



The *GOOD NEWS*

To provide hope by Reaching out and Connecting people to Jesus through the Holy Spirit and Encouraging them to share the same Good News.

February 2021



From the desk of Pastor Brewer

As the vaccines are starting to be rolled out in larger quantities to more and more of our population the question that arises is, “When and how do we open things up more?” People will inevitably have totally different answers based on their beliefs concerning the virus. Some will want to keep things locked down as much as they are now for a while longer because of the continued fear that they hear on a daily basis on the unknowns concerning the vaccines and new strains of the virus, along with a general fear that has arisen throughout the pandemic. Others will want to immediately throw caution to the wind and drop everything in an attempt to go back to what they consider “normal.” Is there a “right” or “biblical” answer to the question of what we should do?

Yes, I believe so. In fact there are two passages from two of Paul’s epistle letters that seem to speak to a situation that could apply here. I’m referring to Romans 14 and 1 Corinthians 8. I’m not going to print them out here but instead encourage you to stop reading this article until you have read both of these passages.

The topics that Paul is dealing with is concerning eating meat that has been sacrificed to false gods and Christian freedom. You might be wondering what the heck these things have to do with Covid-19. Well here is the answer. The people in Paul’s day were struggling with the same issues concerning the eating of this meat as you and I are today with Covid-19, namely how to balance another person’s conscience with our freedom. Or said another way the people who were afraid to eat the meat sacrificed to other gods feared this practice would cost them their eternal life. Those who understood the freedom that Christ had given Christians through His perfect keeping of the Law and all availing sacrifice on the Cross knew that they no longer had to worry about these past practices because Christ was their righteousness. But what did God inspire Paul to tell those who understood their new freedom best? Out of love for their fellow Christians do what will keep them from stumbling.

**St. John Lutheran Church
Pastor Carl Brewer
Pastor Craig VanPay**

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In-person Services

Sunday

8:00 am

10:30 am

Wednesday

7:30 pm

**Ash Wednesday Service
February 17, 2021
6:00 pm & 7:30 pm**

Drive up communion will take place after the 8am service.

We will continue to stream the 8am service each week on the St John Lutheran Church Facebook page.

**Online giving is
available!**

Visit www.stjohnlux.com
and click on Online
Giving – Your Support
Counts!

How can we apply that to our situation today? What would be the most loving way we can treat those who are still greatly concerned over getting Covid-19? How can we open things up while at the same time following practices that provide people reassurance that we're doing everything we can to not spread the virus through our church activities? How can I personally put into practice how Paul is encouraging all Christians to live with each other?

I believe that the next six months to a year are still going to be rocky for a lot of people as they have to slowly overcome the fear that has been instilled through the fear mongering, they hear daily all around them. The process of reconnecting to the world outside of their homes and learning to be comfortable in other places like at church is going to be a process. I've seen it already in the eyes of people as people come back to church for the first time in person, or when there are larger groups in church for a service. We got used to the way things have been, for better or worse, and it's going to take time to get used to our new normal again. But love, not judgement, as Paul speaks about in Romans and 1 Corinthians is going to be what sees us through these struggles together as the body of Christ.

On a different note, I would also encourage you to ask yourself what changes that have been made you think we should keep and even expand upon. If another pandemic ever happened again, what would we do then? Or in another scenario, if the hostility toward our faith continues to grow how will we be the church in a persecuted nation? These are the questions I think we need to keep in mind as we go forward serving our Lord in this place and working together as brothers and sisters in Christ.

In Christ ✝,
Pastor Brewer



NEWS & EVENTS



SAVE THE DATE! New Members Class: If you are considering becoming a member of St. John and interested in learning more about the beliefs and teachings of the Lutheran Church Missouri Synod, join us for a New Members Class on Sunday, February 21st from 1:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m. Current members looking to refresh their knowledge on the teachings of the church are also welcome. Please contact Pastor Brewer to register.

Mission Trip: We will be having a youth **Mission Trip informational meeting on Sunday January 31st, at 1:00pm** at the church. We will also make the meeting available through Zoom if anyone would prefer to attend virtually. If anyone would like that link, please reply and we will get the link to you prior to the meeting. This year's trip will depart on Saturday, July 24th, and return on Saturday July 31st. We will be going to Rapid City, South Dakota, and it is open to middle school and high school youth. If you are interested in going, or learning more about the trip, please attend in person or virtually. Feel free to contact me with any questions. Thank you! Craig Van Pay / 920-255-3267

Attention ALL Youth Grades 9th through 12th: Join us for St John's Youth Group gatherings with Vicar Craig VanPay. (Invite friends – you do not need to be a member of St John's to attend). Together we will share our Faith and encourage each other on our walk with the Lord through various topics and events. Questions, please contact Vicar Craig VanPay.

These are the days that we will plan to meet...

