

GOOD NEWS FROM ST JOHN

October
2018

NEWS FOR ALL

Pastor's Ponderings



At the beginning of November I'll be serving as a Spiritual Director at another Via de Cristo. This is a lay-led spiritual renewal movement active throughout the Christian world (known by different names but with the same emphases) that seeks to strengthen faith and leadership for active members of congregations; most of our week-enders are Lutheran. Would you like to join us? There's no cost to you except the time commitment. We'll leave at about 4:30 p.m. on Thursday, November 1st and return after 5:00 p.m. on Sunday, November 4th. If you're at all interested, please talk to me about it! Applications need to be in by October 6th, so give me a call on my cell phone (352-2492) soon!

I love my Via de Cristo week-ends! Clergy serve as spiritual directors; there are three pastors on each week-end, so I'm in close contact with my colleagues in ministry. But best of all, most of the week-end is conducted by lay people, those not ordained. It's refreshing to see the deep faith and creative leadership of these women and men, and to be able to worship without always leading the service. I always return exhausted but energized!

In another vein, I've just finished a fascinating book by author Adam Hamilton. It's called *Half Truths: God Helps Those Who Help Themselves and Other Things the Bible Doesn't Say*. The chapter titles are the other "half truths" he deals with: *Everything Happens for a Reason; God Helps Those Who Help Themselves; God Won't Give You More Than You Can Handle; God Said It, I Believe It, That Settles It; Love the Sinner, Hate the Sin*. This is the second book by Hamilton that I've read, and I have two more. I enjoy his straight-forward simplicity and creative insights. Let me know if you'd like to borrow this book or his others (*What the Bible Really Says; Moses, the Reluctant Prophet; The Creed*).

Bible Study, Bible Study, Bible Study: it's *NOT* where you come to show off your knowledge of the Bible—it's for *EVERYONE AND ANYONE WHO WANTS TO LEARN MORE ABOUT THE BIBLE*. Please let me know when and where you'd like to have a Bible Study. I would willingly teach a study a day if people would attend. Come and learn more about how God reveals himself and his love in our scriptures. Come and learn how much God loves *YOU!*

St. John/St. Stephen Lutheran Parish, ELCA 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."

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

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

St. John Family News

BLESSING OF BACKPACKS was during the service on Sunday, Sept. 2nd. 2 eager students were present! We're considering choosing a different week for next year, when more families have returned from their Summer family fun.



We welcomed back our Sunday School students and teachers on *Rally Sunday*, September 9th. We also resumed our usual 9am worship time after the Summer schedule. **81 were in attendance.** *Many thanks to the Sunday School for the Ice cream Sundaes after the service!*

Grades 4-9 of the Sunday School will be holding their first service project of this term on **Sunday, Sept. 30th** during the Sunday School time. They will be participating in a **HIGHWAY CLEAN-UP.**

Way to go young people! Excellent way to serve God and our community. *Thanks to our dedicated Sunday School leadership/teaching team too!*

Coming SOON !



Sunday, Oct. 14th, 8am—12:30pm, St. John ELCA

All you can eat Potato and Buttermilk Pancake Brunch !

As always it will feature all-you-can-eat Potato & Buttermilk pancakes, served with REAL Maple Syrup, Sausage, Cheese, Applesauce, Bars, Coffee and Milk.

There will be **homemade pies** available for purchase and a **Basket Raffle** which offers a wide variety of creative collections.

Brunch Tickets Adults—\$7.00 (\$8 at the door) Children—(6 - 12 yrs) \$4.00 5 yrs. & under FREE!

Basket Raffle Tickets \$1 each \$6 for 7 \$10 for 15 \$20 for 35

ALL tickets are available in advance. This is a THRIVENT Action Team Project
For Ticket information Call: 715-352-2524

Sign up sheets are posted...Fliers are available on the table in the Narthex for you to post/hand out. **Much appreciation** to those who have already been working to get the word out!

Your Raffle Basket Creations need to be to church by October 6th. Thanks!



Faith, Fellowship, Food, Fun: Join us for our First Annual "Get-away Day" on Wednesday, October 24, 1:00-6:00. (*"Retreat" sounded too structured.*)



The day was chosen by the Women's Bible Study group because they expressed interest in this activity. I realize those who are still working won't be able to attend, but I promise to offer another **"First Annual Saturday Escape"** if any of you would like it—let me know! It's going to include some Bible Study, some sharing of memories of growing up in (or out of) the faith, some snacks, some question-and-answer time, some prayers, and a closing supper (what would you like?) for which a donation would be appreciated. We can have a catered meal if you want to donate big-time, or pizza, subs, or take-out of your choice. If you plan to attend, please sign up on the sheet in the back hallway. I (Pastor Gail) am really excited about doing this, and I hope you are too!

st. John Women of the ELCA **Next Bible Study**—Tuesday, October 9, at 1pm. at St. John.

The next **GENERAL MEETING** of the Women of St. John will be on **November 4th** at 10am, immediately following the worship service. The meeting will last 1 hour and ALL are welcome and ENCOURAGED to attend.

ELECTIONS will be held at this meeting. We welcome all volunteers and nominations for the positions of: *President, Vice President, Secretary, and Treasurer* to lead the Women of St. John in 2019. It will be a year of transition and we would welcome YOUR input and perspective.

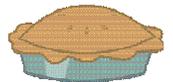
Many thanks to all who have donated items for the Lutheran World Relief Kits! We will be taking all the kits to the In-gathering in Wausau on Saturday, Oct. 6th. From there they get shipped all over the world to wherever they're needed most.

Quilting has resumed !



