



The

Voice

OF ST. JOHN'S LUTHERAN CHURCH

VOLUME 64, ISSUE 2

FEBRUARY 2024

Lent.

a season of renewal

Inside this issue:

- 3 From Our Pastors
- 4 Lenten Book Read
- 5 Take Heart: Hold Hope!
- 6 Valentine's Party
- 7 Summer Trip Registration
- 9 Mission Morning
- 10 Pub Theology
- 10 J-Term 2024 Fun
- 11 New Writing Group
- 12 Lenten Soup Suppers

Lent Begins February 14 with Ash Wednesday

Lent, our springtime period of renewal and focus on repentance and life in Christ, begins on Ash Wednesday, February 14, with worship and the imposition of ashes at noon and 6:15 p.m.

The ashes we receive on our foreheads remind us that we, along with all of creation, are dependent on God's grace.

Mid-week worship with Holden Evening Prayer begins the following week, February 21, at 6:15 p.m. and continues February 21, February 28, March 6, March 13, and March 20.

Soup Suppers precede midweek services (excluding Ash Wednesday) serving from 5:15-6:15 p.m.

WORSHIP SERVICES
8:30 & 10:45 a.m.

LIVESTREAM
8:30 a.m.

www.StJohnsNorthfield.org

RADIO BROADCASTS
8:30 a.m. *Sundays*
KYMN Radio 1080AM/95.1FM
kymnradio.net

TV BROADCASTS
NTV Channel 187
7:30 p.m. Mon. / 7:00 p.m. Fri.
12:00 a.m. & 9:00 a.m. Tuesdays
2:00 p.m. Wednesdays

Join Us for Worship!

Worship Services

8:30 a.m. & 10:45 a.m., Sundays

Livestream

8:30 a.m. Sundays
www.StJohnsNorthfield.org



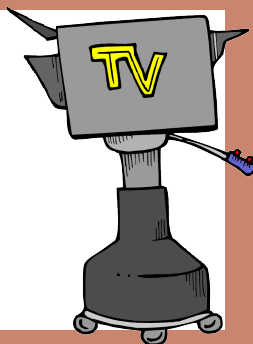
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NTV Channel 187



www.StJohnsNorthfield.org

WELCOME STATEMENT

St. John's Lutheran Church is a community grounded in the promise of God's grace and called to extend Christ's welcome to all people. Every day, Christ meets us all just as we are, extending love to people of every age, race or ethnicity, physical appearance, sexual orientation, gender identity, physical or mental ability, marital or relationship status, economic circumstance, educational achievement, political affiliation, or religious background.

While we do not always agree, we choose to walk and grow in faith together, believing that God creates diversity, and loves and welcomes us.

We warmly welcome you here.

Blessing Box at St. John's

"Take something if in need; leave something when blessed."



The congregation of St. John's continues to support the "Blessing Box", a mission that started in the fall of 2017. It is similar to the Little Libraries found around town except the Blessing box is filled with donated non-perishable food and personal hygiene products. The idea is that anyone who may be struggling can use the goods to make ends meet. The community is welcome to donate to the box being mindful of Minnesota's temperature changes. Donation Ideas (please check expiration dates): canned goods, pasta, flour, sugar, coffee, crackers, soap, mittens, toothbrush, baby items, such as diapers and pacifiers. The box is located in the drive-up on the north side of St. John's.

From Our Pastors

Dear friends in Christ,

This might sound odd for me to say but...I've started reading my Bible again.

As a pastor, I do read parts of the Bible all the time - preparing for a sermon, Bible study, or a Confirmation session. But during my sabbatical in the summer of 2022, I committed to reading all the books of the minor prophets (the book of Hosea through Malachi) just for my own spiritual understanding and growth. Once I came back from sabbatical, I fell back into the pattern of just reading the Bible for things I'm preparing, rather than as a spiritual practice.

It was such a meaningful thing to read Scripture for no other reason than to learn, grow, and wonder from it that I really found myself missing it. This fall, I committed to picking it back up again, starting with what I call the "dusty books of the Bible", or the ones I haven't read in a really long time.

