



THE PULSE BEAT



Volume 50, Number 8

September 2025

A Word from the Pastor

We've seen God at work at St. John for the last six months as we've been active working on our Ministry Site Profile.

It feels like we've been running a race to get to this place.

There has been a lot of thinking, planning, speaking, sharing. And now that time is over, and a time of waiting has begun.

On August 17 after our Town Hall with Pastor Kristin from the synod office, we did a 180 with our level of activity.

From working to waiting.

It may feel like a let-down, it may not look like much is happening, but God is at work.

A time of waiting is still a time of preparation. This is a time to be still, and listen for God's voice.

Where do you hear God's voice? For many of us, it is out in nature. For some, we have a ritual of quiet time in our own homes. Some of us have a craft or hobby, like woodworking or knitting, that keeps our hands busy with repetitive motion and leaves our minds open to hear God's voice.

We hear God's voice when we've been still, taken some time away from our daily work.

You do have one job: to pray for guidance and discernment for: your Call Committee, your synod staff (Paul, Kristin, Afi and Becky), for pastors wondering what might be out there for them next.

Our time of quiet preparation will turn into something new and your action will be needed once again when you will welcome a new pastor, who has new ideas, who is interested in learning about you and may find new ways to help you put your God-given gifts to use.

Let's give thanks to God for a quiet time of preparation.

Living in Christ's Grace,
Pastor Sara Gillespie

THOUGHTS FROM THE PRESIDENT

We did it! It's been a long stretch since Pastor Jim retired in June of last year, but our Mission Site Profile is finished, it's been approved by the congregation and the council, and is now published on the Synod website. I am so proud of how the people of St. John came together and got this accomplished! Thanks to the Mission Exploration Team for their diligence and hard work, and thank you to the congregation! You approached every question asked of you thoughtfully and provided the answers needed to make this a truly collaborative effort where everyone who wanted a voice was given one. The call committee has been assembled and approved by council action, so our next step in calling our new pastor can begin! Perseverance! We could not have gotten to this point without it.

Perseverance is more than endurance—it's the unwavering commitment to press forward despite trials, setbacks, and uncertainty. In the Bible, perseverance is not only encouraged but celebrated as a virtue that shapes character, deepens faith, and leads to divine reward.

One of the most powerful verses on this theme comes from James 1:12: *"Blessed is the one who perseveres under trial because, having stood the test, that person will receive the crown of life that the Lord has promised to those who love him."*

This verse sets the tone for understanding perseverance as a spiritual discipline. It's not just about surviving hardship, but about growing through it—becoming refined, resilient, and more aligned with God's purpose.

Throughout Scripture, we see countless examples of perseverance:

- **Job**, who endured unimaginable suffering yet remained faithful (Job 1–2)
- **Paul**, who faced imprisonment, beatings, and rejection, yet continued preaching the gospel (2 Corinthians 11:23–28)
- **Jesus**, who persevered through betrayal, torture, and crucifixion for the sake of humanity (Hebrews 12:2–3)

Though our perseverance has not been quite as life-altering, it has been a challenge just the same. These stories remind us that perseverance is not passive—it's active, intentional, and often painful. But it is also transformative.

I'm sure we all feel that it's been a long road to get to this point, and we have definitely had our setbacks along the way. But resilience in setbacks often leads to greater opportunities. It is true that when a door closes a window opens. The people of St. John need to continue to look forward. Perseverance doesn't mean pretending everything's fine—it means refusing to give up. It helps us stay true to our values and calling, even when the path isn't totally clear, as it is now, and it's not just about achieving goals—it's about becoming who we are meant to be. We've talked about change and how hard it is. Now is the time to figure it out.

Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up. Galatians 6:9

I am happy to be a part of the St. John story and can't wait to see the next chapter!

