



# The Messenger

March 2025

St. Mark's Lutheran Church



## Walking Through the Wilderness: A Lenten Reflection

Dear Beloved Children of God,

Grace and peace to you.

Time flies so quickly. Ash Wednesday is upon us—March 5, 2025—ushering in the season of Lent and its 40 days of reflection and preparation. I am grateful to be among you as your spiritual leader and to accompany you on your Lenten journey.

During Lent, we meditate on Jesus' time in the wilderness, where He fasted for 40 days and resisted the devil's temptations using the Word of God as His weapon. In this profound moment, Jesus reminds us, *"One does not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God"* (Matthew 4:4).

Each of us faces our own wilderness—a place of testing, struggle, and sometimes, deep isolation. The wilderness can take many forms: sickness, financial hardship, addiction, grief—you name it. I, too, have walked through the wilderness many times. There were moments when I thought I would not survive, moments filled with sleepless nights where I felt utterly alone. Yet, in the darkest corners of my life, God's light broke through, guiding me to green pastures and restoring my soul.

Sometimes, in our darkest and most lonely moments, when life feels like it is unraveling, we may wonder if Christ has abandoned us. In our pain, we may cry out, "WHERE ARE YOU, GOD? ARE YOU BLIND OR ON VACATION?" It is okay to ask these questions. Our God is merciful and gracious, willing to hear our cries, no matter how raw or unfiltered.

The Word of God serves as the foundation of our lives as Christians. It speaks to us about God's redeeming acts and offers hope for our future. In my own wilderness moments, I often recall how Christ has helped me in the past, trusting that He will guide me through my current trials. The words of the beloved hymn, "O God, Our Help in Ages Past", come to mind:

*O God, our help in ages past,  
Our hope for years to come,  
Our shelter from the stormy blast,  
And our eternal home.*

Jesus understands the wilderness because He has been there. He knew hunger, thirst, weakness, and temptation. Yet, He triumphed, setting an example for us. And because He triumphed, we, too, can overcome the challenges we face.

*(Continued on page 2)*



## Walking Through the Wilderness: A Lenten Reflection

(Continued from page 1)

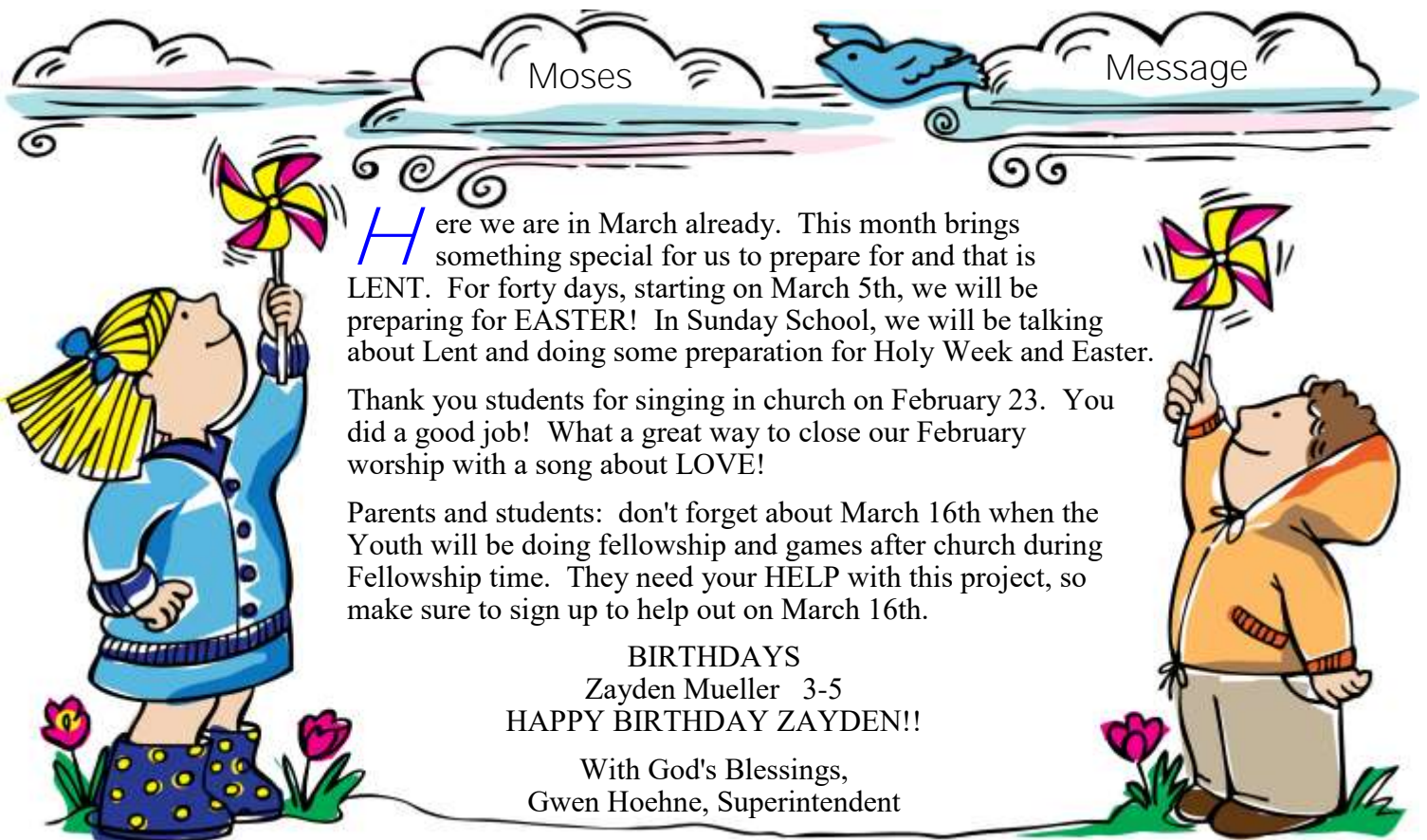
In this Lenten season, I encourage you to strengthen your connection with God. Read your Bible, spend time in prayer, and remember the words of the Apostle Paul: *"Do not worry about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God"* (Philippians 4:6).

