



St. John's Lutheran Church

Called to Fill the Hungry with Good Things

The Messenger

(a monthly publication)

April 2023

Now when the centurion and those with him, who were keeping watch over Jesus, saw the earthquake and what took place, they were terrified and said, "Truly this man was God's Son!" Mt. 27:54

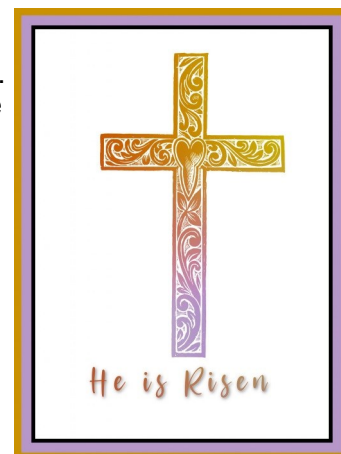
Soldiers tell stories. This centurion and the detail of soldiers with him received the assignment of carrying out the execution of Jesus. They were present here at the moment of his death and they experienced the cries of creation at his passing. The curtain in the temple was split in two, although they would not have known that, or cared. They saw rocks split open. They felt the earth shake. They were terrified. Creation itself was crying out. Matthew paints a picture of fear and confusion for those who witnessed the death and resurrection of Jesus. The soldiers, the disciples, the women, the religious leaders: all were terrified by the things that they saw. In the midst of this fear, God continues to work to let Faith take root.

Jesus, dead, still hangs on the cross. The crowds gathered continue to watch. And as the dust drifts away and the earth settles down an amazing thing emerges: Faith. The centurion and soldiers confess Jesus as the son of God. Gentiles in the service of the Empire, who were not waiting for a messiah, found an invitation to believe. "Truly this man was God's Son!" As they returned to their barracks or tents that night, this contingent of soldiers would have told the stories of what they had seen and come to believe. They would have asked, "where were you about mid-afternoon? Did you feel the earthquake?" They would have checked in with other soldiers who would have been in the city or at the gates or returning from a patrol. "Did you feel it?" "You'll never guess where I was. I saw everything!" The stories started to circulate. We don't know how far the tremors of the earth traveled, but we do know that those soldiers eventually left Jerusalem and traveled elsewhere. They could have marched across North Africa or journeyed to the forested areas of Germany or Britain, or even back to Rome. Wherever they went, they would tell the story of that day when something extraordinary happened.

Our resurrection moment in Matthew's telling of the Gospel is brief. Jesus speaks just a few sentences first to the women on their way from the tomb on Easter morning and again to the gathered disciples in Galilee. Jesus tells the disciples to "Go to all nations baptizing themselves in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit." On their way, they might have crossed paths with some of the soldiers who were there that day. The power of stories and of the testimony of the soldiers spread as well as the witness of the disciples.

We continue to tell the stories of the resurrection. In gatherings around the world celebratory greetings of "Happy Easter" will be shared. The terror of the first Holy Week has been replaced with the joy of living in the light of the Risen Christ. May this Easter Season sustain and encourage you. Jesus is not in the tomb- He has been raised. Alleluia!

Pastor Erik



HOLY WEEK

Palm Sunday- 9am

**Maundy Thursday –
5:30 pm**

Good Friday -

-Noon at Grace -
Episcopal

-5:30 pm at St.
John's

Easter Sunday-9 am

I'm a Lutheran: Connie Wells



I was born in Rugby, ND, and was raised in Bethel Lutheran, rural Rugby. After getting married in Bethel, we lived in Grand Forks and in various places while Charlie was in the army. During that time we didn't have a church home, but when we settled in Steele, that changed. We have been members of Trinity Lutheran in Steele, United Methodist in Robinson, and now St. John's. Our faith has always been an important part of our lives.

When Charlie was in the army, we had the opportunity to live in Thailand for a few months. An important lesson I learned there was what it was like to be in the minority. No matter where we are, we realize that we have more similarities than we have differences. We all want the best for our families - a safe home, adequate food and the opportunity to pursue a fulfilling life.

