



# Reaching Out

St. John's Newsletter

## A Message From Pastor Christine

### ALL IN – Lent 2026

As many of you know, Jim and I traveled almost exactly to the other side of the world to vacation in New Zealand after the holidays. There was something surreal about getting into a large metal cylinder for 15 hours over a very large ocean only to step out into summer and beautiful ocean and mountains! It's a privilege, that's for sure. But, I will say that once you are on a plane for that duration, there is no turning back. We were ALL IN on the adventure, no matter how it would turn out (fortunately, it was awesome!)

And, just as we went all around the world, we have somehow also seemed to have gone all the way around the year back to the Lenten journey already (Is it just me or do the years get faster?). On February 18th, we enter the discipline again, a discipline that for me always has such meaning spiritually. Lent is a season of repentance; that is, turning to God and asking for God's goodness to wipe away our sins and show us how to live anew each day. But Lent is also about turning away from the things which bind us toward Easter and the abundant life God offers. Lent is a time when we are ALL IN. Yes, the journey of discipleship is all year long, but this turning back reminds us to start again, to remember the why and the how, to pause in the dormancy of a winter life and allow God to work on us.

When was the last time you went ALL IN on something? Maybe it was taking a new job or entering a profession. Perhaps it was when you bought a house or decided to join this congregation. Maybe it was the day you were finally baptized as an adult. Going all in on something is powerful, frightening, and honest.

When it comes to faith in the Triune God, Jesus is eager to help us go all in on what it is to participate in the reign of God. Before we can go all in, though, God shows us the way and because God already knows it will be a challenge for us to enter into this broken world in a tangible way, God goes all in on our behalf first. We see this in scripture. Christ heals, teaches, reveals, suffers, dies and rises. Through the highs and the lows, Christ goes all in on both, pouring out the love of God for the world.

What do you say? Shall we go all in for Jesus and his love this Lent? We begin February 18th, Ash Wednesday at noon and 7pm, going all in for repentance. Then, for the five weeks of Lent at 7pm, we will focus upon these themes:

- All in for Creation
- All in for the Unknown
  - All in for Wonder
  - All in for Relationship
  - All in for Letting Go

As the Creator has been all in for you, go now and be all in for the sake of the world. Let's do this together.

<p><b>Office Hours</b> Mon - Thurs 9-3 Friday 9-12</p> <p>-----</p> <p>1804 Highland Ave. Eau Claire, WI 54701</p>
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Blessings, Pastor Christine

## Notice to the congregation

You are hereby notified that the church council is recommending a suspension of the following 3 Articles as written in our constitution. These include C12.02, "Congregation Council members shall be eligible to serve no more than six years consecutively, C.11.03, "no elected officer is eligible to serve more than four consecutive terms in the same office "and C13.13(a), "Ministry members shall be eligible to serve no more than two full terms consecutively". Please note that these Articles limit the number of consecutive years a council member can serve in one position.

When we have people who are willing to serve beyond these limits, these Articles do not allow this to occur. Our volunteerism is down and finding committed people willing to serve is becoming more difficult. This action will be reviewed before the next annual meeting in 2027. We have become aware that these Articles no longer adequately serve the needs of our congregation. On 1/15/2026, the Council unanimously passed the following motion:

"A motion to temporarily suspend Articles C12.02, C11.03, and C13.13(a) which limits the number of years a council member may serve in one position. This will be reviewed before the next annual meeting in 2027."

This notice satisfies the 30 day requirement necessary to proposing this action at the annual meeting on February 22, in accordance with our constitution.

## Angel Gowns

St. John's will be hosting an Eternal Angel Gown Sewing Day on Sat. Feb. 21 from 9am-4pm. No need to be able to sew. There are jobs for all-- gown deconstruction, removal of beads, ironing and more. If you sew, please bring your machine. Unable to come for the full day? No problem. Feel free to come just for the morning or just for the afternoon. Lunch will be pot luck. Any questions, contact Kathy Freitag (715-835-9034 or [kfreitag1952@gmail.com](mailto:kfreitag1952@gmail.com)) or check out the Eternal Angel Gown Facebook page.

