



THE STORY

MARCH 2023

St. John Lutheran Church

PO Box 432 104 Central Avenue North Mapleton, MN 56065

Phone: 507-524-3615 * Email: stjohnslutheran.mapletonmn@gmail.com * Facebook: St. John's Lutheran Church, ELCA

Start the planning for summer of 2023 BWCA

We are going to the end of Gunflint Trail for the BWCA trip in July. It's crazy, but with less availability, most people are booking 6 months in advance. This is offered to all youth grades 7-12th.

We have room for 16 people which would include ideally 4 adults. We will be leaving @ 8 AM Thursday, July 20th and returning @ 8 PM Sunday, July 23.

It will be a blast. We will be camping, fishing, and canoeing. We will have to get commitments end Feb/early March.

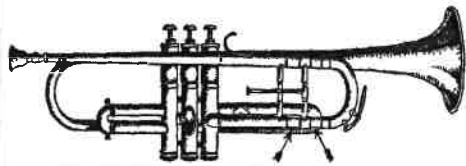


First Communion Workshop – April 1, 2023

On the first Saturday of April, students and parents will have an opportunity to learn about what communion is, and then decide if this is the right time for starting this lifelong journey of meeting Jesus in a new way, through bread and wine. The learning will include seeing a short video, baking bread (which will actually be used at the First Communion!), painting a cross for a keepsake and having some discussion.

Sign-up is very helpful, so that we can have adequate supplies and space available. We will start at 9:00 am on April 1 and be done by Noon (probably closer to 11:15 or 11:30). Please call or email if you have ANY questions about this process.

Pastor Steve



HEAR YE HEAR YE

- *Please have all items in the office for the April newsletter by March 17th. PLEASE!! Thank you
- *Check out the puzzles in the free book section in the education lobby. Have puzzles you would like to donate, just add them to the shelf. Great pass time as the weather starts to get cooler. New books have also been added.
- *Worship Choir wants your voice, Please join us for practice at 8:30am on Sundays, no experience needed. ;)
- *We invite you to share flowers for the altar area - to celebrate a special day/person or just to share some beauty with the rest of the congregation. Call the office for details. 524-3615
- *Church Basement ladies are looking for containers for left overs. Most any size will work. Just drop them off in the Kitchen. Thank you!!!
- * Annual Meeting minutes will be available in the Office.
- *Confirmands will be attending Lenten Service with their mentors during Lenten worship which will be at 6:30pm on Wednesday. Supper starting at 5:00pm

**Lenten Suppers will be held again on Wednesdays starting at 5:00pm
ALL ARE INVITED!!!**

****Coming soon to a church basement near you PIE DAY!****

* On March 12th Church Life will be serving pie. YAH!!! We will again ask for all you pie bakers if you would like to make a pie for this historic day. We will serve by the piece or by the pie.

WE HOLD IN PRAYER: Ashlyn Bennett, Larry Albrecht, Ron Swift , Dick & Ann Kuball, Arleen Hanson, Michelle Birr Straumann and Gloria Schuett

HOMEBOUND MEMBERS: David Treanor, Robert Krengel, Cheryl Bergemann, Betty Borsoski, Arlene Tolzman, Betty Aschlager, Orville Halverson, Audrey Annis and Eloise Ward

Prayers



Morning, noon and night give me Jesus!

Father, when we are weak, you are strong. When we have no faith, you have faith. Thank you for being true to us even when we forget you. Thank you for being faithful even when we are not. Amen

March

Liturgist

Rita Caron

Church Council

Members

March

Cathy Pluym

Gary Denn

April

Patti Krengel

Paul Osmundson

PASTOR'S PAGE

Dear Friends of St. John's-

I want to share a story that I first saw about a year ago...

A professor gave a balloon to every student, who had to inflate it, write their name on it and throw it in the hallway. The professor then mixed all the balloons. The students were given 5 minutes to find their own balloon. Despite a hectic search, no one found their balloon. At that point the professor told the students to take the first balloon that they found and hand it to the person whose name was written on it. Within 5 minutes everyone had their own balloon.

The professor said to the students: "These balloons are like happiness. We will never find it if everyone is only looking for their own. But if we care about other people's happiness....we'll find ours too. ~ author unknown

I like the lesson this story teaches, but I think Jesus explained it even better when he answered the Pharisee's question: "Teacher, which commandment in the law is the greatest?" Jesus said to him, 'You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.' This is the greatest and first commandment. And a second is like it: 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.' *On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets.*" (Matthew 22:34-40)

We all know that loving God is the heart of having faith. Jesus makes it clear that loving the people around us is just as central to having faith (as well as the people far from us, the people unlike us, and even the people who don't like us). In other words, finding and giving others their 'happiness balloon' is the best way to discover our own. And that is also what is most pleasing to the Lord.