Most importantly, hold on to your faith and come to church for spiritual support. Our Lord often speaks to us through the people around us. Your church community is here to walk with you through your wilderness, offering prayer, encouragement, and love.

As we journey through Lent together, may we grow stronger in faith, deepen our trust in God's Word, and emerge from the wilderness renewed in hope and spirit.

Blessings to you this Lenten season.

Yours in Christ,  
Rev. Dr. Niveen Ibrahim Sarras



Here we are in March already. This month brings something special for us to prepare for and that is LENT. For forty days, starting on March 5th, we will be preparing for EASTER! In Sunday School, we will be talking about Lent and doing some preparation for Holy Week and Easter.

Thank you students for singing in church on February 23. You did a good job! What a great way to close our February worship with a song about LOVE!

Parents and students: don't forget about March 16th when the Youth will be doing fellowship and games after church during Fellowship time. They need your HELP with this project, so make sure to sign up to help out on March 16th.

### BIRTHDAYS

Zayden Mueller 3-5

HAPPY BIRTHDAY ZAYDEN!!

With God's Blessings,  
Gwen Hoehne, Superintendent



The Food Pantry ebbs and flows, but we really never know what makes the difference. Although it seems the weather does make a big difference. When it's bitter cold, the people who come are definitely in need. In January we had 77 people shopping to feed 212 people. Almost every family is looking for a box of cereal, **so we are in need of cereal again**---either sweetened or unsweetened. We also need canned pasta meals and canned fruit. Those items are in great demand every week. We appreciate all your help and our clients do also. Thanks.—Karen Jordan

# Lenten and Holy Week Worship Opportunities at St. Mark's



Below is a schedule for all the services at St. Mark's during Lent and Holy week.

## Ash Wednesday

**Wednesday, March 5, 2025—On Ash Wednesday, two services are scheduled at St. Mark's.** The first service will commence at 12:00 pm, where Neenah ELCA pastors will lead the service and administer ashes and Holy Communion. Subsequently, the second service will be held at 6:30 pm, also with the imposition of ashes and Holy Communion.

## Midweek Lenten Services—Wednesday evening at 6:30 pm

<b>March 12, 2025</b>	The Hand Of The Lord Who Creates And Saves	Rev. Amy Engebose
<b>March 19, 2025</b>	The Hand Of The Lord Who Casts Out Demons	Rev. Dr. Niveen Sarras
<b>March 26, 2025</b>	The Hand Of The Lord Who Heals The Sick	Dr. Jean Memken
<b>April 2, 2025</b>	The Hand Of The Lord Who Raises The Dead	Rev. Dara Clifford
<b>April 9, 2025</b>	The Hand Of The Lord Who Holds All Things	Rev. Dr. Niveen Sarras

A simple of meal with be served before each service from 5:00—6:15 pm. Free will donation appreciated.

