

ST JOHN LUTHERAN CHURCH

February News

Staff:

Interim Pastor:

Ted Vanderpan

Office:

Amanda Schultz

Accounting:

Monica Braesch

Custodian:

Hanna Tharaldson

Choir Director:


Allison Vandermark

Organist:


Eileen Hanlon

Accompanist:

Eileen Hanlon



Sunday morning Worship ~ weekly at 8:00 and 9:15am
Sunday school at 9:15am
Wednesday evening worship ~ weekly at 6:00pm
Connect & Confirmation at 6:00pm



Important dates this month:

Sunday the 2nd ~ noisy offering

Sunday the 9th ~ Boy Scout Pancake breakfast

Sunday School sings

Sunday the 16th ~ no Sunday school

Sunday the 16th ~ Special Congregational meeting

148 S Chesnut St. Belle Plaine MN 56011

Church office: 952-873-6492

email: office@stjohnbelleplaine.org

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Unapproved St. John Lutheran Church Council Minutes
January 13th, 2025

President Albert Koepp called the meeting to order at 6:28 p.m.

Present:

X	Pastor Ted	X	Albert Koepp	X	Jim Eggers	X	Anne Herrmann
X	Teresa Latzke	X	Jan Effinger		Tim Moonen	X	Chris Zellman
X	Jerold Stauffacher	X	Jaime Petersen		Cayla Menke		David Bungarden
	Steve Kelm						

Opening Devotions:

Pastor Ted opened the meeting with a prayer.

Approval of Minutes:

Members of Council reviewed the minutes from December 9th, 2024 Council Meeting. Motion was made, seconded and carried to approve the meeting minutes from December. A motion was made, seconded and carried to approve the agenda for January 13th, 2025.

Pastor Ted Report:

January 2025

Pastors Report

Things to Consider:

Winter Weather

It may be good for the Council to consider paying for a hotel for me on Saturday night in the event there is bad weather. So far, I have spent over \$400 on hotel accommodation in Belle Plaine. Two of those have been because of the weather on Saturday night into Sunday morning and two of them have been on Christmas Eve. I can imagine that if we have bad weather, I may not be able to get to Belle Plaine from Buffalo on a Sunday morning. If I am already in Belle Plaine that will not be an issue. I am willing to drive to Belle Plaine on Saturday and stay over if the room is paid for. Otherwise, I will take my chances on Sunday morning realizing I may not be able to get to the church. Of course this may not ever be needed.

Notification

I have decided to retire. I plan that my last day will be April 30th unless a new pastor arrives before then. Over the last several months I have invited you to consider the ending of my time here and the arrival of your new pastor. Now there is a specific time for us to begin working with. I believe my retirement provides St. John with a very positive opportunity.

The Opportunity

I expect the congregation will call a new pastor this summer. The Synod has expressed a similar expectation in casual conversation. There are no guarantees of this, but it is anticipated this will happen. Assuming this happens, my retirement has the potential of putting St John in a better financial position when calling the new pastor. Each month I am gone, before the new pastor begins, could bring a significant financial swing for St. John. 1.) If I retire, Item H of the Interim Contract is void. This provision is to provide one months pay for the Interim Pastor while they seek a new call. I am not going to consider another call. 2.) Once Confirmation is completed this spring, on April 30th, if the pastor's time were to be focused on Sunday worship and pastoral care only, I believe pastoral responsibilities for a short period of time can be covered in something less than full-time.

- All pastoral responsibilities other than Sunday worship, worship prep and pastoral care would need to be suspended. This means no committee or any administrative responsibilities, such as Belle Plaine Clergy, attendance at Bible Camp or Mission Trips, and such things will be expected.
- The Synod has arranged for "Bridge Interims" for this very kind of situation - to cover for a short period of time.
- I will have visited all our shut-ins, providing communion during Lent, so there will be minimal demand for visitation during this short time.
- This pastor could come on Sunday and an agreed upon number of days a week to do the Kingsway service, urgent visits, and any funeral or hospital call needed. Hours could be averaged over a few weeks' time.
- The specific amount of time per week (half-time, three quarter-time or one quarter-time) will need to be negotiated.
- With St John taking a big financial step in the 2025 Budget to provide for the new pastor, this may make a difference.

The Synod office can help with arranging for "Bridge Interim".

Staff Reports:

Hanna Tharaldson has accepted the custodian position.

Treasurer's Reports:

Jerold presented the November December report. The General Fund, Building fund and General operating fund were reviewed with the council members.

Transfers:

No Transfers in or out this month.

