



The Messenger

March 2024

St. Mark's Lutheran Church
A member of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

Dear Children of God gathered as St. Mark's Lutheran Church,

Grace and peace to you in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ!

As we have entered into the sacred season of Lent, I write to you with a heart full of hope and anticipation. Lent is a time of reflection on Jesus Christ's passion and sacrificial love for us. It is a time of renewal and deepening our connection with God. It is also a journey of faith and a period of spiritual growth.



Throughout this season, I encourage each and every one of you to participate actively in our Lenten services and activities. Every Wednesday evening service provides us with a sacred space to pause amidst life's busyness and center our hearts on Christ.

Holy Week is a pivotal moment in our liturgical calendar, and I urge you to join us for the special services leading up to Easter Sunday. From Palm Sunday to Maundy Thursday and Good Friday, let us journey together through the events of Christ's passion, death, and triumphant resurrection.

Moreover, I invite you to explore new ways of connecting with God during this season of Lent. Let us be creative in our spiritual practices and open to the movement of the Holy Spirit in our lives. Whether taking contemplative walks in nature, engaging in charitable work, or spending time in prayer and meditation, let us seek God with open hearts and minds.

Furthermore, I encourage you to explore other avenues for spiritual enrichment, such as watching Christian movies, listening to hymns, or reading devotional literature. Let us use these resources to nourish our souls and draw closer to God in prayer and worship. Christ is closer to you than your skin, open your heart to him.

Additionally, I encourage you to take advantage of our Adult Forum sessions, where we will delve into studying the ELCA World Hunger Lenten Study 2024. Let us engage in thoughtful dialogue, ask questions, and learn from one another as we grow together in discipleship.

In closing, may this season of Lent be a time of profound transformation and renewal for each of us. "And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus" (Philippians 4:7).

Yours in Christ,
Rev. Dr. Niveen Ibrahim Sarra

A Note from our Financial Secretary

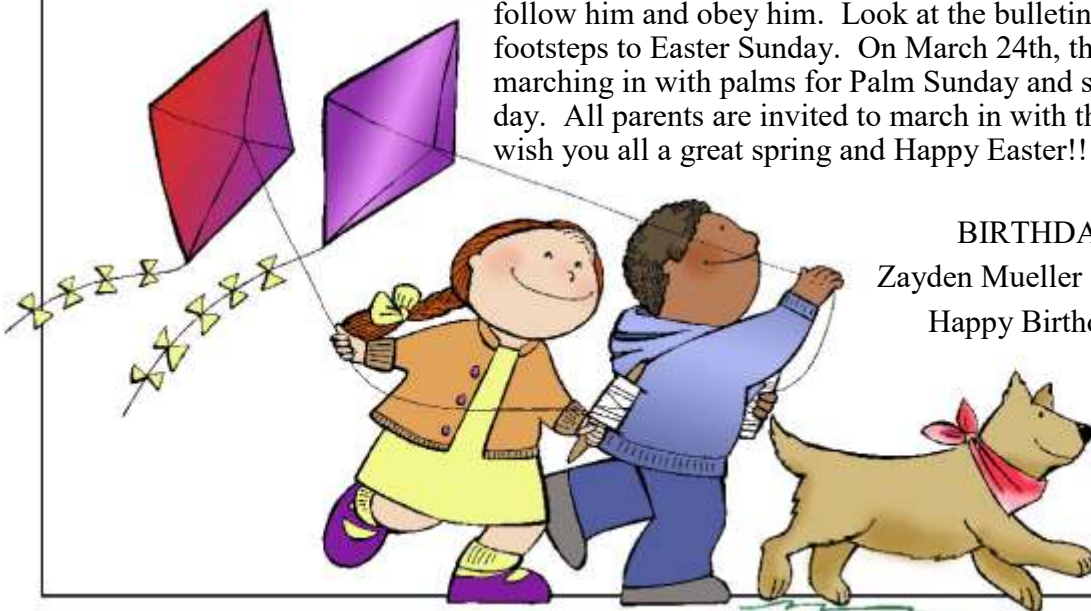
Thank you to those of you who have used your Thrivent Choice Dollars® to share your generosity with St. Mark's Lutheran Church. The period to assign these dollars to a charity that you select comes to an end with the last of March. If you have not used your Choice Dollars yet for one of the many charities available, please consider St. Mark's as a recipient.—*Pat Westphal, Financial Secretary*

Direct your
Thrivent Choice
Dollars
Today!