I believe that God loves me no matter what I say, do or think. At times I know my thoughts are not very charitable, but I know God will forgive my shortcomings if I ask. My favorite Bible stories exhibit God's love for all. A good example is the Woman at the Well that we heard in worship this month. Jesus never turns away from those who are different. He accepts everyone who comes to him.

An ongoing issue which is important to me is the acceptance and respect for LGBTG+ individuals. I hold onto the great commandment to love God with all your heart and your neighbor as yourself. To that I add "judge not lest you be judged". We need to accept everyone as a friend and neighbor. God will take care of judging in his time.

After more than six years, I still struggle with the loss of our son. When I think I've found an answer, further reflection leaves me still wondering why. Since losing our son, I have realized how many people in our community have lost a child. While we have that grief in common, each experience is unique to each family. If I could change anything, I would have my son back. That isn't possible, so to honor him, I will try to be the best person I can be.

I'm a Lutheran because I was born and raised in the Lutheran faith. I stay because I'm in favor of the path the ELCA has taken in welcoming and including everyone. My favorite part of weekly worship is the phrase "All is ready. All are welcome." which we hear before communion is served.

Music has always been important in my life and in my worship. I was a pianist at my home church while in high school and accompanied choir and/or worship in each church we have attended. My working life has always been in banking, mostly in customer contact roles. Today we enjoy our retirement. While we have always enjoyed travel, I think we will stick to road trips from now on. I really have no desire to set foot in an airport again!

Serving on church teams has taught me how much goes on behind the scenes to keep everything going. Nothing happens by accident! It takes a team of dedicated pastors and willing volunteers to make the church an integral part of the community in which we live.

Pastor Erik asked what there was about me that people would find surprising. Probably that there is nothing surprising.



Synod connections page



Vital Church:

Communication & Community

Saturday, May 6th, 10am-4:30pm

Location: Fargo, TBD

Vital Church Conversations

The Eastern North Dakota Synod is hosting another of their Vital Church Conversations on Saturday, May 6 from 10am-4:30pm. This session will focus on how we show up as leaders in our contexts and how to navigate and manage systems in order to foster healthier conversation and communities. If you are interested in joining the conversation speak to a pastor!

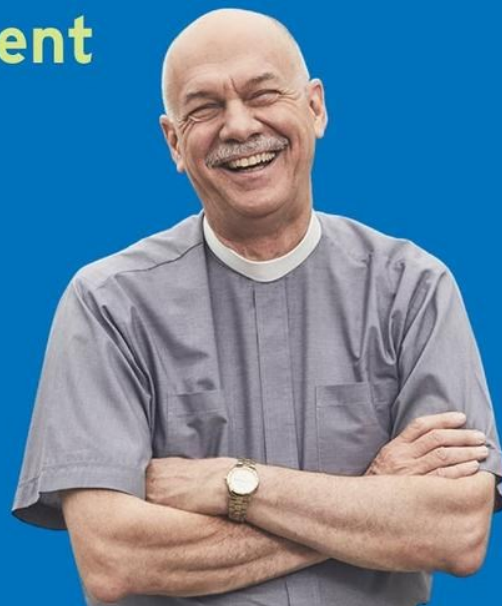
LUTHERAN IMMIGRATION AND REFUGEE SERVICES INTERVIEW

Eastern ND Synod Council member and local leader Matuor Alier was the special guest on Walking Through Lent Together on Tuesday, March 21! This is a weekly interview series hosted by Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service. Matuor is a former refugee from Sudan. Listen to Matuor's interview and check out previous interviews on LIRS's YouTube page. You can find the page by searching "Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service".

Walking Through Lent Together

An interview series with
Pastor Eric Shafer

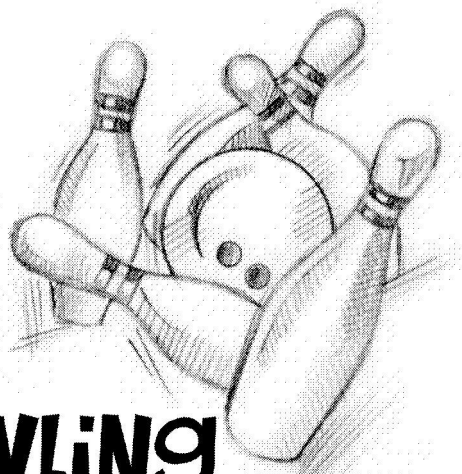
Tuesdays at 2 PM EST



Christians in Action – Youth and Family Ministries

Youth Bowling Event

A good time was had by all on March 12 as the Christians in Action Youth had a social event at Buffalo Lanes.



