



# Annual Program Report

JUNE 2, 2024

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- Nominating Committee
- Pastor Brian’s Retirement

# AGENDA

1. Call to Order, Opening Prayer
2. Adoption of Agenda
3. Approval of Minutes from the February 4, 2024, meeting
4. Treasurer's Report
5. Pastor, Staff, and Ministry Reports
6. Unfinished Business
  - a) Pave the Way Update
7. New Business
  - a) Nominating Committee Report / Election of Council Members
  - b) Pastor Brian Retirement
8. Announcements
9. Closing Prayer / Adjournment

# MINUTES – FEBRUARY 4, 2024

## Congregational Meeting Minutes – February 4, 2024

The meeting was called to order at 5:03pm.

Jeremy Beyerlein made a motion to approve the agenda and Kathy Davis seconded. The motion was passed.

June 4, 2023, meeting minutes were approved, a motion was made by Dawn Williams to accept and seconded by Mark Latus.

October 1, 2023, meeting minutes were approved, a motion was made by Steve to accept and seconded by Sandy.

### Treasury Report (Carrie Peters)

- 2023: Pave the Way enthusiasm impacted general giving positively. The year finished strong, after a projected deficit in the 2023 budget there was a surplus. Great stewardship of funding lead to that surplus.

### Unfinished Business (Pastor Brian):

- Pave the Way: \$302,487 pledged, \$188k have been given. The contract has been signed for the circle drive and outdoor lighting. Landscaping will also start once things thaw out. Narthex (interiors) will be finalizing furnishings.

### New Business (Keith Paukner):

- Power Church: Financial Audit will give us a complete audit for this coming year.
- Committee Financial Reports: No questions were asked.
- Nominating Committee: Officers were approved for the nominating committee.

### 2024 Budget (Carrie Peters):

- 2024 Giving: A 5% increase in giving is being asked of the congregation at St. John's.
- More focus on multi-generational activities, like tonight's recital and dinner ahead of the annual meeting.
- Partnerships & Outreach: Grant money that we were gracious to receive will be used for benevolence. Grant funding was only possible because of a board member that is a member at St. John's. This will not be something we take for granted in future years.
- Synod Giving: Per Dawn higher than the average congregation.
- Steve makes a motion to approve the budget as presented, seconded by Barb Reed. The motion was carried.

Meeting adjourned at 5:26pm Steven made a motion, Jeremy seconded and the motion was carried.

# ADMINISTRATION

## Council President Report

Brian Zach

Back in November our Office Admin, Sue Smith retired to spend more time with her growing family. In March of 2024, Margie Martinez was hired to fill the Office Admin role. We wish Sue all the best and look forward to having Margie be a part of the St. John's Community.

I want to thank Cindi Wright-Kau for her years of service as a member of the custodian team. Cindi will be stepping in early June of 2024 to focus her time on her personal business endeavors.

St. John's needed a provider to support and maintain all of our recent upgrades in the Sanctuary and hired Avenue Systems in Milwaukee. They were pleased with our upgrades and had a few suggestions to enhance the sound quality in the Sanctuary.

In March, we switched IT providers and brought in GO TECH IT located in Brookfield, to manage our ongoing needs in the ever-changing world of IT. Projects include moving staff files to cloud base storage and back up verses onsite server storage. Various security features have been improved to protect our data and to greatly reduce issues such as "fishing or scam" emails. Guests will see an enhancement of Wi-Fi signal throughout the building.

In May, Pastor Brian announced his retirement for May 2025. St. John's is blessed for Pastor Brian's leadership over the years, which brought about significant challenges with COVID, economic inflation, and the tragic events surrounding the Waukesha Christmas Parade. Thanks to Brian's leadership we were able to weather these events and remain a strong congregation. We look forward to celebrating with Brian in his final year here at St. John's.

On a personal note, I want to thank the St. John's community for all their support over the past four years in my role as President. I feel honored and blessed to be able to share my gifts and serve this amazing congregation.

God's Blessing,  
Brian Zach – President

# ADMINISTRATION

## Senior Pastor Annual Report

*Pastor Brian Halverson*

We have completed another programmatic year! I can say confidently that the Holy Spirit is alive and well, as evidenced by the excellent work that we have done and continue to do. We have been faithful witnesses to the grace of God through Jesus Christ. As you read through the ministry and staff reports, you will see that Christ's church at St. John's is a vibrant one. Filled with creativity and enthusiasm, the youth, education, outreach and worship life of the congregation has inspired us to invest our time and resources to the mission of the church.

I would like to highlight a couple of endeavors that point to the ongoing work of the church. First, our "Pave the Way" campaign was successful in raising capital for the necessary repairs of our circle drive. It also raised money for the enhancement of our gathering space, landscaping, and new signage. This work is the first phase of what will be a continuing effort to reshape and renew our facilities for the years ahead. Most importantly, a tithe of ten percent of funds raised has gone and will go to the mission and work of the Hope Center in Waukesha.

Second, the St. John's Academy provided excellent speakers who gave us important and extremely interesting talks with topics that included a look at the Jewishness of the New Testament by Dr. Kris Ruffatto, a presentation by Rev. Paul Bulgerin on the stories in Holy Week, and Rev. Joseph Ellwanger who recalled and related the history of the civil rights movement in the south, a history in which he took part, to today's understanding of civil rights.

Third, I would personally like to thank Brian Zach for the diligent and excellent leadership and administrative management as Council President. Brian has overseen a much-needed overhaul of our IT systems, a new Sound system vendor, and the overall leadership on the council. We are definitely in a much better position in these areas than when he started!

As you know, the upcoming year is one of transition. We will work closely with the Greater Milwaukee Synod this year to prepare for the next pastoral leader who will continue to guide St. John's in its God-given mission. I will do all that I can to assist in this transition.

I remain excited and hopeful for the future of St. John's Church!

# ADMINISTRATION

## Membership Report for 2023

submitted by Margie Martinez, Administrative Assistant

### Members Received:

Steven and Siri Bartlein; Sunniva, Drake  
Jon and Judy Hintzman

Gail Jacobsen  
Levi Zuck; Claire

### Members Removed:

Russ and Pam Brown; Alex, Andy  
Mark and Janice Franzen; Bryan, Sarah  
Karen Gumm; Amanda, Jenna  
Charlie and Beth Ann Piette

Teri Quam; Staci, Stephanie  
Mark and Mary Sabin  
Jan Schemberger  
Cindy Vitale

### Baptisms:

Raelyn Marie Lipscomb  
Navvi Binx Broussard  
Mayzie Joan Allbaugh  
Chase Thomas Wimmer  
Sydney Rae Egmasse

Henry Robert Hale  
Josephine Rose Bickel Cardona  
Sunniva Jane Bartlein  
Issac Campbell Erdahl  
Hannah Sheryl Beukema

### First Communion:

John Cornelis Beukema  
Hannah Lennell

Jacob Thomas Roth

### Confirmations:

Joseph Sidebottom  
Jacob Home  
Jorja Cesar  
Hannah Wagner  
Dayne Peters  
Jacob Balzer

Peyton Lenell  
AJ Harwood  
Roger Miller  
Tyler Schettler  
Ethan Vanden Heuvel

### Funerals:

Arlyn Meier  
Jaidyn Barz  
Kathy Kempke  
Sue Krueger

Carol Elder  
Dolores Doyle  
Pat Anderson  
Barbara Keymar

### Weddings:

none



# ADMINISTRATION

## Communications

submitted by Pam Klink, Communications Coordinator

### Worship

- Worship support is provided with bulletins, PowerPoints, lector sheets, and streaming.
- The regular AV crew and the substitute volunteers are amazing: Phil Peters, Dayne Peters, Penny Holt, Stephanie Broussard, Dave Sturgill, Josh Werner, Jeremy Beyerlein, and Malachi Beyerlein. Worship would not be the same without them – in person or online. *(There is room for 1-2 more to join the team on a regular or substitute basis. Training provided!)*

### Social Media

- Our 8:30 service is live streamed to YouTube and Facebook.
- Our YouTube channel grew to 279 subscribers.
- Our Facebook page grew to 572 followers.

### Announcements

- Announcements are on the back of the bulletins each week.
- A PowerPoint of announcements runs before the early service and between services.
- Announcements are sent weekly in the Happenings email.

### Emails

- The *Happenings* email is sent each week on Friday.
- The *Inspire* newsletter is published each month. A link is sent via email to those who are subscribed to receive the newsletter. It is available on the website ([makedisciples.com](http://makedisciples.com)) under Resources along with a limited number of paper copies. We continue to mail a few newsletters to those unable to view it online and unable to pick up a copy.
- Prayer requests are emailed to the Prayer email list as requests are received.
- The “Subscribe” button on the bottom of each website page is the place to manage the emails you receive. There currently are five email lists: newsletter, Happenings, prayer requests, members, and Sunday School. If your email is not on the list, you will not receive that information. (Please contact me with questions.)
- Emails are currently managed through MailChimp. The possibility of switching to Constant Contact is being explored to have emails better integrated with our PowerChurch database.

### Directory

- One goal for the coming year is to produce an updated picture directory. The previous directory is from 2018.
- A letter will be mailed the first week in June requesting members and other associates to verify and/or update their demographic information with us and to submit a photo by June 30, 2024.
- The PowerChurch database will be updated over the summer allowing for directories to be printed in the Fall.

