



The **St. Johns Servant**

**St. Johns
Lutheran Church**

Park Rapids, Minnesota

April, 2018

How to Really Experience Easter

I would urge you to set aside your normal schedule and join together in worship Thursday and Friday before we celebrate the great festival of Easter. Below are a four reasons why.

1. Jesus tells us to “Take up our cross and follow” Him. This week is the central celebration of our Christian faith, the time in which Jesus literally took up His cross. Two extra hours of sacrifice in worship is so very little compared to what He did for us.
2. Maundy Thursday brings us face to face with Jesus’ final acts with His disciples: the washing of their feet; the new commandment to love one another as He has loved us; the transformation of an old feast (Passover) into the new covenant in His body and blood. As we gather for worship we are reminded again how these acts are to transform our attitudes and actions to be like Jesus.
3. Good Friday is somber, but not sad. Good Friday is clothed in darkness and draped in black vestments. We even reverse the lighting of Advent candles, snuffing them out as the darkness of death closes in on Jesus. But at the same time we rejoice that Jesus laid down His life for His friends - us.
4. There is no Easter without the cross. Easter is not an ode to Springtime, or a celebration of natural cycles of new birth. Bunnies, eggs and candy are fine, but they are not Easter. Good Friday brings us to the stark reality of death, Jesus’ death and ours. And that prepares us to celebrate with renewed joy the true nature of Easter – the resurrection of Jesus from the dead and the hope of our own resurrection.

Pastor Neubauer

Holy Week Schedule

Maundy Thursday, March 29, noon and 5:30 p.m. with stripping of the altar at the 5:30 p.m. service
Cleansing: “You shall never wash my feet” (John 13:1-15)

Good Friday, March 30, noon and 5:30 p.m. *Death:* “This Jesus, you crucified” (Acts 2:22-24, 37-38)

Easter, April 1, 6:00 a.m. - Sunrise Service
7:00 a.m. - Breakfast served by the youth
8:00 and 10:30 a.m. - Festival Worship Services with communion
Life: “Go, tell his disciples and Peter” (Mark 16:1-8)





Order Your Easter Lilies

This year we are decorating the church for Easter with lilies. If you would like to purchase a lily, the cost is \$8.00. Please sign up in the front lobby to reserve your lily. They may be taken home after the 10:30 a.m. service on Easter morning.

Hey Youth! Come Help with the Easter Breakfast

We need help in all areas for the Easter breakfast from setting up on Saturday to flipping pancakes and cleaning up on Easter morning. Please check the sign up sheet by the front office and sign up to help. Thanks!



Lenten Meal Thank You



A big thank you goes out to all the groups who cooked and served the Lenten meals this year—Ladies Aid, Evening Guild, Youth, Lutheran Laymen's League and the Board of Parish Fellowship. Having a meal available makes it easier to schedule time to attend worship and provides an opportunity for fellowship. We really appreciate all your hard work and delicious food!

Time to Start Planning for Vacation Bible School

It may still look like winter but June is just around the corner and we're planning for a great Vacation Bible School, June 4-8. Our theme this year is "Splash Canyon." We'll learn how God is with us through life in rough waters and through smooth sailing. Sarah Kaufenberg has volunteered to be director this year and Nancy Ganske is back to do decorating.

Our first planning meeting will be held Sunday, April 8 after the 10:30 a.m. service. If you're interested in helping with VBS, please come to the meeting. We'd love to have you be part of Vacation Bible School!

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Classic Chorale Concerts

Come and enjoy the Classic Chorale's spring concerts which will be held here at St. Johns on Friday, April 20 at 7:30 p.m. and Sunday, April 22 at 3:00 p.m. Their concerts are always excellent so be sure to mark your calendars and plan to attend.



We May Get a Deaconess, Too

Sarah Newton, wife of Joel Newton, one of our seminary choices, is a trained deaconess and would like to put her skills and training to work in the congregation they are called to. Dr. Glenn Nielsen, placement director at Concordia Seminary asked that we send a call document for Sarah and call her to a deaconess position if they are assigned to St. Johns.