Currently, I'm in the book of First Chronicles and it is...boring. It's a lot of lists of genealogies, lists of armies and wars, with a little bit of narrative sprinkled in. And even though it's not all that interesting or spiritually moving, I am still really enjoying it!

I'm finding that we can talk *about* the Bible a lot, but the act of just reading the Bible regularly feels like it is connecting me to and growing my faith. I'm learning about and remembering little bits about characters and history I didn't know before. Sometimes I understand what I am reading, sometimes I don't, but the overall effect is that it is giving me small moment of time to remember God, find again who God calls me to be as a child of God today, and face the day with a greater sense of the divine with me and around me.

How about you? Has it been a while since you've picked up the Bible? Do you want to but don't know where to start? I recommend starting with Philemon (one of the shortest books of the Bible).

A couple of questions to ask yourself when you read:

- What word or phrase stands out to me?
- What do I wonder about or what questions do I have from this reading?
- Is God saying anything to me through this passage?

Will you join me in trying to read your Bible more this year? If so, let me know where you are and what you are reading! If it would be helpful to read a book *about* to help get you started, I really recommend Adam Hamilton's book *Making Sense of the Bible*.

Blessings on your reading and may God's Word speak to you in ways you never knew it could.

Peace,
Pastor Jonathan

From Our Pastors



Pastor Pam Fickenscher



Pastor Jonathan Davis

Prayer and Care Ministry

Prayer Chain:

Prayer requests are welcome for any concern or thanksgiving. Requests are kept confidential and not included in Sunday morning prayers unless specifically requested. Contact Mary Cisar with a prayer request or to become a prayer chain volunteer: macisar@gmail.com or 507-663-1097.

Grief Care Resource:

Care Notes are one of the grief support resources at St. John's. Stop by the Commons to pick one up for yourself or for a loved one.

Grief Booklets:

"Journeying through Grief" is a resource for those grieving the loss of loved ones. Contact one of the pastors if you would like a copy or if you would like to give a copy to a friend or family member.



The following St. John's members died in these months last year. We list them so that we can remember these loved ones and their families in prayer "with reverence and affection."

February 8, 2023
Steve Nelson

February 11, 2023
Katie Creighton

February 26, 2023
Gloria Porter

St. John's Forum in February 9:45-10:30 a.m. in the Sanctuary

February 4

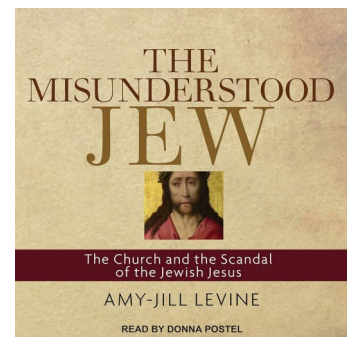
Climate Legislation with Rev. Howard White

Rev. Howard White is a retired ELCA pastor and is the Northfield Chapter Co-Leader of Citizens' Climate Lobby (CCL), as well as CCL's liaison to Rep. Angie Craig's office. He will talk with us about the current state of climate legislation in Washington, D.C. There have been successes in the last few years, and there is hope for more in the year and years ahead. He will share what the experience is like lobbying in person in the offices of U.S. Senators and Members of Congress.

Lenten Book Read begins on February 18

Our Lenten Book read takes a deep dive into the Jewish context of the New Testaments with Amy-Jill Levine's *The Misunderstood Jew: The Church and the Scandal of the Jewish Jesus*.

Levine is a widely noted Jewish scholar of the New Testament and the author of *Light of the World*, which we read during Advent. In *The Misunderstood Jew* Levine seeks to undo longstanding Christian misunderstandings of Jesus's relationship to Jews and Judaism in the conviction that this will help strengthen relationships between Jews and Christians today.



Book discussions will be held on Sundays at 9:45 a.m. and Wednesday afternoons at 4:15 p.m. beginning on Sunday, February 18 (continuing Sundays, February 25, March 3, 10; Wednesdays, February 21, 28, March 6, 13). An online discussion is also possible if there is interest or need. Look for sign-up sheets and books for sale in the Commons on Sundays, January 28, February 4, and 11.

