

# St. John Journal

News & info for the family of St. John  
Lutheran Church of Prairie Hill



*A loving and welcoming family of faith,  
excited about what God has done  
(and continues to do!)*

Volume 17, Number 02

February, 2024

Volume 17 Issue 02

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Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ,

*"In this is love, not that we have loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins." – 1 John 4:7*

C.S Lewis, former atheist, but now a brother in Christ, writes that God "loved us not because we were lovable, but because He is love." This oxford professor walked on to an English subway train faithless in God, but left the train believing in Jesus Christ as Savior.

What is your view of God? The scowling judge waiting to convict you? The disapproving parent whose love you have to earn? Your view of God affects every decision and relationship in your life. Kathleen Chesto wrote to Catholic Digest to tell them about an incident that occurred in her family. Her five-year-old child approached her one day in the kitchen and asked, "Mom, is God a grown-up or a parent?"

Mom was a little puzzled by the question. "I'm not sure what you mean," she said. "Is there a difference between a grown-up and a parent?" "Oh yes," her five-year-old answered quickly. "Grown-ups love you when you are good and parents love you anyway." I know this sounds trite to some people, but have we ever really come to appreciate the wonder of God's love? I dare say that there are some people who don't really believe in God's love. Some have never received it, and some have never given it. Some are still trying to earn their way to heaven. And some are expecting others to earn their way as well. Relax, my brothers and sisters, and let God love you. Jesus is trying to tell us that God's love doesn't depend on our goodness; it depends on God's character. Here is this truth expressed in 1 John 4:10, "*In this is love, not that we have loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins.*"

Pastor Norm

**Contact Information for Pastor Norm**

Cell Phone Number (361) 362-9108 Or Email: [pastornorm2003@yahoo.com](mailto:pastornorm2003@yahoo.com)



### St. John Women's Event



Ladies, please mark your calendars for Sat., February 17, 2024 at 10:30AM in the Parish Hall for Painting and Devotion with Terry Boeker. Terry is an extremely talented artist, and will guide us to create a special canvas. Supplies will be provided.

### Lawn Care Services

The Church is looking for lawn care service. If you are interested, or know someone who may be, please contact Colton Maass at (979) 251-2818.

## February Service Information

February		FIRST READING	RESPONSIVE	SECOND READING	GOSPEL
<b>4</b>	Fifth Sunday after Epiphany	Isaiah 40:21-31	Psalm 147:1-11	1 Corinthians 9:16-27	Mark 1:29-39
<b>11</b>	Transfiguration of Our Lord	Exodus 34:29-35	Psalm 50:1-6	2 Corinthians 3:12-13; 4:1-6	Mark 9:2-9
<b>18</b>	First Sunday in Lent	Genesis 22:1-18	Psalm 25:1-10	James 1:12-18	Mark 1:9-15
<b>25</b>	Second Sunday in Lent	Genesis 17:1-7, 15-16	Psalm 22:23-31	Romans 5:1-11	Mark 8:27-38

Feb	Acolyte	Layreader	Flowers Given By
<b>4</b>	Reegan Huckert	Kallie Krause	<i>Don &amp; Regina Holtkamp in honor of February Family Birthdays &amp; Anniversaries</i>
<b>11</b>	Cayd Wilkerson	Charles Gaskamp	<i>Trey &amp; Cathy Boeker in honor of their Anniversary</i>
<b>14</b>	Addison Westerfeld	Sandra Tillman	
<b>18</b>	Knowles Koehler	Jennifer Anderson	<i>Dorothy Wiesepape in honor of her February Birthday</i>
<b>21</b>	Alex Grote	Sandy Ordner	
<b>25</b>	Wyatt Davis	Connie Rohde	<i>Fred &amp; Debra Westerfeld in honor of their Anniversary</i>
<b>28</b>	Charlie Schramme	Joseph Ordner	

## 2024 St John Council Members

President .....Kenneth Seeker  
 Vice-President ..... Gerald Herrmann  
 Treasurer.....Regina Holtkamp  
 Secretary.....Rita Gaskamp  
 Community Concerns.....Gayle Bednar