## Thursday, April 17, 2025—Maundy Thursday—Seder Meal

The Seder is a meaningful tradition that connects us to the foundations of our faith, reminding us of God's deliverance and the gift of new life through Christ. As we share this meal, we will reflect on the story of the Exodus and how Jesus redefined this sacred meal on the night of His betrayal. The service will also include the celebration of Holy Communion and the washing of feet.

To help us prepare appropriately, please remember to RSVP. Watch for the sign-up sheet in the narthex and kindly add your name so we can plan the meal based on the number of participants.

## Friday, April 18, 2025—Good Friday

Ecumenical Good Friday Service at Gloria Dei Lutheran Church at 12:00 pm which includes a Good Friday Cantata.  
Good Friday Service of Darkness at St. Mark's at 6:30 pm.





## St. Mark's Food Pantry

The Mission of the Month for March is our very own Food Pantry. Each Wednesday, from 9:00-11:00 am, our food pantry is open to anyone in need of food in this community. Because of rising food costs and uncertainty of support for food purchases from federal agencies (SNAP and WIC), our pantry is busier than ever. Our pantry relies more and more on your generosity so they can feed more and more people who are food insecure. The food pantry volunteers are thankful for those members who regularly contribute food and paper items to the pantry, but they continue to purchase more food each week to keep the pantry stocked and ready for the clients each Wednesday, where new faces are seen almost every week. Therefore, they need our continued monetary support and so March has been designated FOOD PANTRY month at St. Mark's! To give to this much needed ministry of our church, denote "Mission of the Month" on your offering envelope or your Vanco contribution. Thank you for any help you can give.



*This month, we begin a new regular feature in the newsletter called "Did You Know?" that will report on various things that happen around here at St. Mark's and/or items about our members that you might find interesting. This first edition is all about the Fellowship Hour Duck. If you have an item you would like to submit to "Did you know?" or you have something you would like to know about St. Mark's that we could answer in this column, please give it to Jean in the church office.*

Did you know that the fellowship hour Duck container has been a part of St. Mark's for nearly twenty years, going back to when a mother duck laid eggs in the church landscaping, and we kept watch over the eggs, mother and ducklings (The laying of eggs in the landscaping has occurred many times since.) The Duck is a container that the church uses to collect donations from those attending fellowship. It is optional to contribute funds, but much appreciated. Where do the funds collected go? Fellowship hosts can choose to be reimbursed from the funds, for the supplies/treats they purchased in hosting. The remaining funds are deposited into a designated Hospitality account and used to keep the kitchen supplied with paper products, plastic utensils, coffee, tea, cakes for special occasions, etc.—by Laurie Olson



## New Bible Study Opportunities!

**Beginning March 9**, our **Sunday morning Adult Forum** will focus on the Lenten Theme for this year, "*The Hand of the Lord.*" Come and share in an interesting discussion of some timely Lenten truths that are a part of our Midweek services. Lots of scripture reading and analysis! Join us!

**Our Thursday afternoon Bible Study** has just started looking at the book of Revelation. Join us for a fascinating look at one of the most misunderstood books of the Bible. We meet every Thursday at 1:30 pm in the Lounge.



## Our Sunday Servants

Date	Assisting Minister	Reader	Greeters	Ushers	Counters	Acolyte
March 2	Sherri Denney		Pat Westphal Wanda Webster	Nancy Bricco Rosemary Cermak	Jeff Tharp Kim Wallmuller Fern Furhmann	Leland Tharp
March 5 Ash Wednesday	6:30 Pennie Linna	6:30 Pennie Linna	12:00 Pat Thompson 6:30 Pat Westphal	12:00 Joy & Jenny Case 6:30 Jean Memken		Usher
March 9	Confirmands	Confirmands	Pennie Linna Nancy Maslow	LaVerne Arndt Lois Kemp	Jane Arps Ellen LaMarche Emil Leppiaho Pat Westphal	Sophia Kersten
March 12 Midweek			Wanda Webster	Pennie Linna		Usher
March 16	Confirmands	Confirmands	Judy Fowler Ginny Schieck	Linda Anderson Nancy Maslow	Gwen Hoehne Doug Sebstead Renie Sebstead	Braydin Messing
March 19 Midweek			Tom Frantz	Mary Jane Hartley		Usher
March 23	Confirmands	Confirmands	Bruce Grundman Emil Leppiaho	Pat Westphal Doug Sebstead	Bruce Grundman Lois Kemp Linda Anderson	Lily Anderson
March 26 Midweek			Joy & Jenny Case	Ginny Schieck		Usher
March 30	Confirmands	Confirmands	John & Laurie Olson Shaun Johnson	Joe & Linda Rehorst	Dom Christofilis Dawn Jones Judie Hilliker	Leland Tharp

### Communion Assistants:

March 2 (At the Rail)—Jean Memken and Laurie Olson

March 5 (Ash Wednesday—Intinction)—Ginny Schieck and Joe Rehorst

March 16 (Intinction)—Confirmands

Altar Guild: Ginny Schieck

## It's Back!!!! BINGO on March 31!

Anyone up for a game or two (or 20!) of BINGO? Come to St. Mark's on Monday, March 31, for a few rounds of your favorite game—BINGO! The fun starts at 1:00 pm and goes to about 3:00 pm. There will be snacks! There will be prizes! What's not to love? Don't miss out on all the fun!





