

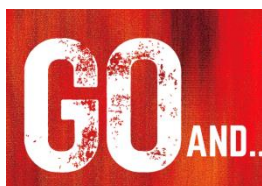


VOLUME 58

March 2024

NUMBER 3

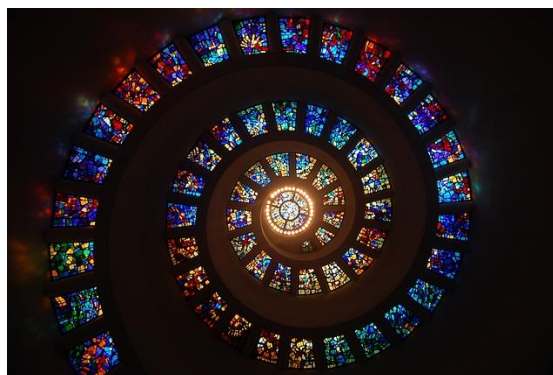
# March Chatterbox Newsletter



## Be Intentional

During this season of Lent, we are joining our ecumenical community in focusing on Spiritual Practices that help us deepen our experience of God in our lives, engage us more fully into the lives of our neighbors and all of creation. Many of us think that our practices can only be “Spiritual” if they have a component of prayer or meditation, but actually, **anything** we do that intentionally seeks to connect with God and with one another, **is** a “Spiritual Practice.” It is the Spirit in us, taking form in the world.

These practices can take various forms, and reach different people in differing ways. The willingness to experiment with many types of practices helps people find that one practice, or combination of practices, that best suits them by expanding their conversations with God, neighbor, and self. The practice you feel most comfortable with, might be something you do individually, or it might be something you do with a small group, or as part of a congregation. They could be prayer and meditative practices, they could be media practices like creating or watching movies, or artistic like painting, ceramics or quilting. There are also conversational like “dwelling in the word,” and small group gatherings like bible dinner groups. There are also service practices, like helping by shoveling their driveway, or picking up some things at the for them. Participating in intentional practices to deepen your with the world, is always a good thing, whether it is as an together with several people.



expressions practices too, studies, or your neighbor grocery store engagement individual or

Dr. Miroslav Volf, professor and founding Director of Center for Faith and Culture, argues that **all** practices are what God is already doing in the

the Yale shaped by

world. This understanding suggests that our practices are not distinct from our belief, but rather are integral to them. Our practices do not justify our belief, nor do they make us worthy of participation with God in the world, but our practices do allow us to constantly seek God’s presence, and opens us to hearing God’s guidance and direction for our lives. Which is actually the whole point of faith, right?

I invite all of you to attend our Lenten lunches with our ecumenical partners every Wednesday, at noon, in the fellowship hall of First United Methodist in Columbus. Together we can explore several spiritual practices and discover one that suits well in our lives, opening us to whole new experiences that help deepen our awareness of being connected to everything else in creation. Plus, there’s the bonus of soup and sandwiches, as we catch up with neighbors and friends. Coming together in shared community, is itself a spiritual practice!

Peace to you in your Lenten journeys.

Pastor Chris



# GO AND...

## BE INTENTIONAL

Jesus is on the road to the cross and is prepared for what is to come. Too often during Lent, we find ourselves busy marching down the road with a long 'to-do' list. The season of Lent calls to be intentional. This means showing up, being present, and diving in deep as disciples.

### Questions to consider:

- What is a Lenten or Easter tradition in your family?
- How can you be intentional in your preparation for Holy Week and Easter?
- How can you get unstuck and GO forward with intention as a follower of Jesus?

**Prayer:** The Lord's Prayer (Use the version of your heart)

**Suggested Song:** Beautiful Things (ACS 925)

### St. John's Council Meeting February 19, 2024

#### Opening

St. John's Lutheran Church Council met Monday, February 19, 2024 at 6:30 pm at the church.

Attending: Larry Wennkamp, Dave Groteluschen, Brian Bunkers, JoAnne Marxsen, Denise Stevenson, Pastor Chris Alexander and Karol Swan.