Moses Message

Hi everyone! We just finished learning about Jonah and how he disobeyed God and God then helped him change his mind by being having him swallowed by a big fish. We learned that God is watching us all the time and that we should follow him and obey him. Look at the bulletin board in the hall and follow the footsteps to Easter Sunday. On March 24th, the Sunday School students will be marching in with palms for Palm Sunday and singing a special song for that day. All parents are invited to march in with the kids and wave the palms. We wish you all a great spring and Happy Easter!!!



BIRTHDAY
Zayden Mueller March 5
Happy Birthday!!!

With God's Blessings,
Gwen Hoehne
Superintendent

More Bingo in March!

Back by popular demand! The Connections Committee is hosting another afternoon of BINGO! Here are the details!

Date: March 18

Time: 1:00 pm—3:00 pm

Where: Fellowship Hall

Who: All ages welcome!
Bring a friend!

What: An afternoon of fun and fellowship! Snacks will be served. Fabulous prizes for the winners!!!



Flowers for Easter

March 31 is Easter Sunday. As we often do, we would like to transform the altar space into a garden. Please consider purchasing a spring plant while the selections are good and keep it at home until March 27-29 during Holy Week. Bring the plant to church on one of those days and we will arrange a display of tulips, daffodils, jonquils, hyacinths, lilies, mums, and whatever you share for Easter Sunday. Won't you help us celebrate Jesus' resurrection with the colors and scents of life?



The Food Pantry seems to vary from week to week. Mostly it is our regular customers, but most weeks we have new people coming in to find out what we are all about and if we could help them. Last week we had a lady come in and got needed goods and when she brought her supplies to her car, her child was very happy with a bottle of juice. It breaks your heart that a bottle of juice is such a wonderful treat. In January, we had 49 families shopping to feed 100 family members. The numbers vary from week to week, but we try to anticipate what to buy to be a help to them. We always need laundry and dish soap, peanut butter and jam and sweetened cereal. Thank you for all your help. We are fulfilling a need in our community.—Karen Jordan

Holy Week at St. Mark's

◇ Sunday, March 24 – Palm Sunday, 10:00 am

Holy Week begins with our Palm Sunday celebration. Come and sing hosanna to Christ our King! There will be a procession of the palms, and everyone will receive a palm to take home to remind them of this holy week. A time of fellowship will follow the service.

◇ Thursday, March 28 – Maundy Thursday, 6:30 pm.

Join us for an Agape Meal (Feast of Love) on Maundy Thursday. We will gather to share food, fellowship, and worship. This special evening will feature a simple meal, foot-washing, and Holy Communion, all woven together within the service. Don't miss this opportunity to come together in unity and love. See you there!

◇ Friday, March 29 – Good Friday

12:00 pm - Ecumenical Good Friday service at Our Savior's Lutheran Church-- 809 S. Commercial St, Neenah, WI 54956. Pastors from the five participating churches will preside.

6:30 pm – St. Mark's Good Friday service of darkness. We hear Jesus' words from the cross and remember his suffering and death.

◇ During Holy Week, the church will be open every morning from 8:30 am to noon if you would like visit our sanctuary and meditate or pray as you remember our suffering Savior. Our Labyrinth will be available for those who would like to walk and meditate on the Jesus' journey to the cross.

◇ Sunday, March 31 – Easter Sunday, 10:00 am

Come to St. Mark's and celebrate our risen Savior with our special Easter worship service and Fellowship.



