



# The St. John's Communicator

## February 7, 2020

### Roser's Reflection . . .

Dear Friends,

Our gracious God equips His Church with everything needed to carry out His mission in the world. This is an important reminder for every congregation, as it is human nature for us to complain about the things that we lack. The Bible teaches us that we lack nothing, but because we do not always use God's gifts effectively, we sometimes think that we do. An important challenge for every congregation is for us to consider the resources that God has given us and ask ourselves if we are using them effectively. Very often when we think that we need more resources what we really need is to rethink how we are applying those we have already been given. As the pastor of our congregation, it is my responsibility to lead us in being good stewards of God's resources within the congregation.

During the Advent season, I reflected on the gifts of our midweek Advent and Lenten suppers. These are important times of community-building and mutual care that are largely underused because they occur at night when many of our members are unable to be present. While these are great events for the 15 or so people who attend, the majority of our members do not participate. From a stewardship perspective, it is clear that we are not using those resources wisely. Each week, during Advent and Lent, members prepare delicious foods and those who attend set aside time to gather together - resources (given by God) are being expended. By no means is this a waste of resources, but those resources could be used differently in order to benefit a larger proportion of our members.

To that end, I have asked our Board of Elders if we might shift these resources of foodstuffs, time, and talents from midweek evenings to Sunday mornings. In this way, many more of our members will be able to take part in the fellowship and building up of our faith community. After discussion, we have decided to hold a Sunday morning brunch each month instead of having midweek suppers during Advent and Lent. Knowing that their elimination will significantly impact attendance at the midweek services, we are retiring the services with the intention of shifting those resources over to the Sunday morning worship service. Additionally, we are hoping that a reduction in the number of midweek services will boost attendance at our Thanksgiving eve, Christmas eve, Ash Wednesday, and Maundy Thursday services. With the exception of Christmas eve, we really struggle to attract the attendance of our members on those special days. Hopefully, this change will assist our members in prioritizing their attendance on the sacred days of Ash Wednesday and Maundy Thursday.

I met with our Fellowship Committee on Tuesday in order to seek their assistance in planning for the meals. I was very encouraged by their response, ideas, and willingness to serve. I notice on Sunday mornings that we do not have enough room in the narthex to accommodate everyone who would like to gather in conversation - which are missed opportunities for us. Additionally, it is very embarrassing for our congregation to host funeral visitations in the narthex with coffee stains on the carpet where the casket is placed and families greet their guests. To that end, I have asked the Fellowship Committee if we can host the weekly fellowship time downstairs in the Fellowship Hall. Beginning in March, our fellowship time each week will be held downstairs following worship. On the first Sunday of the month, we will gather for coffee and treats in an open conversation style - meaning people can simply spend time in conversation with one another. On the third Sunday of the month, we will have our monthly potluck brunch. In order to keep this event from becoming stale, we will change up what we have, i.e. sometimes we will have breakfast items and other times we will have soup/sandwiches/etc. During the second and fourth Sundays of the month, we will gather for coffee and snacks, and then enjoy a time of small group and large group discussions on topics such as Advent and Lent. When there is a fifth Sunday of the month, we will try to offer a special activity in addition to coffee and treats.

In order to offer more people an opportunity to provide cookies, bars, etc. for our fellowship time, Berta is placing a signup sheet in the narthex. Each week will offer spots for two families to sign up. Each is asked to bring 2 or 3 dozen of their items. The items can be home-baked or store-bought - both are delicious!

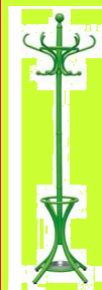
I recognize that change is always unsettling, and I ask for your patience and goodwill as we try something different. My hope is that this will strengthen the bonds of our fellowship and attract others to join us. These gatherings will not exceed 45 minutes, and normally we will be finished in 30. Since Easter occurs on April 12th this year, we will move the third Sunday brunch in April to our traditional pre-service breakfast on Easter; and have coffee and snacks on April 19. I want to close with one of my favorite pictures of the Church: "They continued to hold firmly to the apostles' teaching and to the fellowship, to the breaking of the bread, and to the prayers." (Acts 2:42).