Members: Jason Blank, Dawn Jones, Emily Gauthier, Joe Rehorst, Tom Frantz, Tammie Kersten, Pastor Niveen, and Pat Westphal

Members Absent: JT Rose and Laurie Olson

Call to Order: Vice President, Jason Blank, called the meeting to order at 6:30 pm.

Devotions: By Pastor Niveen. Devotions for March: Jason Blank

Election of Officers: President: **MSC to accept Dawn Jones as Council President Emily Christofilis/Tom Frantz.**  
Vice President: **MSC to accept Jason Blank as Vice President Dawn Jones/Emily Christofilis.**  
Secretary: **MSC to accept Emily Christofilis as Secretary Dawn Jones/Tammie Kersten.**

President Dawn Jones continued with the running of the meeting.

Welcome New Members:

Reviewed Binders and noted the Constitution, which is included in binder. Meetings on are on 3rd Thursday of each month and members are to contact President or church office, if not able to make a meeting. We read the Meeting Covenant.

**MSC to approve minutes from last meeting 01/16/25 from Tammie Kersten/Jason Blank.**

Thank You: Bruce Grundman for removing ice on building and sidewalk - Dawn will write thank you. Lois Hill- for being the Cheerleader for our church- Tammie will write thank you.  
Adam Clifford- Cyber Security Session on Sunday- Tom will write thank you.

Financial Reports: Pat Westphal reviewed current account balances through end of January 2025. January's giving to current monthly expenses was \$13,263.02 and expenses were \$15,851.99. The difference was -\$2,588.97. (This is also year-to-date). It was noted that the additional monthly expenses were related to the following: 1. Paying the first quarterly insurance payment 2. Utilities. It was noted that the Property Ministry Team is monitoring the thermostats and will make adjustments, in an effort to conserve energy & manage utilities costs. Depending on how bills come in, from month to month and the cycle of payments, balances will adjust. \$30,000 will eventually be moved from the Building Fund into the Parking Lot Fund.

Total Associated Bank checking has a balance of \$228,469.93 which includes \$122,859.60 allocated to designated accounts and \$105,610.33 for current operating. Additionally, \$168,503.54 in the Thrivent money market and \$1,026.23 in Thrivent TIPS account and \$56,852.43 in the ELCA Mission Investment Fund. There is also a decline in giving due to the weather.

**MSC to approve Financial Report Tom Frantz/Jason Blank.**

**Pastor's Report ~ *Pastor Niveen Sarras***

Grace and peace to you, dear members of the Church Council,

I am writing to provide an update on my ministry in the months of January and February. I have had the privilege of spending time with visiting members of St. Mark's who are facing various challenges. These interactions have been filled with grace and have highlighted the presence of the Holy Spirit in our congregation as we support one another in prayer and fellowship.



Additionally, I had the opportunity to meet with two prospective new members of our church, Beverly Wilfling and Rhonda Smith, who are interested in becoming a part of St. Mark's. Rhonda has also approached me with the request to have her granddaughter baptized. I look forward to guiding them on their spiritual journey.

In addition to these pastoral visits, I completed my five years of participation in the ELCA Civic and Faith Cohort. This cohort has allowed us to meet regularly to prepare a social statement on the relationship between faith and civic engagement. Our final meeting took place on January 24th and 25th. It has been a valuable experience, and I look forward to continuing to share insights gained from this group with the congregation.

I also had the opportunity to meet with the Worship and Music Ministry Team to prepare for the season of Lent and our midweek services. We are excited to announce that St. Mark's will have joint midweek worship services with St. Paul Lutheran Church during Lent, which will be a wonderful opportunity for our congregations to come together, grow in faith, and share fellowship.

On Thursday, February 13, I had the privilege of meeting with our Bishop, Anne Edison-Albright, to share my annual ministry report. It was a fruitful conversation, and I look forward to continuing to work together in the mission of the church.

