates a plenty, and beautiful flowers. Whatever Valentine’s Day means to you, I think it’s a great opportunity to celebrate love, for your family, friends, and your neighbors. Jesus did say that people would know us by our love.

While writing this article, I came across a book by Gary Chapman called “The Five Love Languages.” I’ve had numerous discussions within my family about love languages, but have never read this book, although I do believe I will be putting it on my “to read” list. The book talks about five love languages: words of affirmation, quality time, acts of service, gifts and physical touch, and how each of us tend to show love, and prefer to receive it, in these five distinctive ways. Often, a failure to understand how others prefer to receive love can cause conflict and feelings of being unloved and misunderstood. Wanting to feel loved and not feeling it can be one of the most challenging places in our lives.

So what do you think God’s love language is? How does He prefer to receive love? Chances are pretty good that it isn’t one of the five in Gary Chapman’s book. As I read more about it, the most constant and consistent theme running through the Bible is obedience. So maybe obedience, then, is God’s love language?

How many times have we deliberately disobeyed God’s clear instructions? Have you allowed Satan to inject doubt about what God really said, or allowed other people to talk you out of obeying God? Think of Adam in the Garden of Eden. Adam was given a pretty clear command from God that he chose to disregard. The bible couldn’t be much clearer about obedience with text in the Book of John. “If you love Me, keep My commandments” John 14:15. “He who has My commandments and keeps them, it is he who love Me” John 14:21. And one more from 1 John “For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments. And His commandments are not burdensome” 1 John 5:3. The greatest commandment, which we hear regularly from Pastor Jim in his sermons, (and from the Book of Matthew) is to love the Lord our God with all our heart, soul, mind and strength.

It seems that loving God is totally linked to obeying Him. Aside from the obvious importance of following His command, it also seems to be showing what God expects from us and what it “does for” Him, our love for Him. If we take the time to make the people around us feel loved, how much more important should it be for us to take the time to learn our Creator’s love language so that he knows we love Him? God so loved us that He gave His only begotten son to be sacrificed that we may live. Doesn’t it just make sense to show Him how much we love him back? While we learn the love languages of the people around us, let’s be sure to give emphasis to learning God’s love language as well.

Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. It does not dishonor others, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres. Love never fails. 1 Corinthians 13:4-8

Hugs and prayers to you all, *Sandy*

CHURCH LEADERSHIP

Pastor James O'Reilly-Christensen

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920 988-9059 (Cell)

E-mail: stjohnpastor1@hotmail.com

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262-377-0410

E-mail: stjohnsecretary@hotmail.com

Website: stjohngrafton.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 Ringers Director

Flutist

OPEN

Sharlene Sandquist

Dale Allen

Sandy Allen

Newsletter staff:

Robin Fatla & Sheila Kapke

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Articles due by the 3rd Sunday of each month.

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(pastor) stjohnpastor1@hotmail.com

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GENERAL INTEREST NEWS

We keep in our prayers: Paul Barnes (Jim & Carole Litvinoff's nephew), Clarice Buchholz (Mary Jaeger's mother), Anna Bullio (great-granddaughter of Florence Van Cleave), Emily Carney (friend of Kylene Wright), Cathy Collins (Florence Van Cleave's daughter), Amanda Combs (friend of Laura Christenson), Don & Nan Donner (friend of Diane & Roger Wendorf), Henry Frier (Marian Witte's son-in-law), Merry Lou Green, Cheryl Isotalo (Robin Fatla's cousin), Dennis & 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), Duane O'Reilly (Debbi O'Reilly-Christensen's brother), Sugeily Pineiro-Garcia, Karen Rautenberg (Sue Dowe's mother), Tom Rogahn, Kathy (sister of Jackie Rogahn), Rebecca & Renee Schauer, Harvey Salger, Wendy Tomter, Wendy Werner (Sandy Allen's sister-in-law), Marian Witte **Military personnel:** Kyle Christenson **"Home away from home"** **members:** Jeanine Burhop (sister of the late Marilyn Speranza) – Lasata; Tim McClosky – at home with sister Merry Lou Green,

OUTREACH TEAM



Join us on Sunday, February 11th for a **"Beat the Mid-Winter Blues" Valentine's Day themed Pot Luck Brunch** following the worship at 10:30 am. Bring a friend and your favorite brunch dish to share. Sign-up in Fellowship Hall or call Robin in the office.

