



The

St. Johns Servant

**St. Johns
Lutheran Church**

Park Rapids, Minnesota

January, 2024

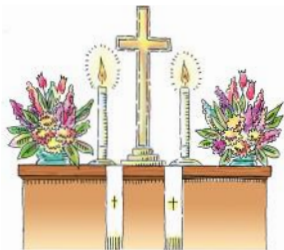


Christmas Undecorating

We plan to take down the Christmas decorations on Monday, January 8 starting at 9:00 a.m. Coffee and rolls will be served.

It's Time to Renew...

...your Lutheran Witness subscription. The cost is \$27.65 for a one year subscription. There is a special Lutheran Witness envelope in your offering packet. Please put your name and address on the back of the envelope to help us double check for correct information. Turn in subscriptions by January 28.



Sign Up for Altar Flowers in 2024

The 2024 flower chart is posted in the front lobby. If you would like to provide flowers for the altar on one or more Sundays, please sign up on the chart. You will receive a reminder call the week before you are scheduled to provide flowers.

Life Sunday

Sunday, January 21 is Life Sunday. We believe that life is a precious gift from God from conception to old age and on this Sunday we especially focus on life. We will also have a special door offering for our local Pregnancy Resource Center which provides assistance for those who are facing an unplanned pregnancy.



Ladies Aid and Evening Guild Merging



Our two LWML (Lutheran Women's Missionary League) groups are merging into one. The Evening Guild voted to merge with the Ladies Aid. Meetings are held on the second Thursday at 1:00 p.m. The group is open to all women of the congregation. The LWML supports various missions worldwide as well as within Minnesota North District.



Crazy for Cribbage Gets A Regular Schedule

Our cribbage events have been so popular we've started a regular meeting to get together and play on the first and third Sundays of the month at 2:00 p.m. starting January 7. Anyone from the community is welcome to come and join the games. If you are new to the game and would like to learn how it's played, we will start with a lesson. Experienced players will form up games to start playing right away. We usually spend about two hours together.



Family Board Game Event



On Sunday, January 28 from 2:00—4:30 p.m. join us for some board game fun. The youth will provide appetizers for a free will offering. This is a great opportunity for fun and fellowship. We will have a bunch of board games here, but people are invited to bring their favorite games also.

Basket Fundraiser Thanks

Thank you to everyone who provided and bid on the baskets for our fundraiser. We raised \$1,365 for the building fund.



Toys for Girls and Boys and Tiny Tots

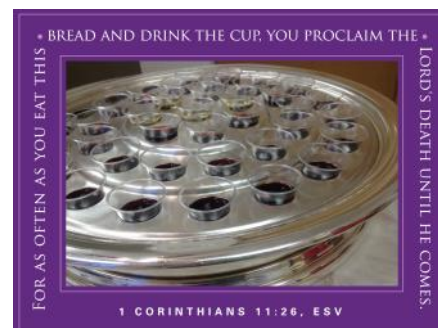
Thank you, St. Johns parishioners! You donated gifts to help make this a happier Christmas for 52 children in 16 local families. The Board of Evangelism would like to thank you for your generosity and Christmas spirit.

What's On The Lutheran Hour

- 1/07 *As We Forgive*
- 1/14 *How Could She Ever Forgive Him?*
- 1/21 *The Battleground of Forgiveness*
- 1/28 *Forgiveness is a Gift from Far Away*

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 131, Sundays at 9:00 a.m. or any time on SENTRadio at lhm.org/sentradio.

Noon Communion Services start again Wednesday, January 3





Main Street Living Programs This Month



Programs are broadcast Sunday mornings at 9:00 a.m. on KVRP Fargo-Moorhead or you can watch all of the archived programs at any time on line! To reach the website for archived programs you will first need to go to the MSL Network site at www.mainstreetliving.com and then click on "North." Depending on your cable provider you might be able to watch Main Street Living out of the Twin Cities instead. You can check this option out on their website, too.

Here's January's schedule:

January 7: Rev. Arie Bertsch, President of the ND District, LCMS, presents the message: "Anchored in Christ" based on Mark 1:4-11. *This Is the Life*: "The Other Wiseman" - Another Magi, making his journey to the Christ child, encounters others and shows kindness along the way.

January 14: Rev. Richard Jones, Dakota Boys and Girls Ranch, Minot, ND, presents the message: "Selective Hearing Loss" based on 1 Samuel 3:1-10. *This Is the Life*: "The Priceless Book" - Money and health troubles on the farm lead a father to God's Word for comfort.

January 21: Rev. Jim Lamb, Lutheran Family Service, Fort Dodge, Iowa, presents the message: "The Trinitarian Value of Human Life" based on Isaiah 43:1. Visit www.MainStreetLiving.com for more information. *This Is the Life*: "Live Option" - A 15-year-old pregnant daughter and her mother disagree on the future of her child.

January 28: Rev. Timothy Stout, St. Peter's Lutheran Church, Sawyer, ND, St. Martin Lutheran Church, Anamoose, ND, and St. John Lutheran Church, Kongsberg, ND, presents the message: "Depart, Thou Unclean Spirit" based on Mark 1:21-28. *This Is the Life*: "In Search of Dignity" - Two factory workers struggle to find meaning after they are replaced by machines.