Evangelism.....Cindy Clay  
 Financial Secretary.....Cassie Lynch  
 Parish Ed.....Stephanie Koehler  
 Property.....Colton Maass  
 Worship & Music.....Virginia Altman



## Baptismal Anniversaries

2/01/1976	Karen Spinn	2/10/1944	Al Steinbach
2/02/1975	Amber Westerfeld	2/10/2002	Wesley Neuendorff
2/05/1984	Leigh Cavner	2/11/1968	Steve Skrla
2/06/1944	Deanna Giese	2/14/1993	Jordan Kaminski
2/07/1937	Marjorie Hohlt	2/18/1940	Donna Bentke
2/07/2016	Canaan Wilkerson	2/18/1996	Kallie Krause
2/08/1942	Dorothy Haevischer	2/19/2006	Colin Hagerman
2/09/1975	Trey Boeker	2/20/1983	Jennifer Schroeder
2/09/2014	Kayden Patterson	2/24/1935	Arlie Parker

## Wedding Anniversaries



2/03/1990	John & Sandra Tillman	2/14/1975	Bob & Susi Bentke
2/04/2017	Brandon & Kaley Bednar	2/20/1982	David & Betty Feldmann
2/05/1967	Ben & Carolyn Kessel	2/24/1973	Fred & Debra Westerfeld
2/05/2005	Kim & Bruce Weilbacher	2/26/1976	Donald & Carolyn Lange
2/12/2000	Trey & Cathy Boeker	2/26/1983	Don & Regina Holtkamp
2/12/1994	Gail & Shannon Mitschke		

*You are in our thoughts and prayers as each of you celebrate your special day. May God richly bless you!*

A very Happy Birthday to those celebrating in February.



**Pastor Norm will be enjoying some vacation time beginning after the Worship Service on February 18th through Sunday, February 25th.**

## REACHING YOUR CHURCH OFFICE

Linda Crabtree    prairiehillsecretary@gmail.com    Church Office Phone: 979-836-8666  
Office hours: Monday-Wednesday 8:00am-4:00pm    Website: [www.stjohnprairiehill.org](http://www.stjohnprairiehill.org)  
Church Council President Kenneth Seeker (512) 801-8663

**St. John Evangelical Lutheran Church  
Church Council Meeting Minutes for January 8, 2024**

The Church Council of St. John Evangelical Lutheran Church met for its monthly meeting on January 8, 2024, at 6:00 pm. Council President Kenneth Seeker, called the meeting to order. All current members were present. Pastor Norm Sulaica opened with scripture and prayer.

**Motion** to approve the December minutes as submitted. **MSC**

**Unfinished Business**

New desk top computer for the office: Gerald Herrmann has contacted Computer Helpers. **Motion** to purchase a new unit with 64 ram plus an external hard drive with 2 terabyte storage, not to exceed the \$2000.00 one time spending limit as stated in the constitution. This also includes labor to transfer all records from old to new. **MSC**

**New Business**

**Motion** for Virginia Altman to use the Activity Center on Sunday, January 28, 2024 and February 3, 2024. **MSC**

Attendance boards: **Motion** to continue to post the previous Sunday attendance only. **MSC**

Memorial Committee has voted to accept the predesignated funds' requests by the families of Allene Holtkamp and Evelyn Thielemann. To be disbursed as follows: \$2770 to Camp income/General Fund by Allene Holtkamp family. \$2517 to Food Pantry/General Fund by Evelyn Thielemann family (this is 1/2 total of \$5035, remaining balance will be left in the Memorial Fund). \$20 to Food Pantry from another funeral added to the \$2517 for a total request of \$2537. Family requests sub total \$5307.00 The committee further requests the following disbursements: \$3000 to Camp income/General Fund; \$2500 to NALC Seminary; \$1000 to NALC Disaster Response Warehouse. **Motion** to approve above disbursement requests totaling \$11,807. **MSC**

**For Information**

Council Appreciation dinner, Saturday, January 27, 2024  
Semi-Annual Congregational meeting Sunday, January 28, 2024

**Committee Reports:**

**Treasurer Report**

**Regina Holtkamp**

No report.

