

January
2020

St. John Lutheran Church



Mission Statement

St. John is a living witness to the love of God as shown in Jesus Christ.

*We gather faithfully in His name to **worship** and praise Him; and we go forth in peace to **share** the Good News and to **serve** the world around us.*

St. John Lutheran Church
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Dear friends in Christ,

In this Christmas season I have been reflecting on Mary, the mother of Jesus especially in the accounts of the Annunciation and the Magnificat in Luke 1:26-56. Her bold and faith-filled actions hold some take-aways for our individual faith lives and the life of a congregation as we begin a new year.

First, be prepared for God to call you to new, unexpected and even seemingly impossible paths. The angel Gabriel presented Mary a new possibility and direction for her to go that was seemingly impossible and would totally disrupt her quiet well-planned routine life. Remember, "Nothing will be impossible with God"

Second, be open to following that call of the Holy Spirit to something unsettlingly new. Mary's bold response to the angel's proposal, "Here am I, the servant of the Lord; let it be..." is not a meek and mild acceptance of the inevitable, but an "all in" determined leap of faith, knowing things will never be the same. As new possibilities and perhaps the discernment of new ministry opportunities present themselves, may you faithfully "be strong and courageous...for the Lord your God is with you wherever you go." (Joshua 1:9)

Third, know you don't need to go it alone. When she found herself in an amazing, unsettling situation that was new to her, Mary sought out her older cousin Elizabeth who was going through something similar. We don't need to go through things alone. The body of Christ we are a part of, the Church, is bigger than each of us alone. As a community of faith we are able to support one another: don't be shy to reach out.

Fourth, and most important, center your life in prayer. The Magnificat is Mary's prayer praising God's faithfulness to God's people and confidence in the wondrous, continuing, active disruptive presence of the Lord.

Thank you very much for the generous congregation Christmas gift and the many cards, treats and gifts received, all are appreciated.

Christmas Joy and New Year Blessings,
Pastor Bob Zimmerman

Annual Meeting - Sunday, January 26

We will review 2019, vote on a budget, and approve the congregational officers and council for 2020. We will also vote on the one service trial proposal.

There will be one worship service at 10:00 am.

Brown Bag Bible Study Study of the Book of Isaiah

Morning Prayer (11:30 am, Brown Bag Lunch (Noon) & Bible Study (12:30 pm)

Isaiah is the longest and most important of the prophetic books and has often been used as Old Testament references to the coming of Christ, referred by Matthew and other New Testament authors. It covers a long period of Israel's history (before, during, and after the Babylonian exile) and offers the full range of God's prophetic message: terrifying words of judgment and comforting words of promise. Isaiah portrays God as the powerful Creator, like no other, and also the gentlest comforter, like an earthly lover or mother. Join us on Wednesdays as we explore this important book of the bible.

Online Study Begins January 8, 2020

Beginning on January 8 at 7:30 pm, Pastor Zimmerman will lead a four session online discussion and study of **Martin Luther's "On the Bondage of the Will."** He chided Erasmus for trusting in human abilities rather than in God's grace, and for attempting to solve the problem of evil by defending unfettered "free choice," when in fact human beings are (to use the words of ELW's confession of sin) "captive to sin and cannot free themselves." We will read Luther's work and discuss together how we as humans continue to be captive to sin, and its empty promises.

Proposed Trial Period for One Sunday Worship service

For your continued consideration, conversation and prayer -

It has been shared that the congregation council wishes the congregation to vote on a trial period to see if a single Sunday worship service year round is desirable. The trial or test period of a few weeks would help determine if such a change would work both practically and attendance wise.

The proposal would be to have a trial period where there would be a single worship service and Sunday school on the six Sundays between Easter and Pentecost (April 19-May 24). This would be time enough to evaluate while not having to worry about weather or other issues. The time of such a service and will Sunday school be before or after, are decisions yet to be made. A vote will be taken at the January 26th annual congregational meeting on whether to proceed with the trial period only. During and after the trial period the conversation will continue.

It is difficult to separate personal preference from what is the best option for the worship life of the congregation. That is the reason a trial period is recommended, for the congregation to "test drive" Sunday school and a single worship service on a Sunday. Please continue to lift this proposal in prayer and bring your thoughts and questions to the December 8th meetings that will occur immediately following each service.



White Elephant Bingo & Potluck Dinner

Saturday, January 11, 2020

4:00 – 8:00 pm

Please bring a dish for all to enjoy for the potluck and a wrapped gift for the prize table.

Family friendly! Bring the kids, friends, grandkids or neighbors!

Steward your best year ever!