BOWLING



Up Next—Christians in Action Youth

Games and Tye-Dye

Sunday, April 16, 1-3PM - English Lutheran Church- Medina, ND

Cost \$10 (covers shirt, supplies, and food)

Look for a Registration link on Realm or contact Pastor Stephanie!

Update on Youth And Family Ministry shared position-

As this edition on the newsletter is being prepared, interviews are happening in town with two candidates who may be joining the Christians in Action team to special ze in Youth and Family ministry and education. All congregations, including St. John's, will benefit from some shared organization of activities and trips for youth. Stay tuned...



“But each of us was given grace according to the measure of Christ’s gift. Therefore it is said, ‘When he ascended on high he made captivity itself a captive; he gave gifts to his people.’ The gifts he gave were that some would be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, some pastors and teachers, to

equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ, until all of us come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to maturity, to the measure of the full stature of Christ. We must no longer be children, tossed to and fro and blown about by every wind of doctrine, by people’s trickery, by their craftiness in deceitful scheming. But speaking the truth in love, we must grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ, from whom the whole body, joined and knit together by every ligament with which it is equipped, as each part is working properly, promotes the body’s growth in building itself up in love.” Ephesians 4:7-8;11-16

Dear people of God – Grace and peace in the name of Jesus!

When I think of congregational ministry, this passage from Ephesians comes to mind. The Apostle Paul’s words remind me that congregational ministry is God’s work that belongs not only to the office of the pastor, but to the entire body of Christ in this place and time. Our congregation has a variety of gifts, most of which I am still in the process of learning about through observation, listening, and conversations. Part of my call as your pastor is to help identify your gifts and encourage you to use them. Paul reminds us that our gifts, given in Holy Baptism, are for the purpose of building up the body of Christ; which Christ joins together, just as ligaments, tendons, muscles, joints, and nerves all connect our physical body so the whole body knows what is going on. To catch a ball being tossed to us, our eye sends signals to our brain to tell our arms to move our hands to the right place and close our fingers at just the right time to catch the ball. In order for this to happen and for the catch to be successful, the communication must happen quickly and accurately; and all the body parts

have to listen and respond in sequence. Similarly, in the body of Christ, communication is one of the keys to effective congregational ministry. Paul tells us that we do that by “speaking the truth in love” (Ep. 4:15) as we grow in faith and do ministry together.

On the surface, it may seem like speaking the truth in love for the sake of building up the body of Christ means that, ideally, we never say anything that will make someone else in the body upset. But you and I both know that this is not reality. Many times, speaking the truth in love means saying exactly what we mean and how we feel. Speaking the truth in love can only happen when we trust one another. And trust takes time to build through the gift of relationship, which happens through effective communication. As we continue to grow into serving in ministry together, I ask for you to speak the truth in love with one another and with me. This happens through direct communication and speaking directly to the person with whom we need to communicate; even when we think what we have to say might make the other person upset, because we are people who speak the truth in love.

As your pastor, called to help lead this congregation in God’s ministry, I ask for direct communication, and will do my best to provide and invite it. This avoids triangulation and/ or “the assumption of knowledge” – assuming that because you or I know something that everyone else knows the same thing. Better to be sure we are all on the same page than make a fool of yourself and the other person. Direct communication also prevents the temptation to communicate anonymously. I rarely ever speak in absolutes, but I will for the sake of the body of Christ today: Anonymous communication never builds up the body of Christ and always sows division, because communication can only happen through relationship, and relationship only happens between people who know one another. As a leader, I will never use anonymous communication, and I do not and cannot respond to it. If a letter has no return address and is not signed, I shred it without reading it. If I receive an email from a hidden or random email address and it is not signed, I delete it without reading it. If you come to me and say, “Everybody’s (or a lot of people or a bunch of people are) saying that they want this or that, or is/are upset about this or that,” I will need to know who specifically these people are. (continued on next page)