We will be assembling **Gratitude Bags** this year for the Crossing Guards in Grafton and Cedarburg. There are 19 guards between the two communities so individual bags will be given on February 14th. Donations of snacks, baked goods, candy, cards, etc will be accepted through February 11th. Contact Robin Fatla if you have any questions.



DRIVE-THRU CHILI DINNER

CARRY-OUTS!

**Sunday
February 18, 2024
11am - 2pm**

**St. John Lutheran Church
1193 Lakefield Road
Grafton**

**\$10 per quart
Take out includes
Chili and crackers**

Partial proceeds to benefit the Ozaukee Food Alliance

**Call or email Church office for more information:
262-377-0410 ~ stjohnsecretary@hotmail.com**

YOUTH AND EDUCATION

The February Sunday School class will be held on Sunday, February 18th. Class begins at 10:45 and will last 30-45 minutes. Join us for a lesson, craft and snack!

Confirmation classes for the month of February:

February 7 - How do I serve others? (we write)

February 14 - Ash Wednesday

February 28 - March 27 - Lenten services, plus service activities.

Please contact Sue Dowe at sadowe1966@gmail.com with any questions!



Bible study in February:

Monday, February 12, 1:00 PM at church

All women are welcome...and bring a friend! The study is printed in the Gather Magazine and copies are available in the office.

QUILTING DATES

Monday

February 12 & 26

9:00 - noon



John Clasen

November 5, 1945 - January 25, 2024

Lent Schedule

Ash Wednesday



Worship with Holy Communion at St. John
February 14th
11:00 am
7:00 pm



Dinner and worship services will be rotated among the EPIC churches.

This year's theme will be
"The Women of Jesus' Genealogy"

February 21 - at Immanuel - Rahab - Pastor Vicki

28 - at Faith - Tamar - Pastor John

March 6 - at Advent - Bathsheba - Pastor Alexis

13 - at Trinity - Ruth - Pastor Erin

20 - at St. John - Mary - Pastor Jim

Dinner is at 6:00 pm and the service begins at 7:00 pm.

The hosting church is asked to bring the main dish and visitors shall bring sides and desserts.

Any questions, please call Pastor Jim or Dennis Jaeger, Worship Ministry Chair.



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1	2 Pastor's day off	3
4 9:30 am - Holy Communion - Church Council installed 10:30 am - Fellowship hour 11:00 am - choir rehearsal	5	6	7 Noon - Pastor's Lunch 5:15 pm - Confirmation class at Trinity	8	9 Pastor's day off	10
11 9:30 am - Holy Communion 10:30 am - Valentine's Day Brunch 11:00 am - choir rehearsal	12 9:00 am - Quilting 1:00 pm - Women's Bible study	13 10:00 am - Bible study at Village Pointe Commons	14 Ash Wednesday  Ash Wednesday Worship times at St. John: 11:00 am 7:00 pm	15	16 Pastor's day off	17
18 9:30 am - Holy Communion - Healing Service 10:30 am - Fellowship hour 11:00 am - Chili Dinner	19	20	21 Noon - Pastor's Lunch 6:00 pm - Lent meal at Immanuel 7:00 pm - Worship at Immanuel	22	23 Pastor's day off	24
25 9:30 am - Holy Communion 10:30 am - Fellowship hour 11:00 am - choir rehearsal	26 9:00 am - Quilting	27 10:00 am - Bible study at Village Pointe Commons	28 Noon - Pastor's Lunch 6:00 pm - Lent meal at Faith 7:00 pm - Worship at Faith	29  IT'S LEAP YEAR!		