# ADMINISTRATION

## Finance Team/Treasurer Update

*submitted by Carrie Peters*

The Finance Team at St. John's meets monthly during the week before the Council meeting to examine the financials and make any necessary recommendations to Council.

2024 has been an eventful year for the Finance Team, Treasurer, and Financial Secretaries. This year, we fully converted accounting for contributions from ACS to PowerChurch, streamlining the workflow. We also took proactive steps to be better stewards of our resources:

- Reinvested \$100,000 of our general funds into two separate 13-month CDs
- With Council's approval, Invested \$100,000 of the Capital Improvement Fund dollars into a separate 12-month CD. This will yield an exponentially higher return than the savings account that still holds the remainder of the Capital Improvement Fund.

The April 30 reconciled financials yielded the following:

- Giving year-to-date is notably lower than budgeted goal (22% below budget YTD).
- Total income is 21% lower than the budgeted goal, year-to-date.
  - **Total income (Jan-Apr) for 2024 is approximately \$55,000 less than 2023.**
- Expenses are 2% below budget, year-to-date.

Due to income being below the budgeted goal, no funds have been moved to the Capital Improvement Fund in 2024. The \$12,102.31 Deficit Reduction Fund remains untouched as there was no deficit at the end of 2023.

# ADMINISTRATION

## Human Resources

*submitted by Lori Schettler*

The staff members at St. John's Lutheran Church are vital to our ministry. The Human Resources Committee (the "Committee" or the "HR Committee") is a strategic partner with St. John's Lutheran Church leadership and the Congregation and is committed to assisting in the development of a high performing staff, capable of supporting the mission of the church. The Committee's core responsibilities include maintenance of job descriptions, participation in recruitment and staffing, performance management, employee relations, investigations and disciplinary actions through termination, employee development, compensation and benefits design, budgeting and administration, Human Resource information management, regulatory compliance related to employment, Human Resources policy development and monitoring of compliance with them.

During the program year ended May 2024, the HR Committee participated in the selection and recruitment process for the position of Office Administrative Assistant. The HR committee, with council approval, also enrolled St. John's in the Evangelical Lutheran Education Assoc (ELEA) benefit program which is an employee-paid benefit, with no cost to the church, providing Life insurance, Long-Term Disability, Dental and Vision plans at very low rates to employees working a minimum of 20 hours per week.

The HR Committee, partnered with St. John's bookkeeper and treasurer in revising the payroll policy. The committee also updated its new hire offer letter. Also, during this year, the HR Committee assisted in updating the job descriptions for the following positions: Bookkeeper, KOTK Director, Handbell Director and Contemporary Worship Leader.

Several updates to the Human Resources Policies and Procedures were proposed and approved by Council. As part of its ongoing diligence, the Committee also conducted an annual review and revision of the Recognition Program and Annual Performance Appraisal process. Throughout the program year, the Committee kept abreast of and discussed new laws and regulations pertaining to human resources.

The HR Committee continued to monitor St. John's performance management process, which enables managers to have more robust discussions with staff about what each is doing well and how that person can be even more effective. The performance management process at St. John's continues to be effective and enables us to serve our strategic priorities.

We look forward to continuing to work closely with Council to ensure that St. John's continues to have a high-performing staff, which serves the mission of our church at a high level.

Respectfully submitted,  
St. John's Human Resources Committee

Tom Potratz, Chair  
Lori Schettler, Secretary  
Brian Zach, Ex-Officio

Kathy Davis  
Scott Bingenheimer

Lisa Belli-Fuchs  
Steve Wimmer

## COMMITTEE REPORTS

### Endowment Fund

submitted by Jennifer Cranfill, chair

Committee:

- Jennifer Cranfill, chairperson (term expires May 2025)
- Carole Lewis, Recording Secretary (term expires May 2024)
- Angie Rose-Mueller, alternate Secretary (term expires May 2025)
- Phil Peters (term expires May 2026)
- Rich Warp, Financial Secretary (term expires May 2026)

The St. John's Endowment Fund was set up to generate income to be awarded to groups/ministries/charities recommended by St. John's members. The restricted balance (principal) is the accumulation of donations made to the fund over the years, for this purpose.

The Endowment Committee was able to offer an "Open-Window" campaign in October of 2023 to accept nominations for Endowment grants. This campaign was used to award \$7150 of income. The grant award recipients were:

St. John's Food Box Drive	\$750
Waukesha Food Pantry	\$500
Just One More Ministry	\$1,000
El Salvador Days for Girls Kits	\$1,000
St. John's Newborn kits	\$1,000
Habitat for Humanity	\$1,000
St. John's Pave the Way capital campaign	\$1,000
All Peoples Church food pantry	\$400
St. John's Preschool scholarship program	\$500

The endowment fund is currently invested in balanced fund (Vanguard Wellington Admiral Shares VWENX). The balance as of 5/16/2024 is \$166,904.87. We received two gifts to the fund in 2023 totaling \$2800.

Donations to the Endowment fund are always accepted, and can be part of your estate plan. The donations to the fund will continue to be "**The Gift that Keeps on Giving**". To date the Endowment Fund has distributed in excess of \$95,000 to various charities.

Please contact any of the Endowment Committee members if you would like more information on donating to the Endowment or have any other questions.

## COMMITTEE REPORTS

### Gifts and Memorials

*submitted by Barb Reed, Chair*

The Gifts and Memorials committee meets as needed to give approval on expenditures from the account. A brochure is available which explains procedures used within the committee and offers information on memorials to families who have lost a loved one.

You're welcome to leave a gift or memorial in memory or honor of someone at any time. All that is needed is to complete a "Designation of Gift" form. Persons or committees requesting to use undesignated memorial funds for an unbudgeted need within the church can complete a "Request for Use of Funds" form. Both forms are available at the Information Desk or from the church office.

The Gifts and Memorials committee consists of five members. Current members are: Dick Granholm, Barb Reed and Jim Truax. Two new members for the committee are needed. If you're interested in serving, contact one of the current members.

### Interiors Visioning Team

*submitted by Gail Rennie, Chair*

As part of the Pave the Way campaign, our goal is to revitalize our current Narthex (Gathering Space) making it welcoming, not only to visitors who are coming for the first time, but to our membership as well. This area is intended to provide a place to gather after worship with a coffee station and seating/standing areas to mingle in: an open welcome space that is contemporary, comfortable and bright. In other words, we want to be a visual "Welcome" to all who enter.

New furnishings and accessories to replace our current outdated furniture have been selected and ordered with the guidance of a local interior design firm. Walls have been newly painted. The knock-out wall to the north of the sanctuary has provided valuable storage space and an info-screen where the new coffee station will be located. The new electric fireplace installation provides an inviting comfortable place for people to meet and sit. Artwork considerations are still a part of our future decisions. New signage will also make this space more user-friendly. This is still a work in progress and we hope to have everything in place by Rally Sunday.

We are open to your ideas, comments and concerns. Thank you for your patience.

Dick Granholm  
 Jan Delzer  
 Jeff Gubbins  
 Marion Schreiber  
 Ken Bahr (consultant)  
 Gail Rennie

## COMMITTEE REPORTS

### **Library**

*submitted by Peg Schellin*

St. John's Library has a large collection of books and virtual materials available for everyone to check out. There is a wide range of topics, such as the Bible, Luther, Devotionals, Prayer, Outreach (El Salvador), Children's Bible stories, Parenting, Aging, Christian living, and much more.

There also are numerous resources that are very useful for the Bible Study Groups.

### **Memorial Garden with Columbarium**

*submitted by Mark Aamot*

Dedicated in October 2017, the St. John's Memorial Garden and Columbarium continues to serve our congregation in end-of-life planning, death, and burial. There are 72 niches in the Columbarium. At this time thirty-five niches have been purchased for 60 individuals. The Garden is debt-free. The budget is separate from the church budget. Beautifully engraved pavers are placed on the ground in the Columbarium to honor loved ones. They may be purchased for \$125. Committee members perform the upkeep of the Garden throughout the year.

The Garden is a beautiful place for mediation and prayer. Funeral services may be conducted in the Garden. On Easter Sunday a sunrise service is held in this sacred place

The following committee members are available for more information:

Karen and Mark Aamot, Ben and Carrie Allbaugh, John and Mary Almasi, Darlene Bahr, Dick Granholm, Chris and Pam Klink, Jeff and Kyle Weyer, and Marlene and Ralph Zick.

## COMMITTEE REPORTS

### **Worship Team**

*submitted by Pastor Brian Halverson*

This year, the Worship team continued to lead the congregation with excellent and faithful worship experiences. With our Advent meditation hour on Sunday evenings to the Holden Evening prayers services during Lent, and of course, our Sunday morning worship, St. John's has provided the opportunity for all people to experience God in meaningful ways.

The beautification of the sanctuary with the new altar cloths for Easter, Pentecost, and season after Pentecost enhanced our worship life. We are grateful for the decorating team who did a wonderful job in providing the look of the altar area for Thanksgiving, Christmas, and Easter. We thank all the people who donated flowers on a weekly basis.

We give a big thank you to Sandy and Keith Paukner for coordinating the elements and assistants for the communion services. We thank Mark Aamot for coordinating the ushers and schedules. And to all the volunteers who have read the lessons each Sunday.

We thank all of our talented musicians for providing us with inspirational and worshipful music, particularly of course to Kenn Anderson and the praise band for their dedication to the gospel of Jesus Christ.

