

March
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

Ash Wednesday (which was really on **February** 14th—not April 14th, as I wrote last month, nor November 14th, as Rose wrote last month!)—Ash Wednesday invited us to spend the next six weeks in repentance, Bible study, fasting, and almsgiving, and to remember that “from dust you came, and to dust you shall return; repent, and believe in the good news.”

What a gracious God we have! Even as we journey through Lent with somber reflection, and strive to recognize and repent of our sin—and our sins—we know that God journeys with us and also awaits us at the open tomb on Easter morning. Please take the opportunity to prepare yourself for that resurrection joy by joining us for Wednesday soup suppers at 5:00, worship (downstairs) at 6:00: at St. John, March 7 and 21; at St. Stephen March 14. Even more important is worship during Holy Week:

- *Palm Sunday, March 25: St. John: breakfast after worship; kids sing in church
- *Maundy Thursday, March 29: Worship at St. John at 6:00
- *Good Friday, March 30: Worship at St. Stephen, 1:00; at St. John, 6:00
- *Easter, April 1: Sunrise service at St. Stephen, 6:00, breakfast at 7:00
Worship at St. John, 9:00
Worship at St. Stephen, 10:30

There's another wonderful opportunity to grow together in faith: *Walking Together*, the 8th or 9th annual gathering of “Best Practices” for congregations in our synod. This is held on March 17th (St. Patrick's Day) in Eau Claire at the UW Davies Center. Information is on the bulletin board, and I hope we'll have several carpools with members of each congregation. I'm not able to go this year; I'll be serving as Spiritual Director for a Via de Cristo week-end in Oshkosh. But if you love your “church”—your particular portion of the body of Christ—please consider attending. Congregations that aren't growing are slowly dying. Not necessarily growth in numbers, but growth in faith. This annual event has already helped St. John grow in its ministry to children. You can choose 3 or 4 from among 40 different workshops to help us all grow in mission and ministry.

Please also remember our Lenten almsgiving, to support our sister synod, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Malawi. I'll match up to \$500 from *each* congregation. Make checks out to me by Easter Sunday. I've already received more than \$200 from one congregation!

St. John Family News!



It was our joy to celebrate the Holy Baptism of **Skylar Mae Huss** during the service on February 4th. Skylar was born October 11, 2017 to David and Suzanne Huss. Her sponsors are *Maren Gersich and Nick Huss*.

We also welcomed **Hollis Ann Baeseman** through the waters of Holy Baptism on February 11th. Hollis was born November 19, 2017 to Mitchell and Cassie Baeseman, and her sponsors are *Allisyn Lehman, Dalton Lehman, and Taylor Weister*.

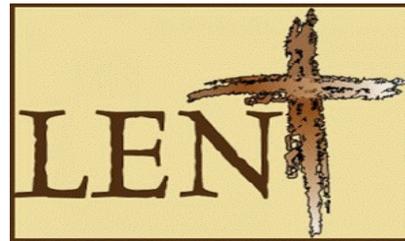


God's blessings and congratulations to all !

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Mid-week Worship WED. at 6 P.M.

Our Sunday School department did a wonderful job of hosting the Mid-week Soup Supper before worship on February 21st at 5pm. It was ***much appreciated*** by a good turn out from both St. Stephen & St. John! ***Many thanks from ALL.***



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ALL are invited and encouraged to join us as we continue our Lenten Journey together. Each Wednesday during Lent you are invited to join us for **Soup Supper at 5pm** followed by **Worship at 6pm**. These Mid-week gatherings will be held at **St. John on March 7th and 21st, and at St. Stephen on the 14th of March.**

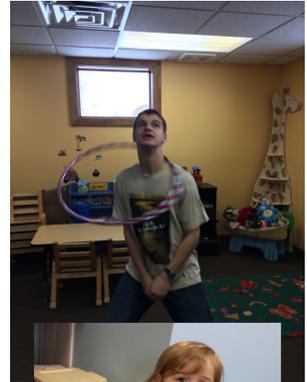
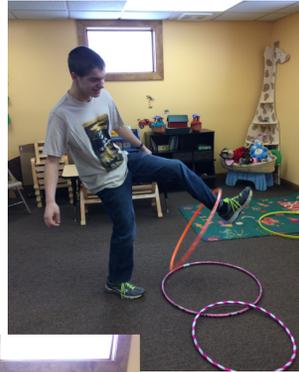
sunday School EXCITEMENT !



