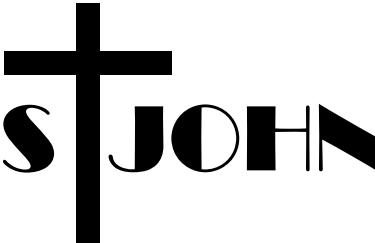


# GOOD NEWS FROM ST JOHN



July  
2019

## Summer SUNDAY WORSHIP

8:30am  
(May 26—Sept. 1st)

Holy Communion  
1st & 4th Sunday

## PASTOR

Gail Sowell  
Cell/Emergency #  
715-352-2492  
Office Hours: 9am-1pm  
Tuesday-Friday  
*(And by appointment)*

## SECRETARY'S HOURS

Monday-Friday  
9:00-1:00

## ADDRESS

120500 county Road N  
Edgar, WI 54426

PHONE/EMAIL  
715-352-2524

stjohnelca@gmail.com

WEBSITE  
[www.stjohnelcaedgar.org](http://www.stjohnelcaedgar.org)

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

## NEWS FOR ALL

### *Pastor's Ponderings*

I think I had delusions of grandeur. I was given a beautiful African violet that lost all its flowers when I brought it home, so I left it where I put it, on a kitchen counter. And now it's full of beautiful lavender violets (or violet violets??), thanks to my benign neglect. So I picked up some "flowers for dummies" at Menards to see if I could actually keep them alive: petunias (which withstood my ministrations last summer) and pansies, a marigold, and a bunch of succulent-looking greens with pretty orange flowers. I don't remember what they are—but I very carefully planted them in the planter box on my front porch, and *then* I read the information provided in each small pot: plant at least 12-18" apart where they get full sun. . . . Well, the first 3 are looking good, but the last 5 are bare of flowers, squished in their back corner. – The moral of this sad tale? If you want to succeed, read the directions before beginning the project.

Then there are the little pink impatiens I planted. Since the porch planter was already full of plants crowded together, I thought I'd plant the 12 impatiens in the ground right in front of the planter. Another brilliant idea wasted: I planted them right among the weeds and didn't even clear out 3 square inches for each one. Four of my 12 are still alive—I try to pull the creeping charlies closest to each plant when I water them in the morning. I wonder, if I were to actually remove all the weeds, might the flowers flourish?  
[Watering? Remember your baptism!]

As I've been pondering on the welfare of my flowers and my lack of garden skills, I've also noticed some parallels between working with flowers in a garden and nurturing faith in my Lord. As I wrote above, "If you want to succeed, read the directions before beginning the project"; "If I were to actually remove all the weeds, might the flowers flourish?"

How do we "succeed" at being faithful Christians? What "directions" can we read? My answer to that is, live as Jesus lived and do what Jesus said. I've encountered many people who consider themselves *Christians*—followers of Christ—but seem to consider other parts of the Bible more important than the words and actions of Jesus himself. I find myself recommending that they read a red-letter Bible, the kind that have the words of Jesus printed in red and everything else in black. Obviously, not every word in the Bible is literally "true" in the way we understand it today. So if we have to choose between what Jesus said and what someone else said or wrote, we'd better choose Jesus!  
*(continues on next page)*

*Pastor's Ponderings*

*Cont.*

And when we're dealing with sowing deeper seeds of faith (an image Jesus used often), it would be helpful to remove the "weeds" before we expect to experience growth. Some of those weeds might be waiting for a "better" time; or "I'll read the Bible after I finish (whatever)"; or "I don't really understand what I'm reading, but I don't want to go to Bible study because I don't know anything about the Bible."

Be assured, **YOU DON'T HAVE TO KNOW ANYTHING ABOUT THE BIBLE TO ATTEND A BIBLE STUDY!** You don't have to say a word, you can just sit there and listen—or you can ask any questions you want and know that they're all okay! There are no "dumb questions" in Bible study!

The more I look for God in all I do, the more I draw parallels from faith to whatever I'm doing. This summer I invite you to open yourself to God and see him in your life at all times and in all places.

Blessings to you!

—Pastor Gail

**St. John Family News!****St. John ELCA Brat & Hamburger Fry,**

**FRIDAYS, May 31st and June 7th  
Pro Vision (CWC) Gas Station Parking Lot, STRATFORD**

The weather was beautiful, and the brats, burgers and dogs were DELICIOUS! Many thanks to all who helped with preparations, supplies, set-up, cooking, serving, and clean-up for EACH of the Fridays. *Special thanks to Shirley Rosien for taking the reins and leading the team!* The net income for these fundraisers was \$1,824.75.