## The Chosen

### *Adult Education*

The popular You Tube sensation historical drama on the life of Jesus called "The Chosen" is making an appearance at our Adult Education as we approach Lent! Beginning February 15th, we will study this alongside scripture. Look for the link to the drama as it is sent out each week in the Enews. Please watch the episode prior to our education hour for best results (although if you don't watch it, you are still most welcome to attend the class). The dates for this study series are:

February 15th, 22nd

March 1st, 8th, 15th 22nd

## Help Us, Help Others

### *Chippewa Valley Technical College Student Food Pantry*

Some students are impacted by rising costs and face food insecurity every day. During February, Caring Ministry will collect items for the CVTC Food Pantry.

There will be a box in the Gathering Area for the donated items. If you prefer to make a monetary donation, please make a check payable to St. John's and write CVTC Food Pantry on the envelope.

#### **Here is a list of items needed:**

- Men's & Women's Deodorant
- Men's & Women's Shampoo & Body Wash
- Bar Soap
- Dental Floss
- Q-Tips
- Toilet Paper
- Raisins, Peanuts, Granola Bars, Fruit Snacks
- Pasta: Thin Spaghetti Noodles, Rotini or Other Pasta
- Knorr Side Dish Envelopes (Buttered Noodles, Broccoli & Rice, Spanish Rice, etc.)
- "Hamburger Helper" Type Meals & Soup Starters

## **Monthly Readings**

February 7 - 1 Corinthians 2:1-12; Matthew 5:13-20

February 14 - Psalm 2; 2 Peter 1:16-21

February 22 - Romans 5:12-19; Genesis 2:15; 3:1-7

February 28 - John 3:1-17; Psalm 121

## Thrivent Choice Dollars

Thrivent Choice Dollars allows eligible members to direct Thrivent Financial's charitable dollars to St. John's Lutheran Church. To be a benefit member with Thrivent Financial, you must own one of the following Thrivent products: life insurance, health insurance, disability insurance or annuities. Based on your premium and cash value, your Thrivent Choice dollars will be calculated. Letters or emails are sent annually to these members indicating the amount of charitable dollars available to them. If you believe that you qualify and have not received a letter, please contact your Thrivent Financial representative.

For the period September 1, 2025 to August 31, 2026, St. John's is designating the Thrivent Choice contributions to our general operations fund to help support our ministries, programs and maintain our day to day operations.

When you are contacted by Thrivent Financial, please prayerfully consider directing these charitable dollars to St. John's.

The Thrivent Financial members who have directed their "Choice Dollars" to St. John's Lutheran Church for January was Steven Drovold, Christine Emerson, Erv LaFave & Elaine McCarty.

**St. John's thanks you for doing this.**

## Volunteer Opportunity

*St. John's Apartments Food Pantry*

Where: St. John's Apartments Food Pantry

When: Mondays from 1:30-4:00. You can sign up for any Monday that fits your schedule. Once or twice a month, more or less...whatever works for you!

What: St. John's Apartments offers a food pantry on Monday afternoons for their residents. They sign up for a five minute spot to shop. There are typically 4 volunteers to assist the residents and keep the shelves stocked.

Why: It's a great opportunity to meet great people! Come and join us!

Please call Mary Haukeness-Mack for more information. 715-497-7467

## GriefShare

*Caring Ministry*

GriefShare (griefshare.org) is a 13-week program that provides weekly support for those grieving the loss of loved ones. The program incorporates elements of faith, a weekly video, and conversations among group members to find support.

A new St. John's, a GriefShare program will take place on SUNDAY AFTERNOONS beginning on SUNDAY, February 1<sup>st</sup> and ending on May 3<sup>rd</sup>. Sessions will be from 2:00 P.M.-4:00 P.M. in the St. John's conference room. There will be NO session on Easter Sunday, April 5<sup>th</sup>.

Please use the elevator entrance to the building. There is no cost for the GriefShare sessions, however, pre-registration is required.

The workbook and journal have been provided by the St. John's Helen Brougham and Fountain of Life Funds. The St. John's Caring Ministry is supporting the GriefShare program as part of its Grief Ministry.



## Bulletins

150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary bulletins from 2024 are available on the table against the east wall of the gathering area. They will be there for you to pick up through the end of February, after which they will be recycled.

