

# GOOD NEWS FROM ST JOHN

April  
2018

## NEWS FOR ALL

### SUNDAY WORSHIP

9:00am

Sunday School  
9:15am—10:00am  
(during the school year)

Holy Communion  
1st & 4th Sunday

### PASTOR

Gail Sowell

Office Hours: 9am-1pm  
Tuesday-Friday  
(*And by appointment*)

### SECRETARY'S HOURS

Monday-Friday  
9:00-1:00

### ADDRESS

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Items for print MUST be submitted by the 20th of the preceding month.

### *Pastor's Ponderings*

"Via de Cristo"—"Way of Christ" in Spanish. For me, this is a *powerful* experience of spiritual renewal, and I'm thankful I've had the opportunity to participate in it a dozen times in my 18 years of ordained ministry. While it's open to everyone of faith, many people wouldn't feel comfortable in that setting, being in close confines with as many as 40 people for 72 hours. But for those who can give themselves to the process, it can be enriching and nourishing. Prayer services 3 times a day; communion every day; singing together in praise and thanksgiving "at all times and in all places"; laughing till you cry, crying till you laugh. Much as I love the Lutheran way of worship, my inner faith requires the deeper spirituality of the Via de Cristo format. If you're interested in attending a VdC week-end, please let me know!

*Via de Cristo*—the way of Christ—involves in part the "Via Dolorosa," the "Way of Sorrows" that Jesus walked on the day he was crucified. Originally the Roman Catholic Church used 14 "stations" or gathering/focal points where individuals or groups could stop, meditate, and pray in devotion to our Lord for his willing suffering on our behalf. Today's portrayals include the following stations: Pilate condemns Jesus; Jesus accepts his cross; Simon of Cyrene helps Jesus carry his cross; Jesus meets the women of Jerusalem; Jesus is stripped of his clothing; Jesus is nailed to the cross; Jesus dies on the cross; Jesus' body is removed from the cross; Jesus' body is placed in the tomb. Like *Via de Cristo*, this kind of meditation isn't for everyone—but if you're interested (or curious), there are Stations in most Roman Catholic churches, at Holy Hill, at St. Anthony Spiritual Center in Marathon, and a number of other locations. Try it and see if it speaks to you!

One of the purposes of Lent is to draw closer to God. *Via de Cristo* and Stations of the Cross are two ways of doing this. In preparation for Holy Week, our mid-week evening services also offer us a chance to focus on different aspects of scripture that can remind us of God's sacrificial love for us and all people. To fulfill the process of Lenten worship, it's *really important* to attend services on Maundy Thursday (March 29, 6:00 at St. John) and Good Friday (1:00 at St. Stephen, 6:00 at St. John), as well as Easter itself (6:00 a.m. at St. Stephen, followed by breakfast at 7:00; 9:00 at St. John; 10:30 at St. Stephen).

—Pastor Gail

# St. John Family News!



Congratulations to Hannah (Imhoff) and Jason Hinz on the birth of their beautiful and precious daughter **Zoey Kay**, born on 2/28/18! Kim Imhoff is the delighted and proud grandma!

## God's blessings and congratulations to all !



It was our Joy to have four of our young people join us in receiving communion for the first time on March 4th. Blessings to *Tatum Bargender, Montgomery Framke, Oliver Olmsted, and Carlie Stahel*. May you continue to faithfully join with your family in Christ around his table. 125 family members, sponsors and friends were present to celebrate this day with them.



Lenten Mid-week Worship services and Soup Suppers have come to a close as we are now in Holy Week. Average attendance at St. John was 34. (*Week one was 56, weeks 3 and 5 were each 26.*) Many thanks to those who hosted soup suppers, those who contributed, and those who faithfully attended. What a blessing to spend time together each week in a more casual, intimate, setting reflecting on our God and his great desire for his people that moved him to deliver us. Offerings from these services went to Circle of Joy in Edgar and to the Community Food Pantry in Stratford.

## St. John met the CHALLENGE !

Pastor Gail had issued a **\$500 challenge for the ELCA World Hunger's 40 Days of Giving**. They had a goal of \$203,000 to raise during Lent to serve the 18 million people of Malawi where our Sister Synod is located. It is wonderful to report that with the funds received from the Palm Sunday Brunch St. John met the challenge! Thanks to all who generously gave.



