

News from St. John

Sunday Worship Services at 8:00 am and 9:15 am
Sunday School at 9:15 am
Wednesday evening service at 6:00 pm
Connect & Confirmation class at 6:00 pm

Happy New Year! May it be blessed!

Cheers to making 2025 the best one yet!

Important dates this month:

Wednesday, Jan 1 ~ No connect/confirmation; no service

Sunday, Jan 26 ~ Annual Meeting

Wednesday, Jan 29 ~ 5th—8th graders go to Feed my starving Children

148 S Chesnut St. Belle Plaine MN 56011
 Church office: 952-873-6492
 email: office@stjohnbelleplaine.org

Staff:

Interim Pastor:

Ted Vanderpan

Office:

Amanda Schultz

Accounting:

Monica Braesch

Temp. Custodian:

Wanda Savage

Choir Director:

Allison Vandermark

Organist:

Eileen Hanlon

Accompanist: Eileen Hanlon



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Unapproved St. John Lutheran Church Council Minutes
December 9th, 2024

President Albert Koepf called the meeting to order at 6:34 p.m.

Present:

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

Opening Devotions:

Pastor Ted opened the meeting with scripture verses read this time of year and a prayer.

Approval of Minutes:

Members of Council reviewed the minutes from November 11th, 2024. Council Meeting. Motion was made, seconded and carried to approve the meeting minutes from November. A motion was made, seconded and carried to approve the agenda for December 9th, 2024 with a change of order to allow the Property Manager to address the Council first and to add items D. Website Proposal, E. Building and Ground, F. Jan 8th, G. Synod - MSP Document under new business.

Pastor Ted Report:

Things to Consider in the Upcoming Months

Christmas Worship

The worship schedule will be the same as previous years, (Christmas Eve - 3,5,7 & Christmas Day – 9).

Be Aware About My Ending – the timing of a new pastor arriving is in the range of 5 or 6 months, at the earliest, after the Call Committee begins. If we launch the Call Committee in January, we are looking at May or June at the earliest. Of course, it could happen sooner than that or slower, but we should begin thinking about it. The Interim Contract obligates the congregation to compensate me for one month after I complete my work. It would be best if I am finished at least one month ahead of the new pastor arriving so that the congregation is not paying two pastors at the same time. This of course could have implications for the 2025 budget, and I expect the congregation will begin asking about this.

Promoting Newly Identified Priorities and Characteristics

I think it would be good to start publishing, promoting and in general talking about the priorities identified through the work of the Transition Team, as well as the characteristics of a new pastor that were identified. As the CC launches and begins looking for a pastor, it would be valuable to be reminding the congregation of what we have identified to focus everyone’s attention.

Synod Document

I received a document from the Synod with some things they would like us to do to prepare for the Bishop’s visit at the Annual Meeting. We will need someone to oversee carrying out the actions they have requested. Who will that be?

New Members

I intend to conduct a New Members Class in January.

Ministry Calendar Key Dates

January 26 Annual Meeting

March 5 Ash Wednesday

April 20 Easter Sunday

April 30 Last Day of Connect/Confirmation

May 4 Last Day of Sunday School

May 11 Mother’s Day

May 18 Graduates Recognition

May 25 Memorial Weekend - One Service

Staff Reports:

The custodian, Sarah Padgett, is no longer employed. Currently looking to fill the custodian position.

No Transfers in or out this month.

Treasurer's Reports:

Jerold presented the November financial 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. First Call Committee

a. Dave reported that a meeting will be held to discuss the information needed to start the recruiting process for the Call Committee. The First Call Committee meeting is scheduled for January, 21st, 2025.

B. Transition team monthly update - a discussion was had on the impact of the Ministry Site Plan (MSP) on the 2025 budget. A motion was made, seconded, and accepted to adopt the MSP.

C. Property task force provided an update that the city likes the new plan and they feel it's ready to be reviewed with a professional design and plating firm. Next step is to review with the plan with building and grounds.