Agape Meal on Maundy Thursday

On Maundy Thursday, March 28th, St. Mark's will host an Agape Supper-Worship experience. Many of you enjoyed the Seder meal last year, and we will do that again in the future. This is a different kind of meal involving dining/worshipping/communing with our church family. To prepare for this meal, we will need an estimate of how many people are interested in participating. Please watch your Sunday bulletins for sign-up information early in March. The meal will consist of three portions:

Part 1: Soup & Salad

Part 2: Fruit & Sweet Breads

Part 3: Bread & Wine (Communion)



Thank you to our ambitious and generous volunteers who have provided soups, breads, cookies, and other items for our Lenten pre-church suppers. We have enjoyed "Rest with an Unhurried God" as we supped together. Our providers have worked very hard to make this an enjoyable time of companionship. Thank you to Mary Jane Hartley, Lois Hill, Adam and Dara Clifford (and Miriam), Jean Memken, Karen Jordan, Gwen Hoehne, Judy Hellman, John Olson, Pat Westphal, and the Worship & Music Ministry Team.





ST. MARK'S
CHURCH COUNCIL MINUTES
February 15, 2024



Members: Pennie Linna, Jason Blank, Dawn Jones, Laurie Olson, Ryan Blank, Kim Wallmuller, Jenny Case, Emily Gauthier, and Pastor Niveen

Call to Order: Pennie called the meeting to order at 6:30 pm.

Devotions: Pastor Niveen, March Devotions—Jenny Case

Approval of the January 18th Council Minutes. MSC to approve the minutes Jason Blank/Kim Wallmuller.

Thank You: To the Soup makers-John Olson, Linda Rehorst, Pat Westphal, Nancy Rose, Sherri Denny, and Gwen Hoehne

Financial Reports: Laurie reviewed the January 2024 financials: Total Associated Bank checking has a balance of \$176,463.13 which includes \$60,901.21 allocated to designated accounts and \$115,561.92 for current operating. Additionally, \$156,462.58 in the Thrivent money market and \$1,039.52 in Thrivent TIPS account and \$54,74.98 in the ELCA Mission Investment Fund. January giving was \$12,593.85 and expenses were \$8,149.02 with a balance of \$4,444.83. It was noted that the invoice for Pastor's compensation for January had not yet arrived from synod. Additionally, the first quarter insurance and office software subscriptions were paid in January. **MSC to accept financials as reported by Sherri Denney/Kim Wallmuller.**

MSC to accept the Financial Report Dawn Jones/Jason Blank.

Pastor's Report:

Dear Church Council,

Grace and peace to you.

As we approach the season of Lent, I wanted to provide you with an update on some recent happenings and preparations within our church.

Joint Ash Wednesday and Ecumenical Good Friday Services:

This year, in collaboration with my colleagues, we organized a joint Ash Wednesday service, bringing together the congregations of ELCA in Neenah. Additionally, we are planning an *ecumenical* Good Friday service to deepen our spiritual journey together during this holy season.

Round Robin Bulletins:

I have finished composing the bulletins for all the midweek Round Robin services, including Maundy Thursday. This year, Jean Memken will join the Round Robin, leading worship services at Saint Paul, Our Savior's, and our church, thereby enhancing our communal worship journey.

Pastoral Care Packages:

I have prepared packages to send to our homebound parishioners who may be unable to attend the Ash Wednesday service. These packages include a pastoral letter, a condensed version of the Ash Wednesday service, a cotton swab dipped in olive oil and ashes, and Holy Communion, ensuring that all members of our church feel connected and supported during this time.

Confirmation Class Leadership:

During Lent, except for Holy Week, the confirmation class students will take the lead in our worship services on Sundays. I encourage you to continue to show them your support as they step into this role.

Pre-Marriage Counseling:

I have been meeting regularly with Dom and Emily for pre-marriage counseling sessions, guiding them as they prepare for this significant milestone in their lives. The wedding will be in April.



Collaboration with First Presbyterian Church:

I had a fruitful discussion with Rev. Kim from First Presbyterian Church about ways in which our congregations can work together to foster spiritual growth and strengthen our bond as a community of faith.

