

Connections

February 2019

In This Issue	FROM THE PASTOR
1 From the Pastor	Friends in Christ,
2 November Council Minutes Reminders/Memorials	“ Hope, glorious hope is emerging. ” began the call to worship on Christmas Eve. It is a reminder that God entered the world in the most ordinary of ways, that hope exists in even in situations lacking possibility.
3 Life Together	Miguel de la Torre counters this emphasis on hope writing, “The first step toward liberation requires the crucifixion of hope – for as long as hope exists the world’s wretched have something to lose.” In his book, <i>Embracing Hopelessness</i> , he argues what we think of as hope, is frequently false hope. It is hope that everything will go back to how it once was. Hope that keeps us distracted by a dream, rather than wrestling with reality.
4 –5 February Calendar	While Rev. Dr. de la Torre’s claim seems startling, Martin Luther took this a step further. Luther argued a theologian of the cross calls a thing what it is. Faithful theologians, faithful Christians do not give false hope. We confront sin, death, injustice and the devil, knowing true hope is that God is with us in this life and the next.
7 January Birthdays February Birthdays Worship Assistants	Luther argued a theologian of the cross calls a thing what it is. Faithful theologians, faithful Christians do not give false hope. We confront sin, death, injustice and the devil, knowing true hope is that God is with us in this life and the next.
<p>We, the people of St. John's Lutheran Church, welcome everyone regardless of gender expression, sexual orientation, race, ability, languages spoken, ethnicity or economic status.</p> <p>We value each person's uniqueness and diversity.</p> 	<p>What is true hope, and what is false hope?</p> <p>False hope is that the American religious landscape will return to how it looked in the aftermath of World War II. It is hope that people will return to the church as the primary place to find community. It is the hope that every neighborhood can support three or four churches, each with their own professional staff and social events.</p> <p>True hope is our young people are wrestling with confirmation and taking it seriously because rather than a rite of passage everyone does, it is a unique commitment none of their peers are making. True hope is the vulnerable, heart-breaking, awe inspiring stories many of you shared during cottage gatherings – stories that show the real ways God has been present in your lives, beyond easy answers. True hope is God is with us in our birth, just as much as in our death.</p> <p>In his book <i>Canoeing the Mountains</i>, Todd Bolsinger, argues we are at a unique time in Christian history, markedly different from our institutional church-centric past. To illustrate this point he uses the story of Lewis and Clark’s Westward expedition in 1804.</p> <p>As the young nation grew westward Lewis & Clark were drafted with discovering a water route from the Mississippi River to the Pacific Ocean. Equipped with the best canoes and supplies for a water journey, they found themselves on the Plains and then at the foot of the Rocky Mountains. Their canoes obsolete, they had to trade with the Indians for horses, scrap their canoes, and set off on foot, to scale the mountains in the winter. While they never found a water route across the Rockies their expedition is one of the most exhilarating stories of American history.</p> <p>Bolsinger argues part of their success was due to their ability to focus on the mission of discovery, rather than a specific method of accomplishing that goal that conflicted with</p>

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Congregational President: Victor Forberger Council Chair: Dick Severson

Council Secretary: Teresa Wagner Treasurer: Alice Gould

Director of Music: Kristie Halverson, kristieh@stjohnsmadison.org

Emergency Fund Director: Hasan Mohr, hmohr@porchlightinc.org

Bookkeeper: bookkeeper@stjohnsmadison.org

Parish Secretary: Dick Gundlach, dickg@stjohnsmadison.org

Custodian: Steven McCarthy, stevenm@stjohnsmadison.org

Worship with Holy Communion is at 9:30 a.m.

Brunch follows the service at 10:45 a.m.

Youth Forum, Confirmation, and Adult Forum at 10:45 a.m. (fall thru spring)

Women's Bible Study

The Women's Bible Study is the first Thursday of the month at the Prairie Rose Café at Oakwood East

Reminders

-----The third Sunday of each month we collect food items for area food pantries.

