



The Messenger

February 2023

St. Mark's Lutheran Church

A member of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America



Dear Beloved Children of God,

Grace and peace to you. Time flies very fast. Ash Wednesday is February 22nd, 2023, followed by 40 days of Lent. I am glad to be among you as your spiritual leader and to accompany you on your Lenten journey. During Lent, we meditate on Jesus' fasting for 40 days in the wilderness and how he uses the word of God as a weapon to resist the devil. He also shows us that *"One does not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God"* (Matthew 4:4).

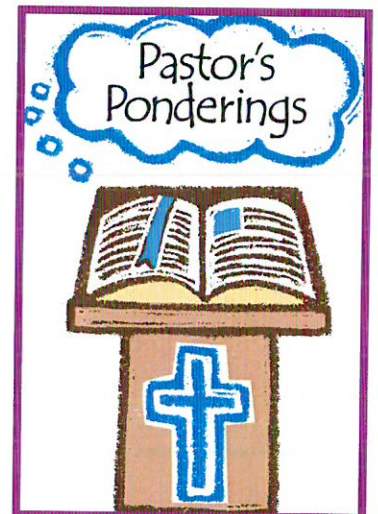
Each of us walks through one's wilderness and faces trials and temptations. The challenge is how to make it through the wilderness. The wilderness can be sickness, financial instability, addiction; you name it. I walked through the wilderness many times. I felt that I would not survive it. Through sleepless nights, I thought that I was walking alone. God shed light on my life in the darkest moment and safely brought me to the green pastures.

The word of God is the foundation of every Christian's life. It teaches us about God's redeeming acts and gives us hope for our future. Every time I walk in the wilderness, I recall how Christ helped me in the past and trust that he will help me in my current wilderness. Sometimes, in the darkest and most lonely moments, when we feel everything is falling apart, we think that Christ abandoned us. Sometimes, out of pain and suffering, we yell at God, asking, "WHERE ARE YOU?" "ARE YOU BLIND OR ON VACATION?" It is OK to question God. God is very merciful and gracious to take your questions. Jesus understands the challenges you go through because he walked in the wilderness. He suffered hunger and thirst. He experienced weaknesses and temptations. But Jesus triumphed over challenges, setting a good example for us. As he triumphed, you can triumph, too. Read your Bible and pray always. As the Apostle Paul teaches, "Do not worry about anything, instead pray about everything" (Philippians 4:6).

Yours in Christ,

Rev. Dr. Niveen Ibrahim Sarras

Rev. Dr. Niveen Ibrahim Sarras



Thank You

On behalf of the entire congregation, we would like to thank Jeff Tharp, Mykayla Tharp and Judy Hellman for their service on the Church

Council. They had a particularly challenging term while we were in transition and we appreciate the extra effort made to keep St. Mark's running smoothly while we waited for our new pastor. Additionally, a special thank you to Judy for serving as secretary and writing thorough and timely minutes each month.

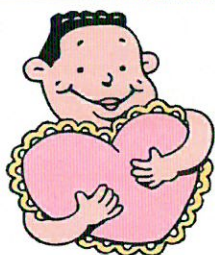
We also welcome Dawn Jones and Jason Blank as our new Council members. Thank you both for stepping up to serve St. Mark's as Council members!



1 John 4:7, NRSV

Our Friend Doug

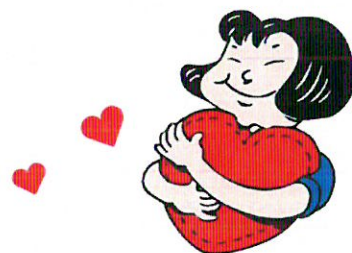
Sharyn Gawlick is one of our faithful volunteers to visit our homebound members and bring them Holy Communion. Here is a picture of St. Mark's member Doug Bedor that Sharyn regularly visits. He recently moved to Wayauwega Health Care, and, as you can see, had some special visitors during the holidays. Many thanks to Sharyn, as well as Phyllis Ziemke and Evie Peterson, who also volunteer for our homebound ministry here at St. Mark's.



