

St. John Lutheran Church
203 E. Church Street
P.O. Box 36
Royal, IL 61871

Monthly Designated Benevolence and Lenten Offerings:
Local Benevolences (Empty Tomb, Restoration Urban Ministries, Salt and Light)
Lenten Offerings – NALC Seminaries

March, 2023



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Feb 26 Lent 1 8:30 am - Sunday School 9:45 am - Worship 11:00 am - Worship Committee 4:00 pm - First Communion Class	Feb 27 	Feb 28	1 Midweek Lent 6:00 - Lent Supper 6:15 - Handbells 7:00 - Worship 7:45 - Choir	2	3 6:30 - New Member Class	4 7:00 am - Men's Bible Study
5 Lent 2 8:30 am - Sunday School 9:45 am - Worship <i>with Holy Communion and First Communion</i>	6	7 8:30 am - LWR Blanket Workday	8 Midweek Lent 6:00 - Lent Supper 6:15 - Handbells 7:00 - Worship 7:45 - Choir	9 1:30 - Circles	10	11 7:00 am - Men's Bible Study
12 Lent 3 8:30 am - Sunday School 9:45 am - Worship 12:00 pm - Meet at church for movie 1:00 pm - Movie - Jesus Revolution <i>Daylight Saving Time Begins</i>	13	14 6:30 - New Member Class	15 Midweek Lent 6:00 - Lent Supper 6:15 - Handbells 7:00 - Worship 7:45 - Choir	16	17 	18 7:00 am - Men's Bible Study 6:30 pm - 7:00 am - Youth Lock-In
19 Lent 4 8:30 am - Sunday School 9:45 am - Worship <i>with Holy Communion</i>	20 7:00 - Council 	21 8:30 am - LWR Blanket Workday 6:30 - New Member Class	22 Midweek Lent 6:00 - Lent Supper 6:15 - Handbells 7:00 - Worship 7:45 - Choir 	23 3:00 - Worship at Country Health 	24	25 7:00 am - Men's Bible Study
26 Lent 5 8:30 am - Sunday School 9:45 am - Worship	27	28 6:30 - New Member Class	29 Midweek Lent 6:00 - Lent Supper 6:15 - Handbells 7:00 - Worship 7:45 - Choir	30	31 	Apr 1 7:00 am - Men's Bible Study

March REMINDER LIST

COUNCIL SERVICE:	ORGANISTS:	ALTAR GUILD:
Derek Siebens	Susi Huls	Jill Henderson
Steve Behrens	Paul Blobaum	Dan Henderson
Parker Poole		Debbie Suits
		Rodney Suits
		Miki Wesley
DATE:	COFFEE HOST:	SOUND SYSTEM:
Mar 5	Myrna Craig	Sean Wells
Mar 12	Ray Manselle	(Sundays)
Mar 19	Anita and James Lieb	Gary Duitsman
Mar 26	Rodney Moorhous	(Midweek Lent)
DATE:	ACOLYTES:	LECTORS:
Mar 1	Midweek Lent - Council	Deanna Osterbur
Mar 5	Garrett Loschen, Leah Pruitt	Laura Ketchum
Mar 8	Midweek Lent - Council	Ray Manselle
Mar 12	Cameron Wagner, Gage Ramm	Tracy Mathis
Mar 15	Midweek Lent - Council	Jackie Johnson
Mar 19	Isabella Frerichs, Alex Bromley	Gary Duitsman
Mar 22	Midweek Lent - Council	Lori Hovel
Mar 26	Lillian Hedrick, Morgan Huls	Tracy Wahlfeldt
Mar 29	Midweek Lent - Council	Laura Ketchum

DATE:	ALTAR FLOWERS:
Mar 5	Darlene and Barb Osterbur (both vases)
Mar 12	Gloria Grant, Aaron and Laura Ketchum
Mar 19	Don and Judy White
Mar 26	Vernon and Wilma Buhr family
DATE	COMMUNION HOST:
Mar 5	Provide Bread: Kenneth Osterbur
	Provide Wine: Rodney and Sandie Osterbur
	Provide Grapejuice: Kay Fiscus
Mar 19	Provide Bread: Roxie Sage
	Provide Wine: Betty Osterbur