Lastly, I would like to propose the formation of a Mutual Ministry Team. This team, appointed by the pastor and president of the Church Council, would support the pastor and staff, fostering a positive and supportive atmosphere within our congregation. While the team would not be a decision-making body, it would be a valuable resource for advice and support.

Thank you for your continued partnership in ministry.

*"Grace be with you all"* (1 Timothy 6:21).

Yours in Christ,

Rev. Dr. Niveen Ibrahim Sarras, Ph.D.

Please be  
Praying for...

Ellen LaMarche  
Sarah L.  
Richie Sczerzen  
Doug Bedor  
Odeh Sarras  
Mary & Ron Zalewski  
Serenity and Leighton  
Judy Fowler

## Ministry Team Reports:

### Christian Education Ministry Team— February 3 ~ *Submitted by Gwen Hoehne*

Present: Jenny Case, Pastor Niveen, Gwen Hoehne

- 1) Cluster event on Sunday, February 9th - LOVE We will make a hanger about Love. Will have music at 9:15 and then return to classroom for cookies and juice. Have coloring sheets for John 3:16 for them to color.
- 2) MUSIC – They will sing in church on February 23. The song is “Love, Love, Love” Would like to sing on May 4th, Last day of Sunday School. Pastor would also like them to sing on either Palm Sunday or Easter Sunday. Will talk to Judy about this and maybe pick out easy songs for them.
- 3) Dates for Sunday School for rest of Sunday School – We have 4 Sundays left that Jenny and I will teach a class. The Dates are February 23, March 9 and 23, April 6th. On April 13th will be a Cluster event for Lent and Easter and May 4th will be the last day and we will have Fun and Games that day.
- 4) Cluster Event on Sunday, April 13 – Palm Sunday - We will probably do something with Resurrection eggs and making Palms. Will have refreshments also. The students will parade into church that day with palms and will probably sing a song. Not sure about the song yet.
- 5) Lessons for the rest of the Sunday School year - Jenny and I are both ready with lessons to the end of the Sunday School year.
- 6) Other Business - We discussed that Avery will not be in Confirmation until next year due to the fact she is the only one. Will wait for Norah, Tyler, and Vayda. Avery will be having her First Communion this year and Pennie will be teaching it. We also discussed about the Acolytes because of the four Confirmands being Confirmed in May, we won't have a Confirmation class that we will train Avery, Norah, Tyler and Vayda plus ask the students being confirmed to help out also. Will work on this. Discussed the Good Gifts the students

picked out and Laurie was writing out a check and sending in the order form. Jenny and Joy and I discussed about the kids running in church and we will address this in Sunday School on Sunday and also having respect for people sitting in the back of church that the play area is for little kids and there should be no talking while church is going on.

Closed with the Lord's Prayer.

### **Property Ministry Team—February 3, 2025 ~ Submitted by Ginny Schieck**

Members Present: Ginny Schieck, Phyllis Ziemke, and Joe Rehorst

1. Suggested a wooden prayer box to be available anytime.
2. All furnace filters were changed at the end of January.
3. Odgen Plumbing did cross control compliance inspection (City of Neenah).
4. Tablecloth shelving in Theater Room was installed.
5. Joe Rehorst available to fill in with lawn mowing.
6. Door on Cabinet in Theater room to be removed by Joe Rehorst.

### **Racial Equity Ministry Team—No report this month**

### **Social Ministry Team—Submitted by Gwen Hoehne**

PRESENT: Pat Thompson, Phyllis Ziemke, Pastor Niveen, Barb Girod, Gwen Hoehne

Barb Girod opened with devotions.

- 1) Karen sent "Thinking of You" and Valetine cards to Emma and "Thinking of you" card to Judy.
- 2) New members to the Social Ministry Team are Joe and Linda Rehorst, Jane Frantz, Dara Clifford and Pastor Barb Girod. Welcome to Social Ministry team.
- 3) Social Ministry team received \$680.00 from the Appleton Conference for the Food Pantry. Barb will apply for a grant from Thrivent for the Food Pantry.
- 4) Would like to have Food Pantry moved up for Mission of the Month to the beginning of the year instead of later in the year.
- 5) Pastor will apply for a grant from ELCA and partner with Pillars who are in need of pillows, sheets, and blankets. This will be through Social Ministry team.

Closed with the Lord's Prayer

NEXT MEETING: Monday, March 10, 2025 at 1:30 P.M..

### **Worship and Music Ministry—January 27, 2025 ~ Submitted by Judy Hellman**

The worship and music ministry team met on Monday, January 27th. Members attending were Pat Westphal, Betty Linna, Mary Jane Hartley, Joy and Jenny Case, Mary Ellen Tracey, Pastor Niveen, Judy Hellman and guest, Jean Memken.