Hi everyone!! February has a lot going on for being the shortest month. We have Groundhog Day to see how much longer winter will be. There is Valentine's Day to celebrate everyone we love. And there's President's Day to honor all the presidents we have had. But the one Holiday that we celebrate at St. Mark's is Ash Wednesday, which starts the church Lenten season. During Lent, we follow Jesus through to his death on the Cross and Resurrection. So take the time to reflect on all you have and thank Jesus for giving his life for us. Think of the Bible verse John 3:16:

*"For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son,
that who ever believed in Him will not perish, but have eternal life."*

With God's Blessings,
Gwen Hoehne, Sunday School Superintendent





ST. MARK'S
CHURCH COUNCIL MINUTES
January 19, 2022



The meeting was called to order by President Laurie Olson at 6:34 P.M.

Devotions: Devotions were given by Pastor Niveen. Jenny Case volunteered for devotions in February.

Roll Call: Members present were Laurie Olson, Mary Jane Hartley, Pennie Linna, Judy Hellman, Sherri Denney, Kim Wallmuller, and Jenny Case.

Members Excused: Jeff Tharp and Mikayla Tharp

Approval of Minutes for the December 15th Meeting.

MSC by Sherri Denney/Kim Wallmuller to approve the minutes.

Thank You's: Judy Hellman and Jeff Tharp for serving 6 years on the church council. Mary Jane Hartley for all of her financial work for the church.

Financial Report:

1. Current Budget Balance is \$116,758.00.
2. Building Improvement is \$13,721.70.
3. December giving \$14,562.39; December spending \$17,644.72.

MSC by Sherri Denney/Pennie Linna to accept the report.

Pastor's Report:

- * Christmas was a very wonderful spiritual and social experience in Neenah. I received all the support I needed to prepare for Christmas Eve and Christmas Day services. Despite the brutal cold, we had good attendance on both services.
- * I am scheduled to teach the confirmation class on the last Sundays of January 2023.
- * I attended several meetings to prepare for my installation service on January 7, 2023. I am grateful to all who participated in making this event possible. We had good attendance at the service, and the fellowship was terrific. I am officially your pastor.
- * I met with the worship and music ministry team to discuss Lent and the midweek worship services. I also met with my colleagues to discuss the same topic. We came up with the following ideas:
 1. We will have a community Lutheran Ash Wednesday service at noon and 6:30 PM, which will take place at Saint Paul Lutheran Church. I will preach – the offering will support students at the Palestinian Lutheran University (Dar Al Kalema – house of logos/word. The churches participating are Gloria Dei, Our Savior's, Saint Paul, and our church.
 2. Throughout Lent, services will be part of a round robin with other ELCA churches. We will have the opportunity to hear different pastors share God's Word each Wednesday at 6:30 pm. The round robin excludes Sunday services and Holy Week, when each pastor will be at their home church. Jon Strasman, Amy Engebose, and I will share in a round robin around the theme of "Questions Jesus Asked."

OUR CHURCH'S
**FINANCIAL
HEALTH**

**For the month of
December 2022**

**Given: \$14,562.39
Spent: \$17,644.72**

3. My colleagues and I discussed the Vacation Bible School, which will take place at Saint Mark's on July 30 or 31 - August 3. Our Savior's will provide music.
We also discussed the possibility of having a community worship service at Riverside Park on Labor Day or Memorial Day weekend.

This week, I am working from home because I need to write reports to the church-wide office in Chicago, the synod, and our church.

I will visit my family from January 31st until February 13, 2023. I will be in the office on February 15th. I have prepared the bulletins for three Sundays in February and arranged with Rev. Barb Girod to lead the worship services. I also arranged with pastors Jon Strasman, Amy Engebose, and Tabitha Gallatin to be the contact pastors in case of emergency. Jean will be in touch with me in case she needs help.

MSC by Sherri Denney/Pennie Linna to accept the Pastor's Report.

Ministry Team Reports:

Education Ministry Team – January 14, 2023 ~ Submitted by Gwen Hoehne

PRESENT: Jenny Case, Sherri Denney, Gwen Hoehne
Gwen opened with prayer.

LESSONS - Gwen has set up Sunday School lessons through May 7th. Would like to have Sunday School on April 2nd, Palm Sunday.

CONFIRMATION - Will set a meeting up with Pastor Niveen after her vacation to discuss Confirmation Date. Jenny and Sherri have set up lessons through February 19th.

FELLOWSHIP ON FEBRUARY 12TH - We are doing a chili dump and grilled cheese sandwiches for Fellowship on February 12th (*Note: this was moved to March 12th*) and after the meal playing Bingo. Laurie Olson offered to make up a flyer and we will make sure that the apartments get some flyers to put up. Will sent a letter to Confirmation and Sunday School parents asking for help with this Fellowship.