On Sunday, February 25th, twenty-one Sunday School students braved the blustery winter weather and attended Sunday School Olympics. The children had fun competing in six games with a Bible related theme. The games were as follows:

St. John Olympic Events

Station 1: **Spread His word round & round.** Kids hula-hooped against each other or even tried adding multiple hoops at one time. For some, it was their first time trying to hula hoop. *Nathan Drabek* ran this station and for good reason. He is St. John's Hula Hoop Guru!



Station 2: **Climbing Jacob's Ladder.** Children played a Ladderball game directed by *Lavone Runge* who demonstrated her stellar skills. They could compete for a score against each other or were just happy if they could get one to stay on the ladder.



MANY thanks to *Niaomi Treankler* for these photos and the recap of the day's event! Award-winning creativity, photos AND teachers/helpers to be sure!

(Continued on next page)

St. John Sunday School Olympics (cont.)



Station 3: **Move Mountains with the strength of the Lord.** The children moved one mountain (made of cotton balls) from one bowl to the other bowl with the use of a straw only. Skylee Manecke was named the champion of this game moving 12 cotton balls in only 11 seconds! *Marianne Mueller* ran this station by cheering them on, keeping track of their times, and making sure no one choked on a cotton ball.



Station 4: **Shout His name J-E-S-U-S!** 5 laundry baskets were staggered out at lengthened distances spelling out J-E-S-U-S. The participants tried to get the "J" before they advanced to the "E", etc. *Vicky Finke* managed this station well by dodging flying bean bags, keeping track of the start line, and picking up A LOT of bean bags!



Many thanks to all the teachers/helpers who lent their support, by cheering, guiding, and gathering/maintaining needed equipment.

HUGE thanks; Nathan, Lavone, Marianne, Vicky, Bonnie, Garrison and Niaomi !

Olympic Finals



Station 5: **Noah's Ark Roundup.** This was a "hide and go seek" style game. Two-by-two pairs of stuffed animal partners were hidden for each group by Master-Hider *Bonnie Bargender*. I hear the Easter Bunny is looking for a good assistant Bonnie!



Station 6: **David Vs. Goliath.** Children tried to knock down Goliath with beanbags. *Garrison Treankler* ran this station successfully by converting a fluffy, yellow bunny into a menacing Goliath. The bunny took some real abuse but still has a smile on his face.



Closing Ceremonies



All children won Gold Medals at the conclusion because "With God we will gain the victory." PSALM 60: 12.

They then snacked on yummy Olympic-themed cupcakes made by *Michelle Hollatz*, delicious cookies made by *Marianne Mueller* and donated milk from *Ann Bonsall*.

Thank you everyone for your help and support! Níaoimí Treankler

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Sounds like it was a great time of friendly competition and FUN! Kudos to the teachers/helpers, and "way to go" students! You are ALL winners for sure. *The secretary had so much fun putting this all together in the NEWS! Thanks to Niaomi for the photo captures, the summary, and for submitting it all to share!*



We're looking forward to hearing from our Sunday School students musically as the Children's Bell Choir plays during the service on First Communion Sunday (March 4), and on Palm Sunday when they SING in church. They really decorate our lives and our times of worship!



Palm Sunday, YOUTH, Pancake Brunch

Immediately following Worship

March 25, serving until 11:30am

A free-will offering will be received which will go to the YOUTH.



Please support them by signing up to donate supplies and your help as needed !

Join us for Worship during Holy Week



The Worship schedule for Holy Week is outlined in Pastor's Ponderings, on page 1.

Palm Sunday, March 25th— Join us for brunch after our usual 9am Worship Service!

Maundy Thursday, March 29— St. John & St. Stephen will join together for worship at **St. John at 6pm**. There is NO Wednesday worship or Soup Supper that week.