Devotions were given by Pastor Niveen. Pat Westphal will give devotions in February.

Pastor Niveen presented her Lent and Easter calendar for future services. Fat Sunday will be on March 2nd during fellowship.

On Ash Wednesday, March 5th, there will be a joint ELCA worship at St. Mark's at 12:00 noon. Pastor Tabitha will preach the sermon. There will be Holy Communion by intinction and the imposition of ashes. At 6:30 pm, we will have another service here at St. Mark's for our congregation.

Our Wednesday Lenten services will be with St. Paul's but will be held each week at St. Mark's at 6:30 pm. We will have our weekly soup suppers from 5:00-6:15 pm.



Holy week services were briefly discussed. We will have the Seder Meal on Maundy Thursday this year. There will be a joint ELCA service at Gloria Dei at 12:00 noon on Good Friday. St. Mark's will have another service at 6:30 pm. There will be only one service on Easter Sunday at 10:00 am.

There will be a Prayer Service for Peace on February 23rd at 2:00 pm. St. Gabriel Catholic church will host this service. The Lutheran liturgy will be used. There will not be any Holy Communion. There may possibly be a combined choir.

The noise issue in the play area was also addressed. This area is to be used only by the younger children. Some older children have been recently using this area and causing excess noise.

There will be an usher's meeting in the near future. This will be helpful especially for new ushers and a good review for all ushers.

Our next meeting will be February 17th at 10:30 A.M.

We closed with the Lord's Prayer.

### **Youth Ministry Team—January 12, 2025 ~ Submitted by Laurie Olson**

Members Present: Joe Rose, JT Rose, Jenny Case, Laurie Olson, and Ginny Schieck

Members Absent: Sherri Denney, Jeff Tharp, and Pastor Niveen

Laurie Olson opened with a prayer.

### **Business for Consideration**

Review of Bowling Event. 31 participated in yesterday's (Feb. 8) Bowling Extravaganza. Joe, JT and Ginny thought it went very well, and everyone had a great time. Costs: \$404 - Rolling Thunder Bowling. Laurie covered the cost of the new trophy plates (\$20). Thoughts are to have this as an annual event. Laurie will send thank you notes to: Gwen for donating her old trophies, DQ for donating Dilly Bar sticks for everyone, All-Sport Trophy for giving us a great deal on the trophy plates and Rolling Thunder for donating free bowling coupons and for their hospitality.

**Connections Ministry Team—No report this month**

### **Endowment Ministry Team—No meeting this month ~ Submitted by Jean Memken**

I have just begun my tenure as chair of this ministry team, so I am still learning about how the team works and where our finances stand. A few things I wanted to make you aware of:

1. We did receive one grant request from Linwood House to sponsor one of their summer concerts. This has been something the Endowment fund has supported in prior years. I will speak with the other team members to see if they once again approve this funding.
2. From the latest quarterly report for last year, it appears the account lost value in the 4th quarter after gaining value the first three quarters of the year. We ended the year with a value of \$190,770, a decrease of about \$3,000 from the end of the third quarter of 2024. Still, it is a sizable account and we do have money available to distribute should we get any other grants applications this year. Thankfully, the stock market did exceptionally well the first three quarters of 2024, so we actually gained over \$18,000 in the account since January 1, 2024.
3. As Church Administrator, I receive all the progress reports on this account and I keep them in a very large binder in my office. Currently, we have about 10 years or so of reports. After speaking with Dawn Jones, the past chairperson, we decided we could safely dispose of most of those reports. I will plan to keep about three years worth of reports on file here, but plan to discard the rest unless I hear otherwise from the Council.

### **Finance/Stewardship Ministry Team—February 18, 2025 ~ Submitted by Laurie Olson**

Members Present: Treasurer Laurie Olson, Financial Secretary Pat Westphal, Mary Jane Hartley, and Pennie Linna

Members Absent: Pastor Niveen and Fern Fuhmann

We opened with a prayer.

Reviewed current account balances through end of January 2025. January's giving to current monthly expenses was

\$13,263.02 and expenses were \$15,851.99. The difference was -\$2,588.97. (This is also year-to-date). It was noted that the additional monthly expenses were related to the following: 1. Paying the first quarterly insurance payment 2. Utilities. It was noted that the Property Ministry Team is monitoring the thermostats and will make adjustments, in an effort to conserve energy and manage utilities costs.

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Pat mentioned that Phyllis Ziemke was inquiring about balances in Memorial Funds. Laurie will get that information to Phyllis.

