

GOOD NEWS FROM ST JOHN

February
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

W1000 Hwy N
Edgar, WI 54426

PHONE/EMAIL

715-352-2524

EMERGENCY PHONE

715-352-2492

stjohnelca@gmail.com

WEBSITE

www.stjohnelcaedgar.org

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

Pastor's Ponderings

"Tears are the unspoken words of the heart." This was said by the daughter of a dying woman, surrounded by some 15 family members, including exes and steps on every side. They all grieved. They all wept. They surrounded her with love.

We, too, are surrounded with love. On every side, inside and out. The immortal, invisible, eternal love of God, of Jesus. The amazing grace of the Rock of Ages—how great he is! For me, it's truly a privilege to be able to receive a phone call from a casual acquaintance, asking me to pray for his dying wife just because he knew I was a pastor.

A season of repentance and prayer is coming up. Ash Wednesday, the first day of Lent, is on April 14th. Valentine's Day seems a good time to focus on love—but for the Christian Church (the body of Christ, the communion of saints, the fellowship of believers) the love I ask you to pursue in Lent is a love in service for others.

You know my passion for the hungry and suffering of the world. I ask you this year to share it and to give as you are able to an area of special need. My focus is on Malawi, because the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Malawi is our sister synod. The following information is provided by the *ELCA World Hunger's 40 Days of Giving*. Their goal is to raise \$203,000 during Lent to serve the 18 million people of Malawi. "Faced with some of the highest rates of HIV, malaria and other preventable diseases, the health care needs in Malawi are great. Since rural families can be days away from the nearest health care facility, our partners [The ELCM] have transformed four-wheel-drive vehicles into mobile clinics stocked with test kits, supplies and medicines. Special programs focus on malnutrition, maternal and neonatal care, HIV and AIDS, and malaria. Your gifts will help train local health care professionals and provide much-needed medical supplies to ensure that these programs continue to save lives."

(Continued)

Pastor's Ponderings

As I've done several times in the last few years, I will match the giving of St. John and St. Stephen, up to \$500 in each congregation. Please make your checks out this time to me, Gail Sowell, marked for "Malawi." (It's a lot easier than keeping track of giving to each congregation. If you need a receipt for tax purposes, let me know.)

Lenten services will rotate between congregations, beginning with Ash Wednesday at St. Stephen, no soup supper. Supper begins at 5:00, worship each week at 6:00. All midweek services *after* Ash Wednesday will be held in the basement, to conserve heat and provide a more family-like atmosphere. During Holy Week, Maundy Thursday's service (no supper) will be at St. John; Good Friday worship at 1:00 St. Stephen, 6:00 St. John; sunrise service at St. Stephen at 6:00, followed by breakfast at 7:00 and regular 10:30 worship; Easter worship at St. John at 9:00.

Please walk the Lenten journey with us and join us for the special days in Holy Week. In order to truly celebrate the resurrection on Easter, we all need to mark the events of Thursday and Friday.

St. John Family News!

The **Installation of Officers** was part of the January 7th service. We extended our appreciation and pledged our support to those who were elected and were beginning their term of service. Our newly installed leaders are listed below:

Deacon: Sharon Schumacker

Trustee: Dan Leffel

Finance Committee: Marion Werner, Sonia Heidmann, and Jennifer Drabek

Parish Ed Committee: Bonnie Bargender, Michelle Hollatz, Cindy Manecke, and Vicky Finke

Cemetery Board: Leon Werner

Auditing Committee: Naomi Sebold, Troy Wiesman, and Leon Werner.

Let's support them with words of appreciation, encouragement and our prayers!



It was our joy to celebrate the Holy Baptism of **Skylar June Socha** during the service on January 14th. Skylar was born November 12, 2017 and her mother is *Courtney June Socha* who was baptized here herself as an infant. Skylar's sponsors are Sarah Socha, Stephen Klopotoski, Ashley Leader and Brad leader.

God's blessings to all as you continue to walk with him !

The ANNUAL MEETING on the 21st was attended by 70 people. Many thanks to **Naomi Sebald** who came forward as a volunteer to be our St. John Photo Coordinator in the making of the **NEW Photo Church Directory** for St. John/St. Stephen Lutheran Parish ELCA. That project will be underway this spring.

In Anticipation of the NEW Church Directory . . .

Each congregation will have 2 scheduled photo days: Wednesday, Thursday, Friday from 2pm to 9pm, and Saturday from 9am to 4pm. You may have your pictures taken at either location. This will take place one week in May; we haven't fixed a firm date yet.

Every family unit will receive a free 8x10 picture (the same one that goes into the directory). There is no cost to the church for any of this, but of course Life Touch hopes you will purchase additional prints. 10-12 pictures will be taken at each sitting.