EASTER - Discussed about making up small bags for Easter Sunday to give out. We will order some Lenten Calendars to give to the students and put out the extras for the congregation to take.

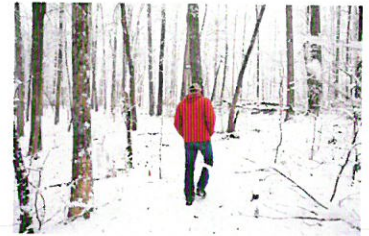
OTHER BUSINESS - Talked about Blankets for Infants. Tie blankets for infants and are given to hospitals for the infants there. We would like to tie these as a Community Outreach. Tying would be after church in the Fellowship Hall and would happen after Easter. No date is set right now.

YOUTH GATHERING - We have two boys interested in going to the Youth Gathering, but we need a male chaperone from our church to go along.

Finance and Stewardship Ministry Team - January 17, 2023 ~ submitted by Jean Memken

The meeting was called to order at 6:33 pm.

Members present: Laurie Olson, Mary Jane Hartley, Pennie Linna, Evie Peterson, and Jean Memken



Pat Wenzel
Tracy Feldman
Brett Gawlick
Richie Sczerzen
Jan Travis
Ellen LaMarche
Mary & Ron Zalewski
Sarah
Doug Bedor
Justyn Denney
Erin Biese
Todd Bagley

Laurie opened the meeting with prayer.

The first item of business was a discussion of the pastoral travel budget. In the past, we have always given a fixed amount each month for the pastor's travel to meetings, hospital and homebound visits, and other pastoral business. Pastor Niveen felt the amount was too high. Laurie suggested we move to paying the pastor a certain amount for each mile she traveled each month for the church. She showed a spreadsheet she had created that would allow Pastor Niveen to easily keep track of her mileage and then submit at the end of each month for reimbursement. Pennie demonstrated an app she uses on her phone that does the same thing. The committee unanimously agreed to adopt this form of reimbursement.

Mary Jane presented the December Financial Report. The end of the year checking account balance was \$172,846.85. Thrivent mutual funds were \$151,846.50. Out TIPS account had an ending balance of \$53,182.17. Building fund was \$18,764.13. December giving was \$4,562.39 and spending was \$17,644.72, leaving a negative balance for the month of \$3,082.33. Laurie explained that despite the negative December balance, we underspent our budget this year by \$35,000. Our numbers are pretty much where they usually are in years past, and we should see some increases in giving, based on stewardship intent cards that were turned in this past year.

Mary Jane reported the Craft Fair proceeds of \$1,050 were given to the animal shelter, the children's hospital, REACH, and the church's "Spruce Up" fund. Laurie reported the basket raffle netted \$1,450 for the Bible campers.

Laurie mentioned that she and Mary Jane will be meeting with property committee co-chairs Bruce Grundman and Jason Blank to talk about the church insurance policy and perhaps changing our carrier. We are anticipating a 10% increase in our current carrier, GuideOne Insurance, so will be looking at Church Mutual as an alternative carrier.

The main item of business was going over each item in the 2023 budget and making sure it was appropriate. Jean discussed the office expenditures and the great increase in the cost of paper. She and Pastor Niveen are discussing ways we can reduce paper usage and have implemented several already. Laurie mentioned her plans to put a sustainability committee together to look at how we can reduce our carbon footprint including paper usage which will save money and be good for the environment.

The committee looked at each budgeted line item in the 2023 budget proposal and made adjustments where needed, including increasing the software budget and decreasing the Synod Assembly budget. There is a possible change in the insurance budget.

Laurie mentioned our other sources of revenue, including all of our designated accounts (scrip, memorials, youth fund, Bible camper fund, etc.) that supplement many of the activities we carry out here at St. Mark's.

We discussed the use of Thrivent Action grants and perhaps holding a seminar to teach members how they can apply for these grants to do projects for the church. Each Thrivent member is eligible to apply for two \$250 grants each year.

In addition, Laurie reported we received donations for many of the groups who use our building and from Amazon Smile. Our members generously gave to Missions of the Month, the Lenten "Sleep in Heavenly Peace" project, and the Lutheran World Relief call for fund to help Ukrainian refugees.