St. John's Stephen Ministers have been trained to walk with those who are facing a challenge in life, whether it be of mind, body, or spirit.

If you know of someone who could benefit from a Stephen Minister, call one of the pastors (507-645-4429) or Jo Franklin (720-281-5107).

Take Heart: Hold Hope!

In November, our Courageous Conversations “Hope in Palestine” speaker shared Rev. Mitri Raheb’s response to those who asked, “what can we do about this unfolding tragedy in Gaza?” He said,

- Pray for us
- Work toward peace
- Learn about and share our story

We now have a tangible opportunity to do just that! Take heart: hold hope...200 olive wood hearts are coming to St. John’s from artisans in Bethlehem, thanks to a mother/daughter project with Northfield connections. St. John’s members have donated funds so that the congregation can be engaged prayerfully this season with this connection to Bethlehem. Here’s the story:



Maddi Froiland, a recent St. Olaf grad, has been living in Bethlehem since serving as an ELCA “Young Adults in Global Missions” volunteer. She and her mother, a pastor at Redeemer Lutheran in Milwaukee (visited by St. John’s youth a few summers ago), have coordinated with churches across the country to support the olive wood artisans of Bethlehem, who have been jobless since the war began in October, due to the lack of tourism.

These artisans carved 8,000 hearts that were used in an ecumenical prayer service on December 27, for the “Feast of the Holy Innocents,” at the Church of the Nativity in Bethlehem.

This is the date when the church traditionally mourns the children killed by King Herod, searching for Jesus. This year, the Christian faith communities came together to also mourn the children of Gaza and the West Bank, who have been killed in the war since October 7. Each heart represents a child’s life.

These hearts will arrive with questions attached: How can I work toward peace, for change, for justice? How can we keep this from happening again? Where and how can love work through me? Holding a heart can be a way of saying “I remember,” “I care,” and “I’m bringing you with us as we take steps for peace.”

Stay tuned for more information about this exciting project.



Life and Growth

Deaths

January 11, 2024

Jerry Anderson

January 17, 2024

Paul Peterson

January 24, 2024

Shirley Anderson



Radio Broadcasts in January

January 7, 2024

Given in loving memory of
Elmer & Cora Schultz and Ken Struss
by Marie Struss and family.

January 14, 2024

Given by Mark and Erin Goettsch,
Nathan, Anneliese, and Charlotte,
in celebration of Nathan Proctor’s birthday,
and gratitude for his work and ministry.

January 21, 2024

Given by Tony Becker and Beckie Judge.

January 28, 2024

Given by friends of St. John’s.

If you would like to
sponsor a broadcast (\$160),
please contact the church office
by phone at 507-645-4429 or email at
office@StJohnsNorthfield.org.

Children and Youth

Important Dates for Children and Youth to Remember

Sunday School Schedule

February 4, 11, 18 & 25
February 18: Toddler Time

Wednesday After School Schedule

February 7, 14, 21 & 28

Prayer Buddy Get-Together

Wednesday, February 7
5:35 p.m., Fireside Room

Valentine's Party During Sunday School

Sunday, February 11

Bowling for Grades 2-5

Monday, February 19 (No School Day)
11:00 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.
(See Article)



Valentine's Party, Sunday, February 11 during Sunday School

Our 3rd-5th graders are planning a Valentine's Party for the Pre Kindergarten - 2nd graders on February 11 during our regular Sunday school time.

Enjoy games, treats, and crafts with a Valentine's theme.

Parents are welcome to attend too.
Hope you'll be part of the fun!

Let's Go Bowling!

Monday, February 19, is a NO SCHOOL DAY so we're heading to the bowling alley!

Who:

Grades 2-5, Friends are always welcome!

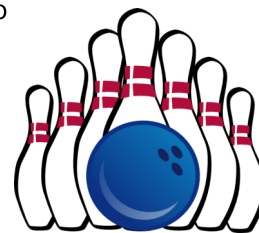
Where:

Flaherty's Northfield Lanes

Time: 11:00 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.