And the good news? We don't have only 5 minutes to do that - we have **all day**, every day!

God bless your loving throughout this Lenten journey, and beyond!

Pastor Steve.



St. John Information

CONTACT/CONNECT

Email: stjohnslutheran.mapletonmn@gmail.com

Berkeland.stjohnslutheran@gmail.com

Website: www.stjohnlutheranelca.com

Streaming: Go to www.youtube.com (type in St. John's Mapleton in the search box). From there you will find all the services.

Items for the newsletter can be emailed to: thestory.stjohnlutheran@gmail.com

Spiritually Speaking

Please check out our congregation's Facebook page and "like" us. Check us out every few days and "like" some of the inspirational and encouraging pictures and share announcements about events with your friends. This is one easy way to share information about our church and God's Word with others.



Worship Committee

The committee met on 2-9-22. Items of discussion were:

The liturgist schedule was reviewed, schedule as follows: March-Rita Caron, April-Linda Annis, May- Josh Isebrand family and June- Lisa Manthei (will confirm with Lisa).

Lenten services will begin February 22nd. A traditional service will be held with Holden Prayer used the remainder of the services. Pat Duncanson and choir will lead the Holden portion of the service. Theme for the Lenten services will be the 5 parts of our intention to live in the covenant God made with us in holy baptism. Services will begin at 6:30 PM.

Worship Committee decided to reinstate the pre-Lenten service suppers with concurrence from Council. Worship Committee will serve the first supper on Feb. 22nd, Youth-Parish Ed on March 1st-Pattie will contact Jason, Church Life on March 8th- Denise will contact Mary or Coleen, Council on March 15th, Food Shelf on March 22nd -Linda will contact John Solting and Worship Choir on March 29th-Denise and Judy will contact choir members. Suppers will begin at 5:00 PM. A free will offering will be collected with funds going to the Food Shelf.

Holy Week will include a Maundy Thursday service, Friday Tenebrae service, Easter First Light service and Easter Festival service with a youth breakfast served between services.


Worship Committee would like to have the youth acolyte beginning with the Easter services (or sooner if the youth are ready).

A bid has been received for new speakers. The council will review the bid at their February meeting. A service of music will be held on Mother's Day with all music groups participating. Additional music services are planned for the summer and again on Christmas Eve.

Next meeting will be held on March 7th at 6:00 PM. With no further business, the meeting adjourned.
Denise Nienow

March 2023

Sun Mon Tue Wed Thu Fri Sat

Join us for Coffee Hour following Worship The Stories are amazing!!!						
			1 Lenten Services / Confirmation 6:30pm Lenten suppers start at 5:00	2	3	4
5 8:30 Worship Choir practice 9:30am Worship / communion 10:30am Sunday	6 Quilting 10:00am - 3:00pm	7 Quilting 10:00am - 3:00pm	8 Lenten Services / Confirmation 6:30pm Lenten suppers start at 5:00	9 Church Council 6:30	10	11
12 8:30 Worship Choir practice - 9:30am Worship / Children sing 10:30 Sunday School PIE DAY!!!!	13 Quilting 10:00am - 3:00pm	14 Quilting 10:00am - 3:00pm	15 Lenten Services / Confirmation 6:30pm Lenten suppers start at 5:00	16	17 NEWSLETTER DEADLINE Happy St. Partricks Day 	18
19 8:30 Worship Choir practice 9:30am Worship / communion 10:30am Sunday School	20 Quilting 10:00am - 3:00pm	21 Quilting 10:00am - 3:00pm	22 Lenten Services / Confirmation 6:30pm Lenten suppers start at 5:00	23	24	25
26 8:30 Worship Choir practice 9:30am Worship 10:30am Sunday School	27 Quilting 10:00am - 3:00pm	28 Quilting 10:00am - 3:00pm	29 Lenten Services / Confirmation 6:30pm Lenten suppers start at 5:00	30	31	



ST JOHN LUTHERAN CHURCH—Council Minutes

ST JOHN LUTHERAN CHURCH The meeting was called to order by President, Jenny O'Rourke at 6:30 p.m. at

St. John Lutheran Church on February 9, 2023

Council Members Present: Lori Schweer (Secretary), Jenny O'Rourke (President), Al Albrecht (Vice President), Patti Kregel, Julie Lux, Aaron Annis, Rita Caron, Josh Isebrand, Gary Denn, Bev Raimann, Cathy Pluym, Royce Woitas

Absent: Paul Osmundson, Gabe Duncanson Non-Council Members Present: Scott Schweer

Opening Prayer: Pastor led the meeting with prayer.