Sunday, January 17th, 6pm-8pm

Sunday, January 31st, 6pm-8pm

Sunday, February 21st, 6pm-8pm

Sunday, March 7th, 6pm-8pm

Sunday, March 21st, 6pm-8pm

Sunday, April 10th, 6pm-8pm

Sunday, April 18th, 6pm-8pm

Sunday, May 2nd, 6pm-8pm

Sunday, May 16th, 6pm-8pm

Harvest Event

After much thought and prayerful consideration, it has been decided to end the Annual Harvest Event. With the 2020 event not taking place, event coordinators feel it is a good time to let this event end. It served its original purpose, to help pay off the Church's mortgage, as well as benefit community organizations, and purchase extra items for the Church. If anyone wishes to continue the event, Larry & Deb Heling and Norene Giese would be happy to explain what they did over the past years, turn over past year's records to them, and new event coordinators would be free to explore whatever new ideas they may wish to try.

"We wish to thank everyone for their support over the past year's events and wish God's blessings to anyone that may decide to pursue future plans". Sincerely, Deb and Larry Heling

Ruby's PANTRY

February 13, 2021

Parking lot opens & In person registration begins at 7:30 a.m.

Food Distribution from 8:30 a.m. – 10:00 a.m.

\$20 donation for an abundance of food.

Online Pre-Registration: \$20 Share Donation + \$1 Processing Fee

Use Your Debit or Credit Card On-line at www.rubyspantry.org

Pre-Registration guarantees your share and is available until all spots are filled.

You will receive an abundance of grocery items!

Drive-thru distribution at St. John Lutheran Church

700 Heritage Rd. Luxemburg WI

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Elder Meeting Minutes - January 26, 2021

Open with Prayer

Elders Present:

Pastor Carl Brewer, Pastor Craig VanPay, Paul Derenne, Kevin Lampe, Eric Nelson, Jeff VanDenBerg

Transfers In/ New Members:

Name	Type of Transfer
Steve & Sue Buchholz	Affirmation of Faith
WayeAnn Hynek	Affirmation of Faith

Released from Membership: Emily (Hanmann) Moon to Bethlehem Lutheran Church in Sheboygan, WI.

Old Business: None

New Business:

February 17th Ash Wednesday Services: 6:00 pm & 7:30 pm

March 28th Psalm Sunday: 8:00 am & 10:30 am

April 1st Maundy Thursday Service: 7:30 pm

April 2nd Good Friday: 1:00 pm, 4:00 pm & 7:00 pm

April 4th Easter Sunday: 6:00 am, 8:00 am, 10:30 am

Closed with Prayer

Submitted by: Jeff VanDenBerg

Next Meeting: February 18 at 6:00 pm

Trustee Meeting Minutes - January 18, 2021

Meeting called to order at 7:00 p.m. and opened with prayer. Members present: Dan DeGrave, Ken Batten and Lloyd Loberger.

Items discussed included:

- 1) Re-organizing the Board of Trustees after installation of the new officer in February.
- 2) Keeping the building secure by keeping an accurate record of who has keys to the building and the possibility of switching over to something like a key fob system for building entry sometime in the future.
- 3) Mr. Batten reported that he has spoken with a salt supplier about price and availability of ice melt products for the church parking lot. Also, the new rubber cutting edges installed on the truck plow are working satisfactorily so far.
- 4) Mr. DeGrave reported that the floor scrubber was fixed. He also stated that a cleaning wand for the carpet machine should be considered. That could be used for cleaning the pews at a considerable cost savings. After some discussion the Trustees agreed that a cleaning wand should be purchased at a cost of around \$300.

Meeting adjourned and closed with prayer at 8:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted, Lloyd Loberger

Board of Education Minutes - January 11, 2021

*Members present: Jodi Reinhard, Loren Vandenberg, Heather Vande Vyver, Shelly Piesler, Ryann VanErem, Terri Batten, Sue Hanmann, and Pastor Brewer

LIFE Hour

- After careful consideration and based on the Life Hour survey/comments, the Board of Education has decided to continue the virtual model for the remainder of the 2020- 2021 school year. This includes PK-4th Grade. Parents are encouraged to continue to use the online PG Kids which can be found on the church website. We are considering Vacation Bible School for this summer. More details to follow about VBS.
- 3rd Graders can pick up their Bibles in the church office. Their names are on the Bibles.
- Confirmation class (5th-6th Grade) will continue to meet on Wednesday. Starting Wednesday, February 3, confirmation class will have the option to attend in person from 6:00-7:00. Social distancing and masks will be required. The google meet link will still be provided to those who wish to attend virtually. Parents are encouraged to attend by not required.
- Terri Batten notified the Board of Education that she will be stepping down as Superintendent at the end of May. We want to extend a huge THANK YOU for her years of service and dedication to our youth. A search will begin to find a successor to fill the position.

**Janice Krueger and Stacey Fett have agreed to put their names on the ballot as candidates for the Board of Education elections to replace Shelly Piesler and Jodi Reinhard.