“Stewardship is not only a matter of faithful giving but of faithful living. In response to the Gospel, we submit our lives to the rule of God, to the lordship of Christ, and to the direction of the Holy Spirit, so that we may be the people God wants us to be and have the lives God wants us to have.” –**Mark Allan Powell**, author of *Giving to God*.

Yikes! It’s January 2, and the bathroom scale shows that, once again, I’ve gained a few pounds in the five-week blitz-feast of Thanksgiving-Christmas-New Year. Clearly, I need to *steward* my health better in 2020.

Though it’s not the most common use of the word, *steward* is also a verb, an action word. We *steward* all that God has entrusted to us, making choices that, as Mark Allan Powell says, help us “be the people God wants us to be and have the lives God wants us to have.”

We steward our lives through our decisions and choices – the food we eat, the people we call friends, how we spend our money, the entertainment we select, the hobbies we enjoy, the many ways we spend our time, and so on.

To steward faithfully, we have to live in prayerful awareness and make conscious, thoughtful decisions that will advance us in Godly directions.

As 2020 begins, prayerfully consider the most important areas of your life, such as your physical, mental and spiritual health, as well as your relationships and time, and ask God to help you steward them in ways that will help you be the person God wants you to be and have the life God wants you to have.

As for me, it will not only help me lose those extra holiday pounds, but also give me my best year *ever*.

--Rob Blezard

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The second Sunday of each month is Food Bank Sunday



Family farm

Help a family break the cycle of hunger and poverty — for good. A cow, a couple of goats, a dozen chicks, two pigs, farming tools, seeds and agricultural training can create a world of opportunity for a family living in poverty. With eggs, milk and meat to eat and sell, and tools and training to increase the harvest, this gift can make all the difference.

Family farm \$715

1Q20 Mission Emphasis: During the first quarter of 2020, all Mission Emphasis gifts will be used to purchase **Family Farms through the ELCA Good Gifts Catalog. The cost of one farm is \$715.00, and it will “help a family break the cycle of hunger and poverty — for good.** A cow, a couple of goats, a dozen chicks, two pigs, farming tools, seeds and agricultural training can create a world of opportunity for a family living in poverty. With eggs, milk and meat to eat and sell, and tools and training to increase the harvest, this gift can make all the difference.” What a wonderful way to share Christ’s love and mercy with families in need. If you would like more information, please speak with a member of the Mission Endowment and Outreach Committee. Thank you!

4Q19 Mission Emphasis: During the 4th quarter, the congregation raised **\$193.00 to help our Synod Seminarians.** Thank you for your generosity which will go towards helping these men and women receive important theological education that equips them to become leaders who serve the Gospel in the church and the world!

Money Counters Needed - The Board of Trustees needs your help to complete the 2020 Money Counters Schedule. There are six openings available as follows: two in April, one in May, two in November, and one in December. If you are willing to help with this much needed service to the church, please contact Christine Dishong as soon as possible for more details. Thank you in advance for your help with this!

**Chair Aerobics
Beginning
January 13 – 6:00
pm**



Join us each Monday evening at 6:00 pm in the Fellowship Hall as we get fit with gentle chair aerobics. See Kim Richards if you have any questions.

**Quilting Group
January 13 – 6:00
pm**



We meet on the second Monday of each month to make quilts for Lutheran World Relief. Newcomers are welcome! Speak to Cindy Knauff if interested.



**Ladies Book Group
Wednesday,
January 15 – 3pm**
Our group chooses a book to read and discuss at our monthly meetings. If you are interested in joining us speak to Sally Foster.

**2020 Vestry
St. John Lutheran Church**

Deacons

Erin Weaver
Anne Olescyski
Jan Leikauf
Kim Richards
Missy Kramer
Karen Collins
Kelly Greb

Elders

Chuck Olescyski
Valerie Cardinal
Matt Claus
Sally Foster
Tanya Nagel
Katie Niklewicz
Jeff Ward

Trustees

Jim Ward
Christine Dishong
John Tully
Dave Knauff
Bob Dishong
Dan Kramer

Officers will be approved at the January 26 Annual Meeting.





- 01/07 Justin Waibel
- 01/11 Frederick Ludloff
- 01/16 Chuck Olescyski
- 01/21 Kathy Marshall
- 01/24 Madison Cardinal
- 01/27 Gianna Julio

Upcoming Events
January 11– White Elephant Bingo
January 26 – Annual Meeting- 1 worship
@ 10 am

Communion Bread Schedule
 January – Christine Dishong

Counters for January
 Jamie Weaver & Valerie Cardinal

Worship Helpers
January

Assisting Ministers
 8:00 am **Matt Claus**
 10:30 am **Valerie Cardinal**

Ushers
 8:00 am **Bob Davidson**
 10:30 am

January Newsletter