Grant for Our Food Pantry:

I am pleased to report that our Appleton Conference has granted our food pantry an \$850 grant during its annual meeting. This support will greatly benefit those in need within our community.

Personal Update:

I wanted to share with you that my brother Odeh is facing a tough illness, and this has prompted me to reflect on the importance of support and care within our church. I have discussed this matter with our Bishop, and while I will not be taking a leave of absence, I will need to slow down for at least ten days to support my family. Your prayers for my brother and my family are deeply appreciated during this time.

As we enter into the season of Lent, let us journey together in faith, supporting one another and deepening our commitment to God and each other.

“Grace be with you all” (1 Timothy 6:21).

Yours in Christ,

Rev. Dr. Niveen Ibrahim Sarras, Ph.D

MSC Laurie Olson/Emily Gauthier to accept the Pastor’s report.

Ministry Team Reports

Property Ministry Team—January 16, 2024 ~ Submitted by Jason Blank

Present: Bruce Grundman, John Olson, Ginny Schieck, and Jason Blank

- Fixed the bottom seal on the south hall door.
- We replaced the emergency exit signs in the hallway.
- We need to consider getting quotes for getting the parking lot fixed in 2025. The parking lot has been patched several times. it is now more quickly deteriorating. We need more information to determine the needs of the parking lot.
- We need to consider getting the lawn rolled in the spring.
- Quote for lighting the sign on the north side of the building has been received and accepted.

Worship and Music Ministry Team—January 15, 2024 ~ Submitted by Judy Hellman

The Worship and Music Ministry team met on Tuesday, January 15th at 1:00 pm. People attending were Joy and Jenny Case, Pat Westphal, Lois Hill, Mary Jane Hartley, Betty Linna, Pastor Niveen, Jean Memken, and Judy Hellman.

Devotions were given by Pat Westphal. Jenny Case volunteered for devotions in February.

Pastor Niveen talked about the services for Lent. There will be an ecumenical service on Ash Wednesday at Gloria Dei at 10:00 am. At 6:30 pm, we will have our own service at St. Mark’s with the imposition of ashes and Holy Communion. There will be a round robin format for mid-week Lenten services. The theme for these services is “Busy: Reconnecting with an Unhurried God.” Starting February 14th, we will have “soup and bread” suppers at 5:30 pm. There will be a sign-up sheet for the suppers.

On Maundy Thursday, we will have an “Agape Meal” instead of the Seder Meal this year. This will be held in the Fellowship Hall. Lois Hill and Pat Westphal will co-chair this meal.



Pat Wenzel
Ellen LaMarche
Sarah L.
Richie Sczerzen
Walt Ziemke
Paul Girod
Jordan
Sherri Denney’s
neighbor, Kathy
and mom, Sara Forrest
Sherry Winter
Tom & Ellen Krempien
Donna Joachim
Pastor Niveen’s brother,
Odeh Sarras
Serenity and Leighton Joachim

On Good Friday, March 29th, there will be an Ecumenical service at 12:00 noon at Our Savior's Lutheran Church. At 6:30 pm, we will have our own service at St. Mark's.

Jean Memken will check on possibly ordering the palms and Easter lilies from Pick 'n Save grocery store.

Pat Westphal gave an update on the paraments. The green and purple sets are on order. The red set will be ordered as soon as we have enough funds. She will also check to see what can be done with the old paraments.

Joy Case recommended that we need more ushers for Christmas and Easter. The song, "Silent Night" should not start until all the candles are lit. Our next meeting will be February 26th at 10:30 am.

We closed with the Lord's Prayer.

Connections Ministry Team—January 15, 2024 ~ Submitted by Mary Jane Hartley

Attendees: Judy Hellman, Linda Anderson, Joy Case, Jenny Case, Sharyn Gawlick, Jane Arps, May Jane Hartley, Sandy Mathenia, and Betty Linna

Devotions/Prayer: Jane Arps will do a prayer for February

Agenda:

- February Fellowship taken care of.
- Movie date at another time.
- BINGO game day for all ages: Will be February 19, from 1:00-3:00 pm in the Fellowship Hall—Snacks and prizes will be provided Sign-up sheet will be in the narthex to get an idea of how many will come.
- Name and address and envelope will be provided for cards to homebound members.
- Name tag Sunday will be February 18, 2024.