## Trivia Corner

**What were the three major promises God gave to Abraham?**

# WALKING TOGETHER

## Church Without Walls

March 21, 2026

8:00 - 4:00

\$25 Per Participant

Bethany Lutheran Church - Rice Lake, WI

Keynote Speaker: Natalia Terfa



Register and Details Here:  
<https://nwswi.org/walking-together-event>



Northwest Synod of Wisconsin  
 Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

### Can You Help?

Hope Gospel Mission's Community Haven House is a safe space for people experiencing homelessness to get connected with the resources they need to move toward wellness and out of chronic homelessness. To do this well, more help is needed. Volunteers connect guests with agencies, assist guests during the check-in process, assist with shower and laundry schedules, and help with cleaning tasks. Shifts are two or four hours, once every week or every other week. Volunteer opportunities are listed at [hopegospelmission.org](http://hopegospelmission.org), or contact volunteer coordinator Linda: 715-552-5566, ext. 1302; or email her at [lindav@hopegospelmission.org](mailto:lindav@hopegospelmission.org).

### “Together in God” Broadcast Schedule

WQOW Broadcast @ 10:30 AM

February - 1, 15  
 March - 1, 15, 29  
 April 12, 26

ABC Network  
 Channel 18  
 Cable 9  
 HD 618

### Memorials & Honorariums

#### General Operations

IMO Reverend Wayne Garman Jr. by Byron Boettcher  
 IMO Austin David Larson by Cimberlee Malmquist  
 IMO Eddie Hanson by Donna Gilbertson  
 IMO Edwin Hanson by Barb Graham  
 IMO Ed Hanson by Eric Nielsen

#### TV Ministry

IHO Lois Mai by Gary & Cora Klawiter

#### Capital Program

IMO Ed Hanson by Cheryl Mattison  
 IMO Ed Hanson by Don & Sandy Huebscher

#### Sunday School

IMO Ron Kappus by Richard & Sue Schultz

FINANCIAL SUMMARY			
DECEMBER	2025	2024	2022-24 Average
Income	\$ 52,173	\$ 75,795	\$ 68,289
Expense	<u>45,514</u>	<u>68,437</u>	<u>55,531</u>
Surplus(Deficit)	<u>\$ 6,659</u>	<u>\$ 7,358</u>	<u>\$ 12,758</u>
YEAR-TO-DATE	2025	2024	2022-24 Average
Income	\$ 487,548	\$ 511,987	\$ 496,333
Expense	<u>468,343</u>	<u>518,873</u>	<u>489,365</u>
Surplus(Deficit)	<u>\$ 19,205</u>	<u>\$ (6,886)</u>	<u>\$ 6,968</u>

### Upcoming JONAH Events

FEB	6:00 pm - 7:30 pm
2	New Member Training
FEB	8:00 am - 9:00 am
3	Common Grounds: A JONAH Coffee Chat
FEB	1:00 pm - 2:00 pm
3	Fundraising Team Meeting
FEB	4:00 pm - 5:00 pm
3	Voices United Civic Action Task Force Meeting
FEB	February 5 @ 1:00 pm - February 12 @ 2:00 pm
5	Mental Health Task Force Meeting
FEB	5:30 pm - 7:00 pm
5	Affordable Housing Task Force Meeting

### We Mourned the Death of...

Edwin Hanson, 92  
 Ronald Kappus, 83





## Registration for the 2026-27 School Year

*SJCP Registration begins this month!*

February 2nd - 9:00AM: Priority Registration  
(St. John's Members and Previously Enrolled Families)  
February 9th - 9:00AM: Open Registration

We invite you to visit our classrooms, meet our teachers, and request information to learn about the preschool experience. Class sizes are limited and are filled on a first come first serve basis. We encourage families to register early. We learn a lot, have some fun, and share God's love!

For more information or to enroll please contact  
SJCP Director Nancy Hanson  
(715)-834-9571 [nancy@stjohns-ec.org](mailto:nancy@stjohns-ec.org)

Registration forms are also available online at <https://stjohns-ec.org/grow/preschool>

Did you know that most families know about SJCP because a friend or family member referred them?