June 9th, 2019 truly was something to sing about! We gathered as a Parish at St. John for combined Pentecost Sunday worship, and in celebration of Pastor Gail's 20th Anniversary of Ordination. We welcomed a number of specially invited guests that came from out of town. Our Guest Preacher was Reverend Carl Wilfrid. He and his wife, Dianne are from Reno, Nevada.

Pastor Carl had preached the sermon at Pastor Gail's ordination service, and was instrumental in encouraging Pastor Gail to embrace God's call on her life and go to seminary.

Besides preaching the sermon, and singing a duet with Pastor Gail, Pastor Carl spent some special moments with the children as he shared children's time with them.



## Some final photo captures of the celebration . . .



We give praise and thanks to God for the way that he has led in the life of Pastor Gail to guide, grow, equip, and prepare her for the ministry. Also for the blessing she is to us at St. John and St. Stephen as God uses her to do the same in our lives!

*Much appreciation to these who joined together to prepare for the special day of celebration :*

Pastor Carl Wilfrid (guest preacher/Pastor Gail's spiritual mentor)  
 Charlotte Otto (worship accompanist)  
 Sharon Schumacker (planning/decorations)  
 Shirley Rosien (planning/decorations)  
 St. John/St. Stephen Women of the ELCA (planning & preparing the potluck luncheon)  
 Sherry Gayken & Rose Morse, Church Administrative Assistants  
 (Communication, communication, communication!)



To all who made the day especially blessed by their presence with us, *thank you!*

Much appreciation to Dan Rosien for the photo captures! Many more can be seen on St. John's website: [www.stjohnelcaedgar.org](http://www.stjohnelcaedgar.org)

## Breakfast in the Park 2019



*Photos courtesy of Dan Rosien, thanks Dan!*



On Saturday, June 15 a good crowd of hungry people showed up at Oak Street Park in Edgar for a DELICIOUS breakfast during the Edgar Fire Department's annual celebration. Many thanks to the great team of volunteers who donated supplies, set-up, cooked, served and cleaned-up after the event.  
*(More photos on the following page!)*

## There were many **SATISFIED** breakfast recipients at the park that day!



**Hats OFF to  
the CHEFS !**



The breakfast-goers were blessed with live music provided by Ashley as they enjoyed their sumptuous fare. It was a great way to start a Saturday!

## ADVENTURES of the Church Mice

Timothy is very small.  
He's the smallest of us all.  
Frederick, he is very tall.  
With a loud voice he can call.



Cleo and Patrick came together.  
They enjoy the wind and weather.  
Friends they are, sis and brother.  
They love us, they love each other.

Tully and Twink, the first Church Mice,  
Thought St. John was very nice.  
They stayed a while, they stayed some more.  
And now we have Church Mice galore!



## Congratulations !

CONGRATS to all the Breakfast in the Park RAFFLE winners!

## ST. JOHN WOMEN OF THE ELCA

**The next Women's General Meeting** will be September 8th after the worship service.

**The next combined Women's Bible Study** will be at Mary Ann Aschbrenner's cabin on Tuesday, July 9. Bring a dish to pass, LUNCH will be at 12 noon, and Bible Study will follow at 1pm.

**JULY** means it's time for the next Women's Stewardship project! **SCHOOL KITS**  
(Watch for school supply sales starting SOON)



Items needed are:



70-count notebooks (*wide or college ruled*)

Blunt Scissors

30-centimeter ruler (*or a ruler with centimeters on one side and inches on the other*).



Ballpoint pens (*NO gel ink*)



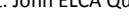
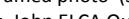
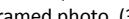
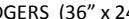
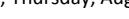
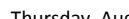
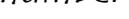
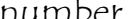
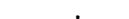
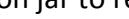
Pencil sharpener



2-1/2 inch erasers



Crayons (*16 or 24 size*)



**HUGE thanks** to ALL who have been pitching in to keep the church & parsonage grounds looking well-cared-for by taking their turn to do the mowing!

Our lawn-mowing crew is down one committed mower, so PLEASE SIGN UP to help with the mowing in his absence. ***This is an important summer ministry!***



St. John's Lutheran Church in SPENCER is hosting a Mental Health First Aid class.

It's an 8-hour training that will teach you how to identify, understand and respond to signs of mental illnesses and substance abuse disorders. It will give you skills needed to reach out and provide initial support to someone and help them connect to appropriate care.