- 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 Huyck
- 2/21 Bob Eichmann
- 2/27 Jesse Schauer
- 2/28 BreAnna Porth



- 2/12/2005 Dennis & Nerissa
Heusdens
- 2/20/2010 Kenn & Kayla
Matthews

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

Worship Assistants

Assisting Minister:

- February 4 - Robin Fatla
- 11 - Gary Haas
- 14 - **Ash Wednesday** - 11:00 -
Dennis Jaeger
- 7:00 - Bob Butt
- 18 - Robin Fatla
- 25 - Gary Haas

Lector:

- February 4 - Sue Dowe
- 11 - Gary Haas
- 14 - **Ash Wednesday** - 11:00 -
Borgne McClelland
- 7:00 - Robin Fatla
- 18 - Dennis Jaeger
- 25 - Robert McClelland

Usher:

- February 4 - Bob Butt
- 11 - Monica Faretra
- 14 - **Ash Wednesday** - 11:00 -
Peter Viesselmann
- 7:00 - Bob Eichmann
- 18 - Roger Wendorf
- 25 - Joe Porth

Altar bouquets:

- February 4 - **OPEN**
- 11 - Carol & Bob Butt
- 18 - **OPEN**
- 25 - **OPEN**

Fellowship:

- February 4 - Sam & Jean Verber
- 11 - Valentine's Day Brunch
- 18 - **OPEN**
- 25 - **OPEN**

Counting Team:

- February 4 - Borgne McClelland Team
- 11 - Dennis Jaeger Team
- 18 - Jim Litvinoff Team
- 25 - Peter Viesselmann Team

Stewardship Corner

STEWARDSHIP MEANS LETTING OUR LIGHTS SHINE AT ST. JOHN!

In previous articles, I have quoted Clarence Stoughton, former president of Wittenberg University, who said “Stewardship is everything we do after we say ‘I believe.’” It is the way in which we use all of the resources that God has entrusted to our care so that we can love God and our neighbor. **Stewardship is about love.** It is about how the congregation together can do God’s work. **It is about how the congregation together can live out God’s call to love God and our neighbors. It is about love in action.** God calls us to love, not just with our words but with our whole lives.

ST. JOHN: A SHINING LIGHT

We do together what we could not do alone. What are some of the ways we see stewardship in action at St. John?

- * Through the leadership of the outreach team we have collected food for Family Sharing, diapers for the Ozaukee Non-Profit Center Baby Bank, School supplies for the Ozaukee County Back to School Drive, personal hygiene items for Mr. Bob’s Under the Bridge Ministry. This mentions a few.

- * Financially supported Lutheran World Relief, Pine Ridge Lutheran Center, Milwaukee Rescue Mission, Interfaith Caregivers, Family Sharing, Portal Inc., Ozaukee Family Services. For a complete list see the annual reports.

- * Supplied rides to church for individuals that no longer drive.

SHINING LIGHT ON GOD’S PLAN FOR ST. JOHN

2024 will bring many changes at St. John, with the upcoming retirement of Pastor Jim mid-year, the discerning of the pastoral needs of the

congregation going forward, the possible expanded relationship with Prime Horizon, our continuing relationship with EPIC, the restarting of our choir and bell choir programs, and the list goes on.

Questions to ponder and ask yourself:

- * How might St. John use all the resources God has entrusted to us to live out God’s mission through this congregation?
- * Where is God calling you to share your time serving neighbors through this faith community?
- * How is God moving your heart to support the ministries at St. John?

PRAY: Abundant God, we thank you for your goodness to us and for all the blessings of life. We praise you for your immeasurable love in redeeming us through Jesus Christ, our means of grace. Raise our awareness of your generosity so that with thankful hearts we give ourselves to serve you and our neighbors. In Jesus name we pray. Amen.

Sharlene Sandquist, Stewardship Committee

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



**HEALING
SERVICE**

February 18
9:30 am
Service



Ozaukee County Equity Roundtable Presents
NURTURING EMPATHY

Community United Methodist Church, Cedarburg
Saturday, February 3, 2024 1pm-3pm



Dr. Ruha Benjamin

Sociologist and Princeton Professor
Dr. Ruha Benjamin will be sharing
her presentation "From Artificial
Intelligence to Collective Wisdom:
building our capacity for empathy,
justice, and imagination in the
digital age."