New Business:

- What to do with extra money in our Craft Fair account.
- Decorations in Fellowship Hall—Checking out tablecloths to see what is needed and also checking on craft supplies in the basement—more to come.
- Talk about connecting more with community by information being listed in local publications.
- Planning something with children and men in congregation.

Information was given to Jean for the February newsletter about Ash Wednesday, Maundy Thursday and Good Friday services at 10:00 am at Linwood Community. Also listed was information on the following programs: Elder Care, Keeping our Minds Sharp, Fall Prevention, and Funeral Planning. Programs are on Thursdays at 2:00 pm.

Sending Cards to the "People we do not see often"

- This will happen once a month.
- There will be three "Thinking of You" cards on a table in the narthex area.
- We will ask members to sign and add a thought.
- Envelopes will have name and address included.
- Committee members will pick up cards and mail.
- Jenny made "Thinking of You" cards.

Information about Connections for the Committee description booklet that we discussed was given to Jean.

What things do you see the Connection Ministry could do better or what are some new ideas for programming?

Remember, we meet on the 4th Monday of the month at 1:00 pm.

Christian Education Ministry Team~ Submitted by Gwen Hoehne

The Christian Education Ministry Team did not meet this month.

Social Ministry Team—January 15, 2024 ~ Submitted by Gwen Hoehne

Chairperson: Karen Jordan

Present: Jane Arps, Pat Thompson, Kim Wallmuller, Phyllis Ziemke, and Gwen Hoehne

Pat Thompson opened with devotions.



1) Budget will stay at \$800.00.

2) Numbers for the Food Pantry were up last week.
Closed with the Lord's Prayer.

Next Meeting Monday, March 11, 2024 at 6:30 pm.

With God's Blessings,
Gwen Hoehne

PLEASE note the time changed from 6:00 to 6:30 pm.

MSC to accept Ministry team reports Jason Blank/Kim Wallmuller.

Unfinished Business:

Live Streaming Update: Our mixer will be switched out sometime in February. At that time, our technician will again troubleshoot with us in getting our camera in ceiling and laptop in sacristy streaming system back running. Thank you to Pennie for all the time she puts into recording and posting services using her personal device.

National Youth Gathering Update: \$3,700 in the account after airfare and registration down payment have been paid. After the soup fundraiser there is enough to cover the remaining expenses of the hotel, remainder of registration and food. Laurie has been attending seminars to keep us informed on the process and is sharing with attendees. Pastor is working on coordinating orientation with other Neenah ELCA churches.

New Business Items:

Election of officers: MSC to continue the current officers: Penny Linna-President, Jason Blank-Vice President and Dawn Jones-Secretary by Kim Wallmuller/Ryan Blank.

Ministry Team Assignments: Teams were summarized for our new Council member. Volunteers for council representatives were confirmed.

Christian Education: Jenny Case, Connections: Jenny Case, Endowment: Dawn Jones, Finance/Stewardship: Pennie Linna, Memorial: Laurie Olson, Partnership: Dawn Jones, Property: Jason Blank, Racial Equity: Emily Gauthier, Social Ministry: Kim Wallmuller, Worship/Music: Jenny Case, Youth Ministry: Ryan Blank & Laurie Olson.