Parking Lot: Laurie informed the team that a anonymous donor family will match, dollar-to-dollar, until we meet our fundraising goal. Pat said we have approximately \$2,200 yet to raise, as of Monday, February 17th. Laurie will prepare an announcement for the bulletin and get to Jean.

Discussed the Food Pantry account. Laurie noted it is getting low, due to the increase of those in need being served; numbers have gone up over the past few months. It was reported that the Food Pantry received a grant from the ECSW Appleton Conference, Food Pantry is the March Mission of the Month and Jane Frantz has been seeking out grant opportunities. Laurie will attend the next Social Ministry meeting to discuss financials and see where Stewardship & Finance can be of any service.

Discussed Lent services offerings. It was noted that St Mark's has often selected an agency to receive our Lenten Worship Service offerings. After a discussion, the Stewardship & Finance Ministry team is suggesting, to the council, that the six worship service offerings be split between the general operating fund and the St. Mark's Food Pantry.

Stewardship: The team decided to again offer the "Seed Library." Laurie will apply for a Thrivent Action Team Grant to cover expenses. Also discussed was doing something similar to the seed planting, which was done with Adult Forum and Sunday School in 2024. Due to Easter being late, Earth Day does not work out for 2025. We will talk with Gwen on if this is possible this year and if so, what Sunday would work for her program and discuss further at next meeting.

Closed with the Lord's Prayer.

Next regular meeting is March 13, 2025 at 6:30 pm.

### **Building Security: Note from the Church Administrator**

Jean would like guidance on a proposal to cut down the open/close times scheduled on the back door for meetings and other building use, so church isn't open for an excessive amount of time. We currently open the doors 30 minutes before the meetings and close 30 minutes after the start of that meeting/event. Council decided to cut this down to 20 minutes before & after the start of the meeting/event.

### **Ministry Team Reports MSC accepted by Joe Rehorst/Tammie Kersten.**

### **Ministry Team-Council Representatives were appointed. They are as follows:**

Christian Education- Dawn Jones  
Connections Ministry- Tom Frantz  
Endowment- Tammie Kersten  
Stewardship/Finance- Jason Blank  
Memorial- Laurie Olson  
Partnership- Dawn Jones  
Property- Joe Rehorst  
Racial Equity- Dawn Jones  
Social Ministry- Pastor Niveen  
Worship and Music- Pastor Niveen  
Youth- JT Rose and Laurie Olson

## Unfinished Business

Medical Emergency Plan- Laurie Olson will head this up with Chris Anderson. He has a lot of experience putting together these types of plans. He is the Fire Chief for the Town of Vinland.

Communication Audit/Website Updates:

We need to find someone to update our website. Jean knows how to do some, but we need another person.

Parking Lot Update:

\$2,252 away to meeting goal! Anonymous donor family will match dollar for dollar for each donation from this point on. If we receive more than needed for the project, we could discuss what to use the funds for, such as a bike rack for the back door area.

Synod Academy- Cancelled due to the weather last weekend, hoping to reschedule. Synod sponsored education is always important.

## New Business

What's happening in the church, which will be put in the newsletter. An example would be: Duck money and where does the money go? It will help members know what is occurring in the church.

March 4th Fat Tuesday, drive through free coffee and donut, advertisement for Lenten services. Some of the duck money will go to this.

Lenten Offering Designation: Finance and Stewardship recommended half the offering to current budget and half will to the Food Pantry. **MSC accepted by Tammie Kersten/Dawn Jones.**

Installation of council and ministry teams: Worship Service on 03/16/25 was selected.

Goals and objectives for the next year: Food pantry, ministry team for technology, connecting members to mission and vision to further our initiatives.

Adjourned and closed with the Lord's Prayer.

Next meeting Thursday, March 20th, 2025, at 6:30 pm.

## A Lenten Mini Retreat—"Becoming Us: A 40-day Encounter"

St. Paul Church, Neenah invites you to a "mini" spiritual retreat on Saturday, March 15, 9:00-Noon, in their Fellowship Hall. We will step into the season of Lent by walking alongside those in scripture whose lives were forever changed in just 40 days. Their struggles, revelations, and triumphs offer a powerful roadmap for our own spiritual renewal. Through their stories, discover how this sacred season can be a time of profound transformation, guiding you toward deeper faith, clarity, and purpose. Will you embark on this journey and see where 40 days can take you?

There is no cost for this retreat. For planning purposes, please sign up by calling St. Paul Lutheran Church at 920-725-3961, or emailing Pastor Amy at [pastor@stpaulneenah.org](mailto:pastor@stpaulneenah.org).

