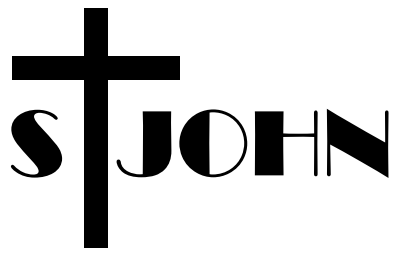


# GOOD NEWS FROM ST JOHN



November  
2018

## NEWS FOR ALL

### *Pastor's Ponderings*

#### **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](mailto:stjohnelca@gmail.com)

#### **WEBSITE**

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

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

Thanksgiving. **THANKSGIVING!** How can we not shout it from the rooftops (like the Verizon commercial—or is it Sprint?). What are you thankful for as we approach Thanksgiving?

I give thanks to God for this call I have to serve two God-blessed, God-given congregations! This yoked parish of St. John/St. Stephen Lutheran Parish ELCA is such a joy to me, I wonder every day what I've done to deserve this call. (Well, okay, there may be a day or two when I "have" to go to work; but most days I "get" to go to work!) A **HUGE** *thank you* to both congregations for the gift of your appreciation (during Pastor's Appreciation Month) on October 21<sup>st</sup>. I was completely overwhelmed at St. John, surrounded by so many who came early to honor me; and I was again overwhelmed at St. Stephen to see the names of every member present in your card. I give thanks to God daily for both groups of faithful friends in Christ.

I give thanks to God for the gift of family, and of friends who have become like family! Though I've had some close relationships outside the Church (which is the body of Christ, the fellowship of believers, the communion of saints), my most significant friendships have been with fellow believers. I give thanks for the many ways my faith has been enlarged and enriched by friends in Christ!

I give thanks to God for the gift of his good creation! You know how I treasure the doglets God has given me (okay, I did play some part in acquiring them) to care for. They, and the six dogs before them, have been my "significant others" since Paul moved out at age 17 to live with his godparents on the other side of the country. My life, rich as it is in so many ways, would be bleak without the unconditional love and exuberant welcome of these beloved family members.

I give thanks to God for the gift of travel! Both my parents traveled as long as they were able, and I was blessed to travel almost all around the world with my mother (who, at 97-1/2, still enjoys vicariously every trip I take). The opportunity to see, and sometimes participate in, life styles so very different from what we enjoy in the United States has been life-changing for me. I wish every one of you could experience, in person, a way of living and thinking and perceiving that varies from ours to a lesser or greater extent. It deepens my faith in our amazing, awesome God of grace and glory to see how he touches people who are so different from us.

*(Continued)*

# Pastor's Ponderings

I give thanks for the gifts of music; and peanut butter ice cream and flavored coffee and the occasional rare filet mignon; and stretch-denim jeans; and board games (and people to play them with!); and the art work and photos from around the world that decorate my walls; and the means to support Lutheran Disaster Response, World Hunger, Best Friends Animal Sanctuary in Utah, Doctors without Borders, Catholic Charities; and heat and warm clothing in winter. And I thank God daily for what appeared at the time to be more of a curse than a blessing: depression, divorce (and healing of that relationship), breast cancer, and (failed) adoption of an adult son.

I give thanks for *all* past and present gifts and blessings in my life which I've taken for granted. Sometimes I haven't realized that many people don't enjoy the same privileges I do. Sometimes I haven't perceived things as blessings at the time. I pray daily that God will open the eyes of my heart to recognize the constant state of blessedness I enjoy. And I pray for all of you, *each* of you, that you'll see God's blessings present in every aspect of your life. *Thanks be to God!*

## Confirmation Class 2018



Front ( L-R) Skylee, Dylan, and Lauryn  
Back—Pastor Gail Sowell

## St. John Family News!

Three young people of St. John affirmed their baptismal vows this October. Lauryn Wiesman was confirmed during the worship service on October 21st (*due to extended-family member availability*). 100 people were in attendance. Dylan Hollatz and Skylee Manecke were confirmed on Reformation Sunday, October 28th and 116 attended that special service.

*Special THANK YOU from St. John and our Confirmands to Lavone Runge, our Confirmation instructor, for her dedication to this ministry and the impact she has made on their lives!*

A special cake & coffee hour was held after the service in honor of our Confirmands.

Our prayers go with each of you...may the gift of the Holy Spirit be stirred up in you, and may you be blessed as you continue to grow in your understanding and relationship with your Savior/Redeemer.



The congregation **SURPRISED** Pastor Gail with a special cake and coffee hour of **APPRECIATION** before the service on October 21st. Steve Robers, (*Council President*) presented a card signed by members of St. John, with gift cards enclosed as a token of their appreciation.