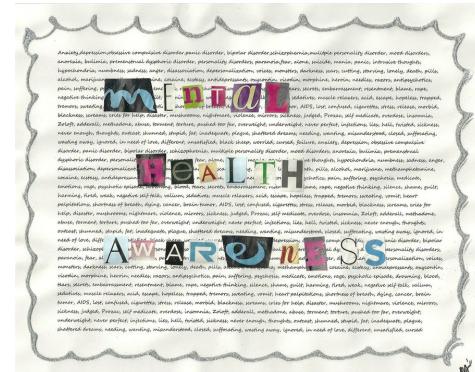
WHEN: Saturday July 27, 9am-5pm

WHERE: St. John's Lutheran Church, Spencer

COST: \$30 which includes book and lunch.

REGISTER: by calling St. John's at 715-659-5158

A flier is posted on the bulletin Board.



## Reflections from Rose



I hope your summer's going well. It certainly started out with some hustle-bustle as we can be reminded by the photos up front in this newsletter. What a joy to reflect on the wonderful anniversary celebration of Pastor Gail's Ordination. It's always faith-building to hear and learn how God has moved in the day-to-day lives of individuals. Have YOU

taken the time to REFLECT and trace God's hand of protection, provision and leading in YOUR life story? I would love to hear some of YOUR reflections. Perhaps you'd even like to share a thought or two in your own "Reflection" article or poem. That would be awesome!

It's also noteworthy to see how God provides for His Church. As I watch and see how teams come together to get events and projects completed, or He puts it on the hearts of people (even outside of the congregation) to give in generous ways to support the ministry that goes on here, I can sense God at work. Giving thanks to God, and pointing it out to others are ways we can give Him the glory He deserves.

One of the privileges of being in the secretary's office is being able to read many communications related to faith growth and development. I was blessed by a couple of "snippets" that were in the bulletin of Pastor Gail's mom's church recently.

One was a quote by John Wesley:

"Do all the good you can.  
By all the means you can.  
In all the ways you can.  
In all the places you can.  
At all the times you can.  
To all the People you can.  
As long as you can."

Here's the other:

First, Do No Harm.

Do Good.

Attend to the practices that draw you ever closer to God.

*May you have some quiet time for reflection this month...*

Here's another writing that was shared with me which provides food for thought...

.....

A LOVE LETTER FROM JESUS

How are you? I just had to send you this letter to tell you how much I love and care about you. I saw you yesterday as you were walking with your friends. I waited all day, hoping you would walk and talk with me also. As evening drew near, I gave you a sunset to close your day, and I gave you a cool breeze to rest you, then I waited. You never came. Oh yes, it hurt me, but I still love you because I am your friend.

I saw you fall asleep last night, and I longed to touch your brow, so I spilled moonlight upon your pillow and your face. Again I waited, wanting to rush down so we could talk. I have so many gifts for you.

You awakened late this morning, and rushed off for the day. My tears were in the rain. Today you looked so sad, so alone. It makes my heart ache because I understand. My friends let me down, and hurt me many times, but I love you. I try to tell you in the quiet green grass. I whisper it in the leaves, and trees, and breathe it in the colors of the flowers. I shout it to you in the mountain streams, and give the birds love songs to sing. I clothe you with warm sunshine, and perfume the air. My love for you is deeper than oceans and bigger than the biggest want or need you ever have.

We will spend eternity together in Heaven. I know how hard it is on earth, I really know (I was there) and I want to help you. My Father wants to help you too. He's that way, you know. Just call me, ask me, talk to me. It is your decisions. I have chosen you, and because of this I will wait . . . Because I love you.

Your Friend,

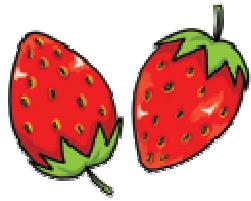
Jesus

## **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)

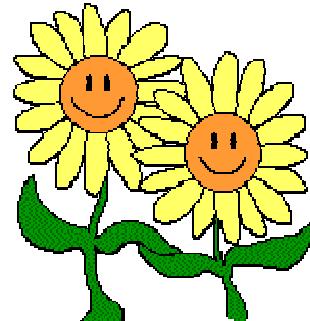
# **July 2019**



### **See Inside for Articles:**

- Page 1 Pastor's Ponderings
- Page 2 St. John Family News? Brat Fries
- Page 3 Celebrating with Pastor Gail
- Page 4 Breakfast in the Park
  - Adventure Poetry from the Church Mice.
- Page 5 St. John Women of the ELCA
  - In Support of Our Sunday School!
- Page 6 HUGE thanks/ Reflections
- Page 7 A Love Letter from Jesus

### **Deadline for August 2019 News**



**August 26**

#### *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."*