We thank the Funeral Reception Ministry who has provided refreshments and coordinated meals for families who had funerals for their loved ones.

With the prayers we offer up to God, we give great thanks to the overwhelming presence of the Holy Spirit who reveals to us the grace and love of Jesus Christ in whose name we worship and glorify!

## CARE MINISTRIES

### Make a Meal Ministry

*submitted by Pam Klink*

When the office is informed that someone needs meals, a sign up is created in Sign Up Genius. The link is shared with members to sign up for dates to share a meal.

Making a meal is easy. Guidelines for allergies and food preferences are provided. "To-go" containers are available at church so dishes do not need to be washed and returned. Don't know what to make? Just make your favorite meal for yourself but make a bigger batch to share.

If you need meals after a surgery, after the birth of a child, during an illness, or for any other reason, please contact the office or Pastor Brian.

### Funeral Reception Ministry

*submitted by Carol Wasemiller*

The Funeral Reception Committee offers, with care and concern, an opportunity for family and friends to gather at church for post funeral receptions. The brochure with the options is available to families when they first meet with the Pastor. (Available on the website or from the office.) Since the team formed, we have provided various options for seven families. Thank you to everyone who volunteered. Contact any team member if you are willing to be called on in the future.

Mary Almasi	262-549-1369	<a href="mailto:jalmasi@wi.rr.com">jalmasi@wi.rr.com</a>
Darlene Bahr	262-894-9582	<a href="mailto:bahrdarlene@gmail.com">bahrdarlene@gmail.com</a>
Barb Lange	262-542-4010	<a href="mailto:sleepyb916@aol.com">sleepyb916@aol.com</a>
Carole Lewis	262-617-0605	<a href="mailto:rgmlewis@aol.com">rgmlewis@aol.com</a>
Cindy Schaefer	262-271-6623	<a href="mailto:cs.otm39@gmail.com">cs.otm39@gmail.com</a>
Carol Wasemiller	847-651-4694	<a href="mailto:clinnea@yahoo.com">clinnea@yahoo.com</a>

### Jail Ministry

*submitted by Joanna Salinas, on behalf of Jane Babcock*

St. John's has a long tradition of participating in the St. Dismas Jail Prison Ministry, a ministry of St. Vincent de Paul. In 32 years of ministry, many St. John's members participated in the St. John's Jail Ministry, spearheaded by Jane Babcock. Members participated in worship services and bible study at the Jail, visited inmates, stocked a library for inmates, wrote countless letters, and more.

Over the past several years, due to Covid and changing policy at the Waukesha County Jail, St. John's participation declined until it was simply Jane. With decreased mobility, Jane's activities in 2023 were limited to inmate phone calls and letter writing. She continued to participate with the St. Dismas group. Knowing that her mobility was continuing to decline, Jane spoke often of the eventual end to the Jail Ministry at St. John's when she retired. These are her thoughts as conveyed to Joanna through her writings and conversations.



## CARE MINISTRIES

Over the years about 20 of St. John's members have been part of this ministry – some have stayed for a season, and some have stayed much longer. It's the kind of ministry in which we don't just participate. We feel a nudge, a willingness to risk getting out of our comfort zone, and the courage to say yes to a call which can be life changing and incredibly fulfilling. It's been a good 32 years. It is the same with all ministries, some stay for a season and some much longer. It is ok, and healthy, for ministries to come and go. It is ok for us to say goodbye to our active participation in the Jail Ministry yet continue to support the work that others are doing. And if someone feels the call, we should support them as they pick back up the torch.

There is currently a little over \$1000 of dedicated funding that has been given by members to our Jail Ministry work. If no one steps forward before the end of the year to run the St. John's Jail Ministry, it was Jane's recommendation that this funding be donated to the St. Dismas Jail Prison Ministry that St. John's participated with. It was further Jane's dream that St. John's would consider donating on a regular basis through our annual benevolences to the St. Dismas Jail Prison Ministry to support their work on our behalf.

### Prayer Shawl Ministry Group

*submitted by Linda Nelson*

As always, our mission is to bring comfort and hope to anyone who needs it. We meet monthly on the second Friday of the month from 10:00 am to 12:00 pm. Our usual place to gather is in the narthex. When the weather permits, we meet outside in front of the church. We welcome new participants – from those who have years of knitting or crocheting experience to those wanting to learn. If you are unable to meet with the group on the second Friday, you may knit or crochet at home. Yarn is available for this ministry. Periodically, the completed prayer shawls are blessed in worship.



Our ministry provides three different items. First, are the prayer shawls. These are available in the narthex to be given to anyone in need of comfort or support. (i.e. illness, recovery, new baby). Second, are Pocket Patches. Essentially, these are mini prayers shawls that fit in your pocket. Third are baptism blankets, that are given to anyone being baptized.

We continue our ministry with love and hope.

## CARE MINISTRIES

### Quilting Group

submitted by Klaudia Hollander

St. John's quilters group meets monthly on the first Tuesday evening of the month from 6:00-8:00 p.m. Our focus is to assemble and sew quilts for Lutheran World Relief. LWR distributes these quilts to people in need around the world. In 2023 we packed and sent 69 quilts following our annual fall Quilt Sunday. We have a small, dedicated group, supported by others who help by sewing quilt tops and tying the assembled quilts at home. Donations of cotton fabric are appreciated. New members to the group are always welcome. 'Quilt To Go' packets with instructions are available in the narthex for anyone interested in supporting this mission.



### Visitation Ministry

submitted by Karen Aamot, Facilitator

Approximately twenty people serve as visitors to our Shut-Ins with monthly visits. Our congregation includes between 11- 14 Shut-Ins. These are folks who are unable to attend worship. Some are in their homes; some are in senior living places in the area. Visitors bring communion and often share a devotional reading and pray with their friends. They also sing favorite hymns together. The Shut-Ins receive the *Inspire*. This ministry has been in place for eleven years and works in tandem with our staff. Volunteers keep in touch by sharing a brief description of each visit with the team. The St. John's Youth make gifts and handmade cards for our Shut-Ins on special occasions. The Visitation Ministry also communicates with those members over 90 and our special Charter Members. Thank you for keeping our dear shut-ins in prayer.

"So faith, hope and love abide, these three, but the greatest of these is love," I Cor. 13

### Yoga Group

submitted by Kathi Hanson

Yoga sessions at St. John's are led by Kim Walbrun, who has many years of experience and extensive training. We meet on Mondays from 10:00-11:00 a.m. in the Youth Room. Attendees pay only for the weeks they are able to attend. Everyone is welcome to attend – bring your own yoga mat and wear comfy clothes.

Questions? Contact – text or call – Kim (414-698-7774) or Kathi (414-421-4206)

## GROW MINISTRIES

### Preschool

submitted by Laura Rickinger, St. John's Lutheran Church Preschool Director

St. John's Preschool, having completed our twenty-fifth school year, is part of the Children, Youth and Families Ministries. We provide an early childhood education experience to our church members and to the community with a staff dedicated to sharing the love of God and the love of learning to all our children. Ours is proudly a diverse community both culturally and with the skills, gifts, and challenges of our children. We continue to welcome children with special needs and challenges and where they can learn and grow receiving the attention they may need and cannot receive in other preschools.



St. John's Preschool

WHERE WE PLAY, DISCOVER, LEARN AND GROW.

#### 2023-2024 Preschool Year Highlights:

In our Two-Year-Old class, our team teachers, Mary Wagner and Lana DeCoto, enjoyed the eagerness of twelve children playing and learning as their first classroom experience. We continue to be successful in enrolling children throughout the school year after their second birthday.

Our Three-Year-Old class with eighteen children, taught by the team of Mary and Lana, once again showed us how children their age make special friendships. Their age-appropriate learning skills are introduced and practiced every day in a fun, fast-paced and nurturing learning environment.

In February, we honored Lana DeCoto's 10th Anniversary as our Preschool teacher. Lana came to St. John's Preschool with a wealth of knowledge and years of experience in early childhood education and has continued to lovingly and creatively impact the lives of our youngest learners every day. Lana is also a member of St. John's Choir and is the KOTK Preschool Director. She has a true heart for ministry, and she blesses us in many ways.

Our Four-Year-Old class with eight eager learners was led by LaBree Paukner. Our families appreciate the opportunity to use our class as either their child's Four-Year-Old experience and then move on to public school 5K, or to attend our Preschool and then enter their school's 4K class. LaBree has an emphasis on Group Work Skills to practice and learn collaboration, communication, and problem-solving. We are confident that each child is

well-prepared for their next step after this year of our Playing to Learn curriculum.

#### Preschool Looking Ahead to 2023-2024:

We are busy with enrollment for the upcoming school year. We are proud of our reputation within the community and how our families refer others to us.

The Preschool office is open throughout the summer preparing for the upcoming school year. This summer's Vacation Bible School Preschool program is being written and taught by Laura Rickinger and Lana DeCoto using the framework of a typical Preschool day. It will be five days of Summer Games-Champions in Training created just for our youngest learners.

# GROW MINISTRIES

## Children's Ministries

Joanna Salinas, Children's Ministry Coordinator

Sunday School had a great year! This is our 9<sup>th</sup> year utilizing the Large Group/Small Group format.

Children gather first in Large Group, where they experience music, stewardship, the lesson and prayers all together as a group. Families often attend this time together and several families have now dubbed this time as "kids church". Then students ages 2-5<sup>th</sup> grade head to Small Groups where they build peer relationships and expand on the lesson.