**Thanks
to Our
Volunteers!**

March REMINDER LIST

DATE:	SUNDAY / SPECIAL WORSHIP USHERS:
Mar 1	<i>Midweek Lent</i> - Don and Judy White
Mar 5	Ed and JoAnn Rademaker, Marsha Osterbur
Mar 8	<i>Midweek Lent</i> - John and Donna Thompson
Mar 12	Allan and Susie Schlueter, Allie and Austin Maul
Mar 15	<i>Midweek Lent</i> - Rodney and Debbie Suits
Mar 19	Gary and Lori Duitsman, Marsha Osterbur
Mar 22	<i>Midweek Lent</i> - Allan and Susie Schlueter
Mar 26	Scott and Tracy Wahlfeldt, Mike and Kris Francisco
Mar 29	<i>Midweek Lent</i> - Mike and Kris Francisco
DATE:	GREETERS:
Mar 5	Justin and Casi Hedrick (<i>East door</i>), Chelsey Mohr
Mar 12	Emily Johnson and family (<i>East door</i>), Allie Maul (<i>North</i>)
Mar 19	Joel and Whitney Highfill and family (<i>East door</i>), Parker Poole
Mar 26	Joel and Whitney Highfill and family (<i>East door</i>)
Mar 29	Ed and Jodi Bohlen, Daniele Frerichs and family

BIRTHDAYS AND ANNIVERSARIES

Birthday Celebrations in March (members 80+ years):

Dorothy Bruns celebrates her 100th birthday on the 3rd.

Bill Loschen celebrates his 93rd birthday on the 7th.

Gerry Osterbur celebrates her 95th birthday on the 14th.

Ella Osterbur celebrates her 94th birthday on the 27th.

Wedding Anniversaries in March (members 50+ years):

Vernon and Wilma Buhr celebrate 60 years on the 17th.

**Remember all who celebrate March birthdays and anniversaries
with greetings and in your prayers.**

St. Patrick used the shamrock to teach people about the Godhead.

Holding up a shamrock, he challenged them,

"Is this one leaf, or three?"

Inevitably, people replied that it was both,

prompting St. Patrick to draw the analogy that so, too, is God:

one God in three Persons—the Holy Trinity.



FROM PASTOR JAY – When Weakness is Strength

Irene was a good friend of my mother, Viola. Irene was delightful, quiet, and married to Jim, who owned a small store, in a small town along the Illinois River. Jim was likewise a kind and outgoing man. Jim had an awkward physical handicap. Before they married, many a friend queried Irene why she chose him; “You could have done better than him!” But Irene’s response was simple, honest, and quite honorable. “Because Jim is a good man.” Irene loved Jim very much. Jim cherished Irene. They weathered many a storm together and as grace filled, albeit, a road with rough spots and rocky stretches.

Paul wrote of a “thorn in the flesh”, an ongoing malady that was troubling him. Three times he pleaded for God to take away his problem but the Lord response was; “*My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness. Therefore, I will boast all the more gladly about my weaknesses, so that Christ’s power may rest on me.*” 2 Corinthians 12: And the next verse sums it up; “*That is why for Christ’s sake I delight in weaknesses, in insults, in hardships, in persecutions, in difficulties, For when I am weak then I am strong.*”

Irene and Jim did not rocket to the top of the social ladder. They achieved limited financial wealth. They were profoundly content because Jesus was the bond in their life. Their Faith was their strength, their trust. They lived the Truth of Jesus in their daily lives. Others recognized their faith. Our community was in a “better place” because of their pervasive, salt-like faith. Their “frailty” reflected their strength as a godly couple. Who are the strongest among us? The ones in whom Faith is deepest.

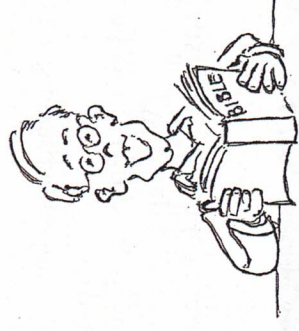
Could we “do better?” in what we do, how we think, where we go, how we handle our lives? We could. “Responsible” often comes to mind, and appropriately so. I prefer the alternate spelling of the word: “Response-able”; enabled and capable of growing in Faith. Rather than bemoan the fact of Jim’s perceived limitations and perhaps throw Jim, “under the proverbial bus” Irene recognized Jim as Jesus saw him. Irene trusted Jesus and took Him at His

from pastor jay (cont.)