Hugs and blessings to you all,

Sandy

CHURCH LEADERSHIP

Interim Pastor - Sara Gillespie

Office hours: Wednesday 10:30am – noon;
2:00 – 5:00 pm

Call anytime Wed. - Sun. 920 214-3132

E-mail: sara.gillespie06@gmail.com

Office Manager: Robin Fatla

Church office hours: Monday – Friday,
9:00 am – Noon
262-377-0410

E-mail: stjohnsecretary@hotmail.com

Website: stjohngraston.org

FaceBook: St. John Lutheran Church-
Grafton, WI

Congregation President – Sandy Allen

Vice President – Dale Allen

Secretary – Judy McMullin

Treasurer – Peter Viesselmann

Church Council:

Sharlene Sandquist – Worship

Sue Dowe – Education/ Youth

Sharlene Sandquist – Stewardship

Robin Fatla - Outreach

Roger Wendorf - Finance

Andy Porth – Property & Grounds

Bob Butt - Public Relations

Jane Turowski - Financial Secretary

Organist

Paula Juedes

St. John Choir Director

Sharlene Sandquist

Glory Ringers Director

Dale Allen

Flutist

Sandy Allen

Call Committee: Dale Allen, Judy McMullin,
Jean Verber, Jim Litvinoff, Bob Butt, Roger
Wendorf, Fritz Dowe

Newsletter staff:

Robin Fatla, Borgne McClelland

Newspaper Deadline:

Articles due by the 3rd Sunday of each
month.

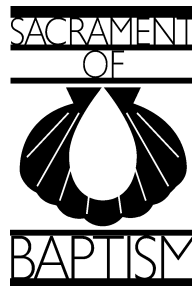
Church Phone Numbers:

Office: 262-377-0410

E-Mail: (office) stjohnsecretary@hotmail.com

GENERAL INTEREST NEWS

We keep in our prayers: Christy Abt,
Anna Bullio, Baldwin Clasen, Amanda Combs, Audrey
Fischer, Henry Frier, Rick Gonzalez, Pat & Sandy
Granrath, Merry Lou Green, Erma & Oswald
Hegenbarth, Dennis Jaeger, Sharon Kaddatz, Joanne
Levenick, Anita Lucht, Scott Maronde, Ken Matthews,
Borgne McClelland, Chuck & Cary Mueller, Alice
Murphy, Erin & Thomas Peterson, Sugeily
Pineiro-Garcia, Joe Porth, Karen Rautenberg, Becka
Rogahn, Tom & Jackie Rogahn, Bill Sackett, Glenn
Sievers, Melanie Smith, Pat Stifter, Richard and Marie
Viesselmann, Jeff Watter **Military personnel:** Kyle
Christenson **“Home away from home” members:**
Jeanine Burhop– Lasata; Tim McClosky – at home with
sister Merry Lou Green



On Sunday, August 17th, we
welcomed into the family of God at
St. John,

Colby Drake Kroening.

His parents are Patrick & Katie
Gnodtke Kroening and his sponsors
are Celeste Linzenmeyer and
Kris Rieder.



*“...I am the resurrection and the
life.*

*He who believes in Me,
though he may die,
he shall live.”*

John 11:25

Wendy Tomter
April 7, 1948 - July 13, 2025

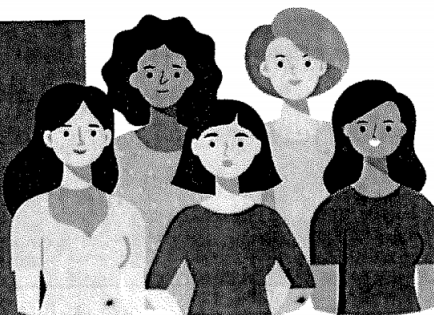
Donna Dowe
February 12, 1937 – August 15, 2025



WOMEN OF THE ELCA

CONVENTION & RETREAT

September 13th, 2025
9:00 am-2:00 pm
St. John's Lutheran Church
20275 Davidson Rd
Brookfield 53045



AGENDA

9:00 am: Gathering and light breakfast
9:30 am: Worship litany
10:15 am: Welcome from Jennifer Hockenbery
Executive Director of Women of the ELCA Topic: Supporting
Women in Today's World
Worship litany
10:30 am: Workshop: *Mending Our Souls* with Emma Mock

MENDING OUR SOULS

Mending Our Souls is a workshop centered on the healing power of creativity and community. The workshop includes a presentation on the significance of textiles in relation to grief across cultures and history. The hands on portion will explore how textiles can help us engage with our personal narratives of loss and healing. This space invites us to reflect on loss, memory, legacy, and healing through the transformative act of making. Together, we will create keepsakes that honor our personal experiences with loss. Inspired by the goal to promote grief awareness, reflection, and expression, this workshop emphasizes the powerful and healing nature of combining creativity with community.