**Financial Secretary Report**

**Cassie Lynch**

No report. December and January will be reported in February. Special envelopes will be Men in Mission Scholarship for December.

**Community Concerns Report**

**Gayle Bednar**

Food Pantry served 41 families (83 people) at one distribution in December.

Funerals in December: Mary Ann Luce, 53 served, and Walter Winkelmann, Jr. gravesite service, 35 served.

**Worship and Music Report**

**Virginia Altman**

Finishing touches on the church photo directory. Should be completed this spring.

**Parish Education Report**

**Stephanie Koehler**

First Communion class on February 10 at 9 am. First Communion and bible presentation on Sunday, February 11, 2024. Jake Church, Gunnar Eckert, Cullen Grote, Callie Dismukes and Oakley Kuecker.

VBS slated for July 29 to August 2, with Rally Day and VBS closing on Sunday, August 4.

Camp dates set for July 14 to July 19.

No Sunday school on March 10. Last day of Sunday school will be May 5.

**Motion** to approve the following dates for fundraising, February 11 and April 21 for bake sales, and March 31 after Easter breakfast silent auction. **MSC**

**Youth Report**

**Gerald Herrmann**

No report.

**Evangelism Report**

**Cindy Clay**

No report.

**Property Report**

**Colton Maass**

Have been in contact with several carpenters with no success regarding the sagging stain glass church window. It's such a delicate procedure to properly repair.

Workday will be scheduled to trim the trees on the cemetery road. Now is the time to trim.

Will go out for bids to replace our lawn service. Needs to include all flowerbeds and the parsonage grounds.

Looking into the recent AC issues, may be the thermostat.

Broken water line near the gazebo. Water has been shut off.

**Pastor's Report**

**Pr. Norm Sulaica**

Visitations: Nursing home/shut ins visits 16, other visits 27, including telephone calls.

2023 year in review report handout.

Homebound, nursing home and assistant living communion records handout.

Lent Wednesday service with pastor rotation: Ash Wednesday, February 14, Maundy Thursday, March 28, Good Friday, March 29 and Easter Sunday, March 31.

Bod 4 God & Faith Lessons classes - weigh in Easter Sunday Sunrise service.

St. Matthew: Mr. Bill Morris was ordained, Saturday, January 6, 2024. Pastor's commitment has been fulfilled.

Personal: 35th Wedding Anniversary celebration will be a cruise February 18 to 25, 2024.

**Motion** to approve all reports as presented. **MSC**

**Motion** to adjourn. **MSC**. The meeting closed with the Lord's Prayer.


Respectfully Submitted,

Rita Gaskamp  
Council Secretary


## **Lenten Services**

2024 Lent Services will center around the theme of **Preparation**. Lent is a season for us to prepare for the Resurrection of Jesus, that is Easter Sunday. It is a brief focus on where we explore how are lives on earth are centered in preparing for our Lord's return and our eternal future with our Heavenly Father. Each week will highlight practice such as prayer, repentance, and simple living and their role in our faith walk. **Our Lenten journey begins with Ash Wednesday, February 14th, Our Morning Service begins at 7 am, and the evening service begins at 7 pm. Our five-week Soup Dinners and Lent Services start February 21. The meal begins at 5 pm and the worship service is set for 6 pm.**



SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WED
February			
<b>4 5th Sunday After Epiphany</b> 8:30AM Sunday School 9:15AM Worship Service 2:00PM Luther League 4:00PM Young Women's	<b>5</b> 10:00AM Bible Study 6:00PM Executive Meeting 6:00PM Bod4God	<b>6</b> 9:00AM Music Planning	<b>7</b> 4:30PM tion Clas 6:30PM Practice
<b>11 Transfiguration of Our Lord</b> 8:30AM Sunday School 9:15AM Worship Service & First Communion Youth Bake Sale after Service	<b>12</b> 10:00AM Bible Study 6:00PM Council Meeting <u>Newsletter Deadline</u>	<b>13</b> 6:30AM Food Pantry 9:00AM Music Planning 10:00AM Rachel Circle 4:30PM God Squad 6:30PM Jump Start	<b>14 Ash W</b> 7:00AM & 7 Worship Se 2:00PM Gai 4:30PM Coi Class Choir Pract Worship Se
<b>18 Lent 1</b> 8:30AM Sunday School 9:15AM Worship Service  <b>Pastor on Vacation</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>20</b> 9:00AM Quilting	<b>21</b> 4:30PM Co Class 5:00PM Sc 6:00PM Le Choir Pra <b>Worship S</b>
<b>25 Lent 2</b> 8:30AM Sunday School 9:15AM Worship Service  <b>Pastor on Vacation</b>	<b>26</b> 10:00AM Bible Study 6:00PM Bod4God	<b>27</b> 6:30AM Food Pantry 9:00AM Music Planning 9:00AM Quilting	<b>28</b> 4:30PM Co Class 5:00PM Sc 6:00PM Le Choir Pra Worship S



WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
			
	1 Office Closed 10:00AM Naomi Circle 6:00PM Faith Lessons <b>**Camp Early Bird Deadline**</b>	2	3 Activity Center Reserved
Confirmation Choir	8 Office Closed 2:00PM Ladies Aid	9 Office Closed	10 9:00AM First Communion Class
Wednesday 11:00PM Ashes & Service, Home Day Confirmation Service after service	15 Office Closed	16 Office Closed	17 8:00AM Men's Ministry Breakfast 10:30AM Painting Class w/ Terry Boeker
Confirmation Lup Supper Lenten Service Service after service	22 Office Closed	23 Office Closed	24 →
Confirmation Lup Supper Lenten Service Service after service			<b>**Special Envelope for February: Bread Partners**</b>

## SUNDAY SCHOOL NEWS

The 2024 Sunday School year is off to a great start! We have an amazing group of ladies that are coming together to work as a team and share Jesus' love with the kiddos of St. John. February 11th, the children will join Pastor to burn palms in preparation for Ash Wednesday. We welcome all children of our congregation, as well as visitors to join us on Sunday mornings!



In His Name,  
Kaley Bednar



### *First Communion*

*First Communion Class will be held on Saturday, February 10th at 9:00AM. On Sunday, February 11th, during the Worship Service, Jake Church, Gunnar Eckert, Cullen Grote, Callie Dismukes and Oakley Kuecker will receive their First Communion.*

### **Soup Supper**

Sign-up sheets are available for the 5:00PM soup supper meal to be held during Lent, beginning February 21st. The meal will be before the 6:00PM Worship Service.



### **Church Gift Shop and Library**

Stop in and visit the library. There is something for everyone and you'll find some great gift ideas.

Items are available by donation. Books for both children and adults can also be checked out. Come by and see what is available for you.



# *The following are sharing their time and talents for the month of February.*

**ALTAR PREPARATION** Connie Rohde, Janet Wehring

**FAMILY AID** Carolyn Kessel, Mary Hill, Sandy Janner, Rosa Sloan, Audrey Steinbach,  
Elvera Tisdell, Janet Wehring, Becki Schawe

**MEMORIAL COMMITTEE** Deanna Giese, Susi Bentke

**SANCTUARY PREP** Sandy Janner,, Carol Haarmeyer

**CHURCH TELLERS** Donna Skrla, Gary Schulze

**SCREEN CREW** Janice Fairlie, Kallie Krause

**USHERS** Johnny Randermann Family, Fred Gaskamp

**NAOMI CIRCLE** Mary Hill

**QUILTERS** Susi Bentke

**EUCHARIST TEAM** Linda Schulze, Carolyn Kessel, Karen Rosenbaum, Cookie Engeling, Diana  
Williams, Connie Rohde

**COMMUNION BREAD** Becky Schulze



“Only by giving are you able to receive more than you already have.”