Considerations of request by the City of Neenah to use St Mark's as a polling site; Laurie had a meeting with the City Clerk to ask questions on their request and needs. The City Clerk visited our church and feels it is an excellent space for elections. The synod does recognize this as a way of participating in the community. The City would be willing to contribute financially for the use of St. Mark's. In 2024 there are scheduled elections in April, August, and November. We have the option to start in August. The city will be asked to provide certificate of insurance with St. Mark's listed as additional insured. **MSC to inform the City of Neenah of our approval to offer our church as an election site beginning with the August 2024 election Emily Gauthier/Pastor Niveen. MSC to request a \$500.00 payment to cover building expenses for each occurrence Dawn Jones/Jason Blank.**

Lenten offering designation: A discussion on whether we are designating the Lenten offerings to an agency or cause. It was decided that this year's offerings will be deposited as current offerings.

Installation of Officers and Ministry team Chairs: February 25th

Communication Audit: Laurie shared a communication audit, which was in this week's ECSW newsletter. This is a good opportunity to look at our communications. Pennie, Dawn and Pastor offered to assist with the audit.

Adjourn: MSC to adjourn at 8:00 pm Ryan Blank/Kim Wallmuller.

We closed Lord's Prayer at 8:00 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,
Dawn Jones, Secretary





Dar-Al-Kalimah University Gaza Relief Efforts



Supporting Gaza's relief efforts is crucial as 70% of families displaced by war face dire circumstances, including homelessness, unemployment, and famine. By partnering with Dar Al-Kalimah Lutheran University in Bethlehem, we can efficiently provide essential resources like shelter, food, and medical care to those in need. Our support demonstrates solidarity, promotes peace, and upholds our shared humanity in times of crisis.



On the right: Dar Al-Kalima Lutheran University in Bethlehem and its Gaza Training Center inspire hope and facilitate healing for children through the arts.



An Invitation to the Gospel Musical Presentations of "Bow the Knee: A Dramatic Easter Musical"

Mark your calendars for the following presentations at two different locations:

1. **St. Stephens United Church of Christ, in Merrill**
 - **Dates and Times:** Saturday, March 16 at 7:00 pm
Sunday, March 17 at 2:30 pm.
 - **Address:** 903 E 2nd St, Merrill, WI 54452
2. **Zion Lutheran Church, Town of Easton, in Aniwa**
 - **Dates and Times:** Saturday, March 23 at 7:00 pm
Sunday, March 24 at 2:30
 - **Address:** 238145 Star Road, Aniwa, WI 54408.



Happy Birthday, Emma!



Our very own Emma Anderson celebrated her 97th birthday last month, and she had a surprise party at the Senior Center.

Happy Birthday Emma!

The Sound of Music at St. Timothy's

Be sure to attend St. Timothy's production of "The Sound of Music" at 473 7th St. in Menasha. Here are the dates and times:

Friday, March 1—7:00 pm
Saturday, March 2—7:00 pm
Sunday, March 3—2:00 pm
Friday, March 8—7:00 pm

Freewill offering collected.



Our Sunday Servants

Date	Assisting Minister	Reader	Greeters	Ushers	Counters	Acolyte
March 3	Confirmand	Confirmand	Emil Leppiaho Jeff Tharp	Evie Peterson Lois Kemp	Jeff Tharp Kim Wallmuller Fern Fuhrmann	Braydin Messing
March 6 Lenten Service				Linda Anderson Nancy Maslow		Usher
March 10	Confirmand	Confirmand	Emily Gauthier Bruce Grundman	Sherri Denney Jeff Tharp	Jane Arps Ellen LaMarche Emil Leppiaho Pat Westphal	Sophia Kersten
March 13 Lenten Service				Jean Memken		Usher
March 17	Confirmand	Confirmand	Joy Case Jenny Case	The Blank Family	Gwen Hoehne Doug Sebestead Renie Sebestead	J.T. Rose
March 20 Lenten Service				Bruce Grundman Doug Sebestead		Usher
March 24 Palm Sunday	Sherri Denney	Tara Dieck	Chuck Baumgartner Rose Cermak	Emil Leppiaho Phyllis Ziemke	Bruce Grundman Lois Kemp Judy Olson Linda Anderson	Lily Anderson
March 28 Maundy Thursday			Linda Anderson Phyllis Ziemke			
March 29 Good Friday		Dom Christofilis Emily Gauthier		Pennie Linna Betty Linna		Usher
March 31 Easter Sunday	Jean Memken	Bruce Grundman	Ginny Schieck Judy Fowler	LaVerne Arndt John & Laurie Olson	Dom Christofilis Dawn Jones Judie Hilliker	Leland Tharp

Communion Assistants:

March 3—Confirmands

March 17—Confirmands

March 31—Bruce Grundman, Jean Memken, Pat Westphal, Ginny Schieck, and Chuck Baumgartner

Altar Guild: Ginny Schieck and Dominic Christofilis

What do you want me to do for you?