In Christ Jesus,

*Pastor*

#### Celebrate!

Oscar and Mildred Wedel and their family would like to invite members of St. John's to a celebration of Oscar's birthday. God has blessed Oscar with a long life; he will turn 100 on February 17. There will be an "open house" with a light lunch from 1:00 pm to 3:00 pm on Saturday, February 15 (snow date is February 16) in the church basement. Come help us celebrate!



If someone has a coat rack they aren't using, I would very much appreciate having one in our Church Office.

Thank you.

Berta Eddy,

Administrative Assistant



### Who Wants to Win a Culver's Gift Card?

We have a number of avenues we use to keep you apprised of the opportunities and events here at St. John's: The monthly Messenger, the weekly Communicator, the Facebook page, the Web page, the Sunday Bulletin, and (first and foremost) the Worship service. Many times we will repeat the information in more than one of the venues in an effort to make sure the information is reaching everyone. But how can we tell if the announcements we're providing are getting through and being remembered?

#### How about by playing a little game each month!

The last weekend of the month, watch for a list of four questions whose answers can be found in the one or more of the Messenger, Communicator, Sunday Bulletin, Facebook page, Web page, or during the Worship Service during that month. Submit the answers either in writing or by email to the church's Administrative Assistant by noon the following Friday, and a winner will be drawn from the entries with the correct answers. The winner gets a gift card for some delicious Culver's food!

### Youth Events

Sunday, Feb 9 & 23

12:30 p.m.

Our Savior, Roscoe



Erin and Jon Pingel will host a Youth Event showing of The Passion of The Christ movie.

This 2004 blockbuster Christian film covers the passion of our Lord in the years and days leading up to Jesus' crucifixion.

The film will be shown on Saturday, March 7 from 3:30-7:30pm at their home at 879 East Erin Circle, Beloit, WI.

There is limited space so please RSVP to Erin by Sunday, February 23. Her cell is 608-290-6159.



Did you know if you miss a regular Sunday Worship Service, you can watch it in its entirety on YouTube!

Just use this link: <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCw9-9SrlBpZwdB2bPj-7Stg>

### In the Event of Inclement Weather

**Snowy days and other winter weather conditions can present motorists with risks that should be avoided whenever possible. To that end, we urge our members to exercise caution when choosing to attend worship and other parish activities during such conditions. Since we have no way of alerting all worshipers of cancelations, I do not cancel worship services. Of course, exceptions to this policy will be made when there is a safety concern in the building, itself. However, I do not want worshipers and worship leaders to "gamble" with their safety, and perhaps their lives, in order to attend worship when roadway conditions advise against it. This is to say, regardless of the weather, I will always be present to offer worshipers God's Word through Scripture reading and preaching, and the Lord's Supper. This does not mean that anyone else is expected to be present when weather conditions present serious challenges to your safe arrival. In terms of other activities, we will make every possible effort to inform members of cancelations.**

#### Those serving the Lord and His people this week:

**Elder:** Lee Fassett  
**Acolyte:** Collin Gill  
**Music:** Bill Cunningham  
**Communion:** Lee Fassett, Jeff Crall  
**Altar Guild:** Debbie Niman  
**Greeters:** Jeanne Ludeman and Delores Steil  
**Ushers:** Mahlon Hemerley, Levi Bartz, Harold Bauling, Kevin & Richard Rindfleisch, and David Koebernick  
**Counters:** Beulah Knutson, Sandy Saunders  
**Sound Technicians:** David Koebernick, Chris Peterson, and Justin Behm

#### Those serving the Lord and His people next week:

**Elder:** Chris Peterson  
**Acolyte:** Kayla Thompson  
**Music:** Bill Cunningham  
**Communion:** Chris Peterson, Randy Bauling  
**Altar Guild:** Nancy Nohr & Dolores Steil  
**Greeters:** Larry and Marlene Nolta  
**Ushers:** Mahlon Hemerley, Levi Bartz, Harold Bauling, Kevin & Richard Rindfleisch, and David Koebernick  
**Counters:** Beulah Knutson, Sandy Saunders  
**Sound Technicians:** David Koebernick, Chris Peterson, and Justin Behm

*Ash Wednesday*

*February 26, 2020*

*Worship Service 6:30 p.m.*