The benefits of this framework are that it allows us the freedom to be highly creative in how we present the lesson and allows for greater volunteerism and family participation. It also provides an environment for children with specific needs to fully participate in (and enjoy) Sunday School in areas where they may struggle in a traditional format. Our theme this year was "The Bible's Greatest Hits" and each week the kids would spin a wheel to see which story we were learning next. This was a fun way to explore Bible stories that we typically don't get to cover in the lectionary year.

### Highlights and milestones of the year include:

- Sunday School enrollment of approx. 50 children.
- Two new families were welcomed to Sunday School this year.
- Four students received their First Communion.
- Bible Distribution to our preschoolers and 3<sup>rd</sup> graders.
- Over 12 Youth/Adult volunteers (Large Group team, Small Group leaders, planning teams)
- Collaboration with the Confirmation students in a Youth Leadership Team on Sunday mornings
- Stewardship Projects brought in over \$1000 in funds as we focused on local & world hunger, our Los Héroes partnership, and connecting with St. John's ministries.
- Impromptu Christmas Pageant.

### Summer Programming

#### Summer of 2023

Last summer we offered Amazing Notes Music Camp in June, Seeds of Change VBS in July along with two Family Fun Nights. Approximately 40 children participated in the weeklong VBS including spending a morning at Retzer Nature Center.

#### Summer of 2024

This summer we are offering an Olympics themed VBS called Summer Games VBS: Champions in Training! It is for kids aged 4-5<sup>th</sup> grade. Kids will compete in our own Summer Games using the Fruits of the Spirit as a guide. It will take place at St. Johns the week of August 5-9.

## GROW MINISTRIES

### Children, Youth, and Family Board

Our Children, Youth and Family Board's (CYF) mission is to help guide our educational programming. We would like to thank the members of the CYF Board for their dedication and vision for the future of St. John's CYF programs.

Sonja Beyerlein

Linnea Logan

Curtis Templin (incoming member)

Karie Zach

CYF staff – Laura Rickinger, Joanna Salinas, Stephanie Broussard

If you have an interest in serving on the Board, please reach out to Linnea Logan.

### Middle School Ministry, 5<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> grade

*Joanna Salinas, Middle School Ministry Coordinator*

Our Middle School Ministries consist of approximately 34 students in 5th-8th grade. Our 5th & 6th grade students participate in a two-year Bible Overview Class and our 7th & 8th grade students are invited to participate in the Confirmation program. This is an age group that thrives with in person programming, and we were excited to create their own space for them downstairs in the Paul Room. We continued to partner with our High School Youth this year to offer weekly Sunday evening programming and meals for all our students.

**5th & 6th grade Pre-Confirmation** students participated in a twice monthly Bible Overview class on Sunday evenings taught by Karie Zach and Joanna Salinas using the Sparkhouse Connect Curriculum. This is a two-year program and this year we studied the Old Testament. The kids particularly enjoyed “eating through the story of Moses”!

**Our 7<sup>th</sup> & 8<sup>th</sup> grade Confirmation Students** participated in twice monthly instruction on Sunday evenings taught by Pastor Brian and Joanna Salinas. This year we explored the connection between our faith and current events, exploring topics such as social media, the history of antisemitism, the civil rights movement, and finishing up the year with conversations around prayer.

In addition to our Sunday evening meals we hosted Fellowship events including Comedy Sportz, serving at the Hope Center, Skateland and pizza, outings to area venues, hosting Brownies and Bingo and the Easter Sunday donut hour, and service opportunities at St. Johns. On Sunday mornings our Middle Schoolers participate in the Youth Leadership Team where they help in Sunday School, and participated in over a dozen service projects.

This summer, we will continue to connect with students during our Family Fun Nights, service opportunities, and as Camp Counselors during VBS.

## GROW MINISTRIES

### High School and Young Adult

*submitted by Stephanie Broussard, Youth Ministry Coordinator*

#### Summer Trip 2023:

5 high school youth spent a week in the Boundary Waters led by one of our young adults, Isabella Salinas. Throughout the week the group learned more about themselves individually as well as each other. Everyone took this time to not only try new things but also learn that they can accomplish difficult tasks. One of the bible verses they focused on during the trips is Philippians 4:13 "I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me".

#### Youth Group:

We begin each group on Sunday evening with the opportunity to have dinner at church before youth group starts. The number of students greatly varied throughout the year depending on the youths other activities and sports. On average we had between 4 – 9 youth each Sunday. We are really focusing on building relationships between the youth as well as their relationship with the church.

#### 9<sup>th</sup> Grade Confirmation:

For the first half of the program year we focused on comparative religions. We kicked off this by digging deeper into our own faith at a Lutherdale retreat. We then had speakers of other religions come to our monthly meetings and teach the students about their faith. These faith groups included The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints, Jewish, Sikh and Islam. Then after the students learned about the faith, we had the opportunity to go to their place of worship and participate in a worship experience. The second half of the year was then spent on preparing for their Affirmation of Baptism. The students had an active role in their Confirmation service. We had 5 students get confirmed in May.

#### Young Adults:

In an attempt to stay connected with our current college students and young adults. The High School Youth created and sent out care packages. We also put out cards from the congregation for those who are graduating this year to be sent to their homes as a congratulations on their accomplishments.

### Adult Ministry Team

*Submitted by Ralph Berglund*

The purpose of the team is to provide opportunities for people to grow in their faith and in their relationship with other people in our community. Key events over the past program year were two congregational wide book discussions and five associated St. John's Academy lectures.

Eight discussion groups participated in the Fall study of the book "Short Stories by Jesus – The Enigmatic Parables of a Controversial Rabbi" and six discussion groups participated in the Spring study of the book "Entering the Passion of Jesus – A Beginner's Guide to Holy Week".

## GROW MINISTRIES

The five academy lectures included two by Pastor Kris Ruffatto, “The Jewish Context of the New Testament” in October and “Anti-Judaism in the New Testament and Beyond” in November. Both turned out to be very timely with the current events in the Mideast. In January Pastor Joe Ellwanger shared his experiences as he was directly involved in the civil rights movement in the 1960’s. In early March we were blessed to have former Governor Marty Schreiber share his experiences as an Alzheimer’s caregiver in his lecture “Learning, Coping, and Surviving as an Alzheimer’s Caregiver”. Then on Palm Sunday Pastor Paul Bulgerin presented “The Story of Holy Week as Presented in the Four Gospels” which served as a great wrap up of our study of “Entering the Passion of Jesus” book and a prelude to upcoming Holy Week services. We plan on offering similar opportunities this coming year.

If you have suggestions for books to consider, please let one of the team members know. Team members are Brian Cranfill, Kathy Davis, Steve Johnson, and Ralph Berglund.

## SMALL GROUPS

### Ad Hoc Groups

Two ad hoc groups met during the congregation-wide studies. The fall 2023 study was “short stories by Jesus” and the spring 2024 study was “Entering the Passion of Jesus”, both by Amy-Jill Levine. Kathy Davis and Dale Landgren led the Sunday morning group. Carol Wasemiller led the mid-week group.

### Friday Morning Ladies’ Book Club

*submitted by Linda Gugel*

We are a group of about 20 that meets once a month in each other’s homes or at church to discuss books we’ve chosen. We enjoy each other’s company and always have yummy breakfast foods.

This year we’ve read:

- Northanger Abby by Jane Austin
- Tom Lake, by Ann Pratchet
- The Oppermanns by Lion Feucht Wanger
- My Father’s Paradise by Ariel Sabor
- The Alice Network by Kate Quinn
- The First Love Stoy – Adam, Eve and Us by Bruce Feller
- All the Beauty in the World by Patrick Bringley
- The Four Season by Gretchen Rubin



We usually end the year with a trip to the Milwaukee Art Museum, led by docent Mary Tollander, and lunch.

## GROW MINISTRIES

### Friday Men's Group Discussion (MGD)

*submitted by Chris Klink*

The Friday Men's Group Discussion (MGD) meets at 6:15 a.m. weekly throughout the year. We have continued to meet by Zoom to allow members to join in from throughout Wisconsin, the rest of the US, and internationally. Our group has been in existence since the late 1990s and as we have all become more "seasoned", about half of us are retired while the rest of us are still working stiffs. We study a variety of biblical and faith-based topics. Our group currently numbers 11 and we are always open to new members. If you would like to find out more, please contact Chris Klink at [klinklink@sbcglobal.net](mailto:klinklink@sbcglobal.net).

### Koinonia Support Group

*submitted by Doris Klitzke*

We are a small group of nine who meet after 8:30 a.m. church services for breakfast a few times each year. We are a support and social group.

### Retired Men's Meal Ministry

*submitted by Jerry Hanson and Roy Osmon*

This activity addresses an important group in the St. John's church family, older men with a variety of backgrounds in their vocational experiences, who nonetheless desire to be a part of Christian life with others who can understand and value them and be mutually supportive. Virtually everyone wants to have an identity which puts them in a positive light, especially when one is now getting up in years and faces the special challenges of changes in body, mind and even spirit. Our gatherings provide a unique opportunity to share fellowship, food, a devotion and prayer, as well as caring for one another's situation in life. The group meets for breakfast at 8:30 AM on the first Wednesday of the month at the Machine Shed in Pewaukee and on the third Wednesday of the month at Good Eats Café in Pewaukee for lunch at noon. The breakfast session usually is attended by about 10-12 men with the lunch by 6-10 men. If you are a man in this age group and are not yet on the mailing list or just want more information, please contact either of us to get in on the fun.