We closed with the Lord's Prayer. Meeting adjourned at 8:00 pm.



Property Ministry Team—January 2, 2023 ~ Submitted by Bruce Grundman

Members Present: Bruce Grundman, Phyllis Ziemke, Chuck Baumgartner, Jason Blank, John Olson, Ginny Schieck, and Jeff Tharp II.

1. Cummings Electric is to install the new light motion switches in the hallway.
2. The door handle on the office door is fixed.
3. Discussed some ideas on how to improve the Food Pantry layout.
4. Discussed getting a possible grant for installing a railing leading to the pulpit.

Worship and Music Ministry Team—December 28, 2022 ~ Submitted by Judy Hellman

The Worship and Music Ministry team met on December 28th at 10:30 am. Members present were Mary Ellen Tracey, Joy Case, Jenny Case, Betty Linna, Ardys Seelow, Lois Hill, Judy Hellman and Pastor Niveen.

Devotions were given by Mary Ellen Tracey. Jenny Case volunteered for Devotions in January.

Christmas decorations will be taken down on Saturday, January 14, 2023 at 9:00 am. Jean Memken will be asked to put this in the church bulletin on January 8th.

Pastor Barb Girod will be our supply pastor when Pastor Niveen is on vacation in January/February. She will plan her own liturgy and choose her own songs.

Our budget for 2023 was discussed and submitted. We all agreed that the cost of the possible organ repair would not be taken from our funds; there are other sources that can be used for this. Some members will check various churches to find out who repairs their organ.

Our goals and mission statement were reviewed for our ministry team. Several changes were made in our goals. These changes will be put into the ministry teams' booklet. Judy Hellman will write the yearly report for our ministry team.

Pastor Niveen had many things to discuss with us. Starting January 1st, setting 3 will be used for our liturgies. We will keep this setting until Easter.

Mid-week Lenten services will be 6:30 pm. There will possibly be a round robin format where the pastor would move to a different church every week. Ash Wednesday is on February 22nd. There will be a service at 10:30 am with a possible evening one. Maundy Thursday service will be at 6:00 pm with a Seder Meal. Good Friday services will be 1:00 pm and at 6:30 pm. The carrying of the cross was also discussed.

The worship and music ministry team will be serving refreshments on Sunday, February. We are calling it "Fat Sunday" and will serve "paczkis." There will only be one service on Easter Sunday at 10:00 am.

Our next meeting will be Monday, January 16th at 10:30 am.

We closed with the Lord's Prayer.

MSC by Sherri Denney/Pennie Linna to accept the Ministry Team reports.

Unfinished Business: None

New Business Items:

1. Racial Equality Resolution:

- Laurie Olson handed out a sheet containing the Resolution's various facts.

MSC by Sherri Denney/Pennie Linna to accept the Resolution as proposed.

2. 2023 Budget:

MSC by Kim Wallmuller/Pennie Linna to accept the budget that was presented.



3. Budget & Annual Meeting Formats:

- Both meetings will be in the Fellowship Hall.
- There will be ballots for the council candidates if needed.
- Laurie Olson presented the agenda for the Annual Meeting.

4. 2023 Missions of the Month:

- MSC by Sherri Denney/Pennie Linna to approve the ballot for the missions.

5. Blankets for Infants:

- Spear-headed by Christian Education Team and will be done on a Sunday that they will select.
- Blankets will be donated to the Neo-Natal unit at Theda Care.

6. Soup & Sandwich Event - Feb. 12th;

- Sponsored by Youth and Parents.
- Money donated that day will go to "Good Gifts".

Adjournment:

MSC by Sherri Denney/Pennie Linna to adjourn at 8:05 pm.

We closed the meeting with the Lord's Prayer.

Submitted by: Judy Hellman, Secretary

Ash Wednesday & Midweek Lenten Services

We will have two community Lutheran Ash Wednesday services, one at noon and one at 6:30 pm, which will take place at Saint Paul Lutheran Church. Rev. Niveen will preach – the offering will support students at the Palestinian Lutheran University (Dar Al Kalema – house of logos/Word). The churches participating are Gloria Dei, Our Savior's, Saint Paul, and St Mark's.