-----The third Sunday of each month we provide the evening meal for the homeless men's shelter at 7pm

-----Articles for the next month *Connections* are due by noon on the third Friday of the current month.

Memorials

No Memorials Received

November Council Minutes

St John's Lutheran Church – Council Meeting – 20 November 2018

Attendance: Dick Severson (chair), Alice Gould (treasurer), Teresa Wagner (secretary), Teena Wagner, Barb Meyer, Carol Buchsteiner, Victor Forberger, Jim Johnson, Pastor Peter Beeson, and Marc Williamson

Devotions: Victor Forberger

Minutes from the October Meeting: Approved

Financial Summary through October 2018

Income:

Total YTD Actual income: \$259,791

Budgeted YTD: \$302,247

2017 YTD: \$256,226

Expenses:

Total YTD Actual Expenses: \$279,966

Budgeted YTD: \$324,159

2017 YTD: \$277,541

Offerings through October totaled \$178,682 compared to \$175,708 for the same period in 2017 and the budget of \$230,413. YTD we have transferred \$55,000 from the reserve fund, the same as last year and as included in the 2018 budget.

At our March meeting, the council voted to reduce the rent for LIRS by half for the current year and the near future. Rent for Off the Square Club is to be reduced by \$600 per month for May through October. We received 2 payments in October, \$2,130 on October 1 which is twice the amount of \$1,065 expected, and a payment of \$1,065 on October 29 which may be the reduced rent for November. I called LSS and I'm waiting for an explanation of what they intended. LIRS will not owe any rent through December which meets the intentions of the council.

A few expense items to note:

- Guest Musician/Pastor \$200 honorarium for the synod for Rev. Kottke presiding at Pastor Peter's installation on October 28.
 - Salaries and Benefits \$14,028 salary and benefits for our current staff of pastor, music director, secretary, custodian, emergency fund coordinator, and Sunday coordinator
 - Staff development \$385 cost of registration for Pastor Peter to attend the Bishop's Convocation
 - Office supplies \$353 for envelopes and letterhead for the Thanksgiving mailing
 - Call Committee expenses \$3,229 moving expenses for Pastor Peter and family. Considerably less than the \$9,000 allowance. A gift from a member offsets \$1,000 of this cost
- Accounting Services \$1,629 covers accounting and payroll services

The balance in the building fund at the end of October is \$42,194. At the direction of the council, this money will be available to the Building Maintenance Committee.

LIFE TOGETHER—News and Events

---**Thanks to all who were able to attend a Cottage Gathering this past fall** to get to know Pastor Peter and share our hopes and dreams for St. John's! We've had 6 gatherings, with 47 attendees. **Pr. Peter** is compiling the notes from the gatherings and will be presenting to compilation sometime in February or March.

---**The Emergency Fund will be suspended for the month of February. Hasan Mohr, the director of the program will be on vacation from his duties at Porchlight and from the Emergency Fund.**

---**Did you know that our St. John's congregation voted overwhelmingly in favor of joining the Reconciling in Christ (RIC) movement in 2006?** Some of us got to share our personal feelings and experiences about what it means to us to be RIC during the adult forum on January 20th. We want to hear your story as well. The Outreach Committee would like to invite you and your family to write your own reflections on what it means to you to be RIC. We will compile and share them with the congregation. Please send your written reflection to me in an email at miriammuellerowens@gmail.com or give **Pastor Peter** or myself your handwritten thoughts at church. Thanks! **Miriam Mueller-Owens**

----**Richard Wagner will continue to take photos for the photo directory** for the next two Sundays, Feb. 10th and Feb. 17th. Wear your finest for the snazziest pic.

----**Late January was very cold and snowy in Madison** and the weather prompted us to close the building. There were some heating issues, but no major damage to the pipes in the building. There will be a need for some organ repair and piano tuning due to the cold weather.