Do you remember the first time you knew you were a Christian? The first time you thought to yourself, “Jesus Christ died for me. Because of him, I’m going to heaven.” The first time your faith actually came alive in your life, and you felt the Holy Spirit at work in you?

For those who have grown up in a Christian home, it might be hard to pinpoint that first realization that Christ’s sacrifice on the cross was for them. Baptism is when the seed of faith is planted in a believer’s heart, but most of us probably don’t remember that day. Maybe confirmation was when the Holy Spirit really made its presence known in your life and showed you the importance of Jesus’ sacrifice for our eternal salvation.

In my daily Bible reading, I came across two instances that might have been awakening moments for the individuals involved. In Mark’s Gospel, Jesus spells out in plain language his upcoming death and rising to his disciples. He said, *“We are going up to Jerusalem, and the Son of Man will be delivered over to the chief priests and the teachers of the law. They will condemn him to death and will hand him over to the Gentiles, who will mock him and spit on him, flog him, and kill him. Three days later, he will rise.”* (Mark 10:33-34). That was a pretty direct message to them of what was about to happen. It should have been a moment of realization about who Jesus really was.

For two of the disciples, James and his brother John, it seems to have triggered an awakening of their own eventual mortality, and they decided to take action to assure their future. They approached Jesus who asked them: *“What do you want me to do for you?”*

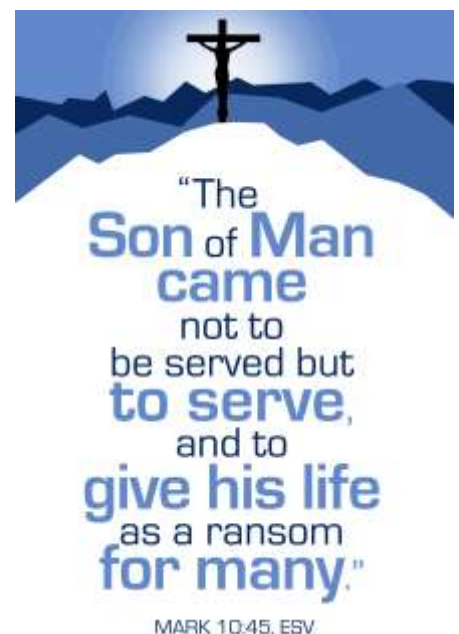
And what did they ask for? Not much. Just a couple of favored spots on Jesus’ right and left when he reigned in his heavenly glory. James and John were with Jesus at his transfiguration. No doubt that was on their minds when they came to Jesus with this request. They saw Jesus in his glory with Moses on one side and Elijah on the other, and that must have looked pretty good to them. But Jesus immediately squelched their ambitions for those coveted spots. He explained that was not up to him. *“These places belong to those for whom they have been prepared.”* (vs. 40)

And then a little later, Jesus encounters blind Bartimaeus, shouting at him as he and his disciples make their way to Jericho. Once again, Jesus asks the same question, *“What do you want me to do for you?”* and what does Bartimaeus say? *“Rabbi, I want to see.”*

I want to see – a cry for mercy. To that, Jesus responded by giving Bartimaeus his sight and reminding him that **it was his faith that healed him**. Bartimaeus’ eyes were opened, and he saw Jesus. I’m pretty sure this was his awakening moment as he became a follower of Christ.

What a contrast! Disciples who were with Jesus every day, who experienced his transfiguration, and yet didn’t understand who he was and why he had come versus a blind beggar with so much faith that Jesus saved him just because he called on him to do so.