Election for new Church Council Officers for year 2023: Motion passed

Vice President: Al Albrecht has volunteered to stay on as Church Council Vice President for year 2023. A motion was made by Rita Caron to elect Aaron Annis as Church Council Secretary for year 2023. Second Josh Isebrand. Motion passed
Julie Lux made motion to approve January 2023 Secretary minutes. Second by Al Albrecht. Motion passed.

Use of building: no new request. Melissa Decker currently using for instructing Yoga

Committee reports:

Parish Ed/Youth Committee: (Chair – Jenny O'Rourke, Julie Lux) --went to Mt Kato tubing on Sunday, Feb 5th had 43 tubing, perfect weather had a fantastic time, this coming week children will be singing during church service and will be making Valentine Day cards to distribute to nursing home and assistant care facilities in Mapleton.

Youth-- mission trip July 20-23. 2023 to Boundary waters (end of Gunflint Trail), will need adult chaperones. Will need to know by end of February early March if planning to attend.

Mutual Ministry Committee: (Rita Caron) – pastors review –how to be a church in the new normal

Endowment Committee: (Mike Ward) –no meeting

Worship Committee: (Patti Kregel, Rita Caron & Josh Isebrand) – Bringing back Lent Suppers starting on Wednesday, February 22nd at 6:30 p.m. All proceeds will go to the Food Shelf. The dates for committees/groups scheduled to host are below:

Wednesday, February 22—Worship Committee

Wednesday, March 1—Youth/Parish Ed

Wednesday, March 8—Church Life

Wednesday, March 15—Church Council

Wednesday, March 22- Food Shelf

Wednesday, March 29—Choir

Church Life Committee: (Cathy Pluym, Julie Lux).—Pie Social Sunday—March 12

Deacons: (Patti Kregel, Paul Osmundson, Al Albrecht, Royce Woitas, Lay Deacon-Lori Schweer)

WELCA: (Rita Caron, Bev Raimann) – meeting March 1 **Stewardship Committee:** Scott Schweer gave list of people currently serving on stewardship committee: Mike Ward, Linda Albrecht, Denise Nienow, and Scott Schweer. Church secretary, also sits in on meetings.

Trustees Committee: Gary Denn, Paul Osmundson, Gabe Duncanson, Aaron Annis— Gary Denn gave report of needing to trim trees and update some of plumbing in parsonage, need to add hydraulic oil to lift. Al Albrecht gave report on Narthex leak—discussion on possibility of having Luke Samuelson using waterproof spray foam.

Wish List from Caryl O'Brien: Discussion—Interior education lobby door replaced with emergency safety bar. Main doors to church new lock and emergency safety bar.

This Year Projected Projects Include: Tuckpointing of Church; Narthex This Year Projected Projects Include: Tuckpointing of Church; Narthex ceiling leakage; Painting peak; Speaker sound system—(church, cry room, kitchen, dining room.) West door, covering/flashing needs to be fixed. Food shelf has offered to fix

Pastors Report —would like Church Life to research and plan for a new Church Directory, sound system needs to be updated. Received request from Synod for annual giving.

A motion was made by Josh Isebrand for annual giving total to Synod of \$2500 for year 2023, Second by Patti Krengel. Motion passed

Treasurer's Report: (Scott Schweer)

Al Albrecht made motion to approve January treasurer report—Aaron Annis—seconded. Motion passed

Other: stair treads—some of the grippers are lifting will be replaced at 100%

Council Duties for year 2023:

- Gary Denn and Al Albrecht
- Al Albrecht and Josh Isebrand
- Cathy Pluym and Gary Denn
- Patti Krengel and Paul Osmundson
- Josh Isebrand and Patti Krengel
- Bev Raimann and Rita Caron
- Gabe Duncanson and Paul Osmundson
 - Royce Woitas and Aaron Annis
 - Gary Denn and Cathy Pluym
 - Julie Lux and Aaron Annis
 - Julie Lux and Rita Caron
 - Royce Woitas and Gabe Duncanson
 - Bev Raimann and Aaron Annis