A special voters meeting was held March 25 and the assembly decided to issue a call to Sarah for a part time position. The position would be for 10-15 hours a week and primary duties would be visitation and women's ministry. Salary would be paid with a combination of budgeted funds, endowment fund and Ted Haberer trust.

Now we have to wait until April 24 to find out if we will receive a pastor and a deaconess.

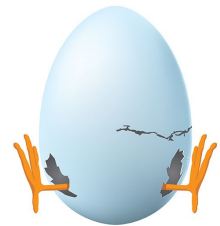


Youth Game Night and Dinner

All youth grade 5-8 are invited to a night of food and fun on Sunday, April 29 from 4:00—6:00 p.m. Watch for more details in the bulletin.

Children's Choir Working on Big Musical

The Children's Choir has been hard at work practicing for their upcoming musical "O Chicken of Little Faith" which will be presented Saturday, May 12 at 2:00 p.m. The musical is about Faith, a girl spending the summer on her grandparents farm. She falls asleep and dreams that the chickens have become human sized and escaped. As they find their way back to the farm, Faith learns some "faith lessons."



What's On The Lutheran Hour

- 4/01 "They Were Afraid, You Know?"
- 4/08 "It's Really Real"
- 4/15 "Peace to You"
- 4/22 "What's in a Name?"
- 4/29 "The Answer to Unhappiness"

Listen to the Lutheran Hour every Sunday on KPRM 870 AM at 9:30 a.m. or KTIG 102.7 FM at 5:00 p.m. on Sundays.

The Lutheran Laymen's League sponsors the program on KPRM each Sunday. If you would like to help sponsor the program your gift may be placed in the offering and earmarked "Local Lutheran Hour."

† Baptisms

- 3/11 Emma Joy Quinn
Nick Quinn & Michelle Erno
- 3/11 Adalynn Marie Roman
Alexander Roman & Michelle Erno

† Funeral

- 3/12 Betty Hensel





Stewardship Corner—Making Contacts for Jesus

Do your neighbors and co-workers know you are Christian? How about the person who sells you your coffee or the person who delivers your mail? Are you attempting to develop a relationship with these people so you can share the Good News of the Gospel with them? We can give no greater service to Jesus than to be part of rescuing lost souls by sharing the life-saving Gospel. Jesus commissions us to *“Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and of the Holy Spirit”* (Matthew 28:19). God wants *“all people to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth”* (1 Timothy 2:4). We are to be Jesus’ hands, feet, and mouth. Jesus tells us *“The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few. Therefore pray earnestly to the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into His harvest”* (Luke 10:2).



God’s plan for His people has always been that we take responsibility for sharing the Good News. Peter wrote, *“Always being prepared to make a defense to anyone who asks you for a reason for the hope that is in you”* (1 Peter 3:15). God blesses us with minds to learn and mouths to speak. Through the power of the Holy Spirit, God will give us the words and the courage to use them. Along with most people, we are eager to talk about the weather, sports, economy, or politics, but, as Christians, we have been given the treasure of the Gospel message--something vastly more important to talk about. Our attitude should be like that of Peter and John, who, when commanded to stop speaking of Christ, said, *“We cannot but speak of what we have seen and heard”* (Acts 4:20).

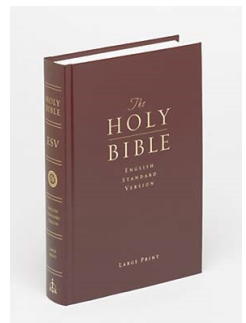
For many, sharing the Gospel is uncomfortable, but do people need Jesus more than we need to be comfortable. God has placed us among many people who do not know Jesus. With God’s help, we can become very intentional with our witnessing. He can open our eyes to opportunities and give us the words to speak. We may want to consider developing a list of people who do not have a relationship with Jesus. The people could be in your inner circle of family and friends as well as in your outer circle of relationships. We can be empowered to witness because the Holy Spirit will guide and direct us.