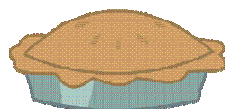
**We appreciate you Pastor Gail !**



# St. John ELC A Potato Pancake Brunch



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Many hands came together on **October 14th** to prepare, cook, bake, serve and clean up! HUGE thanks to ALL! Around 300 people received a warm, friendly welcome, and were served a delicious brunch. \$2099 came in from ticket sales. Many homemade pies were purchased by those eager to enjoy them at home. Thanks to all who baked!

The enticing variety of gift baskets up for **raffle** that day attracted many. A list of winners is included on the next page. *Many thanks to those who created the baskets and to those who bought tickets.* \$1039 was received from the raffle.

# Pancake Brunch 2018

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## Family & Friends !

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- Table – Dan and Shirley Rosien
- Fall Basket – Morgan Mueller
- Give Thanks- Rose Morse
- Baby Badger – Ann Bonsall
- Dinner ware/Flat ware – Tina Lorence
- Advent Calendar/books/candle – Cindy Manecke
- Suit Cases – Rick Mueller
- Autumn Basket – Dan & Shirley Rosien
- Advent Calendar/Cards/Mug – Dorrie Martyn
- Advent Calendar/Reindeer/books – Laurie Mueller
- Cooler/Fishing – Rick Mueller
- Fishing Fun – Ron Runge
- Ladies Packer Jersey – Ann Bonsall
- Dutch oven/spice rack – Connor Finke
- Gift Certificates – Louann Miles
- Mens Packer Jersey – Autumn Schreiner
- Gift certificates & Towels – Barb Borchardt

- Blue quilt – Griffin Treankler
- Pink quilt – Rose Morse
- Brewer basket – Anita Reagan
- Badger stuff – Louann Miles
- Packer stuff – Morgan Mueller
- Coffee lovers – Louann Miles
- What's in it – Dennis Sonentag



We welcomed guests from Austria to Brunch and Worship on Oct. 14th also! *Georg and Daniel* are video journalists making a documentary about cities with similar names as cities in their home country. Wien (Vienna) was of special interest to them. They were pleased with all the interviews and video they were able to take back with them!

*Thanks to Dan Rosien for sharing all the wonderful photos !*



## Family News continued . . .



It was our joy to celebrate the baptism of **Gavin John Klopotoski** during the service on October 7th. His parents are Stephan Klopotoski and Sarah Socha who are planning a June 2019 wedding here at St. John. Gavin's sponsors are Courtney Socha and Skyler Pribbernow. *God's blessings!*

## A Council Minute



The Congregational Quarterly Meeting was held following the service on October 21. Leadership Elections were held with the following results:

- Council Secretary** (3 yr. term) *Vicky Finke*
- Deacon** (3 yr. term) *Sheryl Leffel*
- Deacon** (to fill a vacated position for 1 year) *Shirley Rosien*
- Trustee** (3 yr. term) *Mark Bargender*
- Finance Committee** (2 yr. term) *Tammy Literski, Leon Werner, Vicky Finke*
- Parish Ed Committee** (1 yr. term) *Bonnie Bargender, Vicky Finke, Michelle Hollatz, Cindy Manecke*
- Cemetery Board** (3 yr. term) *Ron Runge*
- Auditing Committee** (1 yr. term) *Naomi Sebold, Troy Wiesman, Leon Werner*

*Many thanks to these individuals for being willing to serve in these capacities. Let's support them with our prayers, and words of encouragement & appreciation!*

## Women of the ELCA

- Next Bible Study—Tuesday, November 13, at 1pm. (at St. Stephen).
- Next General meeting—Sun. November 4, after the service.

**Thank you for your support this year with our Stewardship projects.** Each quarter of the year, we collect items for various kits. In October, these kits are assembled and delivered (thank you Sharon Schumacker) to a pick up location for the Lutheran World Relief. This year we set up an account to be able to track and follow our donations across the world. We will check on them periodically and let you know.

2 Baby Layette kits ( next year our drive will focus on sleepers )  
 25 Personal Care Kits  
 20 School Kits

Blessings to all,

Shirley Rosien, Secretary, Women of St John's Church

**At the General Meeting on November 4 following the worship service,** we will be discussing Thankoffering, Operation Christmas, and the upcoming COOKIE WALK on Dec. 16th. We value each woman's input, and would love to see MORE women in attendance at the Women's meetings.

***Please, come out and join us!***



## Serving by STITCHING



## A “thread” from our QUILTERS

**Jennifer Tryba** (in the red sweater) a THRIVENT representative, dropped in to spend Tuesday morning, Oct. 30th quilting with our dear Quilters of St. John! She’s heard about the warm care the women share through their beautifully crafted gifts of love.