Next meeting: February 22nd at 6:30 PM in person

Submitted by Shelly Piesler

Church Council Meeting – December 17, 2020

Members present: Pastor Brewer, Craig VanPay, Edward Trembl, Rob Funk, Norene Giese, Jenny DeGrave, Kevin Lampe, Jeff VanDenBerg, Carmine Nell, Ann Reckelberg, Lloyd Loberger, Dan DeGrave, Nancy Loberger

Meeting called to order at 7:00 p.m. by President Trembl.

Pastor Brewer opened the meeting with prayer.

Minutes of the November 19 meeting were reviewed. Motion to approve the minutes was made by Dan DeGrave. Seconded by Jeff VanDenBerg. Motion carried.

Pastor reported no changes in membership in the past month.

Rob Funk provided the budget for January 1 through November 30, 2020:

- Total Undesignated Contributions - \$267,768
- Total Church Revenue - \$281,437
- Total Expenses - \$276,462
- Total Assets - \$259,806
- Difference: Contributions minus Total Expenses = negative \$8,694
- Ruby's Pantry: Savings - \$3,315 & Checking - \$2,347
- Paid on Loan 2020: \$22,000 – Loan Balance: \$79,963
- Apron Gang: Savings - \$25 & Checking - \$4,383

Rob reported the bill to Custom Seal Coating was paid off in December. The business has been sold and felt best to settle the account before the end of December.

Elders –

- No transfers of members in or out of membership the past month.
- Vicar Craig Van Pay has given his acceptance letter regarding his call to serve as pastor.
- Three services will take place on Christmas Eve at 1:00, 4:00 and 7:00 p.m. One service will take place on Christmas Day at 9:00 a.m.

Trustees –

- There is a problem with the sound equipment in the sanctuary, Northern Sound Contracting will be contacted to correct the problem.
- Wulf Brothers has started the repairs of the building heating equipment.
- Both the floor scrubber and carpet cleaner are in need of repair.
- The Trustees are working on the implementation of the “financial review” process.
- Volunteers for snow removal have been contacted and a list assembled.

Stewardship Committee –

- The Stewardship job description was reviewed and updates suggested.
- Still looking for one more member for elections taking place in January.
- The cookbook sales have been going well, cookbooks are still available.
- The Red Cross held a blood drive in our fellowship hall on November 23. A blood drive is also scheduled for the high school on January 25, if they are unable to have it there due to COVID-19, the drive will take place at our church.
- Next meeting is scheduled for January 12.

Board of Education –

- A survey will be sent to members to gain feedback about in-person Life Hour. Results will be discussed at their January meeting.
- Kevin Lampe has been working with families for the virtual Christmas program to be shown at the December 20 services.
- Janice Krueger and Stacey Fett have agreed to put their names on the ballot as candidates at the January elections.

Evangelism Committee –

- A candidate has agreed to be placed on the ballot for the January elections.
- Jenny Shaw has prepared an insert to be included with the December Ruby’s Pantry distribution.
- Donations to support Kewaunee County families through County Human Services far exceeded what was hoped, 40 families will be assisted with gifts for the Christmas season. A card to parents from St. John Lutheran Church was included along with coloring books for the children.
- Volunteers for Ruby’s Pantry expressed concern about the floor cleaner not working and having to clean floors by hand with a mop.

Old Business –

- The ordination service for Vicar Van Pay will take place on Sunday, January 24, 4:00 p.m. Due to COVID-19, seating will be limited, only 75 people will be allowed in the sanctuary and in the fellowship for refreshments afterward. Apron Gang has agreed to help with refreshment preparations. Possibly a committee will be created to work with Craig and Apron Gang for the event. Nancy Loberger moved to

set aside up to \$1,000 for food costs. Kevin Lampe seconded. Motion carried. There may be SMP (Specific Ministry Program) funds available, Committee budgets and any members willing to apply for a Thrivent grant to help with the expenses. Once it is determined how many members may be able to attend, a signup sheet will be available. Dan DeGrave moved to email church members to see who would be interested in attending the ordination. Kevin Lampe seconded. Motion carried. The service will also be live streamed through Facebook. Discussion also took place to have an outdoor summer celebration when and if COVID-19 restrictions are lifted.

- COVID-19 procedures being used by the Elders have been going well. Attendance at the Wednesday evening service has been going well compared to when it had taken place on Mondays.

New Business –

- January elections: Elders – Matt Kinnard and Gus Schmoll; Trustees – Kevin Vanden Bush; Board of Education – Janice Krueger and Stacey Fett have all agreed to be on the ballot. Names of candidates are to be placed in the weekly bulletin prior to elections.

Voters' Meeting Date: January 31, 9:15 a.m.

Next Meeting Date: Thursday, January 28, 7:00 p.m. in person and Zoom

Rob Funk moved to adjourn the meeting. Seconded by Ann Reckelburg. Motion carried.

Closed the meeting with the Lord's Prayer at 7:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Norene Giese, Council Secretary