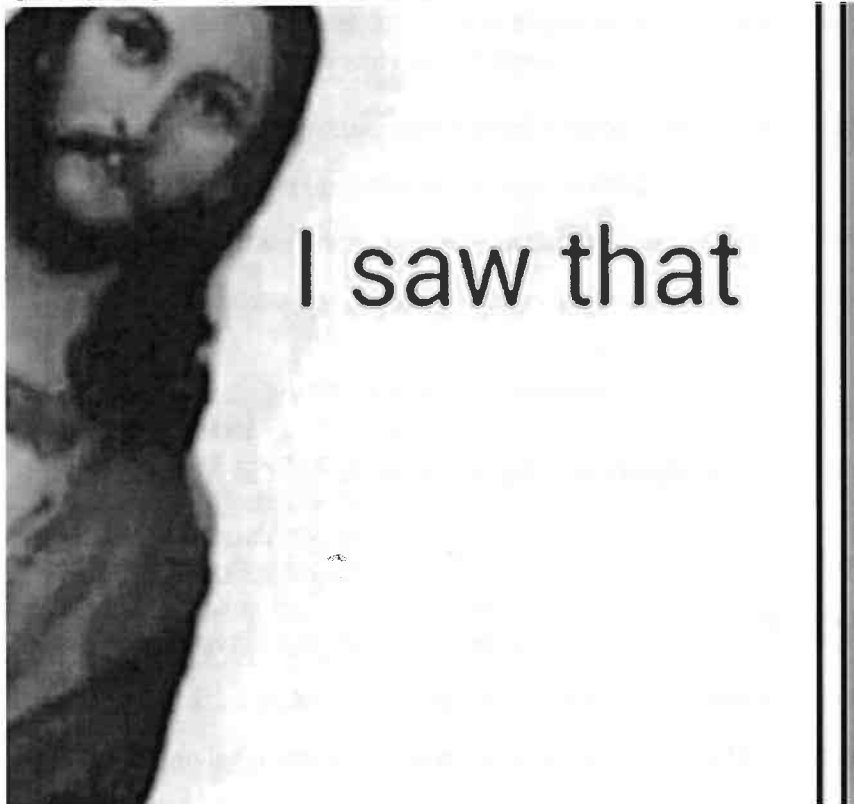
Adjourn: With no further business Josh Isebrand made a motion to adjourn meeting, seconded by Rita Caron, Motion carried. Lord's Prayer

Next meeting will be Thursday, March 9, 2023—at 6:30pm.

Respectfully submitted: Lori Schweer (Church Council Secretary)

Just a Little Humor

If you are not allowed to laugh in heaven, I don't want to go there. Martin Luther



Daily Discipleship

QUESTIONS

I asked God to take away my pain. God said, No. It is not for me to take away, but for you to give it up.

I asked God to make my handicapped child whole. God said, No. Her spirit was whole, her body was only temporary.

I asked God to grant me patience. God said, No. Patience is a by-product of tribulations. It isn't granted, it is earned.

I asked God to give me happiness. God said, No. I give you blessings. Happiness is up to you.

I asked God to spare me pain. God said, No. Suffering draws you apart from worldly cares and brings you closer to me.

I asked God to make my spirit grow. God said, No. You must grow on your own, but I will prune you to make you fruitful.

I asked for all things that I might enjoy life. God said, No. I will give you life so that you may enjoy all things.

I ask God to help me LOVE others, as much as he loves me. God said... Ahhhh, finally you have the idea.



FAITHFULNESS

DAILY DISCIPLESHIP

The Three Trees

Author Unknown

Once upon a mountain top, three little trees stood and told each other stories of what they wanted to become when they grew up.

The first little tree looked up at the stars and said: "I want to hold treasure. I want to be covered with gold and filled with precious stones. I'll be the most beautiful treasure chest in the world!"

The second little tree looked out at the small stream trickling by on its way to the ocean. "I want to be traveling mighty waters and carrying powerful kings. I'll be the strongest ship in the world!"

The third little tree looked down into the valley below where busy men and women worked in a busy town. "I don't want to leave the mountain top at all. I want to grow so tall that when people stop to look at me, they'll raise their eyes to heaven and think of God. I will be the tallest tree in the world."

Years passed. The rain came, the sun shone, and the little trees grew tall. One day three woodcutters climbed the mountain. The first woodcutter looked at the first tree and said, "This tree is beautiful. It is perfect for me." With a swoop of his ax, the first tree fell. "Now I shall be made into a beautiful chest, I shall hold inspirational treasure!" The first tree said.

The second woodcutter looked at the second tree and said, "This tree is strong. It is perfect for me." With a swoop of his ax, the second tree fell. "Now I shall sail mighty waters!" thought the second tree. "I shall be a strong ship for mighty kings!"

The third tree felt her heart sink when the last woodcutter looked her way. She stood straight and tall and pointed bravely to heaven. But the woodcutter never even looked up. "Any kind of tree will do for me," he muttered. With a swoop of his ax, the third tree fell.

