

# GOOD NEWS FROM ST JOHN

June/July  
2018

## NEWS FOR ALL

**Summer  
SUNDAY WORSHIP**

8:30am  
(June 10th—Sept. 2nd)

Holy Communion  
1st & 4th Sunday

**PASTOR**

Gail Sowell  
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Tuesday-Friday  
*(And by appointment)*

**SECRETARY'S HOURS**

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

### *Pastor's Ponderings*

"All things work together for good with those who love God and are called according to his purposes" (Romans 8:28). That verse has been my consolation all my adult life, knowing that God can work good out of every circumstance, no matter how grim or ugly it may be.

As I write this, I've just learned that my mother (who just turned 97) is being put on palliative care. I can't even imagine my life without her. In the past 27 years she's been my best friend: my traveling companion, prayer partner, cribbage opponent, celebrator of life. What makes this bearable is that she is really ready to die. She knows the plans God has for her, plans to bless her with a future of hope (Jeremiah 29:11). She's one of the most faithful, faith-filled people I've ever met. We're not sure how much longer she'll be with us, but please join me in praying for comfort and peace, for her and for me.

As I write this, I reflect on the presentation last month at St. Stephen entitled "Active Shooter in Worship Setting." What a sad thing to have to contemplate! There's no way we can be prepared or protected "at all times and in all places" from the craziness, anger, mental illness, and sin-sickness that's broken out in our world to such an alarming degree. Please pray for wisdom for all who make and administer the laws; and for the peace of God which passes all understanding to touch the hearts and minds of all who are troubled.

As I write this, I want to give you a heads-up for our Breakfast in the Park on Saturday, June 16<sup>th</sup>. A group called "Prevent Suicide, Marathon County" will have a table set up to offer information about suicide prevention. In Marathon County alone, there have already been 11 suicides this year; in Wisconsin, there have been over 50. Suicide touches all of us at one time or another. It's a permanent solution to a temporary problem, and we all need to be aware of support systems, help lines, and other ways to deal with the issues faced by those who consider taking their own lives.

As I write this, I reflect on what it means to have "childlike faith" (Matthew 18:3; Mark 9:36, 10:13-16). How many of us really understand—and let ourselves be transformed by—the body and blood of Jesus, given and shed for all? The ELCA offers guidelines about the sacrament of holy communion ("the Lord's Supper"; "the Eucharist"—thanksgiving; "the Last Supper"; the "Sacrament of the Altar"). The sacrament is intended for anyone who is baptized and desires to receive the Lord's body and blood. *(continued, next page)*

Pastor's Ponderings



In other words, it could be given to a 3-month-old who has just been baptized and holds out her hands when her parent receives communion. St. Stephen has long had a policy of serving children when their parents believe they are ready (and after meeting with the Pastor to discuss it). St. John has always offered First Communion to 5<sup>th</sup> graders (again, following an instruction session with the Pastor and at least one parent). St. John's Council has accepted my recommendation to invite the participation of younger children whose parents see an understanding of the love and forgiveness of Jesus.

As I write this, I give thanks that I'm called to serve St. John/St. Stephen Lutheran Parish (ELCA) in Edgar!

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St. John Family News!



**What would we do without these guys?** What bliss when spring finally came.

**Much appreciation** to *Dean Manecke* who did such an EXCELLENT job of caring for our snow management needs all winter. But the parking lot was in great need of some TLC after the snow took its leave.

**Many thanks** to *Gerald Borchardt* and *Herbie Werner* for cleaning it up and smoothing out the "winter wrinkles" in the parking lot.

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On Monday, May 14th, the **St. John women hosted a Salad Supper** for the members of St. John & St. Stephen and their invited guests. There was an array of DELICIOUS salads, rolls, and desserts that were savored by all in attendance.

After dinner, there was a time of BINGO during which ALL were winners! There were also beautiful plants that were awarded for door prizes after it was all said and done.

Many thanks to all those who had a part in planning, preparing, cooking, serving, and cleaning up, for this delightful event!

This year was the first time that the Salad Supper was opened up to husbands/men of the congregations to come as guests. It turned out to be an added bonus of fun! Thanks to all for joining us!

Quilters



Much appreciation to our QUILTERS! They may be small in number, but they are HUGE in productivity! They completed 110 quilts this season! Their finished masterpieces went out to a variety of destinations to be warm blessings of care and comfort to those in need. Lutheran World Relief, Salvation Army, Orphan Grain Train (St. Mark's in Wausau) and Homme Youth & Family services in Wittenberg to name a few. Many thanks to those who help by rounding up the supplies that are needed for them to do their work.



LAST Sunday School Class of the 2017-2018 term !



BINGO fun !



The last Sunday School class for the term was on May 13th (Mother's Day). The students honored their Mothers (and fathers) with printed tributes in the bulletin and celebrated the end of their term with some Bingo fun! We also took some moments to show our appreciation for our Sunday School Teachers during the service.

Many thanks to these who serve to help nurture our children in the Christian faith: Bonnie Bargender, Lavone Runge (Co-Superintendents) Vicky Finke, Michelle Hollatz, Marianne Mueller, Lana Strasser (Music Director) and Niaomi Treankler.