Life Touch will contact every member by phone (*robo-call*) to give you the options available. After you schedule, you'll receive another robo-call to remind you of your appointment.

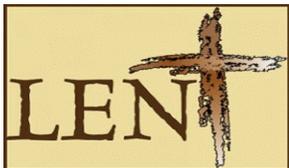
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Many thanks to those who have been responding to the ministry opportunity on behalf of **Lori Krause**. Donations of both raffle baskets and money gifts have been received. The raffle tickets that Cindy had for sale have ALL been sold.

REMEMBER! The RAFFLE of non-cash donations is coming up soon on February 10th. It's taking place at "Crusin' 1724" at 1724 Merrill Ave., Wausau. You are also invited to put a cash/ check (*made out to St. John Charities*) donation in an envelope marked for "Lori's fight against Leukemia" and put it in the offering plate when it's passed. If you make out a check, please write "for Lori Krause" on the "memo" line. *Thank you so much for your generosity!*

Worship



The season of LENT begins on Ash Wednesday, November 14th. There will be a service at St. Stephen at 6pm. There will be NO Soup Supper prior to Worship that evening. Lenten mid-week worship and Soup Suppers begin the following week (2/21) at St. John, and will alternate between the St. John & St. Stephen locations. **ALL evening services are at 6:00pm following Soup Supper at 5:00pm.**

Many thanks to the Sunday School Department who has signed up to host the Soup Supper at St. John on the 21st! There is a sign-up sheet posted for the items needed for that supper. Much appreciation to those who have already signed up to help with those needs!

More Upcoming Worship Opportunities

Maundy Thursday Worship (3/ 29) will be at St. John at 6pm. There is NO Wednesday worship or Soup Supper that week.

Palm Sunday is March 25th. (Brunch) Dan & Michelle Hollatz and Rick Mueller have agreed to take the lead for the brunch, but we're still seeking volunteers to be Youth Group Coordinators . . .

GROWTH Opportunities !



E. P. I. C.—Effective Practices for Innovative Congregational Councils.

This event is taking place at Bethany Lutheran Church in Rice Lake on Saturday February 17th from 9am –1:30pm. Registration begins at 8:30am. Lunch is included in the \$10 registration fee (*\$50 for a group of 6 or larger*). Topics include: The importance of Age Diversity, Leading in a Time of Change, Growing Younger, Lasting Impressions and many more!

This event is geared toward individuals in ANY church leadership role. More information can be found on the bulletin board in the Narthex. Registration and be mailed in (due by Feb. 9) or you can register online.

Christ Jam !



Christ Jam is a Middle School Youth Gathering happening in Rice Lake at Bethany Lutheran Church on March 10th, 2018. Come and spend the day with 250 other Middle School Kids from the Northwest Synod of Wisconsin. The event starts at 8:30am (*registration*) and final worship starts at 3pm. There will be **music** by “The Fourth Degree” a local Christian artist, **Speaker:** John Peterson, Olympic Silver/Gold Medalist, workshops, and a service project. Cost is \$40, which includes a T-shirt and a DELICIOUS lunch!

Walking Together March 17, 2018 ! Held at the UW Eau-Claire Davies Center.



The purpose of this Annual Event is to equip God's people to do ministry and build up the churches in the Northwest Synod. This is a very practical event that will equip you with new ideas, inspiration, resources and materials that you can actually take with you to use in OUR congregation! Save the date, organize a CAR POOL!!

Check out the bulletin board for more information on these events . . .

Women of the ELCA

Next Bible Study—Tuesday, February 13th, at 1pm. (at St. Stephen).

Next General meeting—Wed. March 7, after Lenten Worship. Planning for the Spring Rally. We need YOU!
Next Funeral Group to serve is Group #2

The 2018 Yearbook for the St. John Women of the ELCA is out. If you have any changes in the contact information printed in the book, please let Bev Umnus know.

Upcoming items of interest:

Valentine Boxes—Donations will be made to Circle of Joy or individuals that might be in need of some loving encouragement.

Spring Rally—Our Women of St. John will be hosting the Spring Rally here on April 7. The responsibilities of the host group are as follows:

- (1) provide coffee and small muffins & fruit as women arrive at 8:30am;
- (2) light refreshments at break time at 10:30am;
- (3) provide a noon lunch—soup, salad, dessert.

Hosts are reimbursed by W/ELCA Synod \$5.00 per person.