Throughout Lent, our Midweek Lenten Services will be part of a round robin with other ELCA churches in Neenah. We will have the opportunity to hear different pastors share God's Word each Wednesday at 6:30 pm here at St. Mark's. The round robin excludes Sunday services and Holy Week, when each pastor will be at their home church. Pastors Jon Strasman, Amy Engbose, and Niveen Sarras will share in a round robin around the theme of "Questions Jesus Asked." – *Pastor Niveen*



Registration Now Open! Please talk to Pastor Niveen if interested in attending.

Our Baptismal Calling: Salt and Light

Thursday, February 16, 2023 | 10:30 am - 2:30 pm

The Catholic Diocese of Green Bay and the East Central Synod of Wisconsin - (ELCA) invite you to an event centered in baptismal promise and our common calling as people of faith. Through various presentations, those who attend will find inspiration and resources for ministry and a deeper connection to the connecting points of our theology and tools to share as we help all of God's people discern their baptismal purpose. Speakers include The Reverend Anne Edison-Albright, Bishop of the East Central Synod of Wisconsin, and The Rev. David L. Ricken, Bishop of the Diocese of Green Bay.

It's Official! Pastor Niveen is installed as Pastor of St. Mark's!

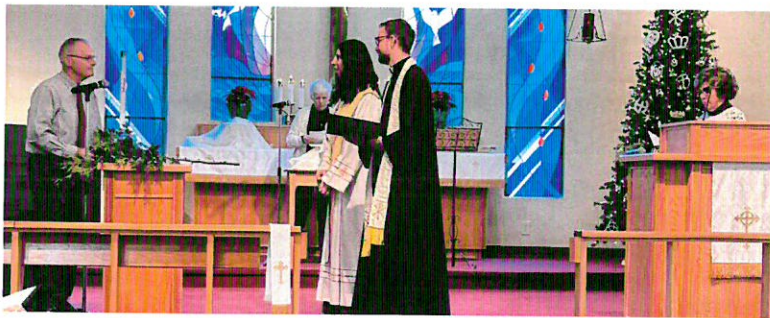
January 7th was a very special day here at St. Mark's as we formally installed Pastor Niveen as our pastor. The worship service was truly a service of celebration God's goodness as He answered our prayers for a new pastor. Many members of St. Mark's were directly involved with the worship service. Our President Laurie Olson greeted everyone at the beginning of the service and then presented Pastor Niveen along with our formal call to her. Dawn Jones and Jason Blank read portions of Scripture, and Pat Westphal, Mary Jane Hartley, and Bruce Grundman read the charges to Pastor Niveen regarding her duties to preach the gospel and distribute the sacraments of baptism and holy communion. Judy Hellman was organist.



There were 14 pastors present to help in the installation of Pastor Niveen. It was great to see many of our supply pastors again – Pastors Jon and Tabitha Gallatin from Gloria Dei, Pastor Jake Czarnik-Neimeyer, and Pastor Jan LaVake all participated in the laying on of hands portion of the installation. Ms. Jill Beverlin was also in attendance. They all provided a lovely reminder of how God cared for us during the transition.

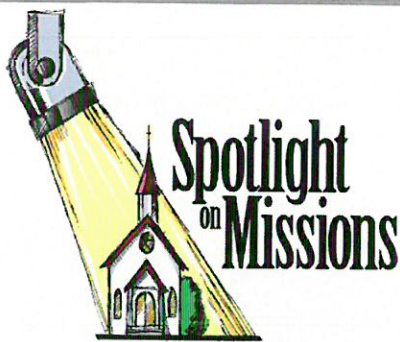
Following the service, a celebratory luncheon was served in the Fellowship Hall. The menu included some traditional middle eastern fare along with some traditional soups, sandwiches, and salads. An array of beautiful cookie bars and a lovely cake were served for dessert. Many thanks to Dawn Jones and Gwen Hoehne for organizing the luncheon and for the many, many volunteers who helped prepare and serve the meal.

Even though Pastor Niveen has been with us since November, it was great to celebrate her acceptance of our call and have her officially installed as our pastor. It is exciting to now start our ministry here at St. Mark's with her as our leader and spiritual guide. May God continue to bless us as work together to carry out the mission of St. Mark's.