D. Sheila Schmidt replacement - Pastor Ted gave an update that Eileen Hanson has agreed to play on Wednesdays for worship and potentially for the choir. This is temporary at least through the school year. Rachel Kelm, Tracy Scheer, and Stephanie Paulson have volunteered to lead singing during Wednesday night worship.

New Business:

A. 2025 budget - a discussion was had on the 2025 budget. A motion was made, seconded, and accepted to approve the 2025 budget.

B. Annual meeting date January 26 - A discussion was held regarding the agenda for the annual meeting. The bishop will be attending and will need an hour to review the Ministry Site Profile (MSP).

C. Property Manager, Kim Meierbachtol addressed that the Rental leases are up in April 2025 and a discussion was had on increasing the rental amount to cover the property taxes. A motion was made, seconded and carried to approve the new lease for April 1, 2025 to raise the rent on each property \$100.00 per month and do a month to month lease on the parsonage house and a year lease on the Hayden house

D. Website proposal - Amanda would like to redo the website with the goals of updating to a new modern layout and allowing it to be easily edited in years ahead without the need of future technical assistance. Chris will look at recruiting interested parties to assist in the redesign. It's estimated to cost \$1500 that will come out of the technology budget.

E. Building and grounds update - Building and grounds committee provided an update regarding the audio visual enhancements. A discussion was had regarding combining the technology committee with the building and grounds committee. A motion was made, seconded, and approved to combine the committees.

F. Jan 8 - A brainstorming session will be held on January 8th for all council and committee members.

G. Planning MSP - Pastor Ted shared a document "Planning your Congregation's Ministry Site Profile". The transition team will write a summary of the MSP that can be distributed to the members of the congregation. A greeter was assigned to be a host to the bishop.

Ministry Team Updates:

A. The Children's Ministry report was reviewed by the council members who reviewed the quarterly report. They have completed the following accomplishment.

- a. Added more members to their team.
- b. The Sunday Schoolers are enjoying serving coffee hour.
- c. They have planned the Christmas program.
- d. Working on cleaning out the Art room.

B. The members of the council reviewed the quarterly report from the Personnel Committee. They have completed the following:

- a. Completed reviews for the Treasurer position and Adult Worship Choir Director.
- b. Eileen Hanlan will fill the Accompanist role for Adult Choir and Wednesday night worship service through December 2024 and possibly longer.
- c. Pastor Ted will schedule 1 staff meeting a month with: Church Communications Director and Office Support & Custodian.
- d. The Personnel Committee will review the Minneapolis Area Synod - Compensation guidelines to determine Family leave/employee benefits.

Motion was made, seconded, and carried to adjourn the meeting at 9:12 p.m. Meeting was adjourned followed by the Lord's prayer.

Respectfully Submitted,
Teresa Latzke,
Secretary

From Pastor Ted:

2025 – Let's look back and look ahead.

Last January this article focused on the need to get committees up and running. We identified a year ago some vital things that committees provide for the life of a congregation. **Congratulations!** We have seen all of the following happening, as our committees are functioning nearly 100%.

Committees get people involved in the actual hands-on work of the congregation. The people involved in the committee are the ones best suited to make decisions because they know what is going on in that area of the church's ministry and they care. When committees are active the best decisions are being made and thus the most effective ministry is taking place, and the work can be very rewarding.

Committees provide a place for people to put their faith into practice. Sure, there is some planning and decision making involved but then, concrete ways to make a difference emerge as the committee puts its plan into action. People actively involved in committees have a way to be involved in things they are passionate about like children and youth ministry, worship life, the larger community or Bible study or small groups or providing social connections, building community, the list goes on and on.

Committees have a big impact on the direction of the congregation's ministry efforts. Church Councils work best when they empower committees to make decisions and do the work of the church. Pushing as much decision making as possible down to the people who are the hands-on planners and workers avoids the bottleneck some Councils can become. When committees have permission to go do the work of the church within broad boundaries, they can create new ministries for unmet needs, do old things in new ways that bring a freshness to church life, and they have a giant impact on what gets done in the church.