Stewardship Review—November

Avg. Sunday Worship Attendance: **174**

Total Offerings: \$32,210	Total Offerings, November, 2022: \$39,252	Budget/Week \$10,807
Total Expenses: \$43,629	Total Expenses, November, 2022: \$35,783	Budget/Month \$46,831
Difference - \$11,419	Difference \$3,469	

Avg. Weekly Offerings \$8,052	Total Offerings, year to date: \$409,911
Avg. Weekly Expenses \$10,907	Total Expenses, year to date: \$417,730
Difference - \$2,855	Difference - \$7,819

CNB Checkbook Balance as of 11/30/23: \$67,115	Our Healthy Balance Goal \$74,000
Less dedicated accounts - \$981	Raised so far \$66,638
Difference \$66,134	Still need \$7,362



THANK YOU to all the people who worked so hard to make this year's "Breakfast in Bethlehem" a great success. What a wonderful way to share the joy of this Christmas season!





“Me Lutheran Church?”

I recently saw this entrance at a Methodist church in Missouri. I am unsure why they only included ME on their sign, but it recalled for me how we can often see the church. The sign at our congregation may start with “Redeemer”, “Messiah”, “Zion”, “Trinity”, or the most common Lutheran name in Minnesota, “St. John”, yet, as we enter the church our focus can still be on “ME.” Even though I know better, I will still ask myself, “What will this church give me?” Will they give me the music I like, sugary treats after worship, friendly greetings from people I enjoy, a call or text from the pastor after worship, and future friends of the same age for my kids? Clearly if I was honest, my heart might be okay with the name, “Me Church.”



In a sense, the Church is for ME. After all, the Christian Church is for sinners---which includes me. On account of Christ's death and resurrection, the Church gives forgiveness, life, and salvation through His gifts. Christ is the host, and we are His guest. However, the Church is also for others. He builds us up as the body of Christ (Ephesians 2:22) to love Him and others (Mark 12:30-31). The Christian gathers with other Christians to receive Christ but also to seek the needs of others.

When was the last time you entered your church with the prayer, “Lord, how can I not only be served by You, but also serve others before, during, and after the divine service? I remember the countless people who helped Amy, my bride, with the four kids during worship as I had to work. I've seen the saints actively listening to the struggles of the members of their church family and providing words of encouragement. We see our churches this time of year collect Christmas presents and food pantry items for the needy. All this flows from the mercy of God in Christ and we pray the LORD grant us the strength to care for the needs of others.

The Lord bless your Advent & Christmas season, that He would keep our eyes fixed on Christ (Hebrews 12:1-2).

In Christ (Isaiah 9:2,7)

Rev. Brady Finner, Minnesota North District President

(Reprinted with permission from the December issue of the *Minnesota North District Intercom*. If you'd like to receive their monthly e-newsletter, send your email request to mnndist@mnnlcms.org.)



Sunday School News

Perfect Attendance—December

PK4 John Ricke
 Kdg. Martin Hahn, Madelyn May
 2nd Layla Arndt, Kelly Kimball
 3rd Olivia May
 5th Wyatt Goodwater, Ava Kimball
 6th Alex Lof, Sophia Neubauer,
 Will Sanquist
 7th Zach Harju, Khloe May

December Offering—\$38.56

Great job!



1/7 Ava Kimball
 1/18 Fletcher Eidsmoe
 1/24 Sawyer Eidsmoe
 1/27 Emma Quinn
 1/30 Lilah Forbes

Baptismal Birthdays

1/13 John Ricke
 1/24 Thatcher Eidsmoe



January Memory Verse

*Though your sins are like
 scarlet, they shall be
 as white as snow.*

Isaiah 1:18



HAPPY NEW YOU!

Changing the calendar each January is a reminder that God makes all things new.

Directions: Use the clues and the calendar
 code to complete 2 Corinthians 5:17, ESV.

JANUARY 2024						
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		1	2	3	4	5
	God	night	word	in	love	Jesus
7	glory	therefore	speak	give	light	Christ
14	saw	beginning	anyone	waters	help	is
21	he	again	through	earth	made	while
28	new	if	and	creation		

The second Monday _____
 The last Monday __ __
 The 16th _____
 One day before the 20th __ __
 The day before the first Friday __ __
 The last weekday of the second week _____
 The day after the 20th __ __
 The day after 18th __ __
 The first day of the second weekend __
 The last Sunday __ __
 The last day of the month _____

Answers: Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation.

Lessons this Month

January 7 The Fall of Jericho
 January 14 Samson
 January 21 Ruth
 January 28 Saul Becomes King



Release Time Update

Release Time has been very busy—already three months have gone by. Deb Anderson has joined our team to help out in 1st grade. Barb Buck will help on special occasion days as needed.

We thank everyone who contributed to our Christmas snacks! Very appreciated!

We hope all of you had a blessed Christmas season, celebrating the birth of our Lord & Savior, Jesus Christ! As always, we ask that you remember us in your prayers.

Laurie Kimball, Release Time Coordinator



1s & 2nd Grade Release Time



3rd & 4th Grade Release Time



5-8th Grade Release Time

Sunday School's JOYous Christmas Program

Thanks to everyone who helped make the program a success!





St. Johns Lutheran Church

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Pastor James Neubauer

Pastor Chad Berg

Pastor Larry Harvala



The Lutheran Church -- Missouri Synod

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