

ST. JOHN LUTHERAN CHURCH MESSENGER

CALLED TO WORSHIP / COMMITTED TO SERVE / CONNECTED IN FAITH

April 2021

A monthly Publication of
St. John Lutheran Church

Worship Schedule

Saturday night
worship at 6:00 p.m.
In Gathering Area

Sunday Worship 9:00 a.m.

Pastor

Pastor Mark Johnson

Office Staff

Audrey Zellman

Treasurer

Rae Fimon

Custodians

Curt & Cheryl Johnson

Organist

Eileen Hanlon

Choir Director

Bri Bergstrom

Accompanist

Sheila Schmidt

148 S. Chestnut St.
Belle Plaine, MN 56011

952-873-6492
office@stjohnbelleplaine.org
Web: stjohnbelleplaine.org



Easter Morning Services

April 4th

8:00 a.m. in person and live of Facebook

10:30 a.m. in person



April 11

**1st Communion Class
5:00p. m.**

April 18

1st Communion Sunday

April 18

**1:00— 4:00
New Member Orientation**

April 25

New Member Sunday



From Pastor Mark

It has been nice to see some of you returning to worship recently. Last year at Easter time we were shut up tighter than a drum and wondering what lay ahead of us. And it has been quite a year, to say the least. However, it appears that we are rounding the bend now. Quite a few folks have gotten their vaccine shots and that bodes well for being able to return to a semblance of normalcy.

During this past year, I'm glad that we have had the opportunity to broadcast our worship services online on our website and Facebook page. And now that we are live streaming it on Sunday mornings you can tune in and see the service as it is taking place. I'm grateful that we have been able to have that connection. It has called forth some creative ways of how we do things, like taking Communion, and broadened our thinking that there is no edge to God's Table of Grace. It doesn't end in the Sanctuary. God is present with us everywhere. And so it has been interesting to think of folks joining in for Communion in their homes as they watch the service.

I was talking to a guy a few months back as we were pumping gas at the Cenex. He was from Our Lady of the Prairie and saying how much he enjoyed the services online and being able to watch them in his pajamas on Sunday morning. I said I'm glad that you're enjoying them. But don't enjoy them too much! Because there is coming a time when we will be wanting to get back together.

I think we are getting there. While maintaining masks and distancing, schools are returning to normal in-person attendance. And we are opening things up gradually at the church here, as well. As teachers and kids at school have learned, online learning has been a necessary alternative through this unusual time but it can't take the place of live, in-person attendance in a classroom together with your classmates. And the same can be said here at the church. There is no way to replicate community virtually. You have to be in a community with others to have that experience. It's good to see each other, to sing and pray and commune and visit together. Online, while easy and convenient, is no substitute for being with each other.

We do plan to continue broadcasting our services on Facebook. However, as things change and we are getting back together, I'd urge you to not let online watching replace your live attending. We want to emerge out of the other side of this pandemic back together as a community. So I am looking forward to seeing you back in the church again. I have missed being with you and am enjoying seeing a number of you beginning to return.

One other practical aspect of being apart from each other during this time is that our offerings have been down. While we have been apart, however, the work of the church continues. We are providing regular and special worship services, having Christian education classes with Connect and Confirmation students, providing pastoral care. Kids are signing up for Camp. First Communion is happening. New members are joining. Baptisms, weddings and funerals for our loved ones continue. The life and ministry of the church continues in many ways. So please remember to support our ministry together with your financial giving to both our General Operating and our Building Funds. Your support is needed and appreciated!

As I write this, we are approaching Holy Week. We have been enjoying our Midweek Lenten Services with the choir helping to sponsor our dear friend, "The Holden Evening Prayer Service," and I have been walking us weekly through the theme of "Basic Lutheran Beliefs." Now I am planning for Palm / Passion Sunday and the momentous events of Holy Week. We enter with Jesus into Jerusalem to the waving of palm branches and shouts of Hosanna! We move to the table of his Last Supper with his disciples on Maundy Thursday. We stand at the foot of his cross on Good Friday. And we come with the women to the empty tomb on Easter Sunday. This momentous week brings us to the heart and center of our Christian faith, centered on the saving acts of God's grace for us in Christ. I am planning for them as I write this and looking forward to them. May we all live and love and hope and serve in the light and the promise of Easter!