**Thank you for sharing us with other families!**

## We can do more together! Can you help??

Please let us know if you can help in one of the following ways. We really appreciate it!

- Make and bring a baked good for the cake walk
- Donate an item or gift card for the silent auction
- Lead a carnival game, or work in the Kitchen or Dining Room

Email [nancy@stjohns-ec.org](mailto:nancy@stjohns-ec.org) or call 715.834.9571.  
**Thank you!**

# st. john's christian PRESCHOOL

Preschool Open House  
*Sunday February 15th 1-3PM*

SJCP is hosting an open house this month. This is a great opportunity for interested parents and families to visit our classrooms, meet our teachers and learn about our preschool program.

We are also happy to arrange tours at other times.

If you know a family that may be interested, please encourage them – or even bring them with you to visit SJCP!

**You are invited to our Shrove Tuesday Event!**  
*February 17th*

This is a fundraising tradition that includes festive fun everyone!! This pre-lent event helps raise money for the ongoing ministry of St. John's Christian Preschool. Thank you!

## Shrove Tuesday is...

1. called "Fat Tuesday" or "Mardi Gras".
2. a traditional time for feasting and fun before the church season of Lent begins the next day on Ash Wednesday.
3. February 17th, 2026

## St. John's Christian Preschool...

1. is a ministry that relies on fundraising.
2. hosts an annual fundraiser on Shrove Tuesday.
3. invites everyone to participate!

## Festivities from 4:30-6:30PM at St. John's include...

1. Pancake Supper (pancakes served until 6pm)
2. Carnival Games and Cake Walk
3. Silent Auction.

If you have questions, please contact any of the preschool teachers or a preschool board member. **Thank you!**

Thinking about summer?....  
**VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL**

Save the Date: August 3-6th from 1-4pm at St. John's  
 4 year olds-4th grade students  
 Looking for youth leaders and adult leaders  
 Contact amanda@stjohns-ec.org

**First Wednesdays Meal and Activity**

Wednesday, February 4th  
 5:00-meal  
 5:30-family activity

**CREW Nights**

5th-High Schoolers are welcome in the Youth Room Wednesday, February 4th at 6pm and Wednesday, February 18th at 6pm!

- Listen to music
- Play games
- Work on homework
- Art projects

**Sunday School News:**

There is no Sunday School on February 22nd due to the Annual Meeting. Sunday school students can meet in the gathering area for coloring and activity pages and a snack.

**Welcome in Spring...  
 With a hand-built bluebird house!**

These bird houses are made by our St. John's youth just in time for nesting. They will be available for purchase March 15-29 for \$40.0. Please order by calling Becky Cater  
 715-271-3492

*Thank you for supporting our mission trip!*

**Love Your Neighbor**

A Capital Campaign for Neighbor to Neighbor Ministry

\$ 175,000 by 2028

More information  
<https://nwswi.org/neighbor-to-neighbor>



Education    Advocacy  
 Diversity    Health  
 Compassion    Inclusion  
 Resources    Faith





**Wall of Giving**

- 1) Decide the amount you would like to donate toward the Workcamp Youth Mission Trip
- 2) Find the envelope whose number corresponds with the monetary amount you choose. You can pick one or more, as long as they add up to your donation amount.
- 3) Place your donation in the envelope in exchange for the note inside. Checks can be made out to St. John's with "Wall of Giving" as the memo.
- 4) Give the envelope to an usher or place it in the church office.
- 5) If you would like, include your name for your Annual Giving Statement. Your support is greatly appreciated!



THANK YOU FOR SUPPORTING OUR YOUTH TRAVELING TO BELLE, WV IN JUNE FOR THEIR WORK CAMP MISSION TRIP



**Church Council****At-Large:** Jeff Putnam**At-Large:** Greg Johnson**Secretary:** Karla Spies**Treasurer:** Norb Kirk**Caring Ministry:** Mary Spryer**Community & World:** Louise Alt**Education Ministry:** Stacy Kelly**Faith Family:** OPEN**President:** Richard Freitag**Seniors & Home Visitation:** Larry Schaefer**Vice President:** Dramus Peuse**Worship & Music:** Richard Spryer**Youth Ministry:** Becky Cater**Your Church Staff****Administrative Assistant:** Genny Gorton**Bookkeeper:** Marlee Agner**Communications Coordinator:** Lydia Elko**Custodian:** Tyeanna Segura**CYF Director:** Amanda Burkart**Facility & Grounds Manager:** David LaRose**Ministers:** All the Congregation**Music Director:** Mark Lundin**Organist:** Linda Ranney**Pastor:** Pr. Christine Emerson**St. John's Christian Preschool:**