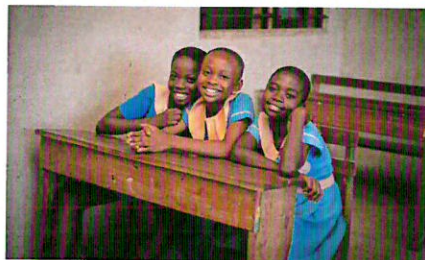
The Annual Meeting is this Sunday, January 29th, immediately following the worship service. The agenda includes voting for new Church Council officers, and delegates to the Synod Assembly, Crossways Camping annual meeting, and the Fox Valley Lutheran Homes Association. We will also be voting on the "Missions of the Month" for this year. Besides the elections, the budget for this year will be discussed and voted on, and we will hear reports from our church leaders and

ministry teams. Following the meeting will be a potluck with the sandwiches and drinks being provided by our Church Council. We need to have a quorum in order to conduct this meeting, so please plan to attend and participate in the governance of our church. Then stick around and enjoy some good food and fellowship with our church family.

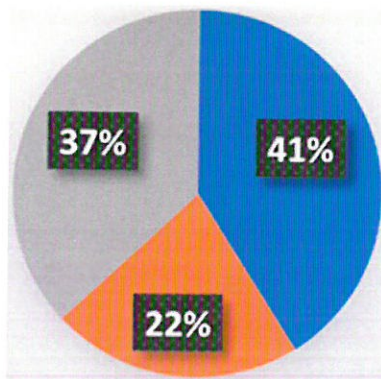


Our Mission of the Month for February is the International Children's Fund. The International Children's Fund (ICF) Is An Organization Like No Other. They channel the Christian concern of partners worldwide into street level impact in African villages and other locations, where logistics often frustrate traditional relief efforts. The secret ingredient to effective relief is a trustworthy network of local, native missionary partners who personally shepherd gifts of food, clothing, medicine, equipment, and funds to the places children need them most. Since 1978, ICF has come to the aid of children in need worldwide. The monetary and material gifts of donors have helped them distribute life-

saving food, clothing, medical clinics, animal husbandry, and medicine across the African continent. They have also supported the construction of orphanages, churches, schools and vocational training centers, drilled water wells to provide safe drinking water, and established agricultural projects. You won't find many organizations like International Children's Fund. They combine four unique elements to efficiently deliver vital aid to those in areas of greatest need.



Where Does Your Offering Go?

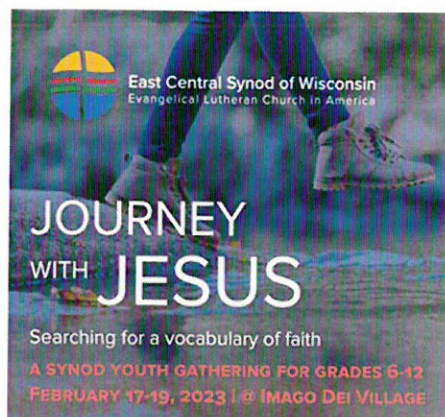


Did you know that ELCA members in more than 8,900 congregations in the United States and the Caribbean give approximately \$1.7 billion in regular offerings annually to support ELCA ministries in their local communities and worldwide? When members give through their congregations, about 5.5% of that money is shared with the local synod, which then shares a portion with the national churchwide office. This unrestricted giving from congregations is called Mission Support. Mission Support gives the ELCA both the foundation and the fuel to do God's work in the world locally, nationally, and internationally. Thank you for your faithful support!

Your Mission Support helps fund the following churchwide ministries:

- 41% of mission support grows the ELCA in the United States.
- 22% of mission support grows the Lutheran church and addresses issues around the world.
- 37% of mission support helps develop current and future leaders in the ELCA.

For additional resources, go to ELCA.org/SOFIA



Synod Youth Gathering

There will be a winter youth gathering at the Imago Dei Camp in Clintonville on February 18-19. Registration deadline is January 31st. It should be a great weekend of fun and renewal for the junior and senior high youth of our Synod. If you would like to participate, contact the church office soon! Crossways Camping also offers a winter camp at Pine Lake camp on February 3-5. We have funds available to handle the registration fees for these camping opportunities. Please talk to Jean in the church office if you are interested!