Finally, committees provide social connections for the people involved. Friendships are created when you work with someone on important matters or matters that are important to you. Generating ideas, the give and take of decision making and putting a plan into action create positive bonds as the goal is accomplished.

And this NEW YEAR we have more great news.

On January 13, the Church Council is set to "appoint" the Call Committee.

On January 21, a Minneapolis Area Synod representative will be here to help the Call Committee get organized and launched.

On January 26th, Bishop Jenn Nagel will join us at our Annual Congregational Meeting to go over our Ministry Site Profile (MSP).

In February, the Call Committee will be up and running and will begin their search.

2025 promises to be a great year for St John Lutheran Church!

You may or may not know!

As you may or may not know, I have been in my role as the church communication coordinator for a few months now! And I have been really enjoying getting to know the church and its members in a new way. Chris and I were married in this church in 2008, we have since had 3 children – all of whom have been baptized at St. John and have received First Communion here. Our oldest was confirmed last October, with the next one being confirmed in April of 2025. Our youngest is in 5th grade and she will also be confirmed here at St. John, just like her brothers, her dad, her grandpa and her great grandpa.

The last few months have flown by and have been a real joy for me! We've had 9th grade Confirmation, 5th grade First Communion, Thanksgiving and the beautiful Christmas supper hosted by the W/ELCA. The Sunday School Christmas program was wonderful!!

The various teams and committees have blown me away with their hard work and dedication as we head into the call process for a new pastor AND as we prepare for a New Year! As congregation members, we don't always see all the "behind the scenes" work that goes into making the church successful. And let me tell you – there is a lot that goes on behind the scenes here at St. John!

I truly appreciate all the kindness and support as I settle into the office at St. John. There are so many exciting activities and events on the horizon ~ and I can't wait to watch our congregation grow into the future!

Sincerely,
Amanda Schultz



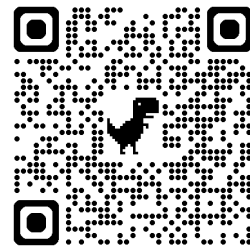
Sunday School tidbits:

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:

This month:

January 19 – 1st graders & families serve coffee hour

January 26 Annual Meeting – Movie & snack for Sunday School children in youth room, for parents that are attending meeting



~ SUNDAY VOLUNTEERS ~

Alter guild: Robin Fink

Jan 5	<p>Greeters: Jamey, Linda & Olivia Jeurissen Lay Readers: Michelle Melheim Communion Assistants: Michelle Melheim, Dave Latzke, Terry Siemon Ushers: Chris Schultz, Rob Schultz, Mark Schultz, Luke Schultz, Logan Schultz, Wayne Koepf</p>	<p>Greeters: Chris & Annette Moylan Lay Reader: Chris Moylan Communion Assistants: Teresa Latzke, Jan Effinger, Renee Mueleners Ushers: Chris & Annette Moylan, Steve Schroeder, Lee Sauter; Wesley Hilgers, Derek Scheer</p>
Jan 12	<p>Greeters: Joyce Nyblom Lay Readers: Bryn Davis Communion Assistants: Patty Laabs, Nick & Bryn Davis Ushers: Myron Bratsch, Kirk Franck, Matt Kes, Jeff Eppen</p>	<p>Greeters: Ron & Diane Rasmussen Lay Reader: Caren Grotberg Communion Assistants: Dave Bungarden, Phoebe Einertson, Lynne Jeurissen Ushers: Dave & Sara Bungarden, Ron & Diane Rasmussen; Jayce Henke</p>
Jan 19	<p>Greeters: Mindy Chevalier Lay Readers: Mindy Chevalier Communion Assistants: Mindy Chevalier, Abby Kubes, Sandi Wolpern Ushers: Myron Bratsch, Kirk Franck, Matt Kes, Jeff Eppen Acolytes: Madden Carlson, Adrik Pederson</p>	<p>Greeters: Sue Koenig Lay Reader: Beth Beuch Communion Assistants: Beth Beuch, Chris & Annette Moylan Ushers: Dave & Sara Bungarden, Ron & Diane Rasmussen; Lincoln and Holden Kelm</p>
Jan 26	<p>Greeters: Wesley Koepf Lay Readers: Renee Meuleners Communion Assistants: Renee Meuleners, Rob & Sandy Schultz Ushers: James & John Karl, Tim Bristlin, Dan & Wyatt Herrmann</p>	<p>Greeters: Anita Lambrecht Lay Reader: Steve Schroeder Communion assistants: Brent Koepf, Sara Bungarden, Steve Schroeder Ushers: Scott & Tricia Ruud, Monica & Jason Braesch</p>