President, Larry Wennkamp called the meeting to order and opened with a prayer.

The minutes from January were read and approved by Brian, seconded by Larry. Motion Carried.

Karol went over the financial reports. Motion to approve was made by Brian, seconded by Karol. Motion Carried.

#### Financial for end of January 2024

**Beginning Monthly Balance** \$24,265.67  
**Monthly General Income** \$17,626.00  
**Monthly General Expense** \$15,280.32  
**Ending General Balance** \$26,643.86  
**YTD Income Required to Meet Budget** \$14,424.30  
**YTD Behind 2024 Budget** (\$1266.30)  
**Memorial Fund** \$1238.20

#### Old Business

- The website created by Pastor Dave Hall is currently free. The council discussed an upgrade fee of \$144 per year to use the website so we are able to upload more information such as our new video. The monies will come from the Evangelism Committee Budget. Motion was made by Brian to purchase the upgrade. Seconded by JoAnne. Motion Carried. The Call Committee will be able to utilize this link as needed.

- Pastor Chris discussed \$250 she had been given to use for emergency funding if someone requests this. Conditions were discussed. This will go into the Evangelism account. Pastor Chris can use as she sees fit and will keep record of any disbursements.
- Brian updated us that he told Pam and Sharon to research new organ options and get back to the council. There is no time limitation and Memorial money is available.
- New Committee members were discussed. Council Representatives were assigned. Potential new members were discussed and will be contacted. Larry and Pat Cuda will be given final list.

## **New Business**

- The Easter Sunrise service will be 7:30 am Sunday, March 31. A brunch will follow with egg casserole, pastries, milk, orange juice and coffee. Dave will contact Pat to create a sign-up sheet. Tables will be set up Friday and Karol will do coverings and decorations.
- Christian Education and Worship/Music will be contacted to do preparations for an Easter Egg hunt following the brunch.
- Pastor Chris discussed a radio ad prepared by Jackson Moore and Evangelism committee. There is a BOGO opportunity so 16 slots for price of 8 at \$108 total. Pastor Chris has March ad schedule.
- Troy Schlueter's membership transfer was accepted with motion by Dave and second by JoAnne. Welcome to our congregation.
- St. Johns is responsible for the Ecumenical Lunch on Wednesday, March 20. Pastor Chris will order Hy-Vee and ask WELCA members to help.
- Confirmation will be Palm Sunday, March 24. A reception following service will be planned. Worship/Music and Christian Education will prepare and council members will help.
- Brian went over the CD's and gave all the information sheet.
- All signed up on the Monthly Duties sheet. The worship responsibilities, council duties, and funeral duties sheets were read and clarified.
- Discussion on sending council documents. Request agenda items then create agenda and sent it with financials, minutes and pastor report.
- Discussion of possible sign up for ushers.

## **Pastor's Report to Church Council**

This month we begin our Lenten activities, focusing on: the Spiritual practices of God for God's People; How Jesus Lived into these practices of God; and How we might respond to these practices with our own spiritual practices within our daily living. We will participate in the Ecumenical Worship and Lunches held at First United Methodist every Wednesday at noon, during lent. I will be the presenter at the first gathering on February 21, and St John's will be the provider of soups and sandwiches for lunch on Wednesday, March 20.

This week we will celebrate Ash Wednesday with communion and the imposition of ashes, at the Prairie Village Retirement community, and then again at St John's at our 7:00 worship service. We will also be switching our Adult Bible Study to Wednesday nights at 6:30 during Lent. Our study will follow 5 parables of Jesus, using the book *Short Stories By Jesus: The Enigmatic Parables of a Controversial Rabbi* by Amy-Jill Levine, as a resource.

Since our last meeting in January, I have continued visits with those in residential communities, and home visits, as well as teaching confirmation, spending time with the Sunday School students in their opening gathering each Sunday, and leading our Monday night bible study. I have also attended the annual meeting of our congregation, celebrated the service of our outgoing council members, Tracey Moore and Bethany Wilke, and have installed our new 2024 Council members, including 2 new members, Joanne Marxen and Karol Swan. I also officiated a Wedding, and the funerals of Dennis Sander and Marilyn Lusche.