Ongoing Business:

A. Call Commitment Recruiting:

a. The members of the council made a Motion, seconded and carried to appoint the following members to the call committee: Diane Gerres, Melanie Eggers, Mike Nagel, James Karl, Havyn Moonen, Jill Martin, Susie Koepp, Susie Steinhagen, Jamey & Linda Jeurissen, Trevor Carstens, Deanne Fogarty.

B. Property task force will hold a meeting to draft a letter for a congregational meeting, scheduled for February 16th, in regards to selling land to build a parking lot.

C. All-Committee Meeting—Jan 8th update

a. A lead contact person has been established for each committee and a second meeting is scheduled for April 23rd. The purpose of the meeting is to discuss ideas, topics and concerns with all committees.

D. Annual Meeting is scheduled for Sunday January 26th. The Bishop will be scheduled first to go over her presentation then proceed with the annual meeting.

a. A request was made to donate breakfast items for the annual meeting

New Business:

Nothing to report

Ministry Team Updates:

A. The members of the council reviewed the quarterly report from the Stewardship committee

B. Buildings and Grounds discussed in the property task force

C. The members of the council reviewed the quarterly report from the Congregational Outreach Team. They reported that they are working on a volunteer schedule and looking into a computer program that could assist with open worship volunteer positions.

Motion was made, seconded, and carried to adjourn the meeting at 7:32 p.m. Meeting was adjourned followed by the Lord's prayer.

Respectfully Submitted,
Teresa Latzke,
Secretary



From Pastor Ted:

One of the most difficult parts of Interim Ministry, for me, is the frequent arriving and departing. When I arrived at St. John, I worked hard at getting to know people, the congregation, and the larger community – and now I will leave. In mid-January, I sent a letter to the congregation announcing my retirement. My last day here will be April 30th. My time with you was always going to be a short amount of time. That is the nature of Interim Ministry.

The Call Committee, (CC), has begun their process. It is a highly confidential process. Much of what the CC does cannot be shared with the congregation. Many of the pastors they interview have not made it public that they are looking for a new call, which makes it quite sensitive. There are other factors as well, but the CC will share everything they can. They want to keep you informed as much as possible.

Based on my experience with this work, here are a few things you can do:

□ Pray for the CC. Ask God to lead and guide them. Ask that God would meld them into a good team. Pray that the gifts of the individuals would compliment the gifts of other individuals on the team. Pray for wisdom and discernment.

□ Pray for the pastoral candidates they will encounter. Pray that it will be mutually uplifting whether or not a candidate is selected. Pray for wisdom and discernment on the part of the people being interviewed.

□ Generate names of pastoral candidates you think might fit at St. John and pass them on to the CC.

Often the new pastor is found through this process – so get those names to the CC.

□ Listen to the CC when they communicate and ask for something. They won't be able to say a lot, but when they do, it will be important information for you to hear.

□ Support and encourage the CC no matter how long it takes. It may go fast, it may go slow, but support and encourage them. Don't get impatient. They are making a super important decision, so help them do a great job.

And all of this brings me back to my retirement. By the end of April, the CC will be well into their work. My announcing my retirement is an advantage for the congregation. The contract we signed commits the congregation to paying me for a month after my last day. By retiring, I am not looking for another call and so that pay will not be owed to me. That will be a help for the congregation as the new pastor arrives. With this timing, I will get us through the Confirmation year and through the spring Confirmation Service. Summer will bring a different pace to life at church. It may be an opportunity to engage a pastor on a part-time basis for a short period, until the new pastor arrives. This type of arrangement is common. There is even a name for it, Bridge Interim. My wife has done 3 or 4 Bridge Interims. At the last Interim Pastors monthly meeting 3, out of around 20, of the pastors were just concluding Bridge Interims. As we get closer to April 30th, we will be able to discern how to proceed.

Having said all of that, I look forward to the time I have left here at St. John. I truly believe we have done some really, good transition work. You are in a good place to be calling a new pastor. I think St. John will be an attractive call for many pastors. So, let's pray for the Call Committee and the process they have begun!

You may or may not know:

And just like that, another month has come and gone! And January was just as busy as December it seems! The connect and confirmation youth settled back into the Wednesday night schedule and on the 29th they traveled to Feed My Starving Children to pack meals. THANK YOU to all the parent volunteers and leaders who took the time to go along! It truly does take a village, and our youth are LUCKY to have this village!!

Also in January, we welcomed 5 new members, we had the all-committee meeting AND we held the Annual Meeting. There are truly some exciting things on the horizon here at St. John!! One of things I am most excited about is sharing our extraordinary committees! Each month TWO of our groups will be highlighted ~ they will have the chance to introduce themselves during service and be celebrated throughout the month! Please be on the look out for postings and more information on our dedicated group members!! We kick it off with our Children's, youth and family ministry team, followed by our Facilities & Grounds / Technology committee.