Thanks to



for the photos !

*Congratulations to our Honored Graduate, Cole Literski!*



On May 20 we celebrated Cole Literski during the service and enjoyed a special cake and coffee hour in his honor afterward. He was also given a beautiful quilt made by the Quilters. Cole is a 2018 graduate of Edgar High School. His parents are *Ralph & Tammy*. After graduation, he will begin an Apprenticeship as an electrician.

Cole’s Confirmation verse was John 15: 9 “As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you. Now remain in my love.”

Cole has been a blessing here at St. John. He’s actively supported the Youth Group by serving at Palm Sunday Brunch, working in the Ice Cream Stand at the Steam show, pitching in at scheduled Highway Clean-ups, and helping at the Annual Potato & Buttermilk Pancake Brunch . Cole has also been a big help in caring for the church and parsonage grounds by lawn mowing.

***Thanks Cole for the many ways that you have helped to strengthen the ministry that goes on here at St. John!***

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**Announcing New Arrivals!** *God’s blessings and our CONGRATULATIONS to...*

***Nathan & Courtney (Manecke) Myszka*** welcomed their new little son, *Emmit* on 5-10-18 at 11:28am. He was 8 lbs. 2 oz. and 19 –1/2 inches long. He’s welcomed by big brother *Easton (4 yrs)* who loves him, and sister *Harper (2 yrs)* who is reportedly unimpressed, but Grandma & Grandpa are!  
CONGRATULATIONS Dean & Cindy!



*Elowyn Jo Swoboda* was born to ***Ben & Hillary (Kirsch) Swoboda*** on Thursday, May 10 at 4:07pm. She weighed 5lbs. 10oz. and was 18.5 inches long. She’s welcomed home by big brother *Jaxon (18 months)*. Congratulations to grandparents *Dennis & Jody* and the rest of the *Kirsch* family too!

***Kregg & Lindsie Leffel*** (son of Dan & Cheryl, brother of Heidi Leffel-Heidman, uncle to Carlie Stahel) welcomed *Kody Brooks Leffel* on 5-12-18. He weighed in at 8lbs and measured 20-1/2 inches. The family resides in North Pole, Alaska. Congratulations to ALL!



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**MORE exciting news!** We will welcome little *McKenna Joy Kraft* through the waters of Baptism on Sunday, June 24 during the 8:30am Summer Worship Service. She was born on February 24, 2018 to *Russel & Brianna Kraft* who *we will be welcoming publicly as new members of St. John in the very near future!* Make sure to extend a warm welcome to these dear new members of our faith family. *May they be blessed as they worship & grow with us in Christ.*  
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**A vision is becoming REALITY!** During his time “off” due to hand surgery, *Herbie* has been working on relocating and “sprucing up” the gazebo. There are plans to make the gazebo a prominent help to those who visit the St. John Cemetery. It will be placed at the entrance to the cemetery and will house a map of all the numbered plots, along with the alphabetized, and numbered listing of all those that are buried here.  
*Thanks Herbie for pursuing the vision and making it a reality!*

*Pray for Herbie, he returns to work this week. How will he find the time?*

## ST. JOHN WOMEN OF THE ELCA

**The next Women's General Meeting** will be September 16th after the worship service.  
The next Funeral Group to serve is group 2.

**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 has begun.  
**A bassinet is in the Narthex for your donations. Thank you!**



In light of last month's brief survey regarding Women's Bible Study, the Bible Study schedule is as follows;

June 12th: St John  
July 10th: St. Stephen or Mary Ann Aschbrenner's  
Aug. 14th: St. John  
Sept. 11: St. Stephen

All studies will begin at 1pm. Come and share in this time of study, sharing of ideas & understanding, and growing together in Christ.

### *Reflections from Rose*

*"Rejoice in the Lord always, I will say it again: Rejoice!"* Philippians 4: 4



*"This is the day which the LORD has made; let us rejoice and be glad in it."* Psalm 118:24

Our God is a God of holiness, majesty and awe. He is also a God of CELEBRATION and rejoicing! In Luke 15 Jesus tells 3 parables that explain what causes great rejoicing in Heaven. The parable of the lost son ends with great celebration when the lost son repents (turns from a destructive path to a right path-God's way). Verse 32 says: "...we had to celebrate and be glad, because this brother of yours was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found."

In the Hebrew scriptures, God gives instruction for celebrations/festivals that his people are to observe to celebrate his character, his presence and what he has done in their lives.

This summer will hold some celebrations for my family. I think it's important to seek out and to celebrate the things that are good, right, pure, lovely, and excellent in this life (see Philippians 4: 8). There are MANY.

This weekend we're celebrating with my son and his family as they anticipate a move to their new home in Mercer on June 10th. They will be living on Mercer Lake and are quite excited about all the fishing they hope to be able to do. I have some mixed feelings about the distance, but am happy for them.

I'm looking forward to celebrating the 90th birthday of my dear aunt at the end of June. She has been a loving, good and Godly influence in my life for my entire journey. She has built into the lives of many others as well. Planning long distance and trying to keep it a bit of a surprise has proved a bit challenging, but I'm praying she will be blessed as we gather to celebrate her.