The church office will close at noon on December 31st and will reopen on January 2nd!

NO service on Wednesday, January 1st

See you in 2025!

St. John Lutheran		
General Fund: Statement of Activi-		
January 01, 2024 to November 30,		
	<u>01/01/24-11/30/24</u>	<u>01/01/23-11/30/23</u>
Revenues		
Offering Revenues	\$250,924.08	\$268,382.63
Wild Game Feed	543.00	500.00
Other Revenue	18,182.12	21,065.43
Total Revenues	269,649.20	289,948.06
Expenditures		
Benevolence Expense	14,328.00	16,650.00
Church/Grounds Maintenance Expense	10,721.15	13,864.73
Education Expense - Youth	14,662.40	11,644.23
Total Insurance	13,093.10	10,212.25
Total Office Expenses	16,190.71	15,246.34
Total Other Expenses	5,513.34	6,913.77
Total Professional Fees	3,123.30	1,667.78
Total Staff Benefits	20,803.09	35,016.03
Total Staff Salaries	167,112.35	179,655.91
Stewardship	72.62	0.00
Total Utilities	16,699.16	26,959.79
Total Worship Music & Arts Expenses	4,467.51	4,801.54
Total Expenditures	286,786.73	322,633.56
Net Revenue	-15,637.00	-29,193.09
Cash Balance at January 1		
	\$48,424.00	\$69,619.00
Net Income / Expenditures	-15,637.00	-29,193.09
Misc. cash not affecting income	-133.07	-127.00
Cash set aside for strategic planning	-10,000	-35,000
Cash Balance at November 30	\$22,653.93	\$5,298.91
Property Improvement / Building Fund		
	<u>1/1/24 - 11/30/24</u>	<u>1/1/23 - 11/30/23</u>
Income (Donations, Rent, Investments)	\$80,174.50	\$85,916.97
Total Expenditures	-133,745.96	-74,305.75
Interest Expense	-7306.17	-5338.68
Net Receipts / Disbursements	-60,877.63	-6,272.54
CALLED TO SERVE THROUGH OUR GIV-	GENERAL FUND	PROPERTY IMPROVEMENT
October 27 - November 2, 2024	\$3633.00	\$115.00
November 3 - November 9, 2024	\$7278.29	\$880.00
November 10 - November 16, 2024	\$4115.55	\$140.00
November 17 - November 23, 2024	\$2955.00	\$1585.00
November 24 - November 30, 2024	\$4,590.00	\$140.00

Embracing Stewardship

As we reflect on the changing seasons and the abundance of God's blessings, the Stewardship committee wanted to take a moment to express our gratitude for your unwavering support and participation during our annual Fall Stewardship Emphasis.

Your commitment and generosity have made a significant impact on our church community.

Through your faithful giving and involvement, we are able to continue our mission of sharing God's love and serving those in need. Your support not only sustains our ongoing programs but also inspires others to participate in the vital work we are called to do.

It is because of faithful stewards like you that our congregation can thrive and make a difference in the lives of so many. Your contributions, whether in time, talent, or treasure, are deeply appreciated and valued.

Thank you once again for your steadfast support and for being such an integral part of our faith community. May God bless you abundantly as you reflect on your giving this coming year.