Roy Osmon  
 Email: [rosmon@wi.rr.com](mailto:rosmon@wi.rr.com)  
 Phone: 414-405-5799

Jerry Hanson  
[jerryhansonrhp@gmail.com](mailto:jerryhansonrhp@gmail.com)  
 262-785-8098



## GROW MINISTRIES

### Saturday Mornings Men's Group

*Submitted by Ralph Berglund*

This group meets every Saturday morning during the school year except Holiday weekends. Our purpose is to provide an opportunity to grow in our relationship with God and other Christian men through book discussion and Bible study. This past year we started in late September by participating in the churchwide discussion of Amy-Jill Levine's book "Short Stories by Jesus". During Lent we also participated in the study of another of Levine's books, "Entering the Passion of Jesus." Between these two book discussions and after Easter through April we spent several weeks working through the Gospel of Mark. It is amazing the insights that you discover through discussion in a small group format.

We look forward to starting up again in the fall. Bring a mug of coffee and join us for some fellowship and meaningful discussion with other Christian men. Contact Ralph Berglund (email [ralph.berglund@gmail.com](mailto:ralph.berglund@gmail.com) or phone 262-547-8231) if you would like more information.

### Saturday Night Couples Group

*submitted by Steve Johnson*

This group is composed of six couples -both current and former members of St. John's:

Dave and Alice Beyer

Dennis and Teri Kramer

Steve and Gerri Johnson

Phil and Barb Lange

Jeff and Peggy Keough

Rick and Iddie (Elizabeth) Wallrath

This group was initially formed in 2000. Over time a few of the original couples left the group and then the remaining couples recruited replacements.

The group continues to focus on our spiritual growth - we participated in both the Fall 2023 study on Jesus' Parables, and Winter/Spring 2024 Lenten book study. One couple, the Kramers, wintered in Florida this year so only five couples participated in the Lenten Study. On the whole, the group really liked A J Levine and while there was a little trepidation on the part of a couple of individuals early on questioning how a Jewish person could teach us about Christian interpretation of the New Testament, in the end everyone really appreciated the perspective she brought to the texts.

This group meets in the homes of group members and because of space limitation has had to limit membership to six couples.

The group sponsored and served the supper for one of the Academy's (Pastor Joe Ellwanger) in January 2024. There is still interest in doing some kind of service project, but several members prefer this to be outside of SJ, such as the Waukesha Food Pantry, Salvation Army or similar, since several members are already engaged in projects within SJ.

Although in the past we have done studies of various books on our own, going forward I think the group will stay engaged with study programs organized by the Church. At this time, we anticipate taking part in the Stewardship study planned by the Adult Ministry Team.

## GROW MINISTRIES

### **Tuesday Morning Bible Study Group**

*submitted by Jennifer Cranfill*

Members: Jennifer Cranfill, Mary Beth Gubbins, Kathi Hanson, Carole Lewis, Sally Schoeneman

The Tuesday Morning Women's Bible Study group meets on the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Tuesdays of the month, September thru May, at 9am. We are a small group that alternates leading and hosting. Always looking for more folks to join us. Traditionally we have studied books of the Bible, Christian books or video studies. This year we have studied Respectable Sins by Jerry Bridges.

### **Tuesday Afternoon Book Club**

*submitted by Darlene Bahr*

Our group of about ten met in the church library at 1:00 p.m. the third Tuesday of each month. This past year our reading list included "Lessons in Chemistry", "Drenched in Light", and "An American Princess", "The Book of Lost Names", and "Ordinary Grace".

We take the summers off and are considering moving from the third Tuesday to the second Tuesday. All women are invited to join us in September to read "Let's Roll".

### **Tuesday Night Bible Study Small Group**

*submitted by Kyle Weyer, facilitator*

Our small group meets from 7-9 p.m. on Tuesday evenings. We schedule approximately six weeks in the fall and six weeks during Lent. We select books that are closely tied to books in the Bible. Our goal is to grow in discipleship. Because we meet in homes, we are at capacity at this time.

### **Wednesday Morning Circle**

*submitted by Kathy Hoepfner*

The Wednesday Morning Circle group meets on the second Wednesday of each month from September through May at 9:30 a.m. in the library. We are a group of women who have a social hour breakfast followed by a Biblical video study. The women take turns hosting the breakfast.

### **Women of Faith Book Club**

*submitted by Patrice Krimpelbein*

This gathering of faithful women has been in existence since 2002, beginning as a bible study group and transforming over time to be the Women of Faith Book Club. We are currently 8 members strong and are open to anyone who would like to join us. We meet the third Friday of each month (except

## GROW MINISTRIES

December) at 7:00 p.m., gathering at the home of one of the members. Our reading selections range from historical fiction to science fiction, serious to humorous, mysteries to biography to inspirational. The book titles are selected by the group as a whole (those that are together at the time the list needs to be expanded) and then sent out to the full email list of members. We use the free version of the BOOKCLUBS App to keep track of our reading list and gathering times. Our favorite books, whether fiction or non-fiction, create a good amount of conversation amongst us. We recently completed “Brit Marie was Here”, “Vera Wong’s Unsolicited Advice for Murderers” and “The Kingdom, the Power and the Glory: American Evangelicalism in an Age of Extremism”. Our upcoming book titles are “The Heaven and Earth Grocery Store” and “The New Woman: A Staggerford Novel”.

The aim of our group is to gather as a community of faithful women ready to discuss topics inspired by the books we read, by current events and by the needs of the group. You are not required to offer your home for meetings and it is not necessary to have read the book to join us, so long as you attend with an open heart and a loving spirit.

### **Women’s Monday Afternoon Study Group**

*submitted by Jan Gregoire*

We are a group of women who have studied from several sources and just finished “40 Verses to Ignite your Faith”. We meet on the third Monday afternoon, September through May, in the church library.

We are a group of 12-15 women, who alternate leading the discussions and hosting.

*\* If your ministry group is not listed in this report, please see Pam so it may be included next year.*

## SERVICE AND OUTREACH

### MUSIC MINISTRY

#### **Music Coordinator/Organist**

*submitted by Becky Whelpley, Music Director*

Dear Friends in Christ,

It has been a joy and honor to serve St. John's! We have much to be thankful for and this past year was no exception. I am thankful for the existing ministries as well as for the new ways that the Holy Spirit has moved us. I would like to thank the people of St. John's, the church staff, the choir members, instrumentalists, and Pastor Brian for all the support and collaboration. Many thanks to Kenn Anderson, Heidi Bischmann and Lisa Weiss-Cornelius for their wonderful musical leadership at St. John's. Many thanks to Brent Logan for his leadership of the brass ensemble. Also, a joyful welcome to Lana DeCoto as our Kids of the Kingdom preschool director.

June 2023, we welcomed campers and numerous staff, adult and youth volunteers to Music Camp "Amazing Notes" for 4 days. The week included bucket drums, hand chimes, singing, boomwackers, learning about the history of the beloved hymn "Amazing Grace", snacks, outdoor sponge races, music bingo and more!

Last August we began each 8:30 am service with a hymn sing; what a wonderful way to gather! We are certainly blessed with the generous donations received to purchase the All Creation Sings ELW supplement that we have been using for the past three years.

A few highlights this past fall included a talent night in during Bingos and Brownies and a members and friends recital on February 4, 2024. Many of our youth participated as well as the choir and handbell choir.

A special middle school music ministry has grown from kids who have "aged" out of KOTK but still want to be involved in music. During the KOTK rehearsal time on Wednesdays I have been rehearsing with these young people to sing and add instruments such as hand chimes and percussion to hymns and KOTK songs. This has been a great blessing to me and the congregation.

All instruments have been faithfully maintained this year; the grand piano in the sanctuary will be needing some extra maintenance in the coming years due to age. More to come. Thank you to the congregation for supporting all of the music ministries.

The choir has been rehearsing all year and has certainly blessed our Sunday services. In addition, the choir has collaborated with handbells, brass, and instrumentalists to present special music during Advent, Christmas, Lent and Easter. This year we celebrated Christmas Music Sunday on December 10 with all ensembles at both services.

I am so thankful to these dedicated volunteers that rehearse weekly to enhance our worship. Thank you!

Looking forward to serving with you in the coming year!

## SERVICE AND OUTREACH

### Handbell Choir

*submitted by Heidi Bischmann, Handbell Choir Director*

The Handbell Choir has had a strong 2023/2024 season and has shared significant highs and lows both musically as a small group and individually this year.

