



# *The* **St. Johns Servant**

**St. Johns  
Lutheran Church**

Park Rapids, Minnesota

April, 2019

## **Holy Week and Easter**

**Palm Sunday**, April 14, 8:00 and 10:30 a.m., special music by the Sunday School

**Maundy Thursday**, April 18, noon and 5:30 p.m. with stripping of the altar at the 5:30 p.m. service, special music by the Bell Choir

**Good Friday**, April 19, noon and 5:30 p.m., special music by the Senior Choir

**Easter**, April 21, 6:00 a.m. - Sunrise Service, Drama, special music by the Bell Choir

7:00 a.m. - Egg Bake Breakfast served by the youth

8:00 and 10:30 a.m. - Festival Worship Services with communion, special music by the Senior Choir

No coffee time, Bible studies or Sunday School



## **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. 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 serving 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!



## Snow Didn't Stop Trivia Night

We may have gotten a foot of snow but it didn't stop our trivia night. Ten teams competed by answering some hard questions. Everyone enjoyed the food and games, too. Congratulations to the "staff" team for taking first place.

This wasn't just fun and games and food. We raised \$2,218 for the nursery remodeling. Thanks to everyone who participated!





## Thanks for A Successful Blood Drive

Blessed are the volunteers, for without them, what would we do? I'd like to thank everyone who volunteered to work registration, serve or provide snacks, and **especially** those who donated blood during our blood drive on March 18 and 19. Despite troubles with Vitalant's computer system on Monday, there were 90 donors who were able to successfully donate for a total of 112 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**

## The Long Winter—A Special Thank You



This winter was one for the record books, snow, snow and more snow. We want to extend a "HUGE" thank you to Sanquist Construction for keeping us plowed through it all. They did a great job! We also want to say thanks to Arch Anderson, Jody Yliniemi, and Mike Riewer for cleaning the snow off the roof and stopping the leak that developed from an ice dam. It was a mountain of snow!

We're really looking forward to spring and having the snow gone and we bet they are, too!

### What's On The Lutheran Hour

- 4/07 "The Darkness Has Not Overcome It"
- 4/14 "He Loved Them to the End"
- 4/21 "Cross in the Garden"
- 4/28 "Disturbing Cognitive Dissonance"

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. You can also listen on Sirius XM Family Talk Channel 133 on Sunday at 9:00 a.m. and any time on [lhm.org/sentradio](http://lhm.org/sentradio).

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."







## Stewardship Corner—*Finding Contentment in Jesus*

In the Apostle Paul's letter to the people in Philippi, he wrote, *"I have learned to be content whatever the circumstances. I know what it is to be in need, and I know what it is to have plenty"* (Philippians 4:11-12 NIV). We are told by Paul that contentment is a state of mind that is not dependent upon external circumstances. True contentment comes from knowing that God is in control and that He will provide for us.

As God's people, we need to be aware that the society in which we live is trying hard to make us discontent. Advertisements suggest that we can't be content without expensive houses, new cars, exotic vacations, big investments, and the latest in clothes. Our culture tries to make us believe that happiness and contentment are within our reach if we acquire just a few more things.

Our contentment should not be based on the size of our incomes or on our net worth. It has nothing to do with the size of our houses or year of our cars. Contentment can't be bought at a department store or travel agency. Real contentment is not related to outward circumstances.

For many, acquiring money can become a preoccupation and an obsession. We can become slaves to wealth. Greed will not allow contentment, because it will always urge us to acquire more. No matter how we try, we cannot be satisfied by worldly things. The love of money can potentially possess a person's life like no other emotion can. Jesus spoke about the futility of greed in Matthew 16:26 when He asked, *"For what will it profit a man if he gains the whole world, and forfeits his soul?"* The things we possess will contribute only to fleeting happiness, not an enduring peace and contentment.

When we place our security in money, pride, self-centeredness, and self-sufficiency take over as we make ourselves god, trusting in ourselves rather than God to provide. We become like the Rich Fool, who gave himself credit for his success and desired even more (Luke 16:13-21). We can push God out of our lives.

Contentment comes from dependence on the Lord. When God is our security, we can be content. The Apostle Paul knew both the secret of contentment and how to receive it. Paul told the Philippians and us, *"I can do all things through Him Who strengthens me"* (Philippians 4:13). Without Christ, we will never achieve contentment. A relationship with Christ will redirect our focus from transient earthly pleasures to things of eternal significance. Keeping our eyes on *"the prize"* (Philippians 3:14) will bring about gratitude in our hearts for what we have rather than desiring what we don't have.