Jennifer came bringing treats to share, and a desire to see just how things work in this dedicated group of women.

The quilt pictured above is an example of the work the group accomplishes for the benefit of others. They are involved in a THRIVENT Action Team Project “Sharing the Warmth of God’s Love”. They will be focusing on sharing their hand-stitched warmth with those using the services of the Edgar “Circle of Joy” and the Women’s Shelter. *Many thanks to those who help to keep them supplied with the items they need in this valuable ministry.*



## Adventures of the Church Mice

Do you know how hard it is for 8 little feet to travel 6 miles?? We (this is Twink and Tully at St. John) communicate with Miri and Frederick often, but when we want to go from one congregation to the other, it’s a BIG DEAL! (Don’t tell Pastor Gail, but sometimes we ride with her from St. John when she goes to St. Stephen on Sundays.) M and F were really lucky a couple of weeks ago when Pastor Gail came back to St. John after worship for the Potato Pancake Breakfast. They wanted to help us clean up the crumbs, but truth be told, Twink and I hadn’t left many. THAT was a FUN day! There were so many people eating, and SO MANY CHILDREN helping! We had to watch where we were going, because some of the little ones weren’t too steady on their feet when they reached up to help set the table. They were ADORABLE! And the food was, like always, really good, in fact we heard a lot of people say it was the best ever. I know you people celebrate Thanksgiving in November, so you know what it means to thank God for good food, and for LOTS of food! HAPPY THANKSGIVING FROM YOUR CHURCH MICE!



### Coming in November November 4th—All Saints Sunday

We'll be honoring our loved ones who've gone on before us, and dedicating the Cemetery Directory Gazebo during our communion worship service. *Join us for this very special service!*



.....  
Sunday School students have begun to **practice for their Christmas program**. Please support those helping to prepare for this delightful annual presentation by encouraging regular attendance to Sunday School.

**Quilting** continues every Tuesday morning at 9:30am

The **Thanksgiving Eve service** will be held at St. Stephen this year on November 21 at 7pm. "The Mill Church" Edgar will be joining us in this community ecumenical worship opportunity



The **office will be CLOSED** the day after Thanksgiving, Nov. 23rd.

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## FUNDRAISER RAFFLE for PUERTO RICO

**Partnering for Puerto Rico** is our joint fundraiser with St. Stephen to raise \$10,000 to help meet the enormous needs that remain following last year's hurricane. There will be only 500 tickets sold, costing \$20.00 a piece. Drawing will be held on Dec. 16th. 1st prize is \$1000, 2nd Prize- \$500, 3rd—5th \$100, 6th—9th-\$50. **Get your tickets TODAY!**

*All proceeds go to Lutheran Disaster Relief in Puerto Rico, you need not be present to win.*

### A Glimpse Toward December



**ADVENT** begins December 2nd. It's time to begin planning those **Advent/Christmas Windows** that help us to anticipate with joy the Christmas Season, keeping our focus on the birth of Jesus Christ, Emmanuel (God with us). Remember, if your window, or an item in it, has special significance to you let Rose know. With your permission we'd like to share that special information to increase our understanding of your unique window. *Thank you!*

**Music Notes:** Do you have a favorite Christmas Hymn (or VERSE of a Christmas hymn)? Write down the title (and verse) and we'll try to include it in a worship service during our Christmas celebration. Would you like to sing or play special music on Christmas Eve or Christmas Day? Let Pastor Gail know!



**Also,** St. John is still seeking a musician for worship to give Louann a break, or even an opportunity to step down. If you play keyboard or guitar, or if you know someone who might be interested, please let Pastor Gail know. Perfection is not required



**Keep in mind** the Sunday School **Christmas Program** will be presented on **December 16th** in the service followed by the **Cookie Walk**. The drawing for the winners in the joint Fundraiser **RAFFLE for PUERTO RICO** will take place on that same Sunday !



## Community Items of Interest

**Edgar Holiday Parade** is Sunday, Nov. 4th at 1:00 pm. down Main Street Edgar. Parade ends at Stark's Floral with Santa and Mrs. Claus with treats. A donation of non-perishable items to the Circle of Joy is appreciated.



**FISH & SHRIMP FRY**—Friday, Nov. 16th 4pm-7:30pm at St. John the Baptist Catholic Church Dining Hall. RAFFLE drawing at 7pm...you need not to be present to win. Includes: Book Fair, Bake Sale, and Children's Only Shop.