The same goes if this communication method comes to or through congregational leaders or staff. It is not possible to respond to unknown persons in any sort of constructive manner that builds up the body of Christ. We will not be blown to and fro by anonymous opinions, requests, or trickery. We speak the truth in love in order to build up the body of Christ, as God has equipped and called us to do with our gifts

With all of that being said, I also commit myself and the ministry of our congregation to being open to constructive criticism and even conflict. Constructive criticism is that which is given for the sake of building up - constructing. Conflict is inevitable, but conflict does not have to be destructive – in fact – conflict can lead to growth and change through listening to one another as we speak the truth in love.

I adopt this idea from colleagues who, every time they begin a new call, have written something very similar for the congregational newsletter. Setting expectations and boundaries helps prevent miscommunication and misunderstanding, and encourages open and direct communication within the body of Christ as we serve in ministry together. Because this body of Christ is blessed with many different gifts and abilities to serve in ministry. And just as our physical body cannot move forward without successful communication, the body of Christ we belong to also cannot move forward without direct, open, and accurate communication.

Thank you for this opportunity to serve in God's ministry with you as we learn and explore one another's gifts for building up the body of Christ and for serving God's Church, this community, and the world, for the sake of the Gospel!

God's peace,
 Pastor Stephanie Gossett
 Associate Pastor- St. John's Lutheran Church



In Memory of:

**Alice Wolff
 Lyle Perleberg
 Alice Wolff**

Given by:

**Marlys Perleberg
 Marlys Perleberg
 Perleberg family and friends**

2023 SPONSORSHIP UPDATES

Radio broadcast and Altar flower sponsorships for 2023 will cost \$40 for altar flowers and \$190 for the radio broadcast. It is a nice way to honor or memorialize a loved one. Contact the church office at 252-1198 to check on availability.

Radio April

**4/2 Russ & Gwen Geizsler
 4/9 Tom & Joan Enderle
 4/16 Gerald & Marjorie Lippert
 4/23 Wanda Kruger
 4/30 Available**

Flowers April

**4/2 Tom & Joan Enderle
 4/9 Carl & Sandy Franke
 4/16 Darwin & Pauline Roeske
 4/23 Wanda Kruger
 4/30 Marlys Perleberg**

**For Dates available for Altar Flowers
 and Radio, please contact the church
 office 252-1198**



ATTENDANCE

	In Person	YouTube Live	YouTube recorded
3/5	90	22	102
3/8 Wed	26	2	19
3/12	44	24	58
3/15 Wed	28	4	50
3/19	99	24	35
3/22 Wed	23	1	22
3/26	125	25	41

February income: \$ 22,132
 February expenses: \$ 29,932

Point of Reference– If St. John's averages \$32,250 of income in a month we are on track for the year.

Ministerial Acts

Baptisms

- + Evelyn Marie Hatlewick 3/12/2023
- + Cal Donald Fiebiger 3/19/2023
- + Maren Jean Striefel 3/26/2023

Weddings

- + Brian Sternberg and Sheri Wayman
- 3/10/2023

Funerals

- + Lyle Perleberg died 2/21/2023
- + Vera Dominick died 2/26/2023

Council Recap

The St. John's Council met on March 13th. Pr. Stephanie led an opening devotion and Pastor Erik led a council orientation, reviewing duties of the council and the 2023 budget. Conner is filling a one year director position on the council and Pam M. is "auditioning" for the secretary position. Financial reports, meeting minutes, and expectation were discussed.

Pastor Erik shared that the church's insurance carrier, Grinnell Mutual, is nonrenewing our policy effective June 1. New companies and quotes are being sought. Guidelines for cancelling Sunday services, due to severe weather, was discussed. Whenever possible, Pr. Erik will make it to St. John's to lead something on the radio. Pastor Stephanie can conduct services remotely. Keeping people safe is important. Flooring in both second-floor lounge bathrooms need replacing and will be investigated. "Christians in Action" Partnership: Two candidates were interviewed to serve children, youth and family ministries in each congregation. St. John's currently has \$8,300 in the annual budget to contribute toward one candidate's salary. That person would average four hours a week at St. John's, freeing up more time for pastors to focus on other duties. With a teacher and director needed at Child in Our Hands, a motion was made by Pam Golde, seconded by David, for Char and Lynn to approach the CIOH board to see if they want to expend \$11,500 to support the second candidate. Motion carried. A discussion on CDs, a money market account and Budget Stabilization Fund was tabled until the treasurer is present. A motion to fix the chimes on the organ at a cost of \$2,325 was approved. The next council meeting will be Monday April 17th at 5:30 pm.