12:00pm: Lunch
12:30pm: Convention for Greater Milwaukee
Synodical Organization

This business meeting will include time to hear about the initiatives and strategic plan for Women of the ELCA. We will hold elections for all positions on the SWO board and for voting members for Churchwide Convention in July 2026. All are welcome to attend this meeting and learn about Women of the ELCA.

WHO IS THIS FOR?

- Anyone who identifies as a woman and is interested in deepening their connections with the ELCA, either as an ELCA congregation member or a participant in women's ministries with that congregation
- Women interested in Mock's *Mending Our Souls* workshop who are looking for healing from grief

You do not need to have participated in Women of the ELCA, nor are you required to commit beyond this retreat

Children are welcome! There will be childcare provided.

Registration is free.

Donations of \$25.00 are suggested to help cover the cost of breakfast, lunch, and the speaker.

ABOUT EMMA MOCK

Emma Marie Mock is the Bereavement Care Coordinator at Sharon S. Richardson Community Hospice in Sheboygan Falls, WI. She holds a Master of Thanatology from Marian University and is a Certified Grief Counselor. In addition to her hospice work, Emma is an artist, educator, facilitator, and speaker on topics related to the healing qualities of creating in relation to grief. Her art and workshops emphasize that creative and collective spaces often serve as healing spaces. Drawing inspiration from the intricate relationships between objects, sentimentality, and memory, Emma designs her professional work, art, and workshops to encourage the exploration of personal narratives and meaningful connections

STEWARDSHIP CORNER

September is here and some of us wonder where did July and August go? The busy months of summer always seem to fly by. Now it is time to gear up for the fall and resumption of activities that were on break for the summer.

Our community gardens weren't utilized as much as we hoped, but it was a good beginning. Harvest Hosts has made good use of our parking lot on several weekends and we have received very good reviews. Some have also visited our worship service. We have made a good start on utilizing our property more fully.

Sandy is in conversation and has a letter of intent from Prime Horizon about using our building on a daily basis beginning in October. So, progress has been made on that front too.

The MET team has completed its work and a call committee has been formed. Sunday, August 17, after church, we met with the synod representative, Pastor Kristin Nielsen, in a town hall format, and she reviewed our MSP with us. There were only two minor changes that needed to be made. The MSP now goes to the synod and will be posted on their site for prospective candidates to read.

As Fall activities at church pick up again, I want to encourage any of you who have the time, to consider joining our quilting group. The more who tie, the faster we can complete quilts. We have a backlog of tops waiting for filling, backing and tying and it would be wonderful if we could complete 5 or 6 a week, instead of 3.

It is a great way to use your time in service to others on the second and fourth Mondays beginning at 9 a.m.

At the beginning of creation, God decided earth was not a place for Adam to be alone (Genesis 2:18). God created Eve, and the very first faith community was born! Throughout the Bible, we find many examples of the faithful coming together, pooling their resources, sharing their talents, and doing God's work together.

In Exodus we read how God, through Moses, commanded the Israelites to make offerings to God. "Everyone who was willing and whose heart moved them came and brought an offering to the Lord." (35:21). Moses reminded the Israelites that God also blessed them with many skills, so "... every skilled person to whom the Lord had given skill and ability to know how to carry out all the work....are to do the work just as the Lord has commanded" (35:1).

This September, let us recommit ourselves to giving of our time, talents and monetary gifts, so that St. John Lutheran Church can continue its witness and work in this community.

Sharlene Sandquist, Stewardship Chair



QUILTING DATES:

Monday
September 8 & 22
9:00 - noon



9/1 Sandy Granrath
 9/3 Andy Porth
 9/7 Adam Fatla
 9/8 Joshua Pritzlaff
 9/8 JoAnn Dowę
 9/10 Edyn Allen
 9/11 Jeff Kapke
 9/14 Diana Tetzlaff
 9/14 Fritz Dowę
 9/19 Joe Schauer
 9/23 Mirabelle Christenson



9/3/1966 Bob & Barb Eichmann
 9/6/2014 Kyle & Laura Christenson
 9/18/1999 Mark & Mary Ellen Levrá

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

You're invited

Jim & Carolę Litvinoff will renew their
wedding vows on

Saturday, October 18, 2025
11:00 am

St. John Lutheran Church
Dinner to follow the service.