Good Friday, March 30—You can choose to worship at either St. Stephen at 1pm or **St. John at 6pm**.

Easter Sunday, April 1—Early risers can attend Sunrise Worship at St. Stephen at 6am and enjoy breakfast at 7am. **St. John will have our usual worship time of 9am**.

Remember that if you'd like to help adorn our sanctuary for our joyful resurrection celebration you need to have that information to the secretary by Palm Sunday, and your plants need to be at church by Saturday, March 31 at 9am.

St. Stephen will also have worship at their usual time of 10:30 am.



Plant Name _____

In memory/ honor of _____

Given by _____

Relationship? _____



One of the HIGHLIGHTS of our Soup Suppers this Lenten Season was a particular dessert bar that was brought in by Gerald Borchardt to share. He calls them **YUM! YUM! Bars**. There were many requests for the recipe so here it is:

Bottom Layer:

- 2 Cups flour
- 3/4 Cup Butter (Butter-flavored Crisco)
- 1/2 Cup Brown Sugar
- *Mix together, press in pan. (9" x 13" or 10" x 14")*

Top Layer:

- 2 Cups Brown Sugar
- 2 TBLS Flour
- 1/2 tsp. Salt
- 1 Cup Coconut
- 1/2 Cup water
- 3 eggs (Beaten) 4?
- 1 tsp. Vanilla
- 1/2 Cup chopped Nuts
- 1/4 tsp. Baking Powder
- Mix together & spread over the Bottom Layer. Bake
- about 20 min. @ 350 degrees, or until nicely brown.
- Cut into bars when cool.

9" x 13" pan about 30 min. (Baking). I substitute some of the sugar with Maple Syrup and cut back a little on water. *Gerald Borchardt* Thanks Gerald! *There's also handwritten copies on the bulletin board.*

WOMEN OF THE ELCA MARCH 2018

The Women of the ELCA will hold the next quarterly meeting on Wednesday, March 7, following the Lenten service. All women please try to attend. We have a full agenda for this meeting.

AGENDA:

Lenten soup supper – March 21
 Spring Rally – April 7 at Edgar – St John
 Synodical Convention – April 20-21 Rice Lake
 Salad Supper – May 15
 Health Care Kits – Jan – Mar
 Donation for Valentine's Day
 Walking Together – March 17 – Eau Claire

We need more input on the agenda items, please.

We will be introducing the members of St Stephen's to the members of the Chequamegon Conference at the Spring Rally. Pastor Gail will be our featured speaker with a program on her travels. Deadline for registration (Early) is March 19. The cost is \$15.00. After that date the cost will be \$20.00.

Bible Study will be held on March 13 at St Stephen's at 1 PM. The study is in the Gather magazine. If you want a copy of the study, please let Rose or Bev know. I can be reached at 715-223-7983. My phone – 352-2839 has been disconnected.

Starting in April our Stewardship kits will be Baby Layette kits. We are always in need of sleepers, receiving blankets, sweaters or jackets, and soap.

Bev Umnus

President of WELCA



Adventures of the Church Mice



We have a problem! This is Miri, from St. Stephen, but I'm writing for Frederick, Tully, and Twink too. We heard someone from one of the congregations say *mice aren't welcome at church!* That really hurt our feelings! God created US, even before he created PEOPLE. (If you don't believe me, look it up in Genesis 1!) We were there at the stable when Jesus was born. (No, you won't find that in the Bible, but we were there!) And we were in the Garden of Gethsemane when Jesus prayed there right before he was arrested on Thursday, and on the hill called Calvary where he was crucified on Friday. And we followed Joseph of Arimathea and the two Marys when they took his body to the cave where they buried him. And we were still at the tomb when Mary Madgalene and Salome came on Sunday morning. We made sure to hide from them, because they were already scared by the young man in a white robe. (You can read all about this in Mark 15-16.)

Honest, we don't bother anyone at St. John or St. Stephen! In fact, we're really HELPFUL, we clean up the crumbs after the soup suppers. Well, not the soup, but the crumbs of bread and desserts, and we'll do the same at St. John on Palm Sunday and at St. Stephen for the Easter breakfast. We're really HELPFUL, and you don't have to be afraid of us. We promise to stay out of the way!