## Have You Checked Out Our Online Giving Option?

Now you can give with a credit/debit card on our website or on your phone. Just go to our website, [www.stjohnspr.org](http://www.stjohnspr.org) and click on the "Give" tab on the top right of the home page. From there you'll reach a page where you can give securely by entering the requested information. You can create an account or give as a guest.

To donate using your phone, download the "GivePlus" app from your app store. You can search for St. Johns, then create an account and start giving.

Please let us know how it works for you. Comments, questions, suggestions are welcome!





## Stewardship Review—February

Avg. Sunday Worship Attendance: 206

Total Offerings: \$31,196	Total Offerings, February, 2018: \$29,361
Total Expenses: <u>\$35,093</u>	Total Expenses, February, 2018: <u>\$31,249</u>
Difference - \$3,897	Difference - \$1,888

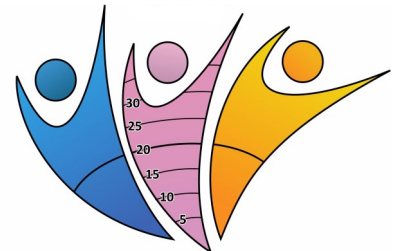
Avg. Weekly Offerings \$7,799	Budget/Week \$9,497
Avg. Weekly Expenses <u>\$8,773</u>	Budget/Month \$41,152
Difference - \$974	

CNB Checkbook Balance as of 02/28/19: \$59,413	Our Healthy Balance Goal	\$74,000
Less Dedicated Accounts - <u>\$2,631</u>	Raised so far	<u>\$39,759</u>
Difference \$56,782	Still need	\$34,241

## Remember Healthy Balance?

Back in 2015 St. Johns was dealing with some financial issues. Years of deficit spending had caused us to borrow from dedicated funds and our checkbook balance was low enough that we weren't meeting all our monthly expenses. From this problem, the Healthy Balance initiative was born. The plan was to raise enough funds to replace the money borrowed from dedicated accounts and to have the equivalent of two months of expenses in savings. In the past three years everyone has done a great job in bringing us closer to this goal. All dedicated funds have been repaid and are in a separate savings account to avoid having the same problem in the future. We are over half way to meeting our goal of \$74,000 (approximately two months of expenses). We still need \$34,241 to make it to \$74,000.

If you'd like to give an extra gift to help reach the goal, you can place it in the offering earmarked "Healthy Balance." You can also give to the Healthy Balance fund through our online giving platform. Just go to our website, [www.stjohnspr.org](http://www.stjohnspr.org) and click the "Give" tab at the top right.



Questions? Comments? Suggestions? Please let us know. Thanks!

## Be on a Board



The Parish Planning Council is currently working on the slate of candidates for board members which will be voted on at our June voters meeting. We would love to have you as one of our board members. There are eight boards—Christian Education, Church Properties, Elders, Evangelism, Parish Fellowship, Public Relations, Stewardship and Young People.

If you're willing to serve, please talk to one of the pastors, Rod Helm or Mike Poole or call the church office.



## Considering Kitchen Remodeling

You may have read in the bulletin and past newsletters that there's a committee working on getting plans together to remodel the kitchen. You may also be thinking "the kitchen's fine, why do we need to remodeling a room that only gets used on Sundays for coffee and occasional meals?" Good questions and here's some reasons why we're looking at remodeling.

First, here's what happened in the kitchen the week of March 18-24:

- ♦ Monday—prepping and serving snacks for the blood drive, prep and serve snack for ABC students
- ♦ Tuesday—prepping and serving snacks for the blood drive, coffee made for Bible study, ABC snacks
- ♦ Wednesday—coffee for Bible study, lunch served after noon service, snacks for ABC, confirmation and choir kids, meal served before the 6:00 p.m. Lenten service
- ♦ Thursday—ABC snacks
- ♦ Friday—ABC snacks
- ♦ Saturday—nothing going on...the kitchen gets a rest
- ♦ Sunday—treats and coffee between services, root beer floats served for Polar Plunge

The kitchen isn't always this busy but it does get a lot of use, more than just coffee on Sunday mornings.

Second, the kitchen's last major remodeling was in 1993. At that time it was expanded into a former closet space so we got more cupboards as well as a dishwasher and garbage disposal. That's over 25 years of Sunday coffee, soup and sandwiches, funeral lunches and other celebrations and the kitchen is showing some wear. The ceiling has water damage from roof leaks. The floor tile has cracked in spots. The laminate is starting to peel and chip on the counter tops. And there's always dents and dings that happen.