We are now looking forward to Confirming our 2 confirmation students on Palm Sunday, as well as celebrating

Holy Week with additional services on Maundy Thursday, Good Friday, as well as a sunrise Easter service followed by a breakfast and Easter Egg hunt for the children.

**Next Meeting: Monday, March 18, 2024 6:30 pm at church**

Motion to Adjourn made by Dave, Brian seconded. Closed with Lord's Prayer

Respectfully Submitted by Karol Swan. Council Secretary

**St. John's Church-Shell Creek  
Annual Meeting Minutes  
January 28, 2024**

The Annual meeting of St. John's was held following church services on January, 28th 2024.

President Tracey Moore called the meeting to order, and Pastor Chris Alexander led an opening prayer.

A quorum was declared present. Sam Welch & Doug Hartman were appointed tellers.

The minutes of the July 2023 minutes were read. Sharon Hartman moved and Jan Liss seconded approval of the minutes. Motion passed. The minutes will be placed on file.

The Auditor's Report was reviewed by Brian Bunkers & Sam Welch. The WELCA/Memorial funds are all in order on the books.

The Financial Secretary's report was reviewed by Doug Hartman. There were no questions on the report. Doug Hartman reported that it was the same format as last year. The monthly general income was a little higher than Pam's. The last Sunday of the year's amount is off, but it will carry over. This year we had to touch into the reserves. Kendra Bunkers moved and Jackson Moore seconded the approval. The Treasurer Report was reviewed. No questions for Pam. Clayton Brunt moved and Kendra Bunkers seconded the approval of all three.

**Old Business**

Tracey Moore gave an update on behalf of Rose Runge. There are no updates currently. Big thanks to all of those serving on the Call Committee!

**New Business**

Brian Bunkers expressed how they tried to keep everything the same and in line with the budget. The major changes are Pastor's pay and our insurance. We moved Pastor to three quarters time. We are compensating her for the wonderful work she has been doing for our Church. The positive is our finance committee has invested some of our money in CDs to help

offset some of the income. Clayton Brunt made a motion to approve the 2023 budget. Jackson Moore seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Karol Swan and JoAnne Marxsen offered to fill openings left by outgoing council members Bethany Wilke and Tracey Moore. We did take nominees from the floor. Jackson Moore made a motion to accept Karol Swan and Joanne Marxsen in for new council members. Barb Welch seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Volunteers are needed to be voting members for the Synod Assembly for the June 1-2 date. Please speak to Pastor Chris if you are interested.

### **Committee Reports**

-Christian Education-2023 report was submitted. No questions.

-Evangelism-2023 report was submitted. The video that was created by Rival Design is finished. There was a recommendation to place the video on our profile page as well. The video was played for the congregation. Thank you to Larry Wennekamp for providing the voice over for the video.

-Property-Brad Luchsinger spoke on behalf of the property committee. Thank you to those that have really stepped up especially with all the snow removal and the funeral help. It was all greatly appreciated.

-Stewardship-2023 report was submitted. No questions.

-Worship & Music-2023 report was submitted. The survey results from the communion showed a majority of members wanting two communions per month starting in February. Alter guild was also in favor. The second Sunday will then be Celebration Sunday. Thank you so much for the input!

-Social Ministry-2023 report was submitted. No questions. Thank you to all of those who chipped in and helped.

Jackson Moore moved to adjourn the meeting with a second from Chris Luchsinger. Motion carried. The congregation closed with the Lord's Prayer.

Respectfully submitted by Bethany Wilke, Council Secretary

### Post Annual Meeting of the Council

St John's Lutheran Church Council met briefly following the church wide morning Annual Meeting, Sunday, January 28, 2024.