Our Sunday Servants

Date	Assisting Minister	Reader	Greeters	Ushers	Counters	Acolyte
February 5	Jeff Tharp	LaVerne Arndt	Rose Cermak Pat Westphal	Sherri Denney Dawn Jones	Jeff Tharp Kim Wallmuller Pat Westphal	Braydin Messing
February 12	Bruce Grundman	Jean Memken	Nancy Bricco Karen Jordan	Tom Wenzel Doug Hesser	Jane Arps Ellen LaMarche Emil Leppiaho	Hailie Anderson
February 19	Sherri Denney	Judy Hellman	Betty Linna Penny Linna	Otto & LaVerne Arndt Doug Sebestead	Gwen Hoehne Doug Sebestead Renie Sebestead	Ariana Hopkins
February 26	Jean Memken	Gwen Hoehne	Bruce Grundman Emil Leppiaho	Ginny Schieck Judy Fowler	Bruce Grundman Lois Kemp Judy Olson	Sophia Kersten

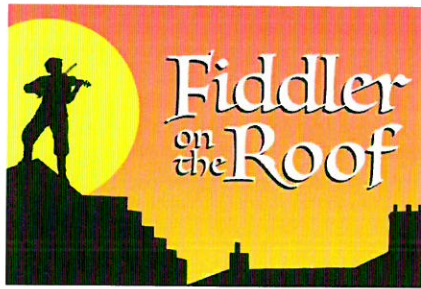
Communion Assistants: 2/5—Gwen Hoehne, Laurie Olson, Bruce Grundman, and Pennie Linna

2/19—Ginny Schieck, Sherri Denney, Pat Westphal, and Phyllis Ziemke

Altar Guild: Gwen Hoehne



Put it on your calendar!



Presented by St. Timothy Lutheran Church

473 Seventh St.

Menasha

Free Will Donations

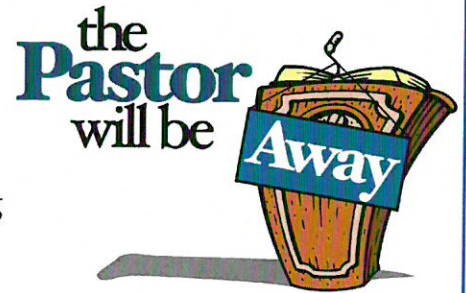
March 10-11 and 17-18, 7:00 pm

March 12 and 19, 4:00 pm

**Our own Jenny Case is in the cast
of this production!**

Pastor's Vacation

We will be saying good-bye to Pastor Niveen for a couple of weeks as she travels back to Palestine to visit her family and friends. She will be gone from January until February 14. Pastor Barb Girod has graciously agreed to lead our worship services while Pastor Niveen is away, and Pastors Jon Strasman, Amy Engebose, and Tabitha Gallatin have agreed to handle any emergency pastoral needs for our members. Have a wonderful reunion with your family, Pastor Niveen! We pray for your safe travels and look forward to hearing all about your trip when you return!



Fat Sunday

You have probably heard of "Fat Tuesday," the day before Ash Wednesday when people around the world indulge in partying and eating all the meaty and fatty delicacies they can muster up before the season of Lent begins. We won't be celebrating "Fat Tuesday" at St. Mark's, but we will have a "Fat Sunday" Fellowship Hour after worship on February 19th, the Sunday before Ash Wednesday. Be sure to stay after church on that date and enjoy some special sweet treats from our Worship and Music Committee.



A Prayer for Racial Justice

Sharyn Gawlick shared this prayer for Racial Justice that was given to her at last year's Synod Assembly.

O God, You have bound us together in a common life. Help us, in the midst of our struggles for justice and truth, to confront one another without hatred or bitterness, and to work together with mutual forbearance and respect; through Jesus Christ our Lord.



The Book of Matthew

I once had a Sunday School teacher who encouraged us to read the book of Matthew in February. There are 28 chapters, and if you read a chapter a day, you can finish it by the end of the month. This past month, I read Matthew as part of my reading assignment for my "History of the New Testament" Lay School class. Here are some interesting facts about this book.