RSVP by September 27th

715 820-0612 or
ejlitvi@gmail.com

WORSHIP ASSISTANTS

Assisting Minister:

September 7 - Dennis Jaeger
 14 - Robin Fatla
 21 - Bob Butt
 28 - Gary Haas

Lector:

September 7 - Gary Haas
 14 - Dennis Jaeger
 21 - Borgne McClelland
 28 - Robert McClelland

Usher:

September 7 - Sue Dowe
 14 - Fritz Dowe
 21 - Jim & Carole Litvinoff
 28 - Tom Rogahn

Altar bouquets:

September 7 - Robin Fatla/
 McClelland
 14 - **OPEN**
 21 - **OPEN**
 28 - **OPEN**

Communion gifts:

September 7 - **OPEN**
 14 - **OPEN**
 21 - **OPEN**
 28 - Robin Fatla & Sue Haas

Fellowship hour:

September 7 - **OPEN**
 14 - **OPEN**
 21 - **OPEN**
 28 - **OPEN**

Counting Team:

September 7 - Peter Viesselmann Team
 14 - Borgne McClelland Team
 21 - Dennis Jaeger Team
 28 - Jim Litvinoff Team



<i>Sun</i>	<i>Mon</i>	<i>Tue</i>	<i>Wed</i>	<i>Thu</i>	<i>Fri</i>	<i>Sat</i>
	1 Labor Day - office is closed	2	3 Pastor Sara in the office: 10:30 - noon 2:00 - 5:00	4 10:00 am - Prime Horizon Cooking Club	5	6
7 8:45 am - Choir rehearsal 9:30 am - Holy Communion 10:30 am - Fellowship hour	8	9 5:30 pm - Dinner at Portlight Shelter	10 10:00 am - Prime Horizon Cooking Club Pastor Sara in the office: 10:30 - noon 2:00 - 5:00 5:15 pm - Confirmation class at Trinity	11 	12	13 1:00 pm - Bingo at Immanuel 5:00 pm - Holden Evening Service at Trinity
14 8:45 am - Choir rehearsal 9:30 am - Holy Communion 10:30 am - Fellowship hour	15	16	17 Pastor Sara in the office: 10:30 - noon 2:00 - 5:00 5:15 pm - Confirmation class at Trinity	18 10:00 am - Prime Horizon Cooking Club	19	20 12:00 pm - Donna Dowe funeral
21 8:45 am - Choir rehearsal 9:30 am - Holy Communion 10:30 am - Fellowship hour 11:00 am - Church Council	22	23	24 10:00 am - Prime Horizon Cooking Club Pastor Sara in the office: 10:30 - noon 2:00 - 5:00 5:15 pm - Confirmation class at Trinity	25	26	27
28 8:45 am - Choir rehearsal 9:30 am - Holy Communion 10:30 am - Fellowship hour 11:00 am - Sunday School	29	30				

EDUCATION

VBS 2025 Reflections

Our VBS theme this year was called "The Tree of Healing", based on Revelation 22:1-4.

".... On either side of the river is the tree of life with its twelve kinds of fruit, producing its fruit each month; and the leaves of the tree are for the healing of the nations. Nothing accursed will be found there any more....." Revelation 22:1-4

It was a great week of faith and fun hosted by Faith Lutheran Church. Each of our 4 participating congregations was represented by a tree. The removable leaves include words that are "prayer starters." Feel free to take a leaf and reflect on it, silently say a prayer of healing. Blank leaves are for anyone to leave their own prayer starter word, if you wish.



You're Invited!

St. John Lutheran Church

Ages 3 – 5th Grade

**Please join us on September 28th for a
new year of classes**

Class time 11:00 -11:30

Email Sue Dowe with questions

sadowe1966@gmail.com

EPIC Confirmation classes held on Wednesdays at
Trinity Lutheran Church in Cedarburg.
resume at 5:15 pm
on September 10th.

OUTREACH TEAM



"Be a piece of the peace puzzle."