Dave Groteluschen, Larry Wennekamp, Brian Bunkers, Denise Stevenson, and new members, JoAnne Marxsen and Karol Swan were present as was Pastor Chris Alexander.

There was a brief discussion to elect new council officers. Several passed on nomination and officers were determined by general agreement.

President-Larry Wennekamp for year 2024

Vice-President-Dave Groteluschen for year 2024

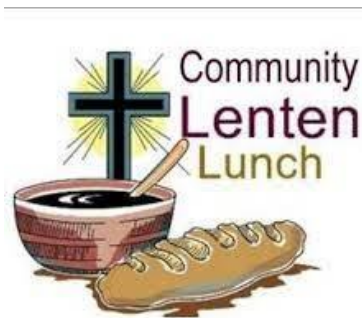
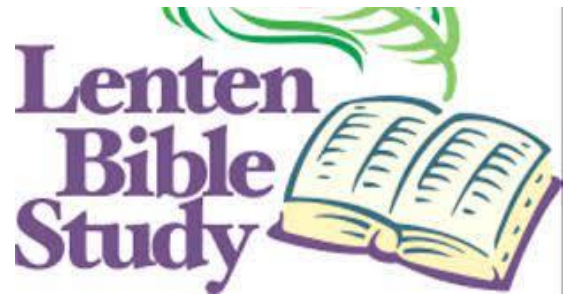
Dave and Larry will switch offices for year 2025  
Secretary- Karol Swan

Next meeting will be Monday, February 19, 2024 at 6:30 pm

Respectfully submitted,  
Karol Swan

### Lenten Bible Study

Bible Study continues on Wednesday nights at 6:30pm instead of a service. The study will be with Dr. Amy-Jill Levine on a series called "Short Stories" (Parables of Jesus). Come join Pastor Chris in the group discussion.



### Community Lenten Lunches

The Ecumenical Lenten lunches continues to be held at the United Methodist Church at noon on Wednesdays during lent. Come enjoy soup, sandwiches, dessert, and a Lenten message. All Ecumenical Partner Pastors will be preaching.

**St. John's serves the lunch on the 20<sup>th</sup>.**

The dates are:  
March 6<sup>th</sup>, 13<sup>th</sup>, & 20<sup>th</sup>



### Holy Week Services

Palm Sunday-March 24<sup>th</sup>-10:00am

Maundy Thursday-March 28<sup>th</sup>-7:00pm

Good Friday Ecumenical Service-Grace Episcopal Church Columbus-noon

Good Friday at St. John's March 29<sup>th</sup>-7:00pm

Easter Sunday-March 21<sup>st</sup>-7:30am with breakfast and an egg hunt following the service.

## WELCA Spring Business Meeting

WELCA Spring business meeting will be held on March 5, 2024 at 7 p.m. at the church. Our guest speaker is Aimee Heesacker of Big Pals/Little Pals. Ruth is the hostess for that evening. All women of the church are welcome to attend.



## WELCA Spring Gathering

*WELCA Spring Gathering will be held in Grand Island, NE on April 13, 2024. Registration forms are on the bulletin board in the Narthex and are due by April 3rd. The fee is \$20 per person.*



## 2024 St. John's WEE SINGERS SCHEDULE (KIDDOS AGE 4-GRADE 2)

**SAVE THE DATES...  
SINGING THE 2ND SUNDAY OF  
EACH MONTH.**

**MARCH 10<sup>TH</sup>  
APRIL 14<sup>TH</sup>  
MAY 12<sup>TH</sup>**

## Quilting

Quilting takes place every Monday afternoon from 1:00-4:00 pm during lent. Beautiful things are created one stitch at a time. So come get your stitches in!!