Nancy Hanson, Amanda Schroeder,

Amanda Downing, Bria Lindstrom

**Lenten Schedule*****All In*****Worship****Sunday - 9:00**

Feb. 22 - Mar. 22

**Wednesday - 7:00**

Feb. 18 - Mar. 25

**Ash Wed. - 12:00 & 7:00****Meals****Soup Meals - 5:30**

Feb. - 18, 25

Mar. - 11, 18, 25

**Special Meals**

Ash Wed. - 1:00 &amp; 5:30

Palm Sunday - 10:15

*More details coming soon!***Trivia Corner**A: Seed, Land, and Blessing  
(Gen 12:1-3; 15:5-7; 17:2-8)**Easter Lily Order Form****Flower Type PLEASE CHECK ONE**Easter Lily - \$12 Daffodils - \$15 Tulips - \$15 **CIRCLE ONE**

IMO/IHO

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**Flower Type PLEASE CHECK ONE**Easter Lily - \$12 Daffodils - \$15 Tulips - \$15 **CIRCLE ONE**

IMO/IHO

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Please bring your order form with payment to the office by

***WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 25th***Offering Envelope #  Phone Number

# February Calendar

**Weekend Events:** **2/7** - 10:00 Luther Park Annual Meeting, **2/14** - Valentine's Day, **2/21** - 8:30 Eternal Angel Gown Sewing Day, **2/27** - No Preschool

1 9:00 Worship 10:15 Sunday School 10:30 Romans Bible Study 2:00 Grief Share	2 SJCP Registration Begins 6:30 JuBellation	3 1:00 Staff Meeting 7:00 STEP Group	4 9:00 Quilting 3:00 Men's Bible Study 5:00 1st Wednesdays 5:30 Choir 6:00 8th Gr. Confirmation 6:00 CREW	5 1:30 St. J's Apt. Services 6:00 Youth
8 9:00 Worship 10:15 Sunday School 10:30 Caretakers of Creation 2:00 Grief Share	9 5:15 Education 6:30 JuBellation	10 9:30 Staff Meeting 1:00 Worship & Music 2:00 Sr. & Home Visitation 6:30 Preschool 7:00 STEP Group	11 3:00 Men's Bible Study 5:30 Choir 6:00 8th Grade Confirmation	12 9:30 Rostered Leaders @Shepherd of the Hill - Elk Mound 1:30 St. J's Apt. Services 5:30 Stewardship 7:00 Property
15 9:00 Worship 10:15 Sunday School 10:15 Faith Family 10:30 'The Chosen' Study 1:00 Preschool Open House 2:00 Grief Share	16 3:00 Bible Study @ The Classics 5:30 Faith Family 6:30 JuBellation	17 9:30 Staff Meeting 4:30 Shrove Tuesday 7:00 STEP Group	18 9:30 Women's Circle 12:00 Worship 1:00 Soup Lunch 3:00 Men's Bible Study 5:30 Soup Supper 5:30 Choir 6:00 6-8 <sup>th</sup> Grade Confirmation 7:00 Worship	19 9:00 Volunteer @ The Community Table 6:00 Council
22 9:00 Worship 10:15 Annual Meeting 2:00 Grief Share	23 4:00 Finance 5:15 Easter Vigil Planning 6:30 JuBellation	24 9:30 Staff Meeting 7:00 STEP Group	25 Easter Lily Order Forms Due! 9:00 Quilting 3:00 Men's Bible Study 5:30 Soup Supper 5:30 Choir 6:00 6-8th Gr. Confirmation 7:00 Worship	26 10:30 Oakwood Health Services

“Beloved, let us love one another, because love is from God; everyone who loves is born of God and knows God. Whoever does not love does not know God, for God is love.” - 1 John 4:7-8