### About our Presenter

Judy Koeune-Brown has over 20 years of experience in church ministry and more than seven years as a hospice chaplain. She has walked alongside individuals in moments of both deep reflection and transformation. Judy holds undergraduate and graduate degrees in religion and theology from St. Norbert College in De Pere and has served as a national speaker and retreat director, guiding others through theological discovery rooted in sacred scripture.

Her latest book, *Becoming Us: A Journey to the Place Where Unity Begins*, forms the foundation of her presentations and retreats. It reflects her personal journey toward integrating all the pieces of herself leading to deeper unity with those around her. The themes within this work hold universal truths, offering insight not only for daily life but also for the Lenten journey, inviting us all into greater connection, reflection, and





**We Get Mail!**

**Dear St. Mark's Family,**  
 Thank you so much for your kind words and support of Luann during this difficult time for our family. Your warm spirit and care are more appreciated than you will ever know. Please extend our thanks to everyone who signed the card.

Warm Regards,  
 Luann (Stensberg), Siri, and Erika

*Thank you so much for the Chemo basket. It was a nice surprise after my first day of chemo and has so many needful things.*

*God's Blessings,  
 Melissa Cruz*

**Dear Friends at St. Mark's,**  
**Thank you very much for all the cards, prayers, and good wishes extended to me while I was ill. Thanks also to Pastor Niveen for visiting me while I was recovering at home. All your acts of kindness meant so much to me. I thank God for all of you!**

*Ardys Seelow*



# RACIAL JUSTICE

APRIL 5, 2025 Conference

@ Ascension Lutheran Church, Green Bay

## Featured Speakers



### The Rev. Angela !Khabeb

*Preacher of the Day*

#### Breakout Sessions

Living Out Justice in a Purple Context  
What We Can Do: Call to Allyship



### Vance Blackfox

*Indigenous Theologian  
Citizen of the Cherokee Nation*

#### Keynote and Breakout Sessions

Indian 101, Missing and Murdered  
Indigenous Women and Girls,  
Indigenous Thought and Theology

This conference features two nationally known to help participants learn more about the history of harm and ongoing effects caused by racism and what we can do to act for racial justice. \$20 includes lunch and materials. 50% Discount for students. [www.ecsw.org/upcoming-events](http://www.ecsw.org/upcoming-events)

Brought to you by *The Racial Equity Team & Women of the ELCA* of the



East Central Synod of Wisconsin  
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America



## Appleton / Oshkosh Conferences

“Wonderful Worth of a Woman”

March 8

Christus Lutheran, Greenville

The combined Spring Event will be held on March 8th, 2025, at Christus Lutheran, Greenville. Ladies from Trinity will be hosting. Christus is graciously lending their facility for the Spring Event.

March 8th is also International Women’s Day (colors green, purple, white). The featured speaker for the day will be Pastor Lori Peper from Oseola. She has a wonderful ukulele musical message.

More information on the event and how to register will be made available online and sent to conference churches.

Contact persons—Wanda Fisher (Trinity) [frnknlu@yahoo.com](mailto:frnknlu@yahoo.com)

Kimberly Radtke 920-205-7783 or [ninjababywhisperer@gmail.com](mailto:ninjababywhisperer@gmail.com)

ST. TIM'S PLAYERS PRESENTS

# Lerner and Loewe's BRIGADOON

BOOK AND LYRICS BY  
ALAN JAY LERNER

MUSIC BY  
FREDERICK LOEWE

ORIGINAL DANCES CREATED BY AGNES DENILLE

performances:

FRIDAY MAR 21, 2025 7PM  
SATURDAY MAR 22, 2025 7PM  
SUNDAY MAR 23, 2025 2PM

location:  
ST. TIMOTHY LUTHERAN  
CHURCH  
473 7TH STREET  
MENASHA, WI

THURSDAY MAR 27, 2025 7PM  
FRIDAY MAR 28, 2025 7PM  
SATURDAY MAR 29, 2025 7PM  
SUNDAY MAR 30, 2025 2PM

Jenny Case is once again performing in a St. Timothy Lutheran Church musical this month. Here's a note from her:

Dear Congregation,

I highly encourage you to come see the production of Brigadoon at St. Timothy Lutheran Church in March. You are not only supporting this great theater ministry, as well as Pillars and Sleep in Heavenly Peace (organizations that will receive some of the proceeds), but you are also supporting our wonderful, talented, hard-working cast! I hope you will come!!!

Sincerely,  
Jenny Case

**St. Mark's Lutheran Church**  
**140 S. Green Bay Road**  
**Neenah, WI 54956**