----**Upcoming Adult Forums—Victor Forberger** will lead a discussion about end-of-life health care planning for the February 17th adult forum. He will cover the kind of legal documents that can or need to be completed. For the Feb. 24th adult forum, Victor will cover financial end-of-life planning with power of attorney forms and what steps need or can be taken as well as issues to watch out for.

----**Planning is underway for the Bethel Horizons Retreat, scheduled for April 5-7th.** Young people wishing to help plan the agenda for the weekend will be **meeting on Sunday Feb 17 after church.** We will leave church around 11:45am, and make our way to Festival Foods (just down the street on East Washington). Grab some lunch (they have a large buffet to choose from) and join us in the community cafeteria at noon for planning. We will be done by 1pm. Free parking is available beneath the store. **Questions? Ask Pastor Peter or Stephanie Schauer.**

----**Pr. Peter attended two conferences in late January and early February.** He and **Alice Gould** attended "Canoeing the Mountains" in Minneapolis during the extreme temperatures of the polar vortex in late January, led by **Todd Bolsinger**. The focus of the conference was navigating a changing world to be the church now. **Pr. Peter also attended Association of Lutheran Development Executives (ALDE) annual conference on fundraising on February 3rd.**

----**When information needs to be provided to you for emergency closings and the like,** please check the website, www.stjohnsmadison.org, call the office number, 608-256-2337 and listen to the information in the announcement. We will also be sending emails to the people on the Weekly Email list. If you have not been receiving the Weekly Email and would like to, please send an email request to Dick G. at dickg@stjohnsmadison.org.

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----**An Intergenerational Event** occurred on Sunday, February 3rd during Adult Forum to do mosaics with Julia Weaver of the Backyard Women's Mosaic Project. Mosaic's of traced hands are being prepared and will be mounted on the wall in the Youth Room. If you would like to add to the collage, please contact **Margit Gundlach.**

----**Wednesday Evening Soup Suppers at 6pm and Holden Evening Prayer services at 7pm** begin this year on March 10. They will run through April 7th. As in the past, we need groups to sign up to provide the meal for 5 Wednesday's. A sign-up sheet will be at the Welcome Center on Sunday mornings until all the slots are taken.

----**Geri Diemer has died.** Her Memorial Service was held on Sunday, February 10th at Lakeview Lutheran Church.

February 2019

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1	2 Groundhog Day
					10am Emergency Assistance	Groundhog Day
					12pm Alanon	8pm Men's Shelter
					8pm Men's Shelter	
				7	8	9
3 Super Bowl	4	5	6	12pm OA	10am Emergency Assistance	8pm Men's Shelter
8:15am Choir Rehearses	10am Emergency Assistance	12pm Alanon	10am Emergency Assistance	12pm OA	10am Emergency Assistance	
9:30am Worship	12pm OA	8pm Men's Shelter	12pm Backyard Music	8pm Men's Shelter	11am Oakwood Communion Service	
10:45am Brunch	6:30pm Bell Choir Rehearses		8pm Men's Shelter		12pm Alanon	
10:45am Youth Forum	8pm Men's Shelter				8pm Men's Shelter	
8pm Men's Shelter						
10	11	12	13	14 Valentine's Day	15	16
8:15am Choir Rehearses	10am Emergency Assistance	Lincoln's Birthday	9am Blanket Workshop	Valentine's Day	10am Emergency Assistance	8pm Men's Shelter
9:30am Worship	12pm OA	12pm Alanon	10am Emergency Assistance	12pm OA	12pm Alanon	
10:45am Brunch	6:30pm Bell Choir Rehearses	6pm New Music Group	12pm Backyard Music	8pm Men's Shelter	12pm Connections Articles Due	
10:45am Quarterly Meeting	8pm Men's Shelter	8pm Men's Shelter	8pm Men's Shelter		8pm Men's Shelter	

Minutes cont'd from p.3

The balance in the MIF Reserve Savings is \$142,623 consisting of:

- the Reserve for Outreach, (10% of 2015 General Fund Bequests) \$22,274,
- Bequest for Altar Refurbishment \$14,060,
- Mission Initiative - Community Minister \$72,897 (\$7,682 from Seibert and \$65,215 from St. John's), and Strategic Reserve for Operating Expenses \$33,392.