First Communion

Our fifth graders and their parents have received an e-mail invite to participate in a First Communion class on Sunday, April 11, at 5:00 p.m. in the church Gathering Area. We will be masked and each family will have it's own table. The following Sunday, April 18, we will have First Communion Sunday for our class participants and their families.

If there is someone in sixth grade or later who has not yet received First Communion instruction and would like to, you are also invited to attend. Please call the church office at 952-873-6492 and inform us of your attendance so we can be prepared for our group size.



New Members

For those who desire to become members at St. John, we are holding a New Member Orientation on Sunday, April 18, at 1:00 p.m. in the Gathering Area. The following Sunday, April 25, we will recognize our new members. If you would like to be included, please call the church office at 952-873-6492 and let us know.

A graphic with a blue sunburst background. The text "JOB OPENING" is written in a bold, blue, sans-serif font, slanted upwards to the right.

Church Accountant and Office Support

St. John Lutheran Church is searching for applicants for the part time position of Church Accountant and Office Support. St. John Lutheran Church is located in Belle Plaine, MN and is a welcoming ELCA community with more than 800 active members. The job involves working from 8:00-noon Monday through Friday for \$21/hour, partly as the daily accountant for St. John and partly as the morning receptionist. Qualified individuals will need a two-year accounting degree or equivalent experience. In addition, individuals are expected to show initiative and communicate efficiently and effectively for a Christian environment. Interested individuals are invited to apply by submitting an application (available at www.stjohnbelleplaine.org), letter of introduction and resume to:

personnel@stjohnbelleplaine.org or

St. John Lutheran Church
Attn: Hiring Committee
148 S Chestnut St.
Belle Plaine, MN 56011

Unapproved St. John Lutheran Church Council Minutes
March 18, 2021

President Albert Koepp called the meeting to order at 6:31 p.m.

Present:

X	Pastor Mark		Matt Stier	X	Albert Koepp	X	Wendy Theis
	Angie Kahle	X	Rae Fimon		Jen Nagorski	X	Sue Koenig
X	Chris Zellman	X	Steve Kelm	X	Ben Aust	X	Chris Schultz
X	Curt Johnson	X	Anne Herrmann	X	Kim Meierbachtol		

Opening Devotions: Pastor Mark shared opening devotions

Approval of Minutes: Members of Council reviewed the minutes from the January 14, 2021 and February 18, 2021 Council Meeting. Motion was made, seconded and carried to approve the meeting minutes from January and February. Motion was made, seconded and carried to approve the agenda for March 18, 2021.

Pastor Mark's Report:

Last year on Saturday, March 14, the Council met in special session and suspended all further indoor activity at the church due to the pandemic. Since then, we have taken steps to adapt to the situation and provide alternative ways to provide for virtually everything that we do. Many thanks to the congregation for its support and patience, to the council for its continued guidance and partnership, to our staff for their energy and initiative, and to all our volunteers for their creative help and care. Together, we seek to be the Body of Christ. It has been quite a year and it is good to see the progress we are making toward a return to normalcy.

Worship Services continue on Sundays at 9:00 a.m. and, during Lent, on Wednesdays at 6:00 p.m., in-person, live-streamed, recorded and archived. On Wednesdays, the choir is helping facilitate "The Holden Evening Prayer" service and I am sponsoring the weekly theme of "Basic Christian Beliefs." Holy Week includes 6:00 p.m. services on Maundy Thursday and Good Friday. Special times for Easter at 8:00 and 10:30 a.m. Saturday evening services resume after Lent on April 10 at 6:00 p.m. Kingsway and Lutheran Home Holy Communion Services via Zoom have taken place on the first Tuesdays of the month.