**HOLIDAY EXTRAVAGANZA Vendor/Craft Sale**—same location on **Saturday, Nov. 17th**, 9am-3:30pm. Chili and Walking Taco Luncheon Available 11am-1pm



### Reflections from Rose

Here we are in November already. Thoughts of *Thanksgiving* begin to fill our minds. I was spending some quiet time with the Lord the other morning, using my devotional book to get started. It directed me to read in the book of Numbers chapter 11: 1-11

As chapter 11 opens, the Israelites are complaining about their hardships as they are traveling through the desert on their journey to the promised land. Maybe you know the story...God was miraculously feeding them with Manna (*bread from heaven*) that came down when the dew settled on the camp at night. The trouble was they began to crave OTHER food, and they started wailing, "If only we had meat to eat!" They looked back and remembered the fish, cucumbers, melons, leeks, onions, and garlic they used to have to eat in Egypt. (*Pastor Gail would never wail for garlic, she doesn't really like it!*)

It got me to thinking though, how longing for *different circumstances* can lead me to complain sometimes. This kind of thinking can even lead me to becoming very self-centered, obsessed with what I want, what I'm sure I NEED! Instead of rejoicing over God's faithful and loving care, I sometimes feel I need something MORE, something BETTER, something DIFFERENT.

It's during these times that I need to STOP and RE-FOCUS. I need to look to our God who loves us RELENTLESSLY. He knows what I need better than I do. I need to trust in His goodness and faithfulness and "get a grip" on gratitude. What a privilege it is to be able to walk with this awesome Creator, Savior, Shepherd, Redeemer-God while I'm still on this earthly journey! I am so blessed!!

*Blessed Thanksgiving Everyone . . .*

**Community Dinner**—Hope Lutheran Church, is serving a community meal on the **last Sunday** of every month.

**Everyone is welcome at their table.**

They serve from 5-7pm.



They have added a small Food Pantry, and they will be showing a family-friendly movie at 7pm.

If you're seeking some assistance because the budget has run out before the month ended, or just seeking fellowship with others, you are WELCOME. *They extend a special welcome to veterans from the area too.*

### Here's a note found by Pastor Gail in the mailbox . . .

*All God's blessings to you:  
I'm a member of St. John Lutheran in  
Dayton, Ohio on Ludlow. Was  
passing by and couldn't resist a "hi"*

*Peace and joy,  
Mary*



## Unimaginable

Sometimes the unimaginable hits us right in the gut.

We are going along with our lives, with a few bumps here and there, but nothing major. Then it happens.

The grief we thought had subsided resurfaces with a fury.

The health we thought had stabilized turns south.

An unexpected turn or fall flips our lives upside down.

We received news of an incurable terminal illness.

A loved one is snatched from our midst by an accident.

The unimaginable has happened.

How do we cope with the unimaginable?

We turn, in the midst of all our incomprehension, to a God whose love is unimaginable.

Is it logical that a holy God would leave heaven and become one of us?

No. It is unimaginable.

Is it sensible for this God walking the earth to spend His time among sinners and outcasts?

No. It is unimaginable.

Is it logical that God would freely walk to a cross and die naked for something for which He was not guilty?

No. It is unimaginable.

Is it likely that this crucified God would rise from the dead and promise us the same?

No. It is unimaginable.

But it is true.

This formidable love God has for us is beyond our imagination, but not beyond His.

Our ways are not His ways. Our thoughts are not His thoughts. Our love pales in comparison to the love He offers us.

So when we are blindsided with unimaginable suffering, let us rest our minds, our spirits, our bodies in the nail-pierced hands of our unimaginable Savior. Let Him rock us to sleep when we are doubled up with sorrow and fear. Let Him open our eyes to see His love surround us in the people He has placed in our path. Let Him embrace us with His presence when the loneliness is overwhelming. Let His knowledge of the past, the present, and the future fill our hearts with a reason to trust.

Let this Unimaginable God claim victory over the unimaginable pain in our lives.

He can do what we cannot.

Imagine that!

*Author Unknown,*

*This writing was shared by Pastor Gail's mom, who received it from a dear friend.*

## 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)

# November



### See Inside for Articles:

- Page 1 Pastor's Ponderings
- Page 2 St. John Family News
- Page 3 Pancake Brunch
- Page 4 Pancake Brunch/ Raffle Winners
- Page 5 A Council Minute/Women of the ELCA
- Page 6 A "Thread" from our Quilters  
Adventures of the Church Mice
- Page 7 Coming in November/ A Glimpse Toward Dec.
- Page 8 Community Items of Interest/ Reflections
- Page 9 Unimaginable

## Deadline for Dec. 2018 News



## November 20th

*Joint Mission Statement of St. John/St. Stephen Lutheran Parish, ELCA:*

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