My daughter from Virginia will be visiting with her family during July. That will be a wonderful time of catching up and rejoicing together.

I pray that your summer will hold rejoicing and celebration as well. *"Rejoice evermore, pray without ceasing. In everything give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you."* 1 Thess. 5: 16 (KJV)

Next NEWSLETTER will come out in August. God bless you with his protection, peace and joy! *Rose*

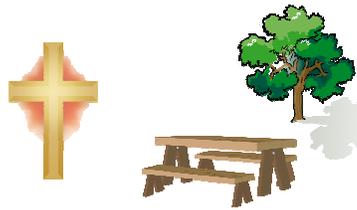
# Adventures of the Church Mice

Oooh, last Sunday was such a GOOD day! We had CAKE! There was so much to celebrate, like Pentecost (when the Holy Spirit came) and graduation. We really wanted to be there to congratulate the grads. [By the way, we think that word should be spelled congraDulate. It's not fair that our cousin, the RAT, gets his name in a big word like that!! Besides, if it's a celebration for GRADUATING, it should be CONGRADULATIONS!] Oh dear, do you think it's time for summer to start so we can forget about spelling and stuff and just concentrate [oops, there's that RAT again!] on the beautiful weather?

HAVE A GOOD SUMMER, AND PLEASE DON'T FORGET YOUR CHURCH MICE!



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Edgar Community of Faith  
Worship in the Park  
Thursday, June 14, 7:00 p.m.



Please come and worship with us in the Oak Street Park to kick off the Edgar Firemen's Celebration! This will be an up-beat worship time with lots of music—a good time to invite friends to join you. This is worship for all ages, and people of all—or no—denominations!



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*Summer is the season* for cooking and eating OUTSIDE! As you read this NEWSLETTER, the first of **2 BRAT FRIES** in June has already taken place. Thanks to those who planned, prepared, set up, cooked, baked cookies, served, and helped to clean up. Special thanks to those who took the time to apply for the opportunity to make it a **THRIVENT Action Team Project** and get a start-up kit/money to help. Thanks also to those who extended friendly welcomes/ smiles and words of encouragement to our patrons. The food was DELICIOUS!



**Compliments to the chefs.** If you missed it, no worries! You can come out and support the NEXT Brat Fry on **Friday, June 8th**, serving 8am—the food runs out. You'll be glad you did!

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**It's ALMOST time for . . .**  
**Breakfast in the Park**, Saturday, June 16th, serving from 7am—11:30am. Menu includes: Pancakes, Eggs with Ham, Sausage & Cheese, applesauce, bars, milk, OJ, coffee and a warm WELCOME for ALL!

## AND...Basket Raffles!



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And of course you'll want to make sure to get the **STEAM SHOW** on your calendar for *August 24-26!* We'll be serving refreshments from our 2 food stands, and many helping hands will make for light work and LOTS of fun!



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**During the Edgar Fire Dept. Annual Celebration**



## “The Road of Life”

At first I saw God as my observer, my judge,  
keeping track of the things I did wrong,  
so as to know whether I merited heaven or hell  
when I die.

He was out there sort of like a president.  
I recognized his picture when I saw it, but I  
really didn't know him.

But later on  
when I met Christ,  
it seemed as though life were rather like a bike  
ride,  
but it was a tandem bike, and I noticed that  
Christ was in the back  
helping me pedal.

I don't know just when it was  
that he suggested we change places  
but life has not been the same since.

When I had control, I knew the way.  
It was rather boring, but predictable...  
It was the shortest distance between two  
points.

But when he took the lead,  
he knew delightful long cuts,  
up mountains,  
and through rocky places,  
at breakneck speeds.  
It was all I could do to hang on!

I was worried and anxious and asked,  
“Where are you taking me?”  
He laughed and didn't answer  
and I started to trust.

I forgot my boring life  
and entered into the adventure.  
And when I'd say, “I'm scared.”  
He'd lean back and touch my hand.

He took me to people with gifts that I needed,  
gifts of healing,  
acceptance and joy.  
They gave me gifts to take on my journey.

And we were off again.  
He said, “Give the gifts away;  
they're extra baggage, too much weight.”

So I did,  
to the people we met,  
and I found that in giving I received,  
and still our burden was light.

I did not trust him, at first,  
in control of my life.  
I thought he'd wreck it;  
but he knows bike secrets,  
knows how to make it bend to take sharp  
corners,  
knows how to jump clear high rocks,  
knows how to fly to shorten scary passages.

And I am learning to shut up and pedal  
in the strangest places,  
and I'm beginning to enjoy the view  
and the cool breeze on my face.

And when I'm sure I just can't do anymore,  
he just smiles and says ... “Pedal.”

## **GOOD NEWS**

St. John Lutheran Church ELCA  
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We're on the Web  
[www.stjohnelcaedgar.org](http://www.stjohnelcaedgar.org)

**June/July 2018**



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**Deadline for August 2018 News**



**July 21st**

*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."*