Word and was joyful in it. Irene loved Jim as Jesus loved her. Being versed in Scripture enables us to give wise and measured responses to any and all curveballs that are thrown at us. We are “response-able”. We have the opportunity each day to align ourselves with the Word and permit godly faith to be the sharpener that hones our character.

In days ahead, many challenges, times of questions and uncertainty will seemingly crop up out of nowhere. When relationships come unglued, plans fail, dreams are dashed, resources dry up; a “thorn in our side” will get jammed into our rib cage and we won’t handle it well. Our journey can suddenly become a series of gigantic potholes in the express lane of life, along which we will weave wildly around to avoid crashing. At that time, who’s at the wheel? Whose foot is on the brake and/or accelerator? The Lord has His hand in yours and draws you to Himself. Listen to how the Word addresses such dilemmas:

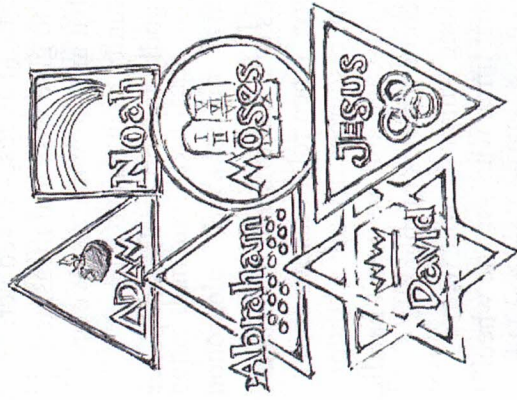
“I praise you for I am fearfully and wonderfully made; My frame was not hidden from you when I was made in the secret place.... All the days ordained for me were written in your book before one of them came to be.” Psalms 139: 14-16. God’s plan for St. John is already in the divine play book, sketched out, drawn up with appropriate X’s and O’s, waiting to be displayed in faith in each of our lives. The Holy Spirit awaits our response. Exciting, isn’t it?!!



*Blessings to you,
Pastor Jay*

2023 LENTEN SEASON

Our Midweek Lenten services will be held **each Wednesday** evening at **7:00** with a supper served in the church basement at **6:00** by our committees and council. The theme for the Lenten messages this year will be the covenants which God has made with mankind through the years from the creation of Adam to the faith expressed by and through Abraham, to the Final Covenant, made complete in His Son and sealed by the Sacrificial Lamb at Calvary.



These six covenants (Adam, Noah, Abraham, Israel/Moses, David, and Jesus) have been an encouragement to the generations which received them and equally so as our generation gazes back over time and sees the Witness of God's faithfulness to His chosen people.

When all the evidence of our spiritual history are placed into the mosaic of faith that is a gift to us, we marvel at God's complete concern for our Eternal well-being. We praise God for His outpouring of love for us.

Lent Supper Menus for March

March 1 – Chili, Grilled Cheese (Hunger-Stewardship Committee)
March 8 – Spaghetti (Council)
March 15 – Chicken Noodle Soup, Sandwiches (Property Comm.)
March 22 – BBQ, Hot Dogs (Worship Committee)
March 29 – Nacho Bar (Parish Ed / Youth Committee)



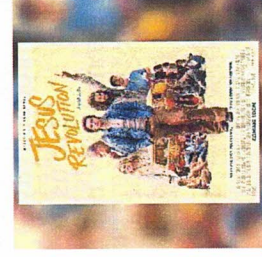
PARISH ED / YOUTH NEWS

Sunday School – Sundays at 8:30 a.m.
Confirmation Classes – Wednesdays 6:30 p.m. - 8:30 p.m.



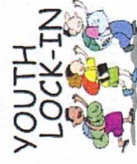
Sunday School Students will sing on the 2nd Sunday of the month. This month that is Sunday, March 12th.
Save the date!

The Jesus Revolution Movie



"From the creators of I CAN ONLY IMAGINE comes a powerful true story of revival, rock and roll, and newfound love: JESUS REVOLUTION" - jesusrevolution.movie (website)

An outing is being planned for all ages to enjoy this movie together! A theater has been reserved at 1:00 p.m. on Sunday, March 12th at Savoy 16. The cost for youth grades 5-12 will be covered by the church, adults are \$5 each. If you would like to ride with others, meet at the church at 12:00 p.m. to head to the theater. Please let the church office or Laura Ketchum know if you plan to attend. This will help determine the theater size needed.