Large Print ESV Bibles Available

We recently replaced the Bibles in the social hall and library with new large print ESV versions that include Luther’s Small Catechism. We have a few extra Bibles available for purchase. They are \$15 each (a steal since list price is \$21.99). Stop by the church office if you would like one.

We also have a few of the old NIV Bibles to give away. Once again, stop in at the church office if you want one.





Stewardship Review— February

Avg. Sunday Worship Attendance: **195**

Total Offerings: **\$29,361**
 Total Expenses: **\$31,249**
 Difference - **\$1,888**

Total Offerings, February, 2017: **\$32,556**
 Total Expenses, February, 2017: **\$33,208**
 Difference - **\$652**

Avg. Weekly Offerings **\$7,340**
 Avg. Weekly Expenses **\$7,812**
 Difference - **\$472**

Budget/Week **\$9,201**
 Budget/Month **\$39,870**

CNB Checkbook Balance as of 02/28/18: **\$89,268**
 Less Dedicated Accounts - **\$2,206**
 Difference **\$87,062**
 Less Healthy Balance **\$34,170**
 Difference **\$52,892**

Our Healthy Balance Goal **\$74,000**
 Raised so far **\$34,170**
 Still need **\$39,830**

Thanks for A Successful Blood Drive

On behalf of United Blood Services, I'd like to thank everyone who volunteered to call donors, work registration, serve or provide snacks, and **especially** those who donated blood during our drive on March 19 & 20. There were 100 donors who were able to successfully donate for a total of 120 blood products. This wonderful outcome could not be accomplished without the help of our volunteers and donors. Thank you so much, everyone, for your support!



Elayne Luiken, Blood Drive Coordinator

Parish Planning Council Minutes—March 20, 2018

Meeting called to order by Dr. Rod Helm, Executive Director. Attending Rod Helm, Pastor Neubauer, Elayne Luiken, Shirley Potter, Ruth Knaack, Brandi Backmann, Jerry Grudem, Brad Dahn, Ginny Ranisate and Cliff Branham. Absent - Connie Fondow

Approval of the PPC minutes from October 24, 2017-Motion Cliff Branham, second Jerry Grudem – Carried.

Treasurer's Report

Year	Income	Expense	Difference
2018	94,693	83,308	11,385
2017	106,799	97,408	9,391
Difference	-12,106	-14,100	--

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Board

HIGHLIGHTS

Christian Education: Release Time: Laurie Kimball reported that students made valentines which were sent to the parents together with a note thanking them for sending their children to St. Johns for Release Time. Other valentines were given to members of the congregation. All students will be studying the things that happened during Holy Week. Area businesses have again given free books to the first and third grade students. Students will receive M&M's as an Easter treat together with a note explaining the religious meaning we can get from them.

Sunday School: No report this month.

VBS: Sarah Kafuenberg reported that she is beginning work on this summer's VBS program. She is considering having a cookout for families on the last day for lunch. Nancy Ganske has agreed to decorate for the week. The first VBS meeting will take place after church the week after Easter.

Preschool: Kim Neubauer reported that enrollment is the same. The Preschool Committee will meet on March 8. Ruth will email recommendations from that meeting for approval by the board. Enrollment forms for next year will be sent out next week.

Old Business:

After discussion, it was decided to have Ginny Ranisate order five cases of large print ESV Bibles that include Luther's Small Catechism from Concordia Publishing House. They will be paid for with an anonymous donation and Thrivent funds. The old Bibles will be offered to the congregation or recycled.

New Business: none.

Church Properties: Pastor Neubauer's office has been painted. Looks good. Other pastor's office to be painted and suspended ceiling installed in all three offices.

Boiler room to be painted in March or early April.

Several door locks are being worked on.

Jerry Eischens and Virgil Eskola are designing balcony stair guard.

New rider is being considered with information gathering.

Electrical lighting work needs to be done around church choir room, exterior, etc.

Elders: no report.

Evangelism: The board met briefly to discuss the final arrangements and organizational tasks for the Trivia event on March 11. Additional teams would be welcomed. Names of known participants were placed on individual teams. Congregational members will be encouraged to come as single participants and join a team once they arrive.