**Time to start thinking about Summer  
And Party with VBS!!**

**Bible School will be held on May 28<sup>th</sup>-31<sup>st</sup>  
from 8:30-noon. Children's Day Program  
will be on June 2nd with the service  
beginning at 11:00am (no 10:00am service),  
with a potluck to follow.**

**Volunteer meeting will be after the service on March 3<sup>rd</sup> and there is a  
sign-up sheet on the bulletin board. Registration will be at a later  
date. Contact Chris Luchsinger or Bethany Wilke if interested in  
volunteering.**



**Calvary Cemetary Annual Meeting**

The annual meeting of Calvary Cemetary will be held  
on Tuesday, April 9, 2024 at 8:00pm in the church  
parlor of St. John's Lutheran, Shell Creek.

**Thank You**

Thank you, thank you, thank you for all that you do as God's people  
in and around Columbus. Thank you especially for your continued  
participation in Mission Share. Through you, and because of you, so  
much good work is done in the world, and so many lives are changed  
out of God's love made real through you. Together we "Go and..." as  
God's people, cultivating love as Jesus' disciples. Please know that  
your congregation is prayed for daily by your grateful siblings in  
Christ, near and far. Thank you for sharing God's love with the world!

God's peace and blessings,  
Timothy Siburg, Stewardship NE Synod







# March



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<u>Office Hours</u> Tues. and Thurs 9:00 AM-1:00 PM  Pastor is in Columbus on Sun. to Tues					1	2
3 8:50AM Sunday School 10:00 AM Worship Service with communion	4 Quilting 1-4 PM	5	6 Ecumenical Lenten Lunch noon Lenten Bible Study 6:30PM	7	8	9
10 8:50 AM Sunday School 10:00 AM Worship Service Wee Singers	11 Quilting 1-4 PM	12	13 Ecumenical Lenten Lunch noon Lenten Bible Study 6:30PM	14	15	16
17 8:50 AM Sunday School 10:00 AM Worship Service with communion	18 Quilting 1-4 PM Council meeting 6:30PM Ruth Circle 7:00PM	19 Tabitha Circle 7:00PM	20 Ecumenical Lenten Lunch noon Lenten Bible Study 6:30PM	21 Eve Circle 1:30PM	22	23
24 8:50 AM Sunday School 10:00 AM Palm Sunday Worship Service with Confirmation	25 Quilting 1-4 PM	26	27	28 Maundy Thursday Service 7:00PM	29 Good Friday Service 7:00PM	30
31 7:30AM Easter Worship Service with breakfast and an egg hunt		<u>Council Reps</u> Brian Bunkers Dave Groteluschen	<u>Altar Guild</u> Barb Welch	<u>Lectors</u> Mar. 3 <sup>rd</sup> -Barb Welch Mar. 10 <sup>th</sup> -Chris Luchsinger	<u>Lectors</u>	<u>Cleaner</u> Deb Runge

Congregation Officers 2024  
 President: Larry Wennekamp  
 Vice President: Dave Groteluschen  
 Secretary: Karol Swan  
 Financial Secretary: Doug Hartman (income)  
 Treasurer: Pam Goering (expenditures)

Council members: Denise Stevenson, JoAnne Marxsen,  
 Brian Bunkers

Please put your committee and organization meetings on the  
 calendar in the Narthex on the information desk or send to  
 Pat Cuda at [stjohnshellcreek@gmail.com](mailto:stjohnshellcreek@gmail.com)



ST. JOHN'S LUTHERAN CHURCH  
10785 280<sup>TH</sup> ST  
COLUMBUS, NE 68601

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

"A COUNTRY CHURCH WITH A WORLDWIDE MISSION"

SUNDAY SCHOOL  
School Year, Sunday at 8:50 A.M.

WORSHIP  
Sunday 10:00 A.M.

Cell Phone 701-226-8140 Pastor Alexander  
Office Phone 402-564-8707

Website: [www.stjohnlutheranshellcreek.weebly.com](http://www.stjohnlutheranshellcreek.weebly.com)  
Email: [stjohnshellcreek@gmail.com](mailto:stjohnshellcreek@gmail.com)  
10785 280<sup>th</sup> St.  
Columbus, NE 68601-8745

From Hwy 30: 5 Miles North on 18<sup>th</sup> Ave 4 1/2 Miles east on 280<sup>th</sup> St.