Sincerely,
Amanda Schultz

Sunday School tidbits:

This month:

February 2 ~ bring those coins to 9:15 service for a noisy offering

February 9 ~ the children will be singing at the end of the 8:00 service and at the 9:15 service AND hosting a new family event: *God loves us even in our PJs*

February 16 ~ No Sunday School

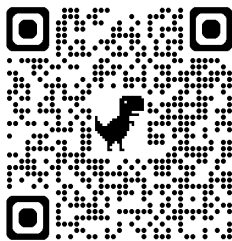
Upcoming:

March 2 ~ Kindergarten families serve coffee hour

April 12 ~ Palm Sunday, the children will sing

May 4 ~ Last day of Sunday School, the children will sing

St. John Children, Youth, and Family are looking for some items to add to our Sunday School classrooms. If you wish to contribute, we have created an Amazon wishlist:



Thank you to those who have graciously donated already!!!

Faithful Stewardship in Action

At St. John's Lutheran Church, we are blessed with a vibrant community of dedicated members who devote their time and talents to various committees, ensuring that our church thrives. We continue to discuss tithing, by sharing our time, treasure and talent. During worship services we will be spotlighting the various committees. One way we can share our time and talent is by serving on a committee. There is almost always a need, and with a variety of committees to choose from, it is easy to find a good fit for your skills and passion.

Facilities & Grounds/Technology Committee

This committee manages our church's physical and digital presence. From maintaining the beauty and functionality of our church properties to enhancing our technology assets and communication tools, their efforts ensure that St. John's is a welcoming and well-equipped space for worship and community gatherings.

Auditing (Finance) Committee

Working alongside the Treasurer, the Auditing Committee diligently plans and manages the church's finances. Their guidance and oversight help the Council make informed decisions that support our mission and sustain our ministries.

Memorial Committee

The Memorial Committee oversees and manages memorial accounts, ensuring that the generous gifts given in memory of loved ones are honored and utilized thoughtfully, contributing to the ongoing work of the church.

Foundation Committee

Entrusted with the stewardship of endowed gifts, the Foundation Committee oversees the investment and disbursement of these funds. Their careful management ensures that these gifts continue to support the church's mission for generations to come.

Stewardship Committee

Guiding and encouraging the congregation, the Stewardship Committee inspires us all to be faithful stewards of the gifts God has entrusted to us. The committee encourages us to be mindful of the importance of giving our time, talents, and treasures in service to God and our community.

Congregational Outreach Committee

This committee is instrumental in organizing our worship volunteers, ensuring that our services run smoothly and that every worship experience is enriched by the participation of our members.

Worship & Music Committee

Helping us celebrate our relationship with God and one another, the Worship & Music Committee brings creativity and passion to our worship services. Through music and other expressions of faith, they foster a vibrant and engaging worship experience.

Children's, Youth, and Family Ministry Team

This team is dedicated to nurturing the faith of our youth. By organizing and planning ministry programs, they create opportunities for our youth and families to grow in their faith and develop a strong foundation in Christ.

Altar Guild

Preparing the altar for worship services, the Altar Guild's care and attention to detail create a sacred space where we can encounter God in worship.

Funeral Committee

In times of loss, the Funeral Committee organizes volunteers to serve at funerals, providing support and comfort to grieving families and ensuring that these services are conducted with dignity and compassion.

Coffee Time Team

Fostering fellowship and connection, the Coffee Time Team organizes volunteers to serve coffee and refreshments between services, creating a welcoming environment for members to gather and share in community.

Nominating Committee

The Nominating Committee plays a crucial role in the life of our church by recruiting volunteers to serve on the Church Council, Personnel Committee, Foundation Committee, and the Auditing Committee, ensuring that we have strong and capable leadership.

Each of these committees represents the spirit of stewardship. We are deeply grateful for their dedication and service. In upcoming worship services, will be spotlighting the various committees where you can learn more and connect with individuals already serving on the committee. Please prayerfully consider joining one of the St John committees this year!

Around town:

FFA Pancake breakfast on Sunday, February 16th. Join the Belle Plaine chapter from 7:00am until noon at the High School ~ there will also be a vendor fair and silent auction.

Check this out:

Each year before Christmas, residents of The Lutheran Home Association are asked to design an illustration based on a scripture verse that depicts the good news of our Savior's birth. One resident's artwork is chosen to be used as the cover for our Association Christmas e-mail greeting. Mary Koepp's design of "Oh Little Town of Bethlehem" was featured as this year's photo.