The kitchen committee has met with several contractors to get ideas on the what we can do to improve the kitchen. They're planning on presenting their final plan at the voters meeting in June. In the meantime, stop in and take a look at the kitchen's current condition, then watch for posters, pictures and news on what they're considering. If you have any questions, comments, suggestions, please talk to one of the committee members—Rod Helm, Brad Dahn, Mike Poole, Elayne Luiken, Pat Stearns and Connie Fondow.

Here's a picture of Ladies Aid members and confirmation students cleaning up after Lent lunch before starting Lent supper.

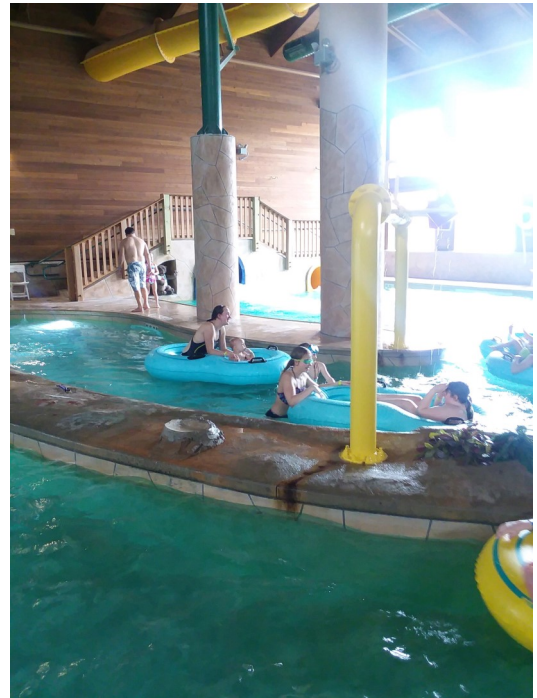






## Taking a Break from Winter at the Water Park

The weather cooperated for the youth trip to Three Bears Water Park on March 24 but the bus decided to cause some problems. First, one of the tires was flat. Resourceful bus driver, Larry Hetrick, went home and got his compressor, aired the tire up and they were on their way. They made it to Wadena and Pastor Newton heard a funny noise which turned out to be the muffler which had fallen off. Nothing was going to stop the group, so they stowed the muffler and kept going. Everyone had a great time at the water park then headed back home. A big thank you goes out to Larry for driving the bus and taking care of things!





## Board

## HIGHLIGHTS

**Christian Education:** Minutes of the December 4 meeting were approved.

**Reports:**

**Release Time:** Laurie Kimball reported that all of the Easter lessons have been updated to match our new ESV Bibles. Because of some inappropriate behavior we may need to draw up a behavior rules system. There is one new 4th grade and one new 6th grade student since last month.

**Sunday School:** No report this month.

**VBS:** Sarah Kaufenberg will again serve as director. Dates will be August 5-9. The theme this year is Miraculous Mission. The next planning meeting is June 23. Set up will be August 4.

**Preschool:** Kim Neubauer reported that enrollment is currently 43 students; there are 2 new students since the last report. The preschool committee met on February 20. Their recommendations are included under new business. Preregistration forms will be sent out to current students in mid to late March, and registration will be opened to the public on April 1.

**Old Business:** Lori Griess had some information about a service project and will look into it further by our next meeting.

**New Business:**

-Motion made, seconded, and carried to approve preschool committee recommendation to leave preschool tuition and registration fees the same as last year.

-Motion made, seconded, and carried to leave staffing the same as last year: one teacher for 3s; one for 3s, 4s, 5s and director; and one aide.

**Church Properties:** no report.

**Evangelism:** Final details for Trivia Night were discussed.

Cross the World crosses were distributed to the congregation. Release Time students and ABC preschoolers will receive them as well. We will investigate the possibility of having them available for food shelf recipients.

The first BINGO event at Diamond Willow will take place on March 7. More congregational members are encouraged to consider assisting with this once a month one-hour commitment.

The possibility of having a portable information center for the entry was discussed. We need a volunteer to build a counter/cabinet.

**Generosity Challenge:** (from Thrivent t-shirts) Consider adapting these challenges for a future event.

We continue to attempt to obtain post high school students' addresses. Small care packages/cards would be sent.

No caring ministry cards will be sent this month.