Pastor Gail will be sharing photos, information, and a devotion about some of the ways travel has changed her life. Theme verse: *“I have other sheep that are not of this sheep pen. I must bring them also. They too will listen to my voice, and there shall be one flock and one shepherd.”* John 10: 16

Synod Conference—is being held in April at Bethany Lutheran Church in Rice Lake. Bev is going as our Delegate from St. John, is anyone interested in going with her? Just let her know.

The STEWARDSHIP PROJECT for the months of January, February, and March is Personal Care Kits: Some of the items used in these kits we have plenty of. The items listed below are what is yet needed to complete kits.

- Bath-size towels-approx. 52” x 27” (dark colors recommended)*
- Bath-size bars of soap (4-5 oz.)—any brand, in original wrapping*
- Metal nail clippers*



The Quilters are “sew” happy to be meeting together again, it has them in stitches! More help is always welcome. They meet Tuesday mornings at 9:30am (*weather permitting of course*). Join us!



Around Town . . .



St. Stephen Lutheran Church, Edgar, will host a Lasagna and Spaghetti Dinner on Sunday, February 11, from 11:30am—1:30pm. Carry outs are available. *Here's a delicious way we can support our Parish Partner!*



Hope Lutheran Church in the town of Frankfort will sponsor an **All You Can Eat Chili and Potato Bar** on Sunday, Feb. 18, from 11am—1:30pm.

It makes me feel a little warmer just LOOKING at this!



Baking Potatoes.

St. John Catholic Church will hold an Annual Parish Benefit on Sunday, February 11, 12pm—3pm in the church basement. The event will feature games, raffles, food and refreshments.

On the Other Hand . . .



Edgar Area Trail Supporters will sponsor a **five-kilometer Woodland Waddle** snowshoe race on Sunday Feb. 18, 11am at the Scotch Creek Woodland Preserve Trails. The course has a mix of groomed ski trails and tight single track with rolling hills.

The race will be held with or without snow. Food and beverages will be served in Edgar Public School after the race. Showers will be available. For more information contact Mark Stankowski : 715-574-1101.

(I bet you could feel pretty warm participating in this!)



The Edgar Fine Arts Association will present the **Cody Clausen Trio** Sunday, Feb. 18, at 1pm in the Edgar Public School Auditorium. The group plays folk, bluegrass, country, and pop hits.



Wig Workshop—Sponsored by **Edgar High School FCCLA** for cancer patients, on Saturday, Feb. 24, at 2pm in the Family and Consumer Education room

Reflections from Rose



Well, I guess I'm not surprised...Puxatony Phil saw his shadow this morning, so that means *6 more weeks of winter*. On the other hand, the sunrise was **beautiful**, followed by clear skies full of golden sunshine, set in a crisp -13 degrees in Athens.

We've had a chance to dip our toes into 2018, and my toes are COLD! Although there have been some unseasonably warm days too I guess...I don't really remember them right now.

As a new year begins, I guess it's common for people to contemplate ways we can increase our wellness, strength, and productivity in the year before us. So for me that usually includes an evaluation on how well I'm nourishing myself.

When I say "nourishing myself", it includes my diet but it's much more than that. How I eat is a good place to start, and sets a standard for how I can measure other areas.

I have come to understand that it's possible to eat and not nourish my body. In fact it's possible to consume many calories and be very over-weight, and yet UNDER-nourished. In addition, what I consume can actually do more harm, add stress, or build up toxins in my body instead of nourishing and making it stronger.

Even more importantly, I realize that standard can also be applied to how I fill my mind and spirit. Does what I receive into my mind and spirit nourish and strengthen, or does it weaken or even cause toxins to grow?

Proverbs 4: 23 says *"Above all else, guard your heart, for it is the wellspring of life."* Of course this doesn't refer to just the pump that circulates our blood. **God stresses the importance of what we allow into the core of our being.**

Another directive from God's word *"Finally Brothers (and sisters), whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable—if anything is excellent or praiseworthy—think about such things."* (Philippians 4: 8) Now here's some SUPERFOOD Jeremiah 15: 16 *"When your words came, I ate them; they were my joy and delight, for I bear your name, O LORD God Almighty."*

My favorite thing about being a nurse was having the privilege of helping people to obtain their best level of wellness, strength and functioning in their daily life, even if they were debilitated, or perhaps dying.

I still see that as what I do now, as the secretary at St. John. It's the calling we all have as part of the Body of Christ. Nourish ourselves well, so we can (in God's strength) help our brothers and sisters to be well-nourished and thrive wherever they find themselves in their journey. *Seek good nourishment and be well dear ones!*

GOOD NEWS

St. John Lutheran Church ELCA

W1000 Hwy N

Edgar, WI 54426

We're on the Web
www.stjohnelcaedgar.org

2018



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Deadline for March 2018 News



February 19th

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."*