Parish Fellowship: Old Business:

Trivia night – Sunday, March 11, 4:00 p.m. The board will meet in church on Saturday morning at 10:00 a.m. to prepare the sloppy joes and baked beans. We'll be at church Sunday by 3:00 p.m. to heat them through. Our board will help with serving and cleanup.

Lenten Meal – Wednesday, March 14

Menu: Sloppy joes, salads, pickles, chips, cookies/bars. Each board member will provide a salad and cookies. We'll meet in the kitchen at 3:30. Elayne Luiken will buy the rest of the supplies needed.

New Business:

Meal for Confirmands – Wednesday, May 2.

There are eight confirmands this year. Menu: Taco Bar, Tortilla Chips and Salsa, Fresh Fruit, Ice Cream Sundaes.



Public Relations: did not meet.

Stewardship: did not meet.

Young People: Three Bears Water Park trip went well. Kids had a great time.

Lenten Meal, March 7: Will serve cheesy potato bacon soup. Brandi Backmann and Dee Persons will prep, Confirmation kids serve and parents will help and clean up.

Easter Breakfast: We will ask Ginny Ranisate to print a sign-up sheet. Dee and Roger Hanson will set up Saturday morning at 10:00 a.m. Brandi will purchase groceries and see what we have on hand.

Discussed spring/summer activities. Can we pair with the Church Properties Board and other members to build a ga-ga pit?

Game Night: Will have a spring game night and dinner, Sunday, April 29 from 4:00-6:00 p.m. Will ask Ginny to put in April newsletter and bulletins.

National Youth Gathering: General discussion about when and where gathering will take place. There may be opportunities for the youth to help with some pre-event volunteering. Brandi has media files with all logos to use for promotion in the congregation.

Trivia Night Raises Funds for Trinity, Port Arthur

Over \$1,600 was raised to send to Trinity Lutheran, Port Arthur, Texas to help with hurricane recovery efforts at the trivia event on March 11. Eight teams competed to test their knowledge on everything from “The Wizard of Oz” to presidents to familiar faces. The Grudem team took first place. Everyone enjoyed the tasty food prepared by the Board of Parish Fellowship. This was our last fundraiser for hurricane relief but now the Board of Evangelism is considering a youth trivia night and inviting other congregations to compete. Stay tuned!





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Income and expenses are down compared to last year at this time. The main reason for the decrease in expenses is because Pastor Heinecke is not here. Last year's income figures also included one more Sunday of offerings so it's not quite an accurate comparison.

Citizens Bank Checking	\$103,961
Less Dedicated Accounts	<u>-3,087</u>
Difference	\$100,874
Less Healthy Balance	<u>-34,270</u> (Goal is \$74,000)
Difference	\$66,604

CNB Dedicated Savings	\$35,396
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LCEF Current Fund as of 03/20/18	\$122,612
Less Endowment Fund Interest	-577
Less Parsonage Proceeds	-18,548
Less R. Haberer Annuity	-1,765
Less T. Haberer Memorial/Interest	-21,130
Less T. Haberer Trust	<u>-77,874</u>
Available Funds	\$2,718

LCEF Endowment Fund	\$22,200
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Motion to approve treasurer's report – Jerry Grudem – Second Cliff Branham - Carried.

Membership Changes

Affirmation of Faith: Ed and Carol Luukonen, Calvary, Park Rapids, MN. Motion Grudem – Second Branham - Carried. Release: Dorothy Marquardt, St. Paul's Lutheran, New Ulm, MN (WELS). Motion Ruth Knaack – Second Branham – Carried.

Pastor Neubauer's Report

Worship: Jesus, Peter and Me series. Teaching times: Sunday morning finished 2 Peter, began "Parables of Jesus;" Tuesday morning finished Romans, began "Ephesians;" Wednesday morning teaching 3rd grade Release Time (11 students) My Bible, 7th-8th Release Time (23 students) Genesis 1-11, Confirmation 7th and 8th Grade (22 students) Sacraments - Communion. Confirmation scheduled for May 20 with examination on May 2. Lutheran Laymen's League -- A Man Named Luther; Ladies Aid -- 1 Corinthians 13 - Love; Evening Guild -- Knowledge vs. Wisdom. ABC Preschool: Devotions. Miscellaneous: Interviews of Candidates, worked on deaconess job description. Youth: Went to Three Bears Water Park. Circuit/District/Regional Events: District Convention is coming up - April 9-11.