Announcements: N/A

Pastor Support Group for Pr Peter: Nothing to report.

Outreach Committee: Fair trade sale will start on December 2nd. They are having their holiday dinner on December 3rd.

Personnel Committee: Personnel and executive committee have been meeting with Pastor Peter about updates to job descriptions and possible staff changes in the next year or so.. A meeting with the accounting firm about the book-keeping work is set for next week.

Finance Committee: Nothing to report as budget for 2019 is set.

Building Maintenance: Door operators and new panic bars have been ordered, and they should be installed before Christmas. We haven't heard back from Lake City about security door changes. Vogel should have cost estimates for the security doors to us this week or next.

Senior Care Team: We are up to eight shut-ins so far. Next meeting will be on March 16th.

Pastoral reflection: After spending the past two months listening and observing, St. John's is at a point where we need to reflect on how God is calling us to be the church now. There are two organizations that may be able to assist us. One is Joshua Group — <http://thejoshua-group.com/> — and the other is Epicenter group — <http://epicentergroup.org/>.

Worship planning team: It was recommended that we have both services this year for Christmas Eve. They will talk about next year after they see how it goes. No service for Christmas Day. There will be cookies between the two services.

Outstanding business: Because of the federal shutdown on refugees, LIRS is closing its Madison office at the end of January. Off the Square Club received enough money to continue for for next year. Off the Square Club rent will be \$1665 for the months of November and December. A new lease will start in January 2019 with the rental rate going up by 3 % up to approximately \$1700.00. Pastor Peter will handle negotiations.

Website: Victor will be following up on the draft changes.

New Business: Community Ministry: How we are going to move forward and in which way. We need to redevelop our vision of what we expect by first looking at staffing — what to do and why with our current staff.

Photo directory: Still being worked on.

December gathering a dinner: Teena Wagner agreed to run the dinner on December 18th. Council will meet briefly after the meal to elect new officers.

Prayers and adjournment (next meeting on December 18th)

From the Pastor cont'd from p. 1

reality. They were willing to give up their canoes, to embrace discovery.

What are our canoes?

For many churches designated buildings and full-time professional staff are canoes. For others confirmation, which for years people have graduated from and then never shown up again to worship. For others it is the idea of *charity-to* rather than *ministry-with* a willingness to help the poor & downtrodden – if they stay in their place and follow the rules. We will not know what our canoes are until we get to the mountains and must decide what we are willing to lose. Until we must decide if we are going to charge the mountains – intent on the mission of discovery, **or** if we are going to give up saying it is an impossibility.

If we do decide to make a go for it, being the church now means culture change. It means being willing to go to the margins and do *ministry-with* those who have been marginalized, partnering with them as respected equals who also have gifts to give. Part of the reason Lewis & Clark were successful is because of a leader not always remembered: Sacajawea, the Indian woman who gave them a path forward. The well-trained military leaders realized, that for all their skill, none of them were equipped to explore the mountains. They were willing to welcome an outsider and rather than just bring her along as a captive, they listened to her counsel.

Over the next year we have hard decisions to make. Like real mountains, this is not a case where you cross a peak and then it is smooth sailing. Rather, like real mountains, we have scaled one peak to discover there are miles of mountains before us. Like Moses and the Israelites who wandered in the wilderness, not everyone who begins this journey will survive it. However, we have the opportunity to embark on the expedition of a lifetime, knowing **God will be with us through it.**

Whatever decisions this congregation makes, I am glad to be in the trenches and scaling the mountains with you.