We're planning a Youth Lock-In!

WHO: all ages

WHERE: St. John Lutheran Church

WHEN: March 18, 2023, 6:30 PM to March 19, 7:00 AM

SERVICE PROJECT: making blankets and pillows for emergency shelters.

BRING: Sleeping bag, blankets and pillows and nighttime care items like a toothbrush and hairbrush.

EXTRA DETAILS: we will have various activities for all ages so everyone can enjoy. If parents want to pick kids up after Sunday School, then please send them with clothes to change into for the morning. Snacks and pizza will be provided at 6:30. Parents are welcome to stay for dinner, but not required. All parents will need to sign their kid in and leave an emergency contact number.

Adult Sunday School

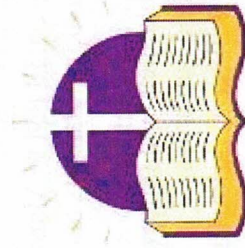
Deanna Osterbur will be leading an adult bible study during Sunday school starting on March 12.

The book is called 24/6 by Matthew Sleeth.

“Remember the Sabbath and keep it holy.”

Sounds nice, but how do we find rest in a 24/7 world? Just as the Hebrews were slaves in Egypt, we have become slaves to technology. Our technological tools allow 24-hour productivity and connectivity, give us more control, and subtly enslave us to busyness itself. Sabbath is about restraint, about intentionally not doing everything all the time just because we can. Setting aside a day of rest helps us reconnect with our Creator and find the peace of God that passes all understanding. The Sabbath is about letting go of the controls one day a week and letting God be God. So how do we do it?

In 24/6, Dr. Matthew Sleeth describes our symptoms, clarifies the signs, diagnoses the illness, and lays out a simple plan for living a healthier, more God-centered life in a digitally dazed, always-on world. Sleeth shares how his own family was dramatically transformed when it adopted Sabbath practices and helps readers better understand how their own lives can be transformed – physically, emotionally, relationally, and spiritually – by adopting the 24/6 lifestyle.



**Sunday Morning
Adult Study**

DESIGNATED BENEVOLENCE



During the month of **March**, the designated benevolence is for **Local Benevolences** to help those in need. **Lent offerings** are designated for NALC Seminars. Please use the center portion of the offering envelopes for your gifts.

The Hunger – Stewardship Committee would like to highlight the organizations we are donating to with our monthly benevolences. For the month of March, the three Local Benevolences the committees have chosen to contribute to are: Empty Tomb, Restoration Urban Ministries, and Salt and Light. Below is information about what these organizations offer to the community. Please consider donating to help those in our communities.

EMPTY TOMB

Christian Health Services

Christian Health Services work helps meet the health needs of financially poorer people by providing limited funds for medical needs, primarily prescriptions; also, layettes and other items are provided to needy families, generally the mothers.

Clothing Work

Clothing can be dropped off, and then is sorted and made available free in Jesus' name. Now accepting Fall-Winter clothes through March 15. Help is needed in sorting clothes and greeting people. Hours are Monday – Friday, 9 AM to 4:30 PM, and Saturdays, 9 AM to 1 PM. Closed on posted holidays.

Free Food Work

Congregations receive calls from empty tomb and then deliver groceries provided by the church to the family or individual in need. More congregations who are able to deliver food are needed.

Furniture Work

Donated furniture is picked up and delivered to households that have expressed a need in the Champaign, Urbana, and Savoy area. Volunteers are needed both to pick up and deliver the furniture in empty tomb's furniture truck.

Helping Work

Helping Appointments: Mondays, 9 AM for up to 10 callers. Up to \$30 is available for various needs, such as rent, power bills, bus tokens, and

designated benevolence (cont.)

automobile gasoline. Call (217) 356-2262. Helping Referrals: Agencies can refer a need for an individual for larger amounts. Funds available through donations.