The Worship Team met and decided to have two special service times for Easter Sunday at 8:00 and 10:30 a.m. We are also moving to use every other pew in the Sanctuary and include balcony seating, as well as having the Gathering Area for overflow, as needed. We will continue after Easter with our 9:00 a.m. service until such time as two services are warranted. We also discussed holding off, due to guidelines, on congregational singing at this time, pending a return to that as we are able.

A survey of First Communion families at the beginning of last Fall opted to wait until this Spring. Families are being contacted for a First Communion class on April 11 and a First Communion Sunday on April 18.

A New Member Orientation will be held on Sunday, April 18, with a Welcome Sunday the following week on April 25.

Confirmation Camp Registration letters went out last month to both our seventh and eighth grade students and we are finishing up their registrations for camp this month.

The Small Group Team is planning an Easter outreach activity for members who have not been able to get out much this past year.

The Personnel team continues to meet. They are reviewing job descriptions, finalizing policy proposals, working on hiring policy and compensation considerations, and continuing to work through the hiring process.

Strategic Planning remains an important part of properly engaging with our congregation's future. We will need to consider when we can set up interviews with prospective consultants and begin to plan for the Fall.

Regular and ongoing items including staff, communication, correspondence, pastoral acts and administration, preparation and facilitation of parish life and activities, etc. continues as usual.

Staff Reports:

Custodial:

Curt has been removing old wires to make room for the new Fiber Optic cable. Implementation is expected in the 30-60 days.

A discussion was had on fire extinguishers in the rental properties. It was confirmed that the fire extinguishers are brand new and will need to be added to the Church contract with Central Fire so all fire extinguishers can be inspected at the same time. Renters should be notified at least one (1) week prior to the inspection date to bring their fire extinguishers to the church for inspection. A good practice would be to notify the renters as soon as the inspection date is scheduled.

The back service elevator has been fixed and was paid for by WELCA. Council expressed their appreciation and thanks.

Treasurer:

Rae presented the February financial reports for the General fund, Building fund, and Budget vs Actual. She spoke to the budget figures being derived from a 7% increase based on February 2020 actual giving which was unexplainably high. She reviewed the upcoming Camp Onamia expense for the 7th graders and may need to borrow from the Building or Foundation fund. Rae also mentioned adding an article to the Messenger regarding fun facts related to electronic giving.

Transfers:

Transfers In - none

Transfers out include Rev. Sarah K. Timian who transferred to The Lutheran Church of Our Redeemer in Foxborough, MA. Randall and Shauna Anderson, children Mikayla, Nolan, Alaina, and Sienna.

Motion was made, seconded, and carried to approve the transfers out.

Ongoing Business:

Kim Meierbachtol presented the Rental Leases and answered questions from the Council. Motion was made, seconded, and carried to approve the leases. Kim will email the Executive Committee with the results of the tenant meetings. She will also provide the church and tenants with a Contact list. Going forward, the January Council Agenda will contain a line item to review leases.

New Business:

Rae presented updated job descriptions for Accounting Office Manager and Office Manager. Titles and descriptions have been updated to better reflect and clarify the roles. Accounting Office Manager has been updated to Church Accountant and Office Support. Office Manager has been updated to Church Communications and Office Support. Rae will make suggested changes to remove the word "budget" from the description since neither position is responsible for the budget. Motion was

made, seconded, and carried to approve the job descriptions.

Compensation for Rental Manager - Motion was made, seconded, and carried to approve the compensation at \$25 an hour from the Property Improvement Fund.

Compensation for Church Accountant and Office Support - Motion was made, seconded, and carried to accept the recommendation from the Personnel Committee to compensate this position at \$21 an hour. Budget variance supports increasing this position to an amount suitable for a two-year accounting degree qualification.

Council reviewed a sample of a Probationary Period Policy that was presented by the Personnel Committee. Council believes this policy to be a common workplace practice and encourages the Personnel Committee to pursue this concept.

A discussion was had to review the current policy on Building Use by Outside Groups. The current policy will remain in place. Council will review this policy on an ongoing monthly basis.

A discussion was had related to Strategic Planning. Pastor Mark will make the arrangements to interview potential consultants on either April 22nd or 29th from 6 - 8 p.m.