- Regular handbell musicians and available substitutes included: Chris Anderson, Sonja Beyerlein, Heidi Bischmann, Mickey Fank, Jan Janzow, Sue Keith, Pam Klink, Linnea Logan, Patti Mueller, Karen Natterstad, LaBree Paukner, Joanna Salinas, Pauline Shoemaker, Chris Standley, Bonnie Suhaysik, Mary Wagner, Kathleen Walrath and Becky Whelpley.
- The choir met regularly throughout the year on Tuesday evenings – September through May – to learn and perform 25 musical selections at 14 worship services/events.
- Our weekly rehearsal routine includes a devotion to begin our time together and a short closing focused on special prayer requests to uplift and strengthen us as we experience love, joy, challenge, and loss in our daily lives.
- For more than 29 years, the St. John’s Handbell Choir has been an integral small group within our congregation. New choir members/guests are welcomed whole-heartedly, and the group regularly participates in book studies, Lenten suppers, and mission outreach projects.
- The handbell choir participated in the Member’s Recital on February 4, 2024. It was a well-attended and fun event and a great opportunity to learn additional pieces of music and perform them in a concert setting.
- Becky Whelpley invites the full handbell choir or just a few musicians to ring with the adult choir from time to time throughout the year. This year, we welcomed Kris Wasserman on trumpet and Becky Whelpley on organ when we performed “Processional,” an original composition by Arnold Sherman on Palm Sunday.
- Sadly, we said goodbye to friend, mentor, leader, mother, and long-time handbell choir director Jane Babcock at the end of February. It was a sad time for us, but also an incredible blessing to be able to support one another – especially musician Joanna Salinas, Jane’s daughter – throughout this time of loss. We celebrated Jane’s life in an impromptu time of remembrance at our February 27 rehearsal and were honored to play “Evensong” by Derek Hakes at Jane’s memorial service on March 15. It will always be a special piece of music and a memory of Jane and her service to the music ministry of St. John’s.
- Several musicians will attend a Summer Handbell Camp being held at St. John’s July 29–August 1 with clinician and well-known handbell composer Sandra Eithun. This fast-paced, multiple choir event is a truly unique experience. We are excited to participate along with 30-35 other musicians from the around Wisconsin and the Midwest. There will be a closing concert featuring the music from the workshop on Thursday, August 1 at 7:00 pm. The concert is free and open to the public.

New musicians are always invited and encouraged to join the Joyful Bells for laughter, prayer, fellowship, fun and beautiful music!

## SERVICE AND OUTREACH

### Kids of the Kingdom (KOTK)

submitted by Lisa Weiss-Cornelius

2023-2024 was an exciting year for children's music and singing. We rehearsed on Wednesday evenings followed by a meal which was prepared by each of the families involved. A "Sign Up Genius" was used to give families a list of weeks that needed dinners. There was no cost for families to be part of KOTK, they just prepared a dinner contribution. The families did a wonderful job of covering meals.

KOTK sang one or two times a month from October to May. This year we added the preschool aged members so that we could work on growing our ensemble. Lana DeCoto joined our team to assist with the younger preschool participants. It was wonderful to have such a nice size group of kids from age 3-10. We grew to the size of 17 members who participated regularly. It was such a joy to see the musical growth weekly. KOTK became a supportive musical family in every way. On our final Sunday, the kids sang 7 songs, played percussion and ukulele. We even had one of our singers play piano to accompany the group. A special thanks to Evan Roth. Looking forward to this next year!

#### Preschool KOTK

- This year, the KOTK added preschool children ages 3-5
- There were eight children who joined.
- The children had time for singing with the older children.
- They then went and did some singing, a story, and some time to play instruments and playtime.
- They were able to join the older children in singing at worship.

### Praise Band

submitted by Kenn Anderson, Contemporary Music Director

- Led worship outdoors last summer
- Worked with KOTK and others to provide cooperating worship opportunities
- Worked with Music Director for special services
- Worked with Music Director for Holiday services and joint services (outdoor too)
- Added piano player to band (when available)
- Continued using in-ear monitors to reduce volume in worship area
- Use of electric drums aiding in less volume as well
- Seeking out new material for service as well as continuing to use familiar songs
- Researching ways to improve quality of sound in the worship area
- Employing outside agency to enhance band's sound and enable easier "mixing"
- Added female vocalist
- Worked with Pastor to ensure cohesive worship experience (flow)
- Selected appropriate music for all contemporary services
- Organized Bluegrass musicians for worship about once a quarter.

## SERVICE AND OUTREACH

### SERVICE AT ST. JOHN'S

#### Garden Team

*submitted by Jennifer Cranfill*

St. John's has a beautiful onsite vegetable garden just south of the parking lot. We grow vegetables for distribution to St. John's congregation on Sunday mornings. Fresh produce can be picked up on your way to/from Sunday service. We also share with community partners such as Waukesha Food Pantry. This past year we planted Butternut and acorn squash, tomatoes, onions, beets and zinnias to help our pollinating friends.

We have worked hard to make the garden abundant and also minimal work. Once it's been planted in the spring, each person on the team takes a few weeks of the season to weed or harvest. Watering is taken care of by timers and an in-ground irrigation system. This year we have invested in some monster tomato cages which will allow our plants to reach even higher and improve our harvests even more.

We are always looking for a few more hands to share the load! During your week, you pick the time and day to work in the garden, very flexible!

#### Hospitality Ministry

*submitted by Barb Lange*

Over the past year St. Johns has restarted two parts of the hospitality ministry: **The Sunday Morning Coffee Committee** and **The Welcoming Committee**. The purpose of both groups is to continue the welcoming and supportive environment at St. John's for both members and visitors.

#### Sunday Morning Coffee Committee

Currently the committee is made up of five individuals/couples that volunteer their time on a rotating basis. Faithful Dick Gennerman is the weekly "coffee brewmaster" and the rest of the team serves treats when available and cleans up after the services.

Coffee and treats are available during the program year in the Fellowship Hall between services. Generous donations offset the cost of the coffee. Treats are donated. More volunteers are always welcome, for the serving/clean up and for helping to provide treats so it can be done on a weekly basis.

Coffee Committee

Mark Aamot

Sarah and Greg Everts

Dick Gennerman

Barb Lange

Kyle and Jeff Weyer

## SERVICE AND OUTREACH

### Welcoming Committee

This committee was restarted in the fall of 2023. Each Sunday morning there are 2 greeters that welcome people at the East Entrance. One of the volunteers stays for part of the education hour to be available to visitors who might have questions, and for new families who are looking to connect with the Sunday School program. Currently there are not sufficient volunteers to be located at both church entrances. This would be possible if more volunteers become available.

#### Welcoming Committee

Darlene Bahr	Carole Lewis
Linda Gugel	Phil Peters
Klaudia Hollander	Barb Reed
Sue Keith	Carol Wasemiller
Barb Lange	Marlene Zick

### Offering Counters

*submitted by Roger Lewis*

We have four teams of Offering Counters. Each team consists of 2 or 3 counters and each team counts about one Monday per month. We enter the names and amounts from the envelopes and from any loose checks into a spreadsheet. We then enter the amount of loose cash in the spreadsheet. Once this all balances, we turn it over to the office for recording, then one of us takes the checks, cash, and deposit slip to the bank.

We would be happy to accept additional Counter applications!

### Property Team

*submitted by Bill Stace, Building Supervisor*

As Building Supervisor at St John's Lutheran, I have the pleasure of working with the hard-working group of dedicated men and women that make up the Property Team. The Property Team meets every Tuesday morning to go over future projects and delegate tasks to be completed that day, of which there are many. Our goal is to keep everything running smoothly, from heating and cooling systems to changing light bulbs! Along with our custodial team of Debra and Cindi we keep the building clean and inviting to all that enter.

We have made significant improvements to the interior and exterior of the building. The addition of the "Bump Out" in the Narthex to accommodate extra storage space, along with a fresh coat of paint. The "Pave the Way" project has added re-stripping of the parking lot and replacing of the Circle Drive starting May 28, 2024. We constantly try to meet the needs of all the St. John's staff and members. As volunteers the Team has saved St John's a great deal of expense. In 2023 we saved the church



## SERVICE AND OUTREACH

\$19,996 and as of May 8, 2024, we have saved over \$37,000 in expenses by not using outside services. Being part of such a talented group is a pleasure and I look forward to making St John's a beautiful and welcoming house of worship!

### **Usher Team**

*submitted by Mark Aamot, 8:30 Usher Facilitator*

"All Are Welcome" – Hymn #641

Hospitality is a priority at St. John's. Thirty volunteers form teams of Ushers who serve at the 8:30 service. They extend a welcome to all worshippers, including visitors. In addition, the Ushers pass out worship materials and answer questions. The Ushers continue to assist the pastors and congregation during the service. Thank you to all who volunteer to Usher.

You are the best!

## SERVICE AND OUTREACH

### PARTNERSHIP AND OUTREACH

*Cindy Halverson, chair*

SJLC outreach and partnership ministries continue to run strong in both commitment by members and impact of the lives of people. Our budget and designated gifts were used to support our three parish partnerships and several local and global ministries and programs throughout the ELCA and in our community. On behalf of the committee and the whole congregation, thank you for your offerings and special gifts that make this amazing level of support for the care of others possible!

Below are reports of the many ministry activities supported by SJLC:

### LOCAL SERVICE/OUTREACH

Our ministries at St. John's provide us many opportunities to "outreach" in the name of Jesus Christ to those less fortunate. Folks of all ages help out in numerous ways, through the many ministries for which we advocate.

#### Christmas Food Drive

*submitted by Brian Cranfill, Outreach Chair*

This was our 39<sup>th</sup> year for the Christmas Food drive. We delivered 120 bags of groceries, plus 40 hams, 15 turkeys, 40 bags of oranges, and 10 bags of apples. Our delivery teams transported the donated food items to All Peoples and the Waukesha Food Pantry. We continue to enjoy assistance from our high school youth group with shopping duties for apples, oranges, and many extra hams and turkeys. This year's shopping excursion was funded by an Endowment committee grant. Thanks also to our loaders and delivery drivers.

