

# Reaching Out

St. John's Newsletter

Office Hours Mon-Thurs 9-3 Friday 9-1

1804 Highland Ave. Eau Claire, WI 54701

### "Together In God" **Broadcast Schedule**

WQOW Broadcast @ 10:30 AM

April - 6th, 20th May - 4th, 18th

ABC Network, Channel 18, Cable 9. HD 618

# A Message From Pastor Christine

**Missing Easter?** 

"Some of those who were with us went to the tomb and found it just as the women had said; but they did not see him." – Luke 24:24

Sometimes, celebrations can feel