Cost \$11.00 (2 games & shoe rental)

(Checks payable to Flaherty's Lanes or cash works too.)



Please sign up on the bulletin board in the Commons or downstairs by the Nursery.

Parents: Please drop off and pick up your child(ren) at the bowling alley. If they need a ride or financial assistance to participate, contact Julie at children@StJohnsNorthfield.org or 507-645-4429.

Parent or high school chaperones are needed!



Prayer Buddies During Lent

Starting on Ash Wednesday, February 14, and continuing through the Lenten season, our 4th and 5th grade Catechism kids are paired with an adult member from our congregation to be their "Prayer Buddy". We ask the adult to pray for their buddy during the Lenten season. With this program, we hope to create spiritual and caring connections with children and adults in our church community.

Children and Prayer Buddies are invited to the Fireside Room on Wednesday, February 7, 5:35 p.m., to enjoy dinner together and good conversations!

If you are interested in being a Prayer Buddy or would like to continue being the Buddy please contact Julie Brehmer, 507-645-4429 or children@StJohnsNorthfield.org. Thank you!

Sunday Morning Youth Group (Grades 6-12) 9:45-10:30 a.m., Youth Room

On Sunday mornings during the school year, all youth are invited to meet in the Youth Room at 9:45 a.m. for treats, highs and lows, and interactive faith discussion. Each week we get a little practice using our Bibles and practice telling our shared story as a community of God's children.

Why do we do this?
***"To care for each other as we learn to
live Christian lives together"***
Wednesday Night Programming
Wednesdays, 6:15-7:30 p.m.

February

Middle School Confirmation and High School Youth Group

(Grades 6-12)

Like in the season of Advent, throughout Lent the middle school and high school youth will attend the Holden Vespers services together and then gather downstairs in the Fellowship Hall to learn and share together and in small groups. This pattern will hold through spring break in March.

Our Whole Lives (O.W.L.)

This winter/spring, St. John's is offering the Our Whole Lives (O.W.L.) sexuality program for high schoolers. O.W.L. is a curriculum designed to teach the social, emotional, and spiritual aspects of sexuality. Pastor Jonathan and Tamara Jackman, a Certified Nurse Midwife, will be leading these sessions for High Schoolers.

Important Dates:

- Feb 4 – Parents Only Session - Required
- Feb 10 – Opening OWL Retreat
- Feb 21 – OWL Session
- Feb 28 – OWL Session
- March 6 – OWL Session
- March 13 – OWL Session
- March 20 – OWL Session
- April 14 – Closing OWL Retreat

If your high schooler is ready to sign up, please email Pastor Jonathan at jdavis@stjohnsnorthfield.org.

Mentor & Mentee Meetings

Working one-on-one with youth is a meaningful experience that we take seriously. The first Sunday of each month is designated as a Mentor/Mentee Sunday. If necessary, mentoring pairs can make arrangements that fit their schedule.

Service Project Events are also meant to put our faith into action and to enhance the Mentor/Mentee relationship. Opportunities for community events will be in the E-Voice, The Voice, and on the St. John's website.

Mentor/Mentee Sundays Coming Up: February 4, and March 3.

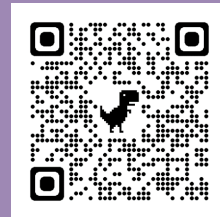
Children and Youth

**Summer Trip
Registration**

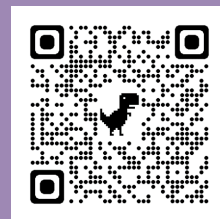
This summer's trip will be canoeing and camping at Amnicon. Four groups of eight youth and two chaperones will adventure up north July 7-12. Registration is now open!

Sign up and learn more about the trips at the following locations:

Middle School (and older) Flambeau River Ramble <https://amnicon.org/24JPFNFLAM/>



High School Whitewater Canoeing on the Brule <https://amnicon.org/24JPFNBRULE/>



**Northfield Week
at Good Earth Village
along with Bethel and
St. Peter's Churches
June 23-28**

Good Earth Village offers camps for grades 2-7 with 2 or 5 night options (depending on grade).