The Church beyond Our Doors

Walking Together 2018

The church has left the building to be the church!

"Jesus is the King."

Elvis Presley



March 17, 2018 !

Held at the UW Eau-Claire Davies Center.

Come and join us for the 9th annual Walking Together event! This day of learning and workshops is designed each year for people from around the synod to worship and collaborate, hear about best practices in congregations, get inspired and experiment with new and creative ministries, and gain some helpful tools to use in their congregations.

35 + Workshops will include topics like:

- Story, Identity & Stereotypes*
- Holy Cow! I Never Knew That About My Church!*
- Emerging Adults Left With Elvis*
- Come - Picture the Bible*
- Electing a Bishop 2018*
- Faith, Science, & Our Stewardship of Creation*
- The Dos and Don'ts of Marketing in Your Church*
-any many more!*

Online registration can be found on the synod website nswsi.org in the "calendar of events".

Cost = \$20 per person (includes lunch)



Northwest Synod of Wisconsin
Evangelical Lutheran Church of America
God's Work. Our Hands.

Reflections from Rose



It 's looking like Spring is beginning to think about showing up. Pretty soon we'll need to think about Lawn-mowing sign-ups. I sure have appreciated all the great efforts in snow and ICE management this winter. Dean Manecke did a great job of taking care of St. John, even with the weather being so fickle lately...snow & ice, freeze & melt. There were other helpers too. Some "drive-by" sidewalk clear-ers, who didn't even come in to hear a word of very grateful thanks. Thank you Gerald Borchardt, Herbie Werner, and Steve Robers.

I always try to make sure things are welcoming & safe for visitors to the Church during the week, but sometimes it would be a challenge to keep up if there wasn't such attentive, good help. MANY thanks to each of you! I don't really have a "Reflection" of my own to share this month...so I'm going to share a bit of insight that was shared with me recently, and then I'm going to include a letter of greeting from our sister church in Malawi. It seems timely in light of our Lenten almsgiving emphasis on their behalf.

"Kindness is becoming at any age..."

"Life is like a mirror...we get the best results when we smile at it!"

So what's OUR reflection this month?

New Year Greetings from Malawi!

Dear Partners in Christ,
Receive new year greetings from the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Malawi (ELCM).

On January 6, 2018 Christ was revealed to us. As part of the Christian family, ELCM joined the whole world celebrating the birth of Christ on December 25, 2017. And on January 1, 2018 the Lutherans in Malawi also celebrated the New Year. At the Cathedral in Lilongwe we held prayers on both Christmas and New Year's day.



Yesterday, January 7, the pastor who gave sermon at Cathedral in Lilongwe reminded the gathered members that Epiphany being the period Christ reveals himself to us, we are also compelled by the same Jesus to reveal ourselves to others.

2018 is another year the Lord has given to us, and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Malawi this year is expecting to implement many activities not all mentioned in this message.

First, the ELCM will this year hold the 14th Church Assembly. The Assembly dates are from August 22 to August 26, 2018. The 36th Anniversary Celebration of the ELCM will take place in the afternoon of August 25. Closing worship service of the Assembly will be on Sunday, August 26, 2018.

Secondly, as Malawi is challenged with various degrees of catastrophic climate changes that result into food insecurity, so far the country is experiencing dry weather since Christmas. Most of the gardens/ fields are visibly having dry spell. And there are cholera outbreaks in various places within the city of Lilongwe and other congested cities.

Therefore ELCM is requesting for your prayers for the church to achieve its plans and implementation of the Assembly as well as praying for better weather so that this year should not be a disaster of food shortage.

May the good Lord be with you.

Yours in Christ,

Mphatso Thole, Communications Department

GOOD NEWS

St. John Lutheran Church ELCA

W1000 Hwy N

Edgar, WI 54426

We're on the Web
www.stjohnelcaedgar.org

March 2018



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Sister Church in Malawi

Deadline for April 2018 News



March 25th

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."*