Board of Elders – Jerry Grudem

The Elders meet the first Tuesday of each month. The Elders assign members to assist with first service communions held on the second and fourth Sundays. The Elders assign members to assist with second service communions held on the first and third Sundays. The Board of Elders has been blessed for 2017-2019 with nine active board members.

**Board of Evangelism – Connie Fondow**

Since the voters meeting in November of 2017, the Board of Evangelism has engaged in the following events/projects: Items purchased and donated by members for the Toys for Boys and Girls and Tiny Tots campaign in the PR area; Gift cards purchased by congregational members and sent to Trinity Lutheran in Port Arthur, Texas; Assistance with the March Food Shelf campaign at St. Johns; Donated funds sent to Trinity in Port Arthur from the Trivia event on March 11; Pictures of confirmands/mentors taken for future display; Cards continuing to be sent to inactive members in accordance with Pastor's recommendations.

Board of Christian Education

Release Time: 4th grade Christmas program went well. Students made valentines on Feb. 7; they were sent to parents together with a note thanking them for sending their child to Release Time. All students are studying the events of Holy Week. Area businesses have given free books to students in first and third grades. During Holy Week students will watch a DVD and receive an M&M's treat together with a note explaining a religious meaning we can get from them.

Sunday School: There were mixed reviews about having the Christmas program on Wednesday evening. Beginning on January 7, the sixth grade class has been led by Jerry Werder; they continue studying the New Testament. Sunday School students will sing in church on Palm Sunday.

VBS: Materials have been ordered. Sarah Kaufenberg will serve as director this year. Nancy Ganske will be in charge of decorations. The first VBS meeting will be after church the week after Easter.

Preschool: Enrollment stands at 41; a new three year old started last Thursday. Preschool Committee met March 8. Enrollment forms for next year were sent out the week of March 12.

Actions: Instructed Ginny to order 5 cases of large print ESV Bibles from CPH for use by adult Bible classes. Approved Preschool Committee recommendations: Offer 2 classes of 3 year olds. Offer 2 classes of 4 year olds. Offer 1 class of 4 year olds to meet 3 days a week. Offer 1 class of 4 year olds to meet 4 or 5 days a week. Staff to include 1 teacher for 3 year olds, 1 teacher for 3's and 4's and Director, 1 teacher's helper. Tuition for 2018-2019 to be raised \$5.00. Registration fees to remain the same (\$40 for non-members and \$0 for members of St. Johns).

Board of Church Properties - Brad Dahn

Church Properties welcomes a new member Jeff Just, great to have the board addition. Hired a new church janitor, Mike Riewer, and things are going very good. The new garage was getting very full and Jerry Grudem built some shelves and did some heavy duty organizing, thanks, Jerry. The new janitor was doing some fixing around the church, so a new workbench, drill, and shop vac were purchased to assist him. Virg Eskola and Terry DeYoung extended the handrail up to the balcony, it looks great and very functional. Jerry Eischens is working to come up with a guard for the opening in the stairs. Jerry has also taken measurements for new cabinet faces in the office. The new church boiler, water softener, and added equipment are working great! The pastor's office has been painted and looks fresh and clean! The other pastor's office is scheduled to be painted and suspended ceiling with new lights installed in all three front offices in the next two weeks. Boiler room ceiling, walls, and floor are also on the painter's schedule. We have definitely had some snow to plow and move the second half of winter and it is always done before many of us are going for the day. Thanks to Sanquists and others that just make it happen.

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Sunday School News

Perfect Attendance--March

Kdg. Clinton Koch, Alex Lof, Sophia Neubauer
 1st Zach Harju, Khloe May
 3rd Max Harju, Aiden May
 4th Kaelynn Hartig
 5th Laura Kaufenberg, Leo Kaufenberg
 6th Jacob Lof
 7th Jillian Neubauer

March Sunday School Offering Total: \$45.40




Happy Birthday!