Use code NORTHFIELD24 for an additional \$100 off a full week or \$50 off a half week as a "campership" from St. John's.

Visit

<https://goodearthvillage.org/northfield>
for details or contact Julie or Kristin with questions.

the WOMEN'S page



February Gatherings

Baby Boomers

Saturday, Feb. 3, 4:30-6:00pm
Patsy Ophaug's home

Women's Breakfast Group

Saturday, Feb. 10 9:00am
St. John's Fireside Rm

Elizabeth Circle

Thursday, Feb. 8, 1:30pm
St. John's Library

Lydia & Paul Circle

Wednesday, Feb. 14, 9:00am
Coffee and Conversation
10:00 Bible Study
St John's Library

Mary Circle

Friday, Feb. 9, 1:00pm
St. John's Fireside Room

Wellspring

(for 30-50 somethings)

Monday Feb. 12, 6:30-8:00pm
St. John's Library

Knitters (Prayer Shawls)

2nd & 4th Thursday
10:00am St. John's Library

Knitters (World Vision)

1st & 3rd Wednesday, 10am
Kathy Vang's home
414 Waterwheel Dr. Dundas

Night Knitters!

1st & 3rd Wednesday
6:00pm, St. John's Library

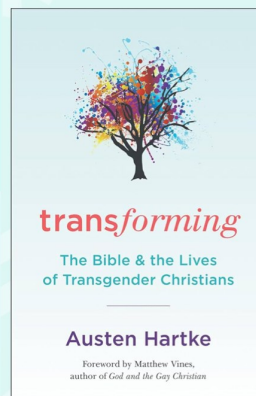
Quilters & Bandage Rollers

Thursdays, 9:00am - noon,
Fellowship Hall

COURAGEOUS CONVERSATIONS: HOPE IS A MUSCLE
February 1st, 2024, 7 p.m. St. John's Hall

Love Your Transgender Neighbor: A Biblical Basis for Allyship

Speaker: Austen Hartke, graduate of Luther Seminary, author, and founder and director of Transmission Ministry Collective, and former member of St. John's.



Have you heard Bible verses used against transgender people, and you're wondering if there might be more to the story? Ever wondered whether there were people who didn't fit neatly into gender boxes in ancient times? In this session we'll dig into stories of biblical characters who lived outside gendered expectations and talk about how these stories can inspire us to stand with our gender-expansive siblings today.

Austin will have his latest book available for purchase at the event.
Open to the public. Refreshments served.



BIBLE STUDY

Start the new year with this study, which holds a spotlight on Jesus and his ministry, following the Gospel of Mark.

Two sessions from which to choose
Currently meeting weekly, through May

Wednesday Evenings

5:30 pm-6:30'ish
St. John's lower level, Rm 19

or

Thursday Mornings

9:00 am-10:00'ish
Zdenek's, 2121 Ontario Ln.

Zoom is available for both times/venues
Refer to St. John's Calendar online for Zoom link
Questions? email Women.StJohns500@gmail.com





Notes from the Triennial, by Jane Rinehart

Dr. Jacqueline Bussie was a dynamic keynote speaker at the Women's Triennial Convention in Phoenix last September. I was one of the lucky women in attendance who was inspired by her words.

Here is a sample of the radical love of which she writes and speaks: God's love widens our sense of "We." Jesus taught that we all belong to one another, we are kin. Our true family is infinitely more than blood relatives. Jesus erased the boundary of stranger and family.

How can we put this expansive love into action? Bussie tells us:

1. It is always within our power to widen the We.
2. Use your privilege to help those with less privilege.
3. Justice is what love looks like in public. (Cornel West)
4. To love is to listen.

Good news alert! Jacqueline Bussie will be the keynote speaker at the Women's Cannon River Spring Conference that will be held here at St. John's on May 11, 2024 (see photo under "Save the Date" bottom right). Mark your calendars. Details for registration, etc will be available later.



QUILT SUNDAY February 11, 2024

On Quilt Sunday we display beautiful quilts, hand made by St. John's Women, draped over all our pews during worship. On February 11, St. John's Women will (silent) auction off two quilts. Winners may choose their quilt from those displayed in the sanctuary. Donations for supplies and kits are always welcome.