In other news:

A **special congregational meeting** will be held on February 16th, 2025 after the 8:00am service. The purpose of this meeting will be to discuss the sale of the parsonage and the garage lot property. A quorum and vote will be necessary to make a final decision. If the vote is yes, the proceeds from the sale will be used to build a parking lot on the Hayden property adjacent to the church with a targeted start date for construction of Spring of 2026.

(Please note: there will only be one service this day, similar to the annual meeting)



Happy Birthday!

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
						1
						Nathan Shutes
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Myron Bratsch Cassidy Burkman Robin Fink Deborah Hagen Rick Martin Josie Schmidt Linda Schwichtenberg	Alvina Laabs Marv Laue Wesley Mellgren Dave Menke Elissa Moonen Austin Oldenburg Brock Pavlicek Mark Siemon	Emily Aust Marcj Kiewel Mikayla Olson Connor Vycital Graham Wendt	Alexis Edberg Cheryl Flynn Rebecca Johnson Joanne Musick Zoe Otting	Jane Baker Katie Wermerskirchen	Lynne Jeurissen Kim Koepp Brent Schwichtenberg Amara Smith	Maddie Fors McKayle Siemon Sherrie Simcox
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
Elizabeth Koonst- Kopesky Marty Siemon	Bryn Davis Tucker Kritzman Luke Luskey	Karen Bessel Delores Merkley	Alissa Henning Derek Hoffman Angela Kahle Lavonne Moore Jacob Olson Larry Schmidt Jennifer Scott	Courtney Eppen Sydney Fors Abigail Liebhard	Oliver Henke Noah & Nolan Rust Ben Swanson	Julie Adelmann Maria Jonason Aiden Koepp Evan Koepp Leah Schaefer
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
Wayde Holm Kathi Stauffacher Dominic Veerkamp	Nick Davis Josh Schultz	Savannah Berg Crosby Carlson William Costello MaryAnn Koonst	Jacob Koepp Dale Mercado Michael Ritsch	Dennis Aretz Connie Haas Sydney Paulson Tabitha Rose Brian Schmidt Veaya Scott Jacob Siemon	Benjamin Hagen Evan Muehlenhardt Ross Overline	Baylen Anderson Bev Stier Thomas Weiland
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
	Marcy Boblitt Brian Fahey Pamela Koepp	Charles Koepp Jonathan Vinkemeier Chris Bieder	Sven Berg Tyler Gruhn Becca Schwichtenberg Sue Steinhagen Jason Thaemert	McKenzie Koepp Ally Schultz Eva Tharaldson	Bennett Londin Zachary Tracy	Andrew Hagen

Church Calendar

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Noisy Offering 8:00 & 9:15 Worship 9:15 Sunday School	6:30 pm Boy Scouts 6:00 pm Personnel Committee meeting	11:00 Lutheran Home Service 1:30 pm Kingsway Service	6:00 Connect/Confirmation 6:00 pm Worship Service 7:00 pm Worship Choir	5:00 pm TOPS		
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
8:00 & 9:15 Worship *Sunday school sings 9:15 Sunday School family fun event 8-noon Boy Scout Pancake Breakfast	6:30 pm Boy Scouts 6:30 pm Church Council		6:00 Connect/Confirmation 6:00 pm Worship Service 7:00 pm Worship Choir	5:00 pm TOPS		
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
8:00 am worship 9:15 am special congregational meeting *no Sunday School	6:30 pm Boy Scouts	4:30 pm Stewardship	6:00 Connect/Confirmation 6:00 pm Worship Service 7:00 pm Worship Choir	5:00 pm TOPS		
23	24	25	26	27	28	
8:00 & 9:15 Worship *Baptism at 9:15 9:15 Sunday School	6:30 pm Boy Scouts		6:00 Connect/Confirmation 6:00 pm Worship Service 7:00 pm Worship Choir	5:00 pm TOPS		