So what would you say if Jesus asked you, *“What do you want me to do for you?”* As we approach Holy Week, that might be a good thing to ponder. I pray your answer will be one of a repentant sinner seeking forgiveness. Jesus always responds to our cries for mercy. So let’s take a cue from Bartimaeus. Let’s ask God for sight, to open our eyes and see Jesus. Let’s ask the Holy Spirit to awaken or reawaken our faith so that we might look to the cross and really see what Jesus’ death and resurrection means in our lives. And then, with joyful resurrected hearts, let’s live that faith each day, knowing that God will provide all that we could every want as we look forward to our heavenly home. A most blessed Easter to all of you! – Jean Memken



Curious. Courageous. Christ Together.

Your gifts made a difference in 2023.

Our impact report for 2023 shares the story of what we were able to accomplish together in ministry this past year. Thank you for the gifts you have shared and for being an integral part of our synod life together.



Thanks be to God,
+ to you!

By the Numbers

≈60,000

Congregation
Members

97

Pastors and
Deacons

138

Retired Pastors
and Deacons

18

Seminarians

14

Installations or
New Beginnings

4

Ordinations

114

Congregations

Ministry Highlights

Ministry through Events | Synod Assembly, Theological Conference, Ad+Ministers Conference, Retired Rostered Gathering, Journey with Jesus - Synod Youth Gathering, Land Acknowledgement Panel

Ministry through Groups | Synod Council, Endowment, Candidacy, Racial Equity, Synod Youth, Hunger, Lay School, Women of the ELCA, Conference Gatherings, Synod Authorized Ministers

Ministry through Synod Staff | Misconduct Training, Mission/Vision/Values work, Associate to the Bishop Gathering, Conference of Bishops, Region 5, ELCA Rostered Ministers Gathering, Crossways Summer Staff Commissioning, Transition Ministry, Holy Conversations, New Starts, Mission Table

2

Synod Staff
Sabbaticals

56

Sermons
Preached

172

In Person Visits
at Congregations

162

Online Meetings
or Visits with groups

114

Events
Attended

Funding summary

\$1,186,115

Your mission
support gifts

45%

Shared with
ELCA

5%

Shared with
Seminaries

\$16,120

Shared with
Ministry Partners



To make a gift to the ministry
of the East Central Synod of
Wisconsin, visit www.ecsw.org.



East Central Synod of Wisconsin
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

www.ecsw.org | 920.734.5381 | ecsw@ecsw.org | PO Box 655 Appleton, WI 54912

Some Fun Activities for our Youth—Pick up flyers for each in the Narthex!

SYNOD YOUTH EVENT
St. Mark's Lutheran Church



SATURDAY, APRIL 20 * NOON - 3 PM
BOWLING AT REV'S

275 S. Washburn St., Oshkosh

OPEN TO MIDDLE & HIGH SCHOOLERS

Adults chaperones will be attending. Once we know the number attending from St. Mark's, car pooling will be discussed/arranged.

Cost: \$13.99 per person. (Cost to St. Mark's youth will be covered by the Youth Activities fund.) Includes bowling 2 games, shoes and lunch. Lunch will be a pitcher of soda and 16" pizza per 4 people.

Interested? Complete & turn in registration form to church office by April 10th. Limited spaces available - don't wait till the last minute to register.



East Central Synod of Wisconsin
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

Area ELCA Church Sponsored
6-12th Grade



SPRING
Lock-In

Friday, April 12
6PM - 7 AM
FREE

Our Savior's Lutheran Church

800 S. Commercial St., Neenah

GAMES • FUN • PRAISE

Packing List: Sleeping Bag, Pillow, Hoodie/Cardigan, T-shirt, Pajamas, Snack to Share.

To sign up, use this Google.doc:
<https://forms.gle/nmYCZWskByu2s83o6>

St. Mark's Lutheran Church

140 S. Green Bay Road

Neenah, WI 54956