We were blessed to have the Children's Choir sing for us in the Palm Sunday service after processing with their palms. After the service, we went downstairs to enjoy a wonderful Pancake Brunch. *Some photo captures follow, courtesy of Niaomi Treankler. Thanks Niaomi!*



# Palm Sunday Brunch



**Y  
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!**

**HUGE** "Thank you!" to everyone who donated items, cooked, served, helped clean up, and ate at the **Palm Sunday Brunch**. We fed 70 people and raised \$290 that was donated to the Malawi Fund!

*Rick Mueller*

*We want to add a grateful word of thanks to Master-Chef Rick Mueller and Dan & Michelle Hollatz for spearheading this event.*

Delicious care packages were packed and sent to Ed Kralcik and Judy Totzke who received them gladly and wish to say "Thanks for thinking of us"!

Thanks to Enola Willhite & Gerald Borchardt for making those thoughtful deliveries. *God's blessings to you all!*

**Thanks !**

**Well Done !**

**YOUTH** .....  
**Registrations for Camp Luther Park** need to be to Naomi Treankler by **April 29!** That will enable us to take advantage of the "early bird discount". Don't miss out on this opportunity!



## Adventures of the Church Mice



Hi, it's Tully here—smallest of the Church Mice at St. John and St. Stephen. That's how I was able to stow away in Pastor Gail's backpack (again!) when she went to her Via de Cristo last month. That was TRULY an adventure! I was a *little* worried when I found out we'd be spending more than 3 days in a church. I mean, even though I AM a church mouse, this was a foreign church, and it was **really different!** It was also a SCHOOL! The center of the building was shaped like a stop sign (is that an octagon?) and they used it as a gym. On the other side of the hall, the outside part, were 12 classrooms that could also be used as Sunday School rooms. What a cool idea! A church where people could worship, and a school that could meet during the week, all in one huge building! (I can tell you, my little mousy legs got REALLY tired with all the running around.) It's a good thing there was a LOT of food, they seemed to never stop eating, and there were *lots* of crumbs! There was also a whole lot of singing. And talking. And praying. And more singing and talking and praying. And even MORE! No wonder Pastor Gail slept 13 hours straight when we got back. I couldn't even get over to St. John until late the next day. My feelings were a little hurt, though, I must say. People were talking about their pet dogs and cats and birds, and one lady even had a ferret, but no one seemed to care about mice. People are so hard to understand! But even so, I hope I get to go to another Via de Cristo. Maybe next time Twink and Miri and Frederick can come too!



### *Reflections from Rose*

**I don't like mud.** We live at the intersection of 2 "dirt" roads, and our driveway is the same red granite gravel as the roads. After all the wonderful melting and thawing and mixing of the dirt and the gravel there's a lot of MUD. I almost got stuck in the approach to the garage yesterday after work. I used to ENJOY mud when I was a kid. I used to make mud pies and

other mud sculptures. I even would rub mud all over myself when I wanted to role play a person of color in one of our games. I always liked to be the "Native American" when we would play a game of Cowboys and "Native Americans". As I recall my mom didn't care much for mud back then either.

**But I do love SPRING!** I love watching and waiting for the little green sprouts to poke their way through the cold black earth. It's especially fun to watch them grow early, when they aren't hindered by all the weeds that spring up to try and choke them out. I've been checking my tulip bed every day. Nothing yet.

**It's such a good reflection of Jesus.** He sprang forth in HIS awesome power of NEW LIFE after he had been put in the cold dead tomb. I think of one of the taunts that's recorded in the Bible when Jesus was hanging on the cross, "He saved others, let him save himself!". And I remember Jairus' daughter... He raised her to life after she had been pronounced dead in Matthew 9. I think of Lazarus in John 11. He had been in the tomb for three days when Jesus called him back to life. In the next chapter (12) Jesus is HAVING SUPPER with Lazarus after having raised him from the dead. Can you imagine, what in the world was that like?! How amazing...And now, he's accomplished what it took to give US *his* new life. GLORY!