Pastor Peter



January

01/03 Ryan Schwenn
Annika Mueller-Owens
01/04 Bonnie Pedersen
01/07 Shirley Sorenson
01/08 Leah Groehler
Michael Blom
01/10 Brittany Disch
01/11 Georgianna Stebnitz
Steven Griffith
01/13 James Johnson

01/14 Alan Steinhauer
01/15 Sue Kinas
01/16 Trevor Upright
01/17 Alice Blatterman
Sten Severson
01/17 Melissa Miller
01/17 Jeremy Showers
01/18 Doug Peterson
01/19 Clarence Schwengel
Sierra Mueller-Owens
01/20 Bob Germann
01/21 Jacob Taff
01/22 Danny Beeson Thelen

01/24 Alan Schwenn
01/25 Randy Halvorsen
01/26 Kathleen Reinke
Michelle Ninneman Rapacz
Esther Wolobah
01/27 Dick Gundlach
01/28 Thomas Hilger
Jacqueline Stroede
01/30 Brian McCarthy
01/30 Janet Hutchens
01/31 Cindy Stroede
01/31 Matthew Rolfsmeyer
Brian Brimmer



February

02/03 Marcus Buss
Rhiannon Stroede
02/05 Linda Penn
02/05 Amy Jo Hauge
02/06 Don McCarthy
Richard Wagner

02/07 Jennifer Stroede
Ashley Miller
02/08 Carole Buchsteiner
02/09 Dennis Replinger
02/11 Scot Latek
02/12 Michelle Zitlow
02/15 Erna Stephenson
Gregg Severson
02/16 Thomas Loftus

02/16 Meredith Steinhauer
02/17 Dave Vogel
02/18 Paulette Schwengel
02/21 Karen Taff
02/21 Maddie Zwank
02/22 Don Helfrecht
02/23 Daniel Hyslop
02/23 Damien Bakken
02/25 Sydney Latek

Communion Assistants	3-Feb-2019	10-Feb-2019	17-Feb-2019	24-Feb-2019	3-Mar-2019
Greeters	Charlene Caucutt	Pat Biba	Kevin Wagner	Ronda Collins	Merle & Dee Zimmerman
Acolytes	Truman Rafferty	Anja Forberger	Micah Asplund	Annika Mueller-Owens	Micah Asplund
Assisting Minister	Dick Severson	Miriam Mueller-Owens	Tom Hilger	Dave Vogel	Barbie Pietz
Lector	Caden Collins	Dave Vogel	Ronda Collins	Dee Zimmerman	Tim Asplund
Communion Assistants	Dick Gundlach and Barb Meyer	Dick and Winnie Severson	Tom and Carol Rivers	Alice Gould and Karl Gutknecht	Charlene Caucutt and Dave Vogel
Ushers	Team #1 - Dick Paulson	Team #2 - Marcia and Marc Williamson	Team #3 Jim Johnson	Team #4 Asplund/Pietz Family	Team #1 Dick Paulson
Altar	Team 1 – Niki and Kelsey Wagner	Team 2 - Teena and Teresa Wagner	Team 3 - Anja and Victor Forberger	Team 4 - Tammi Knickmeyer and Karen Reiner	Team 1 – Niki and Kelsey Wagner
Welcome Center	Elaine Mittelsteadt	Marcia Williamson	Ronda Collins	Pat Biba	Ronda Collins
Brunch	Lyndsay and Marcus Nelson	Barb Jull and Matt Rolfsmeyer	Marcia and Marc Williamson	Pat Biba	Winnie and Dick Severson
Adult Forum	Intergenerational Forum to do mosaics with Julia Weaver of the Backyard Women's Mosaic Project housed at St. John's and another of our Partnership Ministries.	None Scheduled	Victor Forberger will lead a discussion about end-of-life health care planning. He will cover the kind of legal documents that can or need to be completed.	Victor Forberger will cover financial end-of-life planning with power of attorney forms and what steps need or can be taken as well as issues to watch out for.	none scheduled

St. John's Lutheran Church
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FEBRUARY