St. John's Women of the ELCA



Like us & Friend us on Facebook: "Women of St. Johns"
@ Kvinner St. Johns (Kvinner: Norwegian for "Women" 🙄)

Correspondence: women.stjohns500@gmail.com

Visit our web pages: www.stjohnsnorthfield.org/women

SAVE THE DATE!

**Saturday, April 20, 2024
9:00-12:00**



Mission Morning

mocha, muffins, & missions

Mission Mornings have been so successful and fun, we are continuing the tradition!

All women are invited to enjoy muffins and coffee while we learn a bit about Lutheran World Relief and Global Health Ministries. Help pack kits for LWR and GHM, prepare quilts, tear bandages and knit. It's a perfect way to make new friends and enjoy each others' company.

See you there!



SAVE THE DATE!

**May 11, 2024
WELCA'S CANNON RIVER
SPRING CONFERENCE
Here at St. John's**

Registration/Coffee
8:00 - 9:00am
Business meeting and Speaker
9:00 - 11:45am
Noon Lunch
Registration Fee \$15
(includes lunch)



News and Updates

Pub Theology in February

What is Pub Theology?

It is weekly conversation around questions of faith, God, Jesus, the Bible, current events, and culture. No fancy theological or biblical knowledge needed in order to participate. Just bring your questions, thoughts, and experiences.

We will meet on Mondays,
February 5 & 26
from 6:00-7:30 p.m.
at The Contented Cow.

The topics vary and will be published ahead of time on Facebook, in the E-Voice, and an email list.

Contact Pastor Jonathan
(jdavis@StJohnsNorthfield.org)
to add your name to the email list.



J-Term 2024 Fun

St. John's hosted three of the J-Term classes: art, knitting, and non-violent communication. Students met each week during January to learn new skills and explore their faith together with youth from St. Peter's and Bethel.



The Lutheran Center for Faith, Values & Community and the Nourishing Vocation Projects at St. Olaf College would like to invite you to this year's Conference on Worship, Theology, and the Arts. Monday, July 29 through Wednesday, July 31, St. Olaf College

This year the conference will combine signature CWTA musical experiences with innovative and imaginative work being done by both the Nourishing Vocation Project and Nourishing Vocation with Children, under the leadership of Rev. Dr. Char Rachuy Cox.

What to expect:

- Inspiring worship ~ A pick-up choir under the direction of Dr. Anton Armstrong.
- Networking
- Music Reading Sessions
- Arts Encounters
- Daily plenaries
- Theology-in practice through child-attentive, arts-enriched, user-ready ministry ideas for you to take home and implement.
- Nourishing conversations

You can look forward to all this and so much more! St. Olaf College looks forward to welcoming all participants to The Hill and hopes you will mark your calendar for CWTA 2024. Registration can be found at our website, <https://wp.stolaf.edu/cwta/>, starting January 16.

New Writing Group: "Inspired Pens"

Meets:

10:30 a.m.-12:00 p.m., Last Tuesday of the Month, September-May

Where:

St. John's Library

Participants:

Anyone interested in doing more writing as part of their faith journey.

Leadership:

Chris Engstrom and Barb Kuhlman

What to expect:

Quote of the Day to Set the Theme

A Short Reading to Discuss

Free Writing Exercise based on the reading followed by a writing exercise.

Sharing your writing experience as you desire, with respectful feedback.

News and Updates

Senior Pastor

Pam Fickenscher

pfickenscher@StJohnsNorthfield.org

Associate Pastor

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Director of Children's Ministry

Julie Brehmer

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Director of Ministry with Youth & Families

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Arielle Loy - Children's Music Director and
Early Childhood Specialist

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David Sims and Will Fecko - Directors of
Rejoice Ringers

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OFFICE HOURS

9 a.m. - 4 p.m. M-Th

9 a.m. - 3 p.m. Fri



*Lenten
Soup Suppers*

*Wednesdays
February 21 & 28
March 6, 13 & 20*