- ♦ Our Community Garden beds have begun ripening and tomatoes are in abundance! Each Sunday until they have finished, there will be a bowl in Fellowship Hall for you to help yourself.
 - ♦ Our first season as a Harvest Host has already welcomed 9 RV traveling guests from around the country. With the changing color season fast approaching, we may have more visitors.
 - ♦ As of this writing, we have yet to see a winner in our summer Bingo game.
 - ♦ Our 6 month monetary collection for Family Promise is now at \$230. Our goal is to collect \$2,500 by December 31st. These donations will be presented to Family Promise to purchase every day needs at Portlight Shelter.
 - ♦ We also continue to collect your unwanted story books - for children or adults, DVDs, activity books for children or adults and games. There is a collection basket in Fellowship Hall.
 - ♦ Trinity Church in Cedarburg has ongoing collections of the following items:
 - ♦ Aluminum can "pull" tabs
 - ♦ Worn out athletic shoes
 - ♦ Used magazines
 - ♦ Cell phones
 - ♦ Corks from bottles
 - ♦ Dead batteries
 - ♦ Empty ink cartridges
 - ♦ Prescription bottles (remove labels)
 - ♦ Other gently used shoes for all ages
- There is a bin in Fellowship Hall if you would like to drop any of these items off for Trinity.
- ♦ St. John is scheduled to prepare and share dinner with the Portlight Shelter guests on Tuesday, September 9th. Please contact Robin if you would like to help by providing a portion of the meal or sharing the meal.

**St John Evangelical Lutheran Church
Financial Summary For July 2025**

	July 2025			Year To Date 2025		
	Actual	Budget	Actual Over (under) Budget	Actual	Budget	Actual Over (under) Budget
Unified Income	\$ 11,720	\$ 9,000	\$ 2,720	\$ 65,476	\$ 66,000	\$ (524)
Expense Summary:						
Education	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 11	\$ 100	\$ (89)
Outreach	\$ -	\$ 50	\$ (50)	\$ 71	\$ 200	\$ (129)
Worship	\$ 853	\$ 751	\$ 102	\$ 6,958	\$ 6,397	\$ 561
Youth	\$ -	\$ 125	\$ (125)	\$ -	\$ 875	\$ (875)
Stewardship	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 191	\$ 230	\$ (39)
Public Relations	\$ 20	\$ 83	\$ (64)	\$ 179	\$ 581	\$ (402)
Property	\$ 1,420	\$ 1,706	\$ (286)	\$ 14,028	\$ 16,336	\$ (2,308)
Finance (incl. Mission Support)	\$ 9,375	\$ 8,050	\$ 1,325	\$ 51,386	\$ 56,515	\$ (5,129)
Total Expenses	\$ 11,667	\$ 10,765	\$ 902	\$ 72,824	\$ 81,234	\$ (8,410)
Net Income (Deficit)	\$ 53	\$ (1,765)	\$ 1,818	\$ (7,347)	\$ (15,234)	\$ 7,887

Comparative 2024 Figures:

	<u>@ 7/31/2024</u>
Unified Income	\$ 65,617
Total Expenses	\$ (94,908)
Net Income (Deficit)	<u>\$ (29,290)</u>

Major Differences 2025 vs. 2024: Income so far for 2025 is only \$141 less than last year.
Expenses so far for 2025 are \$22,100 less than last year.
Major year-to-date expense item differences:
-- Guest Preachers expense \$1,200 more than last year.
-- Gas Utility expense \$1,700 more than last year.
-- Wages and benefits net expense \$19,500 less than last year.

Thrivent Choice Gifts Rec. 2025:	\$1,237	
Memorial Gifts Received 2025:	\$15,030	Memorials received for Dick Juedes, Peter Becker & Doreen Viesselmann, and bequest from Sheila Kapke
Budgeted Mission Support 2025:	\$9,490	(All paid in February 2025)
Added Mission Support 2025:	\$155	(Boy Scout Camp -from tithe of 2024 memorials received)
	\$490	(Ozaukee Food Alliance - from proceeds of chili drive-thru)
	\$230	(ELCA Good Gifts Community Garden - from offerings)

	<u>@ 7/31/2025</u>	Comparative	<u>@ 7/31/2024</u>
Assets At End Of Month	\$ 179,835		\$ 134,608

Assets Are Needed to Support The Following Funds:

Audio Fund (formerly Cassette)	\$ -	\$ -
Contingency Fund	\$ 26,200	\$ 8,111
Family Promise Fund	\$ 484	\$ 484
Fully Funded	\$ 206	\$ 208
Library Fund	\$ 505	\$ 505
Memorial Fund	\$ 142,577 <(incl. \$6,761 restricted)	\$ 135,986 <(incl. \$6,761 restricted)
Mercy Fund	\$ 1,458	\$ 1,360
Music Fund	\$ 114	\$ 114
Organ Repair Fund	\$ -	\$ -
Outreach Fund & Garden Beds	\$ 1,006	\$ 509
Pastoral Education Fund	\$ 2,176	\$ 2,176
Property Fund	\$ 8,013	\$ 10,483
Scholarship Fund	\$ 2,639	\$ 2,039
Youth Fund	\$ 1,804	\$ 1,924
Total Fund Requirements	\$ 187,183	\$ 163,899
= Asset Excess (Shortage)	\$ (7,347)	\$ (29,290)
(Excess = budget surplus; Shortage = budget deficit)		