Beth Albright

Actress and director of
Cedarburg Children's The-
atre Beth Albright will give a
presentation for parents
and their kids focused on
teaching by example.



Community United Methodist Church: W68N563 Evergreen Blvd, Cedarburg

For more information, please contact: ozaukeequity@gmail.com

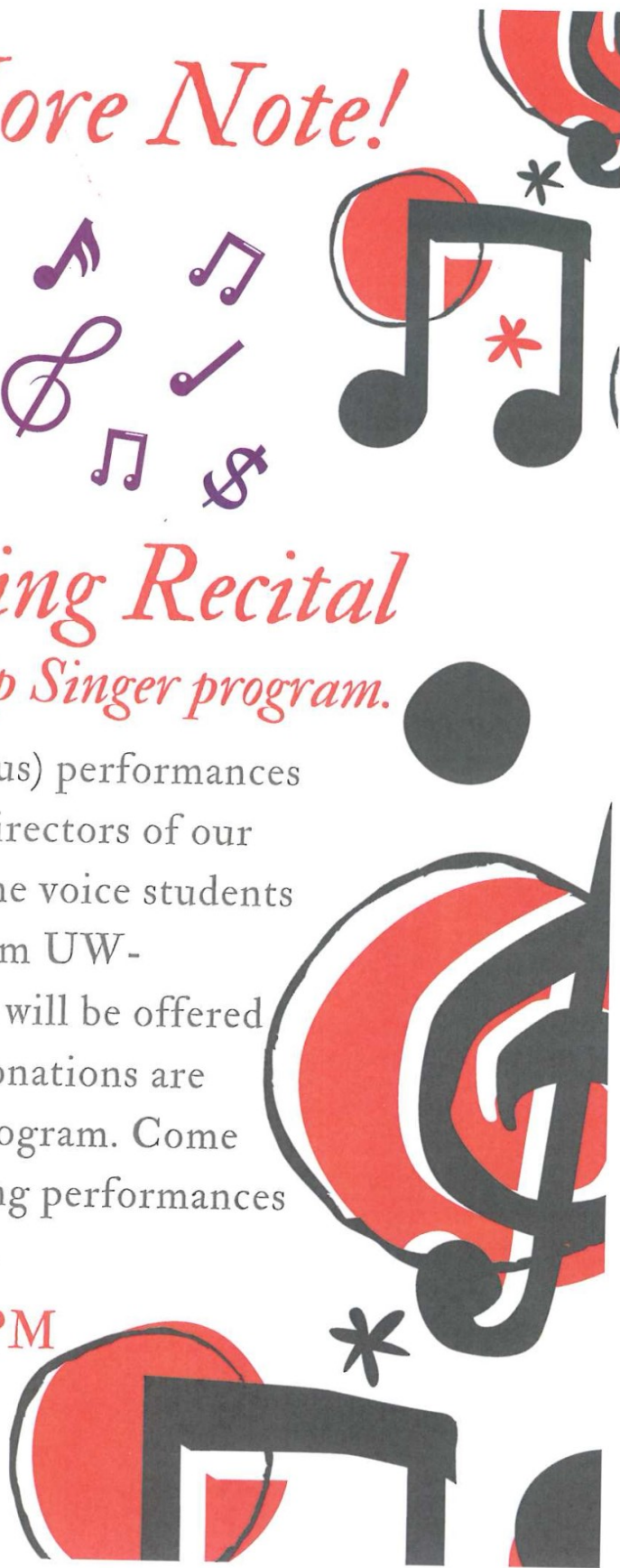
Just One More Note!



a FUN-draising Recital benefiting our Scholarship Singer program.

FUN-ny (and some more serious) performances will be given by members and directors of our Jubilation Choir, including some voice students and a music faculty member from UW-Milwaukee. A dessert reception will be offered at intermission, and free-will donations are welcome for our Scholarship program. Come hear some FUN-ky, entertaining performances by some FUN-tastic musicians.