#### Food Pantries

*submitted by Brian Cranfill, Outreach Chair*

**Waukesha** – St John's continues to support the Waukesha Food Pantry through continuous ongoing donation by members to the collection bin in Fellowship Hall. The Food Pantry picks up the donations once a month. Bring your donations when you come to worship and save yourself an extra trip to the food pantry!

**All Peoples** – New this year, we are also supporting All Peoples Church food pantry. They have an ever-increasing need. We also collect items in the Fellowship Hall and have volunteers to transport donations to APC.

## SERVICE AND OUTREACH

### Hope Center

*submitted by Carole Lewis*

Hope Center has been a valuable partner in the community, providing basic needs ... food, shelter, and clothing ... to anyone who needs a helping hand. Our special relationship with Hope Center continues, thanks to your generosity and caring hearts!

Over the years, St. John's members have donated clothing, hygiene items and furniture, as well as volunteering their time and giving financial support to this very worthy program. Thank you for your support, and for making a difference to all those who benefit from the Hope Center!

### Hope Center Lunch

*submitted by Brian Cranfill, Outreach Chair*

Every Monday since Dec 2020, one of our dedicated volunteers shops for and delivers food to Hope Center to allow them to make 50 or more lunches. We have a very dedicated core of volunteers who participate each month to support this ministry. St. John's general budget pays for the food served each week.

### Loaves and Fishes

*submitted by Dawn Williams*

In the past few years, many of the Churches in Waukesha County have not been able to support this critical mission. However, thanks to the support of Joanna and many of our youth, St. John's has been able to more than double the number of meals we prepare and serve. Our traditional meal of spaghetti, garlic bread and a tossed salad, is usually supplemented with cookies for dessert! No one leaves the dinner table hungry!

The Loaves and Fishes overall coordinator is always looking for additional groups to help support this outreach program, so if you are part of a group at St. John's and would like to be a part of this vital mission, please contact me ([nytwnd88@gmail.com](mailto:nytwnd88@gmail.com))! Even if you are not part of a group but would like to know more about Loaves and Fishes, I will be more than happy to fill you in on more details.

## SERVICE AND OUTREACH

### Monthly Outreach Focus

*submitted by Brian Cranfill, Outreach Chair*

Each month we focus our in-kind giving to one of our local or global partners. Many of these efforts have a long history of support at St. Johns. Our collections include:

- Backpacks and school supplies for All Peoples
- Mission of healing for Heroes of Faith in El Salvador
- Coats/gloves/scarves for All Peoples
- Socks & undies for Hope Center
- Women's Center donations
- Newborn Kits
- Personal care items for Hope Center
- All Peoples Food Pantry

Thank you to all our leaders and contributors who help make a difference in the lives of many each month.

### Outreach Support

*submitted by Brian Cranfill, Outreach Chair*

St. John's continues to dedicate a percentage of budget to several ministries outside the church, including LSS (Lutheran Social Services), Hope Center, Women's Center, Oaks Indian Center, and Lutherdale.

### Project Move

*submitted by Chris Klink*

Project Move is a branch of ministry through the Hope Center where three Saturdays per month groups from various churches pick up donated furniture - such as beds, dressers, tables, chairs and couches, and appliances such as refrigerators, stoves, and washers and dryers - that is then available at no charge for people in need. St. John's is one of nine churches who rotate through the assigned dates. We currently have a team of four members and are always looking for new members to our team. If you would like to find out more, please contact Chris Klink at [klinklink@sbcglobal.net](mailto:klinklink@sbcglobal.net).

## SERVICE AND OUTREACH

### **Women's Center**

*submitted by Mary Almasi, liaison*

Each year there are two opportunities for St John's congregation to support Waukesha Women's Center (WWC) which serves women and children of domestic abuse. 1) Each December a giving tree in the narthex provides gift tags for local stores and gas stations that are given to residents of the WWC. This year's gift cards totaled close to \$1000. 2) The February Outreach offering (collected in the narthex shopping cart) are items suggested and needed by the WWC. This past February two carloads of requested items were delivered to the center.

St John's members continue to be VERY generous supporting this essential community service through these two giving opportunities.

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## SERVICE AND OUTREACH

### GLOBAL SERVICE AND OUTREACH

#### **Bread for the World**

*submitted by Brian Cranfill, Outreach Chair*

In June 2023 we held our annual offering of letters to congress, asking for personal letters to request that our elected officials support polices that will benefit the hungry locally and globally. Specifics in the 2023 offering of letters asked for folks to write with regard to the Farm Bill.

#### **ELCA Hunger Appeal**

*submitted by Brian Cranfill, Outreach Chair*

St. John's has a very long history of supporting ELCA World Hunger Appeal and ELCA Disaster Relief in a big way. Hunger issues were highlighted in September 2023 through announcements and sermons. Many St. John's individuals give directly to this enormously important ELCA ministry.

#### **Newborn Kits**

*submitted by Mickey Fank*

In 2023, St. John's assembled and donated 625 Newborn Kits. Over the past 24 years, St. John's has donated a total of 13,067 Newborn Kits!

We partner with Global Health Ministries in Minnesota. They ship the kits to various developing nations in Africa, Asia, and Central America. Newborn Kits are gifts that help a new mom celebrate her baby and help her clothe and care for her child. Importantly, the kits are also used by overseas partners to encourage young women to seek prenatal care during pregnancy, greatly improving their chances for a healthy, happy outcome. Once that connection is made, they can also encourage postnatal care, including vaccinations and well-baby checks that can help a newborn thrive.

Our goal for 2024 is 600 kits. Newborn Kits will be assembled Tuesday, July 23<sup>rd</sup>, & there will be a fellowship meal prior to assembling the kits this year. Each kit contains a towel, wash cloth, receiving blanket, onesie/shirt, baby hat, Ivory Soap (bath bar), two cloth diapers, and two diaper pins.

About \$3500.00 is needed in monetary donations to purchase the diapers, diaper pins, towels, and wash cloths and to help offset the cost to deliver the kits to Minnesota. This year we received \$1000.00 from St. John's Endowment Fund, which is a huge help towards meeting our goal.

Other items are purchased & donated by members/friends of our mission. Depending on sales/deals, each kit costs about \$10.00 - \$12.00, for a total cost of \$6000.00 - \$7200.00 each year! St. John's members are so generous!

If there are any questions, please contact me.

## SERVICE AND OUTREACH

### PARTNERSHIPS

#### **Akeri/Nguruma Parishes and School, Tanzania**

*Submitted by Deborah and Andy Petersen, Ministry Leaders*

#### PARTNERSHIP

We persist in initiating new connections and nurturing existing ones with our Tanzanian brothers and sisters in Christ. Pastor Franael Issangya diligently keeps us abreast of current events via WhatsApp and Facebook. In the next few months, keep watch for a special newsletter article with lots of photos!

We experienced devastating news when we heard of Pastor Tumaini's death. She was a young mother and newly called pastor to the Nguruma parish. When we met her in 2023, she was gifted a prayer shawl from St. John's. Her calm, friendly demeanor drew us in. She is deeply missed.

#### SCHOOL

With government requirements being more enforced than in previous years, there was some unfortunate staff turnover. As a government accredited school, administrators and teachers are required to have a certain level of education and experience. It was difficult to hear of those moving on, but we trust and respect the board for doing what is right so Akeri Hope can be a top school.

Recently, it was determined that the form 7 students who live outside the parish were spending too much time traveling back and forth to school every day. This left little time to study. The school board was able to obtain two small homes near the school for those students to reside in during the week, making the trip home over the weekends. This has resulted in these students being better prepared for the national exams in June.

During our 2023 visit, the school board shared with us their greatest concern – school staff salaries. They conducted research and obtained information from the government to ascertain the appropriate salary levels for each administrative and teaching position. With the building structures complete, our partnership team made the decision to send money for one year in support of these salaries. Last month, form 7 and form 4 students competed against 6 other schools, in preparation for the upcoming national exams. Akeri Hope form 7 won 1<sup>st</sup> place, while form 4 won 2<sup>nd</sup>. The school manager accredits these wins to the higher quality teachers they now have.

#### THE FUTURE

Our objectives for the upcoming year include offering steadfast prayer and encouragement to our partners, maintaining regular communication, consistently sharing updates with St. John's, and ensuring our financial contributions are impactful.

#### DELEGATION

We have begun planning our next visit scheduled for Spring 2025. With every delegation, it is our goal to immerse ourselves in the community, gain insights into their daily lives, foster new connections, and spend time with students and educators at Akeri Hope English Medium School. We are fully engaged

## SERVICE AND OUTREACH

with the community, witnessing, and empathizing with their challenges, learning about successful projects, and embracing discomfort. The trip will take place mid-Spring 2025.

Karibu Sana! (You are very welcome!)

### All Peoples Gathering Church, Milwaukee

Our partnership with All Peoples is 32 years old! We share a lot of history, life, and love together.