~ SUNDAY VOLUNTEERS ~

Alter guild: Jan Effinger, Linda Rueben

Feb 2	<p>Greeters: Bruce & Susie Volek Lay Readers: Amy Franck Communion Assistants: Matt & Kristin Stier, Kirk Franck Ushers: James & John Karl, Tim Bristlin, Dan & Wyatt Herrmann</p>	<p>Greeters: Ken & Wendy Theis Lay Reader: Cheryl Flynn Communion Assistants: Teresa Latzke, Linda Reuben, Cheryl Flynn Ushers: Scott & Tricia Ruud, Monica & Jason Braesch *Noah * & Nolan Rust Acolyte: Lincoln Kelm, Holden Kelm</p>
Feb 9	<p>Greeters: Brian & Jonathan Schmidt Lay Readers: Angie Kahle Communion Assistants: Dorothy Koepp, Terry Siemon, Angela Faucette Ushers: Brian Schmidt, Jon Schmidt, Jason Schmidt, Doug Hillstrom, Dave Latzke, Jerold Stauffacher Acolyte: Ari Hiles, Emmaleah Cecka</p>	<p>Greeters: Brent & Wendy Koepp Lay Reader: Brent Koepp Communion Assistants: Brent Koepp, Jan Effinger, Renee Meuleners Ushers: Brent Koepp, Mitchell Koepp, Justin Stauffacher, Tim Moonen, *Lucy & Macy Leonard Acolyte: Ryan Stene</p>
Feb 16	<p>Greeters: Jerold & Kathi Stauffacher Lay Readers: Bonnie Vinkemeier Communion Assistants: Bonnie Vinkemeier, Jerold & Kathi Stauffacher Ushers: Brian Schmidt, Jon Schmidt, Jason Schmidt, Doug Hillstrom, Dave Latzke, Jerold Stauffacher</p>	<p align="center"><i>Special congregational meeting</i></p>
Feb 23	<p>Greeters: Lowell & Laurie Hiles Lay Readers: Susie Steinhagen Communion Assistants: Susie Steinhagen, Greg & Linda Schwichtenberg Ushers: Marc & Mindy Chevalier, Josh Sparby, Lydia Sparby, Andy Steinhagen</p>	<p>Greeters: Kevin & Sandi Wolpern Lay Reader: Sandi Wolpern Communion assistants: Sandi Wolpern, Abby Kubes, Lynne Jeurissen Ushers: Chris & Annette Moylan, Steve Schroeder, Lee Sauter</p>

Coffee hour hosts this month:
 2/2 ~ grab and gab
 2/9 ~ Boy Scout Pancake breakfast
 2/16 ~ Special Congregational meeting
 2/23 ~ Chris Swanson's Confirmation small group

St. John Lutheran Church

General Fund: Statement of Activities Previous Year Comparison

January 01, 2024 to December 31, 2024

	01/01/24-12/31/2024	01/01/23-12/31/2023
Revenues		
Offering Revenues	366,600.17	395,179.68
Wild Game Feed	543.00	500.00
Other Revenue	28,134.11	35,812.41
Total Revenues		
Expenditures		
Benevolence Expense	15,235.78	23,500.00
Church/Grounds Maintenance Expense	151,364.30	86,298.48
Education Expense - Youth	21,474.41	16,852.01
Total Insurance	13,443.10	12,336.06
Total Office Expenses	20,664.93	18,577.63
Total Other Expenses	7,256.74	7,446.54
Total Professional Fees	3,163.55	1,843.98
Total Staff Benefits	20,870.13	36,341.42
Total Staff Salaries	182,275.08	194,243.84
Stewardship	72.62	0.00
Total Utilities	17,314.07	28,772.81
Total Worship Music & Arts Expenses	4,971.76	5,158.10
Total Expenditures	469,343.86	439,964.99
Net Revenue	-46,755.18	29,499.39
Cash Balance at January 1	48,424.00	69,619.00
Net Income / Expenditures	-46,755.18	-29,619.00
Misc. cash not affecting income	-133.07	-127
Cash set aside for strategic planning	-10,000	-35,000
Cash Balance at December 31	\$8,464.25	\$39,838.00

Property Improvement / Building Fund

1/1/2024 - 12/31/2024

1/1/2023 - 12/31/2023

Income (Donations, Rent, Investments)	\$95,811.95	\$107,164.53
Total Expenditures	\$143,123.47	\$76,807.95
Interest Expense	\$3,464.20	\$5,342.93

Net Receipts / Disbursements

(\$50,775.72)

\$25,013.65

CALLED TO SERVE THROUGH OUR GIVING	GENERAL FUND	PROPERTY IMPROVEMENT
December 1 - December 7	\$4,944.10	\$1,251.28
December 8 - December 14	\$5,257.39	\$2,300.00
December 15 - December 21	\$4,804.90	\$921.38
December 22 - December 28	\$20,895.49	\$755.00
December 29 - December 31	\$2,326.28	\$1,496.38

St. John Lutheran Church
148 S. Chestnut St.
Belle Plaine 56011

Non-Profit Organization
U.S. Postage Paid
Permit No. 16
Belle Plaine, MN 56011

Change Service Requested