- Much of the book of Matthew is also in the book of Mark. Scholars believe the book of Mark was written first, and then Matthew and Luke soon after, as they are all very similar.
- Scholars think Matthew was probably written between 75-100 AD and the best guess is it was probably written in the city of Antioch which is close to Syrian border. After the temple in Jerusalem was destroyed in 70 AD, many Jews and Jewish Christians settled in this area. Even though the name of the book is Matthew, no one really knows who wrote it.
- Matthew was a book written primarily for Jews. The main theme in the book of Matthew is that Jesus is the fulfillment of the Jewish prophecies. I had never really thought about that, but there are numerous things in Matthew that exhibit a very

Jewish slant to the writing. For example:

1. The first chapter of Matthew is a listing of the generations from Abraham to Jesus, showing that Jesus was indeed a Jew, descended from Abraham. This lineage also ties Jesus to King David, and the promise that the Messiah would come from the House of David is also a Jewish belief.
2. The Israelites were in the wilderness 40 years. Jesus retreated to the wilderness for 40 days.
3. Matthew portrays Jesus as the new Moses. While the children of Israel were in the wilderness, Moses left for a time, received the Law (the 10 commandments) from God, and brought it to them. Jesus was baptized, went into the wilderness for 40 days and nights, and then came back and explained the Law to the Jews and revealed that he was the fulfillment of the Law for all.
4. The book of Matthew describes Jesus calling the 12 disciples as kind of a throwback to the 12 sons of Jacob that became the 12 tribes of Israel.
5. Abraham's covenant with God involved the whole world. God promised Abraham that he would be the father of "many nations." The first people to seek out Jesus in the book of Matthew are the wise men, non-Jews coming from other nations to worship Jesus.
6. When Jesus is tempted three times by the devil in the wilderness, he always answers the temptation with something from the Torah (the first five books of the Old Testament).
7. When Jesus meets with his disciples at the last supper, he creates a new Exodus – a new reason to celebrate this holy meal when he gives his very body and blood to free people from the slavery of sin.
8. There are several instances in Matthew where Jesus quotes Isaiah 53 as he describes himself and his ministry. Isaiah 53 is often called the chapter of the "suffering servant" and describes many things that Jesus endured throughout his ministry and especially at his crucifixion.

If you are looking for a good bible study for the next month, you might consider reading through the book of Matthew. Even if you have read it before, you, too, might see it in a new light as you read the many stories from Jesus' life and the many parables he used to teach the people. You already know it has a very happy ending, so take a look and enjoy reading about our Savior in February.—*Jean Memken*

St. Mark's Lutheran Church

140 S. Green Bay Road

Neenah, WI 54956



February 2023

February 2023

March 2023

Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28				

Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
Jan 29	30	31	Feb 1	2	3	4
			9:00am Food Pantry 6:00pm Stewardship Webinar (Online)		7:00pm AA - Mary Room	10:30am Treble Singers (Music Room)
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
8:30am Confirmation (Confirmation Room) 9:00am Bible Class (Lounge) 10:00am Worship (Sanctuary) 11:00am Fellowship (Fellowship Hall) 1:00pm Baby Shower - Mary Kersten	6:00pm ESTHER (Fellowship Hall) - Jean Memken 6:00pm OA (Mary Room) 6:30pm Property Ministry Team (Library)	7:00pm AA (Mary Room) 7:00pm SAA (Lounge)	9:00am Food Pantry		7:00pm AA - Mary Room	10:30am Treble Singers (Music Room)
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
8:30am Confirmation (Confirmation Room) 9:00am Bible Class (Lounge) 10:00am Worship (Sanctuary) 11:00am Fellowship (Fellowship Hall)	6:30pm Social Ministry Team (Library)	11:30am Community Table (St. Paul's Lutheran Church, Finance/Stewardship (Church Office) 6:30pm 7:00pm AA (Mary Room) 7:00pm SAA (Lounge)	9:00am Food Pantry	1:30pm Lydia Circle 6:30pm Church Council (Mary Room)	7:00pm AA - Mary Room	
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
8:30am Confirmation (Confirmation Room) 9:00am Bible Class (Lounge) 9:00am Sunday School 10:00am Worship (Sanctuary) 11:00am Fellowship 7:00pm Neenah	10:30am Worship and Music (Mary Room)	7:00pm AA (Mary Room) 7:00pm SAA (Lounge)	9:00am Food Pantry 12:00pm Ash Wednesday Worship (St. Paul Lutheran Church, Neenah) 6:30pm Ash Wednesday Worship (St. Paul Lutheran Church,		7:00pm AA - Mary Room	10:30am Treble Singers (Music Room)
26	27	28	Mar 1	2	3	4
8:30am Confirmation (Confirmation Room) 9:00am Bible Class (Lounge) 10:00am Worship (Sanctuary) 11:00am Fellowship (Fellowship Hall)	1:00pm Connections (Fellowship Hall)	7:00pm AA (Mary Room) 7:00pm SAA (Lounge)				