*Quilters will meet February 20th and  
February 27th.*

Luther League Youth will  
hold its gathering on  
February 4th at 2:00PM.  
Join us for the fun and  
fellowship.





### **Faith Lessons Prophet and Kings of Israel**

Join us for a 5-week study from the holy Lands Teacher and Professor, Ray Vander Laan. The study will take us to Megiddo, Mount Carmel, Lachish, Negev, and Arad. We will explore ancient ruins and scripture. Each lesson will grow our faith in God. Our journey through the Prophets and Kings of Israel concludes on February 1st at 6:00PM.



### Game Day

Each 2nd Wednesday of the month, there will be a Game Day at the church from 2:00pm - 5:00pm. The next Game Day is February 14th. Join us for fun, games and fellowship. All ages are welcome.

### Jump Start

Meets on February 13th at 6:30PM.



### Naomi Circle

**The Naomi Circle will meet at 10:00AM on February 1st.**

### Ladies Aid

Will be meeting on February 8th at 2:00PM.



### Men's Ministry

Men's Ministry will meet on February 17th at 8:00AM.





## God Squad

God Squad is a monthly event held at the Church. God Squad is a 3<sup>rd</sup> through 6<sup>th</sup> grade youth gathering centered around “Faith, Food, and Fun.” The next monthly gathering will be Tuesday, February 13th at 4:30PM. Should you want to share in this ministry, we invite you to come and help Laura with snacks and drinks, or if you enjoy activities, please join Pastor Norm as we encourage our youth to burn away their after-school energy.

## Bod4God

Sunday, September 17th, Pastor Norm stepped on the scale and revealed his weight. His weigh-in kicked off the beginning of Bod4God.

Bod4God is centered around scripture and weight loss. His purpose is to encourage each of you to commit to raising money for our youth to attend camp and also to encourage a healthier you. A sign up sheet to support this Weight-A-Thon will be available in the Narthex and remain throughout the event. You can make a financial commitment for every pound Pastor Norm loses or a single donation. Bod4God will meet in February on the 5th and the 26th at 6:00PM. Pastor Norm will weigh in at the Easter morning sunrise service.

## Bible Study

Bible study is held each Monday at 10:00AM.



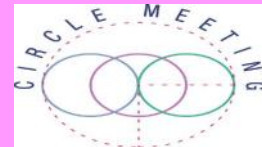
The deadline for the March newsletter will be February 12th.





*The Young Women's Circle will meet on  
Sunday, February 4th at 4:00pm.*

**Rachel Circle  
Will meet Tuesday, February 13th at  
10:00AM . Please note the time  
change.**



**The Activity Center is reserved on February 3rd.**



**Offering Envelopes  
Member Offering Envelopes are  
available in the Narthex for 2024. Please  
pick yours up.**



*Flower Chart*  
*The 2024 flower chart has been posted in the  
Annex. You may sign up for flowers by checking  
the flower chart for available dates.*



Choir practice is held each Wednesday at  
6:30PM, except beginning Ash Wednesday thru  
Lent, after Worship Service.  
Come share your voice.

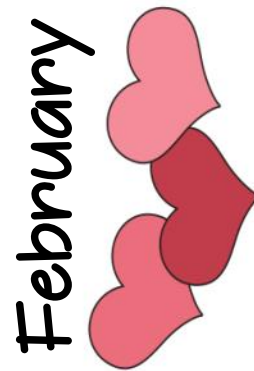
**Food Pantry Upcoming Dates**  
February 13th and 27th from 6:30AM-8:00AM.

**St John Lutheran Church  
of Prairie Hill**  
6605 Old Independence Rd.  
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[www.stjohnprairiehill.org](http://www.stjohnprairiehill.org)  
979-836-8666



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The deadline for the  
March newsletter is:  
***February 12th***  
Submissions received after  
this date will be included if  
time and space allow.  
Thank you!



**RETURN SERVICE  
REQUESTED**