Greetings from Child In Our Hands,

We celebrated the first day of spring in March, but it certainly did not appear to look like spring outside with the mounds of snow surrounding us. The preschool class has enjoyed the large amount of snow on the playground. They have even found themselves stuck at times. They showed great teamwork as they worked to pull each other out and dig lost boots out of the snow.

God's Little Lambs has been working on their colors, numbers, shapes, and ABC's. They have also been working on their fine motor skills when it comes to coloring. They love having their work displayed in the hallway.

Noah's Ark is busy as ever. Three of the infants in the room are mobile. This can create a challenge for the one non-mobile infant as the others are so curious and love trying to interact with him.

Promise Land Preschool went on a field trip to Party Crashers. There are bounce houses and a discovery zone. The discovery zone has a variety of science explorations and games. Both classes had so much fun!

Thank you for your continued prayers for Child In Our Hands as we work towards our goal of building back up to capacity. We feel them and are so grateful for the support we receive from the community of St. John's Lutheran Church.

Sincerely,

Valerie Ford
Interim Director



Donation

As we are entering cold season, Child In Our will gladly take any donations of Kleenex or paper towels. Thank you.

ARE YOU

TO CHECK
YOUR
CURRENT
IMMUNIZATION
RECORDS:

STOP INTO CVHD:
122 2ND ST NW
JAMESTOWN

REQUEST ONLINE @
www.centralvalleyhealth.org

CALL CVHD:
701.252.8130



UP TO DATE?

Thanks to Our Volunteers

Gem says Thank you to all who volunteer and make my job a little bit easier. I might not remember to thank you in person, but this is my chance to say thank you for everything you do, for stopping by to say hi and check how I am doing. Pr. Erik and Pr. Stephine share the same feeling.

Giving Matters

Offering Envelopes Have Arrived

After more than a four month delay, the 2023 Offering Envelopes have arrived. Please pick up your envelopes in the Narthex and begin using them immediately. If you would like some envelopes sent to you, please let Gem know in the church office.

Not Everyone has a Box! We ordered 120 full boxed sets and some additional undated/unnumbered sets for use this year. If you don't find a boxed set, and would like envelopes, we can get them for you. Please fill out a yellow request sheet and we will have them available within a week.

- + People who have signed up for electronic giving do not have a full box of envelopes.
- + People who have not picked up envelopes for a few years probably don't have a set this year.
- + People who have picked up envelopes in the past but have never used them probably don't have a set this year.

Everyone who wants envelopes can get them, we have tried to only order what we actually use.

Christians in Action this Week



Atonement:	Rev. Lucinda
Ellendale:	Teagan Thompson (SAM)
Gackle:	Shar Gumke (SAM)
Medina:	Rev. Erik
Immanuel:	Rev. Lucinda
St. John's:	Revs. Stephanie and Erik
Trinity:	Lay Preacher Eric H. with Rev. Susan
Kulm:	Rev. Linda
Montpelier:	Rev. Kristi

Where the Worship Leaders Are:

Each week, St. John's includes a pre-worship slide that shows where the various worship leaders are for the day. Some realities of life in congregations today is that there are fewer pastors than congregations and there are fewer congregations that are able to afford a full time pastor.

Christians in Action is a local response to ensure that pastoral leadership is shared and coordinated for the good of God's church in our area. Congregations are working together to share ideas, resources, and people for local ministry. This involves a combination of seminary trained pastors, locally trained Lay Ministers, and mentored lay preachers.

A large worship grid keeps all of the leaders connected and on track for the coming weeks. Shared resources allow for some special items, like the scripted Gospel reading in Lent to be used by multiple congregations.