Join us 9:30am Tuesday mornings! We have a large amount of supplies to be put to good use, but our group size continues to dwindle. *Many thanks to our dedicated ladies for their warm labor of love.*

PIES, PIES, PIES! The WOMEN will be selling homemade pies again at the ANNUAL POTATO & BUTTERMILK PANCAKE BRUNCH on Sunday, October 14th. They always "sell like hot-cakes" so we'd appreciate MANY yummy donations. *Men, we'd gladly receive YOUR pie donations too!*



Other Upcoming women's events:

Cookie Walk 2018 will be on Sunday, December 16th. This will be the same Sunday as the Sunday School Christmas program as is customary.

HELP WANTED ! YOUR help is needed to strengthen the ranks of our **Ministry Volunteers/ Worship Assistants**. If you'd be willing to help in the areas of Ushering, Greeting, Reading Scripture during Worship, or serving on Altar Guild please let Rose know. Those serving are getting weary and would appreciate the encouragement of others being willing to take a turn.

Bible Trivia from Pastor Gail: Last month I mentioned that the word *adultery* in the Bible almost always refers to *idol worship*, the worship of false gods. Israel "committed adultery" with the gods of surrounding pagan nations, thus breaking the first commandment. In reading Ezekiel (my Old Testament—Hebrew Scripture—book) this month I was struck with the VERY graphic description of how God perceived Israel's faithlessness. Take a few minutes to read Ezekiel 16. You may be surprised, as I was, that something like this is actually in the Bible!



LOOKING Ahead . . . Quarterly Meeting coming up on Oct. 21st

* * * **Election of Officers** will take place at the Quarterly Meeting. Available positions: *Deacon (1)- 3 yr. term, Trustee (1)-3 yr. term, Council Secretary (1)-3 yr. term, Finance Committee (3) - 2 yr. term, Cemetery Board (1)-3 yr. term.*

Nominations can be made now. Watch for nomination slips and a box to receive them in the Narthex!
MAKE SURE to get each person's permission before nominating them. You may nominate yourself if you're willing to run!

CONFIRMATION will be on REFORMATION SUNDAY, October 28. Dylan Hollatz and Skylee Manecke will be reaffirming their Baptismal Vows in the service that Sunday. Lauryn Wiesman will also be confirmed this year, but she will reaffirm her Baptismal Vows on Sunday, October 21 due to a scheduling conflict.

To add to the blessings of the special day, the **Sunday School students will be singing** special music during the service on **October 28th**. They will be having special practices during Sunday School class time on October 7th and October 21st to prepare. Parents are asked to make a special effort to ensure their students are here for the **practices AND the performance!** It's always a delight to see our kids participate in the service! *Many thanks to ALL who help make this possible.*

The required 9th grade Confirmation classes with Pastor Gail will be 5:45-7pm on Wednesdays, October 3, 10, and 17.



As we plan ahead, parents please be reminded that Christmas Program Practice will be EVERY Sunday from November 4th through December 9th. It's important that your child(ren) be at each practice. If they can't, or they won't be able to be in the program, please let their teacher know right away so roles can be assigned accordingly.



Make it a habit to check out the Sunday School bulletin boards, they're GREAT !



Adventures of the Church Mice



Frederick here, from St. Stephen—THEY'RE BACK! The CHILDREN are back! It's so much fun to be in worship when the kids are there! (even if we DO have to be more careful where we hide, some of them are very good at finding things, even little MICE. Not that I'M little....) (I really can't help being so big-but there's more of me to love!) It's tricky, though, getting downstairs after the Children's Message, when all those little feet are tramping down the stairs. But it's worth it because WE get to hear the lesson and share the crumbs that fall from the children's hands. (Wasn't there something a few weeks ago in the Gospel about crumbs and dogs? Oh my goodness gracious me, I hope there aren't any DOGS coming to church now!)



I'm really looking forward to attending "Soul Support I"

It's a wonderful time to get to know other Church Administrative Assistants (Secretaries :) learn new things, and share ideas to help us better serve our Congregations. This year we're also going to have a Prayer Walk along the River Falls Riverwalk, and have the opportunity to get to know the new Bishop, *Laurie Skow-Anderson*.

We'll be learning about our sister congregation in Malawi, having Group Bible Study & Devotions as well as a worship service at Joy Lutheran Church in Prescott. Sounds like a full agenda. What a DELIGHT!

Psalm 37: 4 says *"Take delight in the LORD, and he will give you the desires of your heart."*

It thrills my heart that as I occupy my role as church secretary, focusing on the Lord and what he's doing in and through the congregational life of St. John is part of fulfilling my job-description.

I've held a variety of occupations in my years, but none has fulfilled the desires of my heart in the same way as having the role of Church Secretary at St. John.

I can remember at times in my life wishing that God would let me know EXACTLY what he wanted me to do—like which job to take. You know, like maybe he could send a note by paper airplane or carrier pigeon with specific written instructions. But as, you might guess, no such "black & white" instructions came.

I've come to realize that although God uses principles (*and some specifics*) in his Word to guide us, as well as directing us through his indwelling Holy Spirit, he usually gives us the freedom of choice—if we first seek to put HIS ways before our own. That's one way that we reflect the image of God, we have the ability to think and to choose, we don't live just following instinct.

Isn't it great to know that we have a loving Father that wants to give us the desires of our hearts—hearts that take delight in him?

Proverbs 3: 5-6 *"Trust in the LORD with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make your paths straight."*

May your hearts be filled with delight!

—Reflections from Rose



GOOD NEWS

St. John Lutheran Church ELCA
W1000 Hwy N
Edgar, WI 54426

We're on the Web
www.stjohnelcaedgar.org

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Please remember to check your bulletin for updates. If you would like to have us e-mail the Newsletter to you, please let us know.

Deadline for November News



October 22nd

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

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