4/03 Kaden Gartner
 4/03 Dylan May
 4/04 William Sanquist
 4/07 Hunter Harrison
 4/08 Eastyn Walker
 4/11 Vivian Harju
 4/13 Samuel Leckner
 4/17 Khloe Harrison
 4/24 Clinton Koch

Baptismal Birthdays

4/01 John Benson
 4/04 Kaden Gartner
 4/10 Kolt Safratowich
 4/22 Vivian Harju
 4/22 Rachel Ulvin
 4/27 Hunter Schroeder
 4/30 Ali Roberts



RESURRECTION HOPE

 Romans 6:5 reveals the hope we have because Jesus rose from the dead on Easter. 

Directions: First solve the math problems. Then put the corresponding words in the blanks; for example, the word next to the answer "1" goes in the first blank, the word next to the answer "2" goes in the second blank, and so on.

2+2 = ____	united	2x3 = ____	death	7+6 = ____	resurrection
3x3 = ____	certainly	18-16 = ____	have	4-1 = ____	been
0+1 = ____	if	2x4 = ____	we	13-1 = ____	him
2+3 = ____	in	20-6 = ____	like	2+5 = ____	his
2x5 = ____	be	8+3 = ____	with		

"For ____ we ____
 1 2 3 4
 with him ____ a ____ like ____ ,
 5 6 7
 ____ will ____ also ____ united
 8 9 10
 ____ in a ____
 11 12 13
 ____ his." Romans 6:5, NIV
 14

Answer: For if we have been united with him in a death like his, we will certainly also be united with him in a resurrection like his. Romans 6:5, NIV





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Information gathering is being done for possibly purchasing a new riding mower for this summer as the old one has some issues. We are looking at some concerns with the kitchen stove, but may wait until some future upgrades are done in the kitchen. Ken Smith is doing some lock work around the church on some problems.

There are always plumbing, electrical and various other things that have been repaired and will have to be fixed in the future. Thanks to all on the board of Church Properties.

Board of Young People – Brandi Backmann

December: Youth served evening meal before Advent Service December 13.

January: The bus was full of youth and their friends as we headed to Detroit Mountain for an afternoon of tubing. Thank you to our volunteer bus driver, Mary Lou, and chaperones, Dee Person, and Brandi and Matt Backman.

February: Youth served evening meal before Ash Wednesday service on February 14. The bus was once again full for a trip to Three Bears Waterpark in Brainerd. Thank you to our bus driver, Larry Hetrick, and chaperones, Larry Hetrick, Jill Hartig and Pastor Neubauer.

March: Youth serviced evening meal before Lenten service on March 7.

Upcoming events: Serve Easter Breakfast between sunrise and 8:00 a.m. services. Game Night with dinner on April 29. Senior recognition on May 20 – will assist junior class and their parents with planning as needed. Youth Gathering 2019 will be held in Minneapolis.

Board of Stewardship – no report

Board of Parish Fellowship – Elayne Luiken

The board assisted the Evangelism Board with Trivia Night on Sunday, March 11. We prepared and served sloppy joes and baked beans, along with bars and cookies that were provided by members of the Evangelism Board.

Prepared and served the evening meal before Lenten service March 14.

Old Business – none.

New Business

Deaconess position --- reviewed job description and reviewed proposed funding plan. Pastor Neubauer explained why the job description was necessary. This was requested by seminary placement agent to allow them to move forward in the seminary's placement of pastors on call day. Discussion. This information will be presented to the voters on Sunday, March 25 between services for final decision.

Back Door – Rod asked Brad to look into the back entry doors. His concern was that the doors are not working the way they are intended. One door should close when the other opens to keep the cold air from entering the building.

Next PPC meeting is scheduled for May 22, 2018.

Meeting adjourned. Closed with doxology.

Respectfully submitted,
Shirley Potter



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Pastor Bill Neumann



The Lutheran Church -- Missouri Synod

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