**I love how God's creation reflects who He is,** and the story of what he HAS done, and continues to do. Have a blessed Easter and a joy-filled Spring!

**St. John Women of the ELCA**



# Chequamegon Conference of the ELCA

## Women's Spring Rally 2018

# Shepherd Lead Us

### Theme Verse :

**Saturday, April 7, 2018**  
At St. John ELCA, W1000 CTH N  
Edgar WI 54426  
Registration begins at 8:30am  
with light refreshments.

*Jesus said to his disciples, "I have other sheep that do not belong to this fold. I must bring them also, and they will listen to my voice. So there will be one flock, one shepherd." John 10:16*

Come travel to European cathedrals (and more) with Pastor Gail Sowell

*Hear how the opportunity to travel has blessed, challenged, and caused her to grow in her faith.*

**LADIES WE'RE COUNTING ON YOU!** It's right here, in your OWN backyard. So SAVE THE DATE and join us! There will be a business meeting and Installation of Officers, but NO worries! *All the positions have nominees in them already.*

We will share lunch together at NOON, and we will also share a time of communion. A **few** of our women have spent time planning and making preparations for this event. Now they could use the help of **many** to put the plan in motion.

IN-KIND GIFTS for the *Circle of Joy Food Shelter* serving Edgar & Marathon City. **Requested items:** non-perishable food items. *Special needs: sugar, peanut butter, jelly, ketchup, cereal, and laundry soap.*

**Please join us in welcoming the women of our conference. Help is NEEDED for donated supplies, setting up, preparations, serving, and cleaning up. There's a sign-up sheet in the Narthex. Stop by and see how YOU can help. MANY hands make light work and more fun along the way! Women, YOUR support is needed.**



Our next Bible Study is on Tuesday, April 10, at 1pm at St. Stephen. Bring a friend!  
The next General Meeting is Wednesday, May 2. Please come join us. We need YOUR input!

Quilters



The Quilters continue to meet each Tuesday morning at 9:30am. We have received MANY supplies for our handiwork recently. MORE helping hands would be appreciated. Come when you can, leave when you must. We would be "sew" happy to see you. No experience required! We have plans to continue through the month of April yet before taking our break.

**WOMEN'S STEWARDSHIP PROJECT**—for April, May, and June is Baby Layette kits. Items needed are: *Sleepers (without feet), gowns, sweaters, socks, onesies, and receiving blankets.*  
Items must be *like new* if not new. Yard sale season will be starting soon.  
**A bassinet will be placed in the Narthex for your donations. Thank you!**

# Looking Ahead . . .



Bids for **MOWING** the Cemetery are being sought. Are YOU interested? Do you know someone who is?

May 13th (*Mothers Day*) is the LAST day of Sunday School!

May 28th is Memorial Day. The VFW Honor Guard will be at St. John Cemetery around 9:15am.



*As we begin to dream about those lazy, hazy days of summer let's remember. . .*

**Brat Fries** in Stratford at ProVison on Friday, June 1 and Friday, June 8th.

**Worship in the Park**, at Oak Street Park on Thursday, June 14th at the beginning of Edgar Carnival Days.

**Breakfast in the Park**, at Oak Street Park in Edgar on Saturday, June 16th.

And of course you'll want to make sure to get the **STEAM SHOW** on your calendar for August 24-26!

Just a "heads up" regarding the upcoming opportunities to spend time together building friendships, serving our community, and strengthening St. John. *Thank you for keeping these things in mind as you plan your summer!*

**NORTHWEST SYNOD ASSEMBLY**—June 2-3, at UW Eau Claire, Davies Center. There will be a Bishop election. We need to send 2 representatives. Interested? Talk to Pastor Gail. Registration has begun.

## PLANTING YOUR SPRING GARDEN

For the Garden of your Daily Living

Plant Three Rows of Peas:

1. Peace of Mind
2. Peace of Heart
3. Peace of Soul



No Garden is Complete Without Turnips:

1. Turnip for Meetings
2. Turnip for Service
3. Turnip to Help One Another

Plant Four Rows of Squash:

1. Squash Gossip
2. Squash Indifference
3. Squash Grumbling
4. Squash Selfishness

To Conclude Our Garden, we Must have Thyme:

1. Thyme for Each Other
2. Thyme for Family
3. Thyme for Friends

Plant Four Rows of Lettuce:

1. Lettuce be Faithful
2. Lettuce be Kind
3. Lettuce be Patient
4. Lettuce Really Love One Another

Water Freely with Patience and Cultivate with Love.