RESTORATION MINISTRIES

Providing a loving and safe Christian environment for homeless or nearly homeless individuals and families
Our Transitional Housing Program provides restorative classes such as:

- GED (if needed)
- Financial management
- Employment counseling
- Parenting skills (if needed)
- Emotional healing and spiritual guidance

In addition, we freely provide for friends in the community.

- Food Pantry
- Clothing Room
- Household goods and small appliances (as available from our donors)
- Men's/Women's groups
- Bible Study groups
- Substance Abuse Recovery groups

SALT AND LIGHT

It's no secret that the cost of all living expenses continues rise. And while we are all feeling the difference, families living near or at poverty level risk being buried by these crucial expenses. And while one-way giving helps for a moment, it doesn't address the root cause of poverty. In addition, it chips away at a person's dignity.

At Salt & Light, we help community members gain access to food, clothing, and household goods, despite any financial obstacles. More importantly, we offer a COMMUNITY of people to empower, affirm, and encourage those we serve. As our Executive Director, Nathan Montgomery, says, "We don't want to make the condition of poverty more bearable for those suffering in it; we want to help them overcome it.

We believe that people struggling with poverty are not projects. As a relational ministry, we invite you to partner with us by shopping in our stores, volunteering your time, and donating your goods and finances. At Salt & Light, we help community members gain access to food, clothing, and household goods, in spite of financial obstacles. More importantly, we offer a COMMUNITY of people to empower, affirm, and encourage. TOGETHER, we are changing lives and transforming our community.

COUNCIL MEETING NOTES

1. Council met on Monday, February 13, at 7:00. Pastor Jay led Bible Study on 1 Peter 2:9.
2. Insurance meetings are being held to go over current coverage. A wireless water sensor will be purchased to be in compliance. Training for those that should go through mandated reporting training will be scheduled.
3. Recommendation was made to purchase 2 - 12-month CDs for Improvement Fund funds to get a better interest rate. Council approved this.
4. The monthly designated benevolence for March is Local Benevolences, Lent Offerings will be for NALC Seminars
5. Council approved an additional financial contribution to the family of Aleyah Carley. A local teen battling leukemia.
6. Property – Upstairs classrooms remodel continues. Heat Pump for offices being replaced by Duden and Silver soon. Youth Garage Roof will also be completed soon.
7. Youth – Savoy 16 has reserved a theater for our church on March 12th to attend as a group and see the new movie, "Jesus Revolution"
8. Parish Ed – First Communion – classes being held for 10 kids; First Communion will be taken on March 5. Kids will be singing on Palm Sunday, April 2, waving palms.
9. Next council meeting is Monday, March 20, 2023, at 7:00 p.m.



EXPRESSIONS OF THANKS

I would like to thank the LWR Tuesday morning quilting ladies for the beautiful quilt that was made and given to me as a retirement gift as bookkeeper. It is appreciated very much and will be genuinely cherished for years to come.

Jerry Poyner

I want to thank Pastor Jay, and everyone, for all your prayers, visits, cards, and thoughts during my recent hospital stay. Prayer Works!! Thanks to everyone for making my birthday open house such a special day for my family and me.

Blessings to all,

Don White

**thank
you!**

Dear Friends at St. John,

As we look back on another year, Paul and I are once again so very touched by your ongoing support. As we look ahead, we are a bit overwhelmed by the changes that this year will bring. Paul is already working on the transition to a new Executive Director, probably in late summer or early fall. We are already planning our move back to WA, likely in time for Thanksgiving. As we anticipate so much change, it is a very real blessing to consider your faithfulness financially, and in prayer. We depend on both! Please continue to keep us in prayer so that we may finish well at the World Mission Prayer League and be prepared for whatever God has in store for us next year.

With sincere thanks,

Pris (and Paul) Gossman

Thank you for the Walmart Gift Card. We used it to put food on the table. I am sending you a few pictures of our home, or what's left of it. I was here when the storm hit. It has been five months and we still have not been able to get a permit to rebuild.

Thank you again,

Hank Williams, Venice, FL

*P.S. Thank you for Ray and Loretta, they are great people.
(Pictures are in the church office if you are interested in viewing)*

expressions of thanks (cont.)