**Elders:** no report.

**Parish Fellowship:** Old Business:

Trivia Night, Sunday, March 10, 4:00 p.m. The groceries have been purchased, using Thrivent funds. Our board will meet at 2:00 p.m. that day to make the sloppy joes and beans. Evangelism Board members will furnish bars and cookies.

**Lenten meal:** We're serving on Wednesday, April 10. Menu: sloppy joes, salads, and cookies. Meal prep will begin at 3:30 p.m. At our April meeting we'll decide what kind of salads and cookies we'll make.



**New Business:**

Showing of Polar Plunge video—Pastor Newton and students will take the plunge on Saturday, March 16. He'll show the video on Sunday, March 24 between services. We'll serve root beer floats at that time.

Confirmand meal will be Wednesday, May 1, 5:00 p.m. We'll decide the menu at our April meeting.

**Stewardship:** no report.

**Public Relations:** did not meet.

**Young People:** Three Bears Water Park—Dee Persons has coordinated with the park. We are scheduled to be there from 2:00-6:00 p.m., March 24. Larry Hetrick has offered to drive again. Jill Hartig, Pastor Newton and maybe Sarah Newton will chaperone. There will be a sign up sheet by the front office.

**Lenten Meals**—First meal is set for March 6. Wild rice soup will be served. Second meal will be March 27 serving tacos.

**Easter Breakfast**—Discussed menu. Brandi Backmann will work on getting sign up sheets for prep work which will be Saturday or possibly Friday night and for Easter Sunday.

**Upcoming events**—Pastor Newton brought us up to date on upcoming events for both high school students and all youth.

**National Youth Gathering Update**—Brandi has been watching the webinars presented by the NYG team. They are very informative and offer lots of great information. Hotel assignments will be distributed this month. German youth will be here on July 6.

**Next event**—Mario Cart at the Newtons' March 21.

## Polar Plunge Plans Changed

First, the polar plunge was rescheduled because of the frigid temperatures, then it was cancelled because it warmed up and things were too slushy, so the plungers had to get creative and find an alternative or give all the pledgers their money back. At first they were planning to do an ice bucket challenge but ended up jumping in the river. Our fearless jumpers were Pastor Newton, Dom Backmann, Emily Borders, Keegan Moses and Daniel Neubauer. Brandi Backmann made a video of the plunge which was shown between services on March 24. The Board of Parish Fellowship served root beer floats too. You can watch the video on the St. Johns youth Facebook page.

We're glad it all worked out and they jumped in the river because \$1,245 was raised to send the kids to the National Youth Gathering in Minneapolis in July. Thanks to everyone who contributed!





# Sunday School News

## Attention, Parents!

Two things to note this month:

The Sunday School students will sing for Palm Sunday services on April 14. Please have your children here by 7:45 a.m. to warm up.

There will not be any Sunday School classes on Easter Sunday, April 21.


*Happy Easter!*

### Happy Birthday!

4/03 Kaden Gartner  
4/03 Dylan May  
4/04 William Sanquist  
4/08 Eastyn Walker  
4/11 Vivian Harju  
4/17 Khloe Harrison  
4/24 Clinton Koch  
4/26 Natalie Tretbar

### Baptismal Birthdays













4/04 Kaden Gartner  
4/10 Kolt Safratowich  
4/22 Vivian Harju  
4/22 Rachel Ulvin  
4/26 Grace Hockett  
4/27 Hunter Schroeder

## Jesus gives us *life*

Through his death and resurrection, Jesus offers the free gift of eternal life.

*Directions: Match each clue from Holy Week with the correct image. If you get stuck, look up the Bible verses.*

People spread these on the road for Jesus. (Matthew 21:8)	
Mary pours this on Jesus' feet. (John 12:3)	
Jesus shares this with his disciples. (Matthew 26:26)	
This is placed on Jesus' head. (John 19:2)	
Soldiers may have used these to compete for Jesus' coat. (John 19:23-24)	
Jesus carries this himself for a while. (John 19:17)	
Marks caused by these help Thomas identify Jesus. (John 20:25)	
While on the cross, Jesus is thirsty and is given this. (John 19:28-29)	
This is rolled away from Jesus' tomb. (John 20:1)	
These are used to prepare Jesus' body for burial. (Luke 23:55-56)	
These remain in the tomb after Jesus rises. (John 20:6-7)	
Judas betrays Jesus for this. (Matthew 26:14-15)	

Answer: palm branches, perfume, bread, crown of thorns, dice, cross, nails, vinegar on a sponge, stone, spices, linens, silver coins

### April Memory Verse:



Jesus said to Thomas, "Have you believed because you have seen me? Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed."