There is much Fruit in your Garden because you Reap what you Sow!



This appeared in *The Northwester*. The newsletter for Women of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, Northwest Synod. Used here by permission.



## The Bishop's Easter Letter



# Northwest Synod of Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

God's work. Our hands.

March 2018

Dear Saints of the Northwest Synod of Wisconsin,

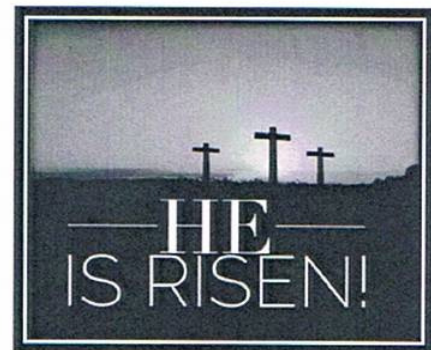
This week I was honored to preach at the funeral of a 37 year old pastor who died too young and left behind a wife and a two year old daughter. It was an honor, but also just plain hard work. Not just for me, but everyone who sat in the overflowing sanctuary. But what would have been inestimably harder would have been doing that work without Easter...doing that work without Jesus. But I was able to stand in that pulpit and proclaim as clearly, and with as much certainty as I could muster, that death does not have the final say. I said these words: "Jesus died, and Jesus rose again, for a day just like this." Yes he did.

I often tell pastors, deacons and Synodically Authorized Ministers: "There are three high holy days in the year - Christmas, Easter and Mothers' Day. And don't ever forget Mother's day!" All three of these days celebrate the gift of new life. Each, in its own way, celebrates Jesus bringing new life into a world that can be dragged down by the fear and the reality of death.

So, what about Easter? First of all, I hope that everyone who reads these words takes/makes the time to go to church on Easter. Secondly, as you sit there in the lily scented church, surrounded by light and the sound of beautiful hymns, try to imagine your most difficult collision with death without the belief that Jesus really did rise from that tomb. Imagine burying a parent, or a child, or a spouse or a friend without that promise. Imagine. I cannot.

I cannot imagine, because I don't remember a day in my entire life when I didn't have that promise folded into me. It has strengthened me on days when it was all I had. The promise that "Jesus died, and Jesus rose again, for a day just like this." It is an awesome gift and one for which I am grateful.

This Easter, go to church. But don't just go there. Imagine someone who hasn't received the gift of that promise. If you can't think of anyone, well, you may need to get out and make some new friends! Because what you have been given, is too precious to hang onto by yourself. All of us, if we live long enough, will experience a "day just like this." It is inevitable. And we have a promise that will make a difference to someone who just cannot do that plain hard work by themselves.



They need Jesus. They need the promise of Jesus. They need the hope of Jesus. They need what you have been given. Please...share it. It is an honor.

Bishop Rick Hoyme  
Northwest Synod of Wisconsin-ELCA

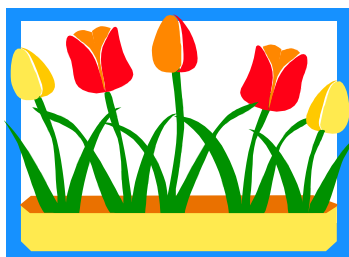


## **GOOD NEWS**

St. John Lutheran Church ELCA  
W1000 Hwy N  
Edgar, WI 54426

We're on the Web  
[www.stjohnelcaedgar.org](http://www.stjohnelcaedgar.org)

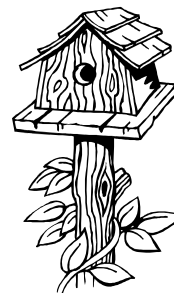
## **April 2018**



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## **Deadline for May 2018 News**



## **April 22nd**

*St. John/St. Stephen Joint Mission Statement:*

*"Saints united to be the body of Christ in the world, freed by grace  
to live faithfully, witness boldly, and serve joyfully."*