The first tree rejoiced when the woodcutter brought her to a carpenter's shop. But the carpenter fashioned the tree into a feedbox for animals. The once beautiful tree was not covered with gold, nor with treasure. She was coated with saw dust and filled with hay for hungry farm animals.

The second tree smiled when the woodcutter took her to a shipyard, but no mighty sailing ship was made that day. Instead the once strong tree was hammered and sawed into a simple fishing boat. She was too small and too weak to sail to an ocean, or even a river. Instead she was taken to a little lake.

The third tree was confused when the woodcutter cut her into strong beams and left her in a lumberyard. "What happened?" The once tall tree wondered. "All I ever wanted was to stay on the mountain top and point to God..."

FAITHFULNESS

DAILY DISCIPLESHIP

Many, many days and night passed. The three trees nearly forgot their dreams. But one night, golden starlight poured over the first tree as a young woman placed her newborn baby in the feedbox. "I wish I could make a cradle for him." her husband whispered.

The mother squeezed his hand and smiled as the starlight shone on the smooth and the sturdy wood. "This manger is beautiful." she said. And suddenly the first tree knew he was holding the greatest treasure in the world.

One evening a tired traveler and his friends crowded into the old fishing boat. The traveler fell asleep as the second tree quietly sailed out into the lake. Soon a thundering and thrashing storm arose. The little tree shuddered. She knew she did not have the strength to carry so many passengers safely through with the wind and the rain.

The tired man awakened. He stood up, stretched out his hand, and said, "Peace." The storm stopped as quickly as it had begun. And suddenly the second tree knew she was carrying the king of heaven and earth.

One Friday morning, the third tree was startled when her beams were yanked from the forgotten woodpile. She flinched as she was carried through an angry jeering crowd. She shuddered when soldiers nailed a man's hands to her. She felt ugly and harsh and cruel. But on Sunday morning, when the sun rose and the earth trembled with joy beneath her, the third tree knew that God's love had changed everything.

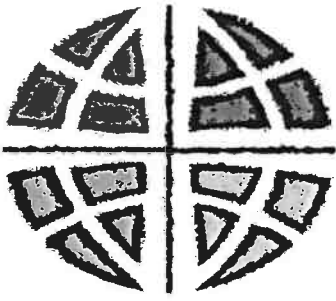
It had made the third tree strong. And every time people thought of the third tree, they would think of God. That was better than being the tallest tree in the world.

The next time you feel down because you didn't get what you want, sit tight and be happy because God is thinking of something better to give you.

THE SHADOW OF THE CROSS

A young man who had been raised as an atheist was training to be an Olympic diver. The only religious influence in his life came from his outspoken Christian friend. The young diver never really paid much attention to his friend's sermons, but he heard them often.

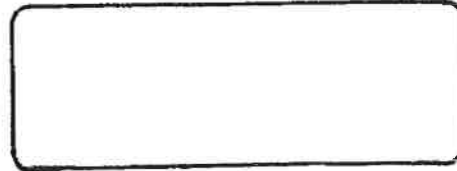
One night the diver went to the indoor pool at the college he attended. The lights were all off, but as the pool had big skylights and the moon was bright, there was plenty of light to practice by. The young man climbed up to the highest diving board and as he turned his back to the pool on the edge of the board and extended his arms out, he saw his shadow on the wall. The shadow of his body in the shape of a cross. Instead of diving, he knelt down and asked God to come into his life. As the young man stood, a maintenance man walked in and turned the lights on. The pool had been drained for repairs.



Gods Work Our Hands

Evangelical Lutheran Church of America

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Bits and Pieces: In other words things to remember ;)

Lenten Suppers will be served on Wednesdays starting at 5:00pm. ALL ARE INVITED.

This is a great time for great food and even better conversation, as we continue to strive for more interaction within our church. Let us break bread together, Amen.

March 12th - Children Sing, Please have your child/ren in their rooms by 9:10am THANK YOU.

2023 LENT @ ST. JOHN'S

March 1 (6:30 pm) Mid Week Holden Service: live among God's faithful people

March 8 (6:30 pm) Mid Week Holden Service: hear the word of God/share in the Lord's supper

March 15 (6:30 pm) Mid Week Holden Service: proclaim the good news through word and deed

March 22 (6:30 pm) Mid Week Holden Service: serve all people, following the example of Jesus

March 29 (6:30 pm) Mid Week Holden Service: strive for justice and peace in all the earth

April 6 (6:30 pm) Maundy Thursday Worship (with First Communion)

April 7 (6:30 pm) Good Friday Tenebrae

April 9 (7:30 am) Early Light Easter Worship

(9:30 am) Festival Easter Celebration

Compassion.. Commitment.. Community.. In Christ!