Ministry Team Updates:

Stewardship Committee - nothing new

Buildings and Grounds Committee - met to discuss rental properties.

Personnel Committee - meeting next week to discuss Probationary Period and Grievance policies.

Children's Ministry Team - nothing new

Small Group/Faith Formation Committee - Linda Schwichtenberg has been leading an Easter outreach to folks who haven't been getting out. The committee is looking for drivers to help make deliveries.

Worship and Music Committee - planned for Easter and Saturday evening services.

Technology and Communications Committee - nothing new

Motion was made, seconded, and carried to adjourn at 8:14 p.m. Meeting was adjourned followed by the Lord's prayer.

Respectfully Submitted,
Anne Herrmann, Secretary

Sponsor a Camper

Sponsor a 7th grader going to Camp Onomia this year! We have 24 seventh graders going to Camp Onomia this coming summer, which costs \$460 per child. Each family pays \$125 toward the cost of camp and St. John pays the remaining \$335. The total cost to St. John this year is \$8,040. If you'd like to contribute towards this cost, please consider making a special donation to the General Fund in March!

April 2021

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				1	2	3
All Sunday Services (except Easter Sunday) are <u>In person</u> or live on Facebook				6:00p Maundy Thursday Service In person or live on Facebook	6:00p Good Friday Service In person or live on Facebook	
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
8:00 Easter Service In person or live on Facebook		1:00p Zoom Service with Lutheran Home and Kingsway	6:00p Connect/Confirmation Small Group Leaders meeting 6:30p Worship Choir			6:00p Worship Service
10:30 Easter Service						
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
9:00 Worship Service 10:00 Executive council meeting 5:00p 1 st Communion Class			6:00p Connect/Confirmation Class 6:30p Worship Choir	5:30p Personnel Committee meeting 6:30p Church Council		6:00p Worship Service
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
1 st Communion Sunday 9:00a Worship Service 1:00p New Member Orientation			6:00p Connect/Confirmation Class 6:30p Worship Choir			6:00p Worship Service
25	26	27	28	29	30	
New Member Sunday 9:00 Worship Service			6:00p Connect/Confirmation Class 6:30p Worship Choir			

April 2021



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				Dominick Rosario	Derek Grubn Travis Latour Katy Potter Deana Sielmann	Angela Koepf Melissa Seaver Bonnie Vinkemeier Andy Weldon
Piper Potter Katelyn Schmit	Lariana Ruud Riley Stier	Lilie Adelmann Dynelle Kruggel Jesse Lutterman Milton Meierbachtol Ann Pederson April Stier		Lana Hanson Nathan Muehlenhardt Alec Ruud Danika Schroeder	Will Steinhagen	Beth Beuch Cassie Fink Jake Mercado Colin Sammons
Vivian Herrmann Alex Hoff	Nicole Schultz	Teresa Bratsch LuAnn Dahn Peyton Schwichtenberg Kiya Williamson	Grayson Klaverkamp Bob Moody Tyler Moylan	Joseph Adelmann Allison Skuzacek	Anthony Kluver Emma Martin Cody Schultz	Brooke Hagen Matthew Kes
Elizabeth Hilgers	Sophia Petersen Sabrina Sammons	Judy Brown Sally Simcox	Amando Jo Rosario Mark Simcox Bruce Volek		Armin Dahn Sandy Schultz Bonnie Tromnes	Hunter Hornaman Larry Ruehling
Jackson Korb Nolan Lutterman	Christopher Hiles Diane Latour Jamie Lindahl Chris Stier Samantha Tharaldson	Andrea Andert	Kade Sheilley	Isabella Koepf Nikolai Kortgaard- Moorleghen Dominica Wolf	Jennifer Fairbanks Colt Henke Bailey Kes	

Financial Corner

St. John Financial Results Two Months Ending February 28, 2021 and February 29, 2020