It has taken flexibility and a willingness to change to begin this process. Several congregations moved their Sunday worship times to accommodate travel (for example St. John's worships at 9 am and Medina moved to 11 am). Sometimes the bible readings for the day are swapped to allow for lay preachers to use the same preparation for more than one presentation. Good ministry continues to take place in our area because we are committed to sharing.



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
26 9:00am Worship - St. John's 10:00am Sunday School 10:30am Hope for the Hopeless Church - Centennial Hall	27	28 9:00am Staff Meeting 5:00pm Come to the Table Meal 6:00pm Hope for the Hopeless Church - Centennial Hall	29 staff meeting 10:30am Preschool Chapel 1:30pm Preschool Chapel 5:30pm Lent Worship	30 6:00pm Hope for the Hopeless Church - Centennial Hall	31 6:00pm Hope for the Hopeless Church - Centennial Hall	1
2 9:00am Worship - St. John's Palm Sunday 10:00am Sunday School 10:30am Hope for the Hopeless Church - Centennial Hall	3	4 9:00am Staff Meeting 5:00pm Come to the Table Meal 6:00pm Hope for the Hopeless Church - Centennial Hall	5 10:30am Preschool Chapel 1:30pm Preschool Chapel	6 6:00pm Hope for the Hopeless Church - Centennial Hall	7 6:00pm Hope for the Hopeless Church - Centennial Hall	8
9 9:00am Worship - St. John's - Easter Sunday 10:00am No Sunday School 10:00am Sunday School 10:30am Hope for the Hopeless Church - Centennial Hall	10	11 9:00am Staff Meeting 5:00pm Come to the Table Meal 6:00pm Council Meeting 6:00pm Hope for the Hopeless Church - Centennial Hall	12 10:30am Preschool Chapel 1:30pm Preschool Chapel	13 6:00pm Hope for the Hopeless Church - Centennial Hall	14 6:00pm Hope for the Hopeless Church - Centennial Hall	15
16 9:00am Worship - St. John's 10:00am Sunday School 10:30am Hope for the Hopeless Church - Centennial Hall	17	18 9:00am Staff Meeting 5:00pm Come to the Table Meal 6:00pm Hope for the Hopeless Church - Centennial Hall	19 10:30am Preschool Chapel 1:30pm Preschool Chapel 2:00pm Ave Maria Worship 4:00pm 6th and 7th Grade Confirmation 7:15pm 8th Grade Confirmation - Trinity	20 6:00pm Hope for the Hopeless Church - Centennial Hall	21 6:00pm Hope for the Hopeless Church - Centennial Hall	22
23 9:00am Worship - St. John's 10:00am Sunday School 10:30am Hope for the Hopeless Church - Centennial Hall 2:00pm Ave Maria Worship	24	25 9:00am Staff Meeting 5:00pm Come to the Table Meal 6:00pm Hope for the Hopeless Church - Centennial Hall	26 10:30am Preschool Chapel 1:30pm Preschool Chapel 4:00pm 6th and 7th Grade Confirmation 7:15pm 8th Grade Confirmation - Trinity	27 6:00pm Hope for the Hopeless Church - Centennial Hall	28 6:00pm Hope for the Hopeless Church - Centennial Hall	29
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St. John's Lutheran Church
424 1st Ave S
Jamestown, ND 58401
Change Service Requested

Non-Profit
Organization
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
Permit No. 1
Jamestown, ND
58401

Worship Services

Sundays

~ 9:00 am

«AddressBlock»

Wednesday Confirmation

~ 4:00 pm - Worship

Holy Communion

All Worship Services

Church Office 701-252-1198

Preschool/Child Care 701-252-1903

Website: www.st-johnslutheran.org

email: stjohns@st-johnslutheran.org

STAFF OF ST. JOHN'S LUTHERAN

Senior Pastor
Erik Weber

Associate Pastor
Stephanie Gossett

Admin Secretary/bookkeeper
Gem Saied

Custodian
Robin Vasquez

Child In Our Hands
Valerie Ford - Interim

Choir Accompanist/Pianist
Connie Wells

Holy Week

Palm Sunday Worship April 2nd - 9 am

Easter Sunday Worship April 9th - 9 am