September 2025 Pulse Beat



1193 Lakefield Road
Grafton, WI 53024

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

Worship Schedule

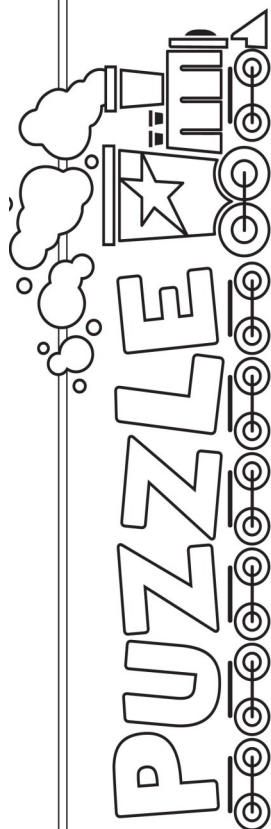
- Sunday Morning - 9:30 a.m.
- Education hour - 11:00 a.m.

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.

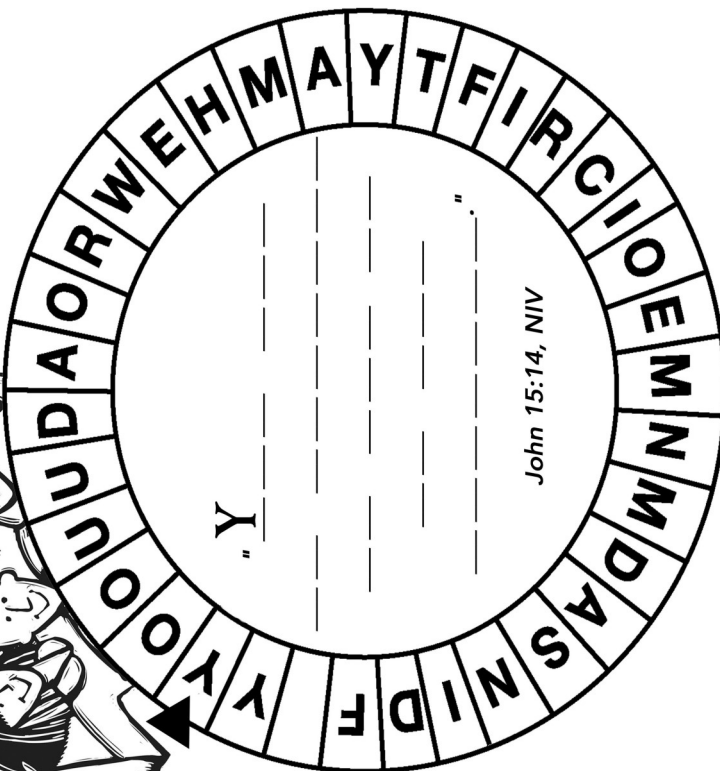
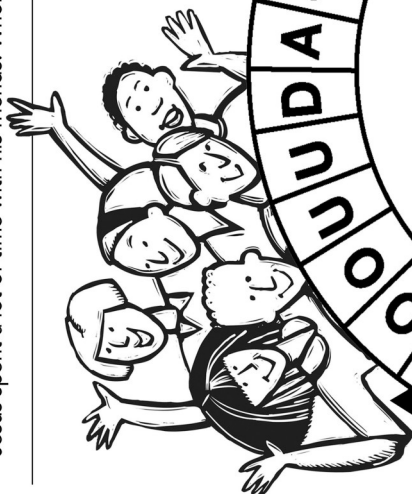
"Faithfully Serving Christ Since 1866"



WHO WERE JESUS' FRIENDS?

Jesus spent a lot of time with his friends. Whom did Jesus consider his friends?

Beginning at the arrow and moving clockwise, write every other letter on the spaces below.



Answer: "You are my friends if you do what I command." John 15:14, NIV