- **Backpacks & School Supplies** – St. John’s continues to be a strong partner for this annual late-summer campaign which enabled All Peoples to give backpacks, filled with a complete supply of items required for their grade levels, to students in Kindergarten through High School.
- **Food Justice** - a faithful team from St. John’s delivers donations received at St. John’s along with overstock of food from the Waukesha Food Pantry to the All Peoples Food Pantry. The pantry is set up as a shopping experience where guests are assisted in selecting items which work for their family situations. Families can also choose books and Bibles to take home.
- **Christmas Food Baskets** – St. John’s provided grocery bags filled with items needed by families to create their Christmas feasts.
- **Winter Wear** – St. John’s collected new and gently used children/youth jackets and accessories in early fall. All Peoples created a gift bag with a coat, hat, scarf, and gloves in sizes newborn through Men's XXL and distributed them in early November.
- **Financial Support** – St. John’s continues to support All Peoples as one of three partnerships through benevolence giving. As one of All Peoples original mission partners, St. John's made a financial commitment to support All Peoples for ten years. In an abundance of grace and love, St. John's has kept this commitment over three decades.

Please contact Cindy Halverson at [chalvers57@gmail.com](mailto:chalvers57@gmail.com) or Pastor Brian Halverson if you would like to find out more about this partnership.



## SERVICE AND OUTREACH

### **Héroes of the Faith, El Salvador**

*Submitted by Mary Beth Gubbins – Ministry Leader*

Better together and going on 26 years of partnership between Heroes of Faith and St John's Lutheran Church!

The scholarship program, better known as Education for Life continues to bond students from El Salvador and members of St John's, both past and current, together. Scholarships at all levels of education provide financial help to families of Los Héroes. Education continues to be a powerful way to help our Brothers and Sisters in El Salvador get out of poverty. Many of our students are doing amazing things after graduating from high school or college. Jouse just received his law degree and is now working for a local judge! These accomplishments provide a steady income through good jobs that would not have been possible without going to school. This year's program has 65 students! Sponsors provide financial support, prayers, and encouragement. They have the opportunity to stay in contact with their student with letters and some, even through the internet. The Program is run by Pastor Francisco, who is the administrator and is responsible for getting the scholarships to the students monthly and monitors their progress. We also provide annual school kits for all the students in the program. We are equipping them with everything they need to be successful!

In January of 2024 a delegation of seven people went to El Salvador to meet in person with our Brothers and Sisters of Los Héroes. They celebrated the new school year with our students and our partnership. The 8-day trip included learning about the country of El Salvador as well as bonding and spending time with the members of Heroes of the Faith. Truly a special trip!

Then in April of 2024, Pastor Santiago came to visit St John's! His visit provided lots of opportunities for members of St John's to connect. April 21, Pastor Santiago preached at St John's, offering a message of gratefulness for the amazing partnership we have had over the last 26 years and how it has impacted them. A Spanish bible was presented to him to celebrate our 25-year partnership. It will be used during their worship services. Additionally, a wonderful brunch was held between services to celebrate. He also shared the special news that a health clinic is being built as part of the church in memory of Deb Adams (past member of St John's). The health clinic will serve the community and offer medical services that are not currently available to them. The construction has begun and will be open by the end of the year. The staffing will be filled by past students, now nurses, of the Education for Life Program. The clinic will be named after Deb. Deb, also a nurse, was very instrumental and active in the Mission of Healing in El Salvador.

We continue to give thanks for this special partnership and trust God to continue to bless it and grow it as he sees fit.

## INTEREST GROUPS

### **Men's Softball Team**

*submitted by Brian Harms*

We have approximately 15 participants that play softball on Monday evenings throughout the summer from May to mid-August. Games are played against other churches in the area at Wirth Park in Brookfield. While we enjoy playing softball, at the heart of the team is just getting together to enjoy fellowship and friendship. A number of the members of the team have participated for many years together and always welcome new players to the team. If interested, please reach out to Brian Harms – (414) 651-2120. Looking for something to do on a Monday evening? Come cheer for us!

### **Winter Farmers' Market**

*submitted by Joanna Salinas*

St. John's was excited to open our doors on November 19, 2023, to the greater Waukesha community and host our 6th Annual Winter Farmer's Market and Meal. This event is a project of the Food, Faith and Farming Network and consists of a Farmer's Market with 10-15 local farmers and a meal made entirely of locally grown produce. We partnered with Southminster Presbyterian Church of Waukesha, who is a past market host. It was a wonderful partnership! The market is a great opportunity for outreach to our local community and draws many non-members into St. John's. Additionally, we were able to raise over \$500 for the Harvest for Hope fund, an emergency relief program for area farmers.

We are eagerly looking forward to hosting the market again this year on November 24, 2024!

If you are interested in working on this team, please contact Joanna Salinas or Sonja Beyerlein.

# PAVE THE WAY

## Pave the Way Report

Submitted by Brian Zach, President

In 2023, St. John’s unveiled a year-long giving Pave the Way campaign to raise funds to address important property concerns for the benefit of mission and ministry for our family, visitors, and the community. Pave the Way projects focused around four areas:

- Painting the exterior building
- Outdoor signage
- Update the narthex
- Reconstructing the circle drive

Some of the projects are complete or currently underway. Other projects are in preparation and waiting approval stage as no project will begin until funds are available. Here is the current financial state of the Pave the Way Campaign.

Thank you for your loving and generous gifts in making the Pave the Way campaign possible.

<b>Pave the Way</b>	<b>\$308,000.00</b>	Total funds pledged
	\$221,671.00	Total pledges received as of April 30, 2024
	\$86,329.00	Total amount of pledges still coming in
<b>Expenses/Designations</b>		
Rainbow Painting	\$27,863.48	Exterior painting
Hope Center	\$2,786.35	10 % tithe for the exterior painting project
Core Sampling	\$3,610.00	Investigating parking lot substructure issues
Miller Electric	\$5,850.00	Down payment for new circle drive lighting
Poblocki Paving	\$4,888.00	2023 parking lot crack repair and blue striping
CDI	\$13,131.00	Interior furniture pieces
	<b>\$58,128.83</b>	<b>Paid expenses as of May 31, 2024</b>
Signage designation	\$15,106.14	Donations designated for new outdoor signage
	<b>\$73,234.97</b>	<b>TOTAL Expenses and Designations</b>
	\$148,436.03	Balance of received funds
		Additional expenses for Poblocki, Miller Electric, and CDI will come in once projects wrap up. At which time St. John’s will tithe 10% of the project costs.

# NEW BUSINESS

## Nominating Committee Report

*submitted by Brian Zach*

The 2024 Nominating Committee, elected at the February 4, 2024, meeting is: Andy Petersen, Sandy Paukner, Barb Reed, Charlotte Yourell, John Roth, Brian Zach, and Brian Halverson.

Council positions are staggered two-year terms. The Nominating Team presents these individuals to the congregation for election to a first or second term on Council.

President	Paul Bulgerin
Secretary	Josh Werner
At Large Member	Mark Latus
At Large Member	Brittany Larson
At Large Member	youth name not available at time of printing

### 2023-24 Council Members

- Brian Zach - President
- Keith Paukner– Vice-President
- Carrie Peters – Treasurer
- Josh Werner – Secretary
- Jim Morgan – At Large #1
- Mark Latus – At Large #2
- Charlotte Yourell – At Large #3
- Brittany Larson – At Large #4
- Elizabeth Roth – At Large #5

### 2024-25 Proposed Council Members

- Paul Bulgerin – President (1<sup>st</sup> term, 1<sup>st</sup> year)
- Keith Paukner – Vice-President (2<sup>nd</sup> term, 2<sup>nd</sup> year)
- Carrie Peters – Treasurer (2<sup>nd</sup> term, 2<sup>nd</sup> year)
- Josh Werner – Secretary (2<sup>nd</sup> term, 1<sup>st</sup> year)
- Jim Morgan – At Large #1 (2<sup>nd</sup> term, 2<sup>nd</sup> year)
- Mark Latus – At Large #2 (2<sup>nd</sup> term, 1<sup>st</sup> year)
- \_\_\_\_\_ – At Large #3 (1<sup>st</sup> term, 1<sup>st</sup> year)
- Brittany Larson – At Large #4 (2<sup>nd</sup> term, 1<sup>st</sup> year)
- Elizabeth Roth – At Large #5 (1<sup>st</sup> term, 2<sup>nd</sup> year)

## NEW BUSINESS

### Pastor Brian's Retirement

May 1, 2024

Dear Friends in Christ,

Many of you know that Cindy will be retiring at the end of this year and are understandably asking when I plan to do the same. As the question continues to come to both Cindy and me, we have decided to share our decision so that all will have the same information and, more importantly, so that the leadership of St. John's can begin to think about the transition.

I have shared with the Council and Bishop Paul Erickson, and now I share with you, that I plan to retire from full time ministry on May 31, 2025, (not 2024) shortly after my 65<sup>th</sup> birthday. Cindy and I are excited about this upcoming new phase of our lives and the adventures we have yet to experience together. That said, we both have vocational work ahead of us and we remain focused and deeply committed to the ministry and work that God has called us to do in this time.

The decision to share this news early is to give the congregation, and the leadership specifically, the time to work with the Synod and plan for the transition.

God has much for us to do together in the year ahead, and we will do it faithfully and well. St. John's is a special place. You are the Spirit-filled faithful who make it so and I am blessed to be your pastor.

God's world is dynamic. It constantly changes, moves, and grows where and how God directs it. Our church too is dynamic, always moving forward in the way God would have us move. We put our ultimate trust in the dynamic God who brings new beginnings out of expected and unexpected endings.

I look forward to being with you and serving alongside you during this time. Both Cindy and I are grateful for all of you.

Yours in Christ,



Pastor Brian K Halverson