Sunday, February 4th at 3PM
Grace Lutheran Church
715 6th Ave, Grafton, WI



Black History Month 2024

STRENGTH FOR THE STRUGGLE WITH THE REV. JOSEPH ELLWANGER

February 11

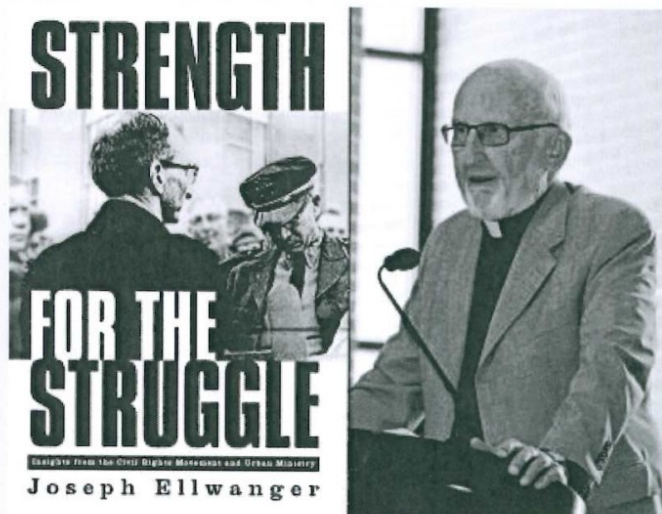
Sunday

2:00 p.m.

Faith Lutheran Church, Cedarburg

Strength for the Struggle is the title of a book by Pastor Joseph W. Ellwanger, and a challenge for all who seek to follow the Gospel call to justice and peace. Pastor Joe will share stories of his life experiences, insights on the themes of his book, and reflections on the trust and hope that sustain faithfulness to the Gospel.

This event is free and open to the public.



To register go to: www.faithlutherancedarburg.com/events

February 2024 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"

JOURNEY TO THE CROSS

Starting on Ash Wednesday, the church traditionally observes Lent, a 40-day period of repentance and reflection. As we prepare for Easter, families can focus on Jesus' life and ministry, culminating in his death and resurrection.

Use this Lenten Bible Reading Plan, along with a kid-friendly version of the Bible, for family devotions. With older-kids, you can expand the readings to the surrounding paragraph or chapter. Discuss how each reference to Christ ties into God's plan of salvation.

DAY 1 Genesis 3:15	DAY 2 Isaiah 7:14	DAY 3 Matthew 1:20-21	DAY 4 Luke 2:11	DAY 5 Luke 2:52	DAY 6 Mark 1:9-11	DAY 7 Matthew 4:1-10
DAY 8 Matthew 4:18-20	DAY 9 Luke 6:27-31	DAY 10 Matthew 11:28-30	DAY 11 Luke 4:40-41	DAY 12 Luke 8:24-25	DAY 13 Matthew 12:8	DAY 14 Mark 6:41-42
DAY 15 Luke 9:20-22	DAY 16 John 3:16-17	DAY 17 John 6:35	DAY 18 John 8:12	DAY 19 John 10:14-15	DAY 20 Mark 10:13-16	DAY 21 Mark 9:2-3
DAY 22 Matthew 20:17-19	DAY 23 Luke 19:9-10	DAY 24 Matthew 14:25-27	DAY 25 Luke 10:36-37	DAY 26 John 11:25-27, 43	DAY 27 John 12:3	DAY 28 Matthew 21:8-9
DAY 29 Mark 11:15-16	DAY 30 John 17:17-19	DAY 31 Luke 22:3-6	DAY 32 Mark 14:22-24	DAY 33 John 13:3-5	DAY 34 Matthew 26:39	DAY 35 Luke 22:63-65
DAY 36 Mark 15:22-26	DAY 37 Matthew 27:50-54	DAY 38 John 19:40-42	DAY 39 Luke 24:1-8	DAY 40 Matthew 28:19-20		