My heartfelt thanks to all of you for your greetings, well wishes and gifts on my retirement from St. John's church office. Getting hired on was an unexpected surprise back in 1977, and now it's been over 45 years! God truly blessed me during all those years, and I am truly grateful for that opportunity and experience with lots of learning and growing and sharing the message of God's love. And what a blessing it's been to work with so many gifted pastors: Dennis Heaney, Glen VanderKloot, Glenn Anderson, Dan Wissmann, Melvin Blobaum, Tim Hubert, Ron Rasmus, Jay Johnson, and Emil Blobaum. I was also blessed to have such good help in church office staff: Rita Frerichs, Marge Bluhm, Deanna Osterbur, Kathy Frerichs, Diane Frerichs, Julie Franzen, and Lindsey Loschen; as well as all of the volunteers who helped with assembling bulletins, and newsletters, and who worked on various projects for the church. The church office has been left in good, capable hands with Julie and Lindsey! And the blessing continued in working with all the musicians, altar guild, council, and committee members, sewing ladies, janitors, youth directors. A special thank you to Debbie Romine as choir director, Jerry Poyner as bookkeeper, and Carolyn Blobaum as organist, for their years of service to the church. They too retired in 2022 and the church was blessed by their time and talents. Forty-five years is a long time to stay in one job, but yet the years flew by! Again, from the bottom of my heart I say thank you for your support and prayers over those 45+ years! May God's abundant blessings be poured out upon all of you!

*In Christian love and service,
Debbie Suits*

**Thank
You**



SOME OF "THIS AND THAT"

...**Video Messages** of Pastor Jay here at St. John continue and are posted to YouTube. Videos are also shared to our Facebook page and website or can be viewed by going directly to YouTube on the "St. John Lutheran Church Royal, IL" page.

...**First Communion Sunday** is scheduled for Sunday, March 5 for those students who are ready and want to participate in the Holy Sacrament. Keep these students and their families in your prayers.



...**Handbells and Adult Choir** will resume rehearsals on March 1. Handbells will practice at 6:15 before Lent worship. Choir will practice following the Lent worship service. More voices are always welcome and additional ringers needed, so come and join in for this season of Lent / Easter.

...**Education Trust Fund** is set up in the Multiple Funds account. Donations may be given to this fund through your offerings marked "Education Trust" (divided equally between the Gossett and Ramm families or you may give specifically to one family). These funds are used to help with their school fees, supplies and expenses.

...**Altar Flowers** are provided each weekend by donations from members of the congregation. House of Flowers in Rantoul provides and delivers them. The cost per vase is **\$20.00**. Payment is to be made to the church and earmarked for flowers. You can sign up on the chart posted on the north office door for one or both vases, and indicate whether it's for a special occasion.

...**Monthly Bible Study Circles**: Esther—Martha—Sarah are now one circle and meets on the second Thursday afternoon of each month at 1:30 here in the church basement for study and fellowship. This month they will meet on March 9, and Janis Loschen will host.

...**Church Office Hours** are Monday-Friday, 9:00 - 3:00, lunch break typically between 12:00 - 1:00.



THE AMERICAN PASSION PLAY

Our recent guest musician, Nathan, will be starring in "The American Passion Play", and you are invited to attend! The longest-running theatrical tradition in the Twin Cities is preparing for its final curtain.



"The American Passion Play," which tells the story of the life, crucifixion, and resurrection of Jesus Christ, is preparing to mark its 100th season in Bloomington.

If you would like to attend,

WHEN: 1 p.m. March 11, March 18, March 25, and April 1

WHERE: Bloomington Center for the Performing Arts, 600 N. East St., Bloomington

COST: \$25 per ticket

HOW TO BUY: By phone at 309-829-3903 and 309-800-9640. VISA, MasterCard and Discover cards are acceptable for payment or people can mail a check after ordering by phone. Checks may be sent to The American Passion Play, Inc., P.O. Box 3354, Bloomington, IL, 61702.

REFOCUS FOR LENT

Give up complaining – focus on gratitude.
Give up harsh judgements – think kind thoughts.
Give up worry – trust God to provide.
Give up discouragement – be full of hope.
Give up bitterness – turn to forgiveness.
Give up hatred – return good for evil.
Give up anger – be more patient.
Give up pettiness – become mature.
Give us jealousy – pray for trust.
Give up gossiping – control your tongue.
Give up sin – turn to virtue.
Give up giving up – persevere.