Operating Fund			Year Over Year
	February 28, 2021	February 29, 2020	<u>Increase (Decrease)</u>
Income*	\$ 45,130	\$ 59,443	-24%
Expenses:			
Personnel	(34,522)	(52,869)	
Office	(3,111)	(3,370)	
Property & Maintenance	(6,657)	(6,581)	
Ministry Teams	(631)	(2,286)	
Other	(979)	(1,132)	
Benevolence:			
Minneapolis Area Synod	(2,000)	(2,000)	
Camp Onomia	(500)	(500)	
World Hunger	-	(250)	
Net Receipts / (Expenditures)	<u>\$ (3,270)</u>	<u>\$ (9,545)</u>	
Cash Balance at January 1 (Excl. Loans)	\$ (82,735)	\$ (84,836)	
Net Income / (Expenditures)	(3,270)	(9,545)	
Misc. cash not affecting income	377	(240)	
Loan from Building Fund (2018 & 2019)	44,500	54,500	
Loan from St. John Foundation (2014-2016)	54,339	53,799	
Cash Balance at end of February	<u>\$ 13,211</u>	<u>\$ 13,678</u>	

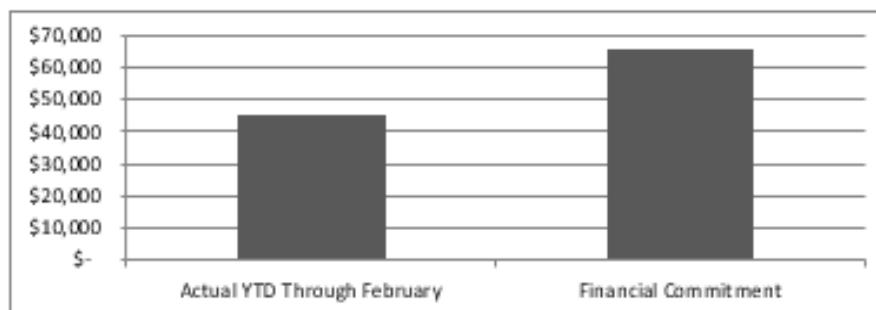
* 44% of Contributions were received electronically in 2021 - thank you!

Building Fund			
	February 28, 2021	February 29, 2020	
Receipts**	\$ 16,593	\$ 18,686	-11%
Principal	(19,846)	(18,981)	
Interest	(1,274)	(2,139)	
Net Receipts / (Disbursements)	<u>\$ (4,527)</u>	<u>\$ (2,434)</u>	
Loan Balance at January 1	\$ 208,857	\$ 325,224	
Principal Payments	(19,846)	(18,981)	
Loan Balance at end of February	<u>\$ 189,011</u>	<u>\$ 306,243</u>	

** 36% of Contributions were received electronically in 2021 - thank you!

Actual Income Compared to 2021 Financial Commitment:

Actual YTD Through February	\$ 45,130
Financial Commitment	\$ 65,348



April 4, 2021 Ushers	
8:00	10:30
Brent Schwichtenberg Greg Schwichtenberg Katie Wermerskirchen Juls Robbins	David & Sara Bungarden Louis Longhenry Don & Dianne Rasmussen

April 11 and 18, 2021 Ushers	
8:00	10:30
Chris Schultz Rob Schultz Mark Schultz Wayne Koepf Aaron Leonard Matt & Dominick Fogarty	Tim Moonen Dale Schmidt Samuel Schmidt Dick Bristow

April 25 and May 2, 2021 Ushers	
8:00	10:30
Curt & Cheryl Johnson Bryn Davis Corey Johnson Craig Johnson	Scott Ruud Alex Ruud Griffin Ruud Dale Mercado Jake Mercado Jerry Meger Alex Meger

In Memory

A Memorial were given to the Building Fund in memory of
Debbie Bristow by Carol Stoppelmann.

CALLED TO SERVE THROUGH OUR GIVING		
Offering Received the week of		
February 25– March 3	March 4-10	March 11-17
General Fund—\$5.583 Building Fund—\$1.440	General Fund—\$5.907 Building Fund—\$2.114	General Fund—\$9.737 Building Fund—\$1.845
March 18-24	March 25-31	
General Fund— \$3,437 Building Fund- \$ 1,299	General Fund— \$4,914 Building Fund- \$750	