John 20:29



## “Main Street Living North” for April

Now that the MSL NETWORK is broadcasting in six different areas in the upper Midwest, a decision was made to use just one central website address at [www.mainstreetliving.com](http://www.mainstreetliving.com). On the home page you will then need to click on the link identified as “North (Fargo).” If you use the old address it will take you to a furniture store in Colorado.

Here’s the programs for April:

April 7: Rev. Ed Borchardt, Bethlehem Lutheran Church, Frazee, presents the message: “Strength Doesn’t Come From Within” based on Philippians 3:8-14. The LHM Easter program is: “The Puzzle Club Easter Adventure.”

April 14: Rev. Chris Brademeyer, St. John Lutheran Church, Oakes, ND, presents the message: “Who Is This King?” based on Matthew 21:1-9. The LHM Easter season program is: “Easter Is.”

April 21: Lutheran Hour Speaker, Rev. Dr. Michael Zeigler, delivers the Easter message. The LHM Easter season program is: “3 Days.”

April 28: Rev. Robert Wentzel, Trinity Lutheran, Bemidji, presents the message: “My Name Is Thomas” based on John 20:19-31. This Is The Life program is: “Miracle in Chinatown.”



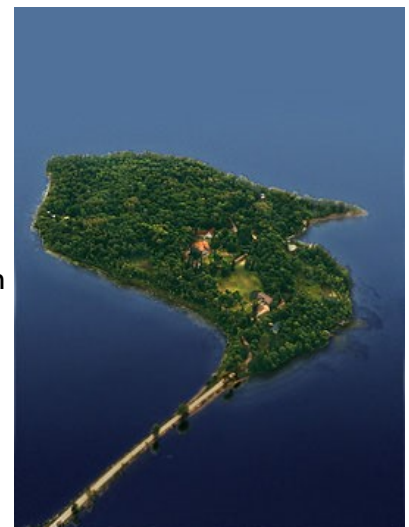
“MAIN STREET LIVING” is a locally produced TV program that includes a 30 minute worship service led by participating pastors of the Minnesota North and North Dakota Districts of our LCMS, along with a 30 minute Lutheran Hour program (normally “This Is the Life,” along with occasional church-season specials). Programs are broadcast at 9:00 a.m. central time on FOX station KVRP Fargo-Moorhead Channel 15.1. Or you can watch archived episodes anytime on their website at [www.mainstreetliving.com](http://www.mainstreetliving.com) (then click on “North (Fargo).”

## Lutheran Island Camp Scholarships Available

Our Lutheran Island Camp jamboree was another casualty of the bad winter weather but we want to get the word out about camp and how great it is and that we have scholarships available to help pay for up to half the cost.

Stop into the social hall to pick up a brochure and scholarship form. Choose a camp, fill out the scholarship form and drop it off at the church office and register for camp. We usually send the scholarship funds to camp right before the camping season starts. You can also check out their website and register online at [www.islandcamp.org](http://www.islandcamp.org).

If you get to go to camp just once, you’ll be hooked and want to go every year!







**St. Johns  
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*Pastor James Neubauer*

*Pastor Joel Newton*

*Pastor Bill Neumann*



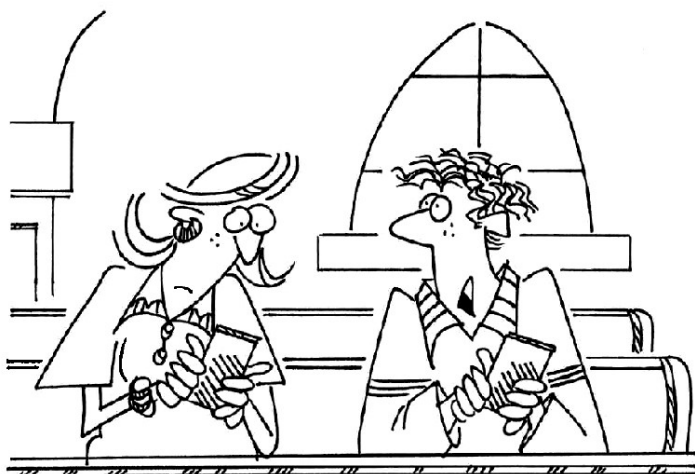
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**"The Pastor keeps referring to  
'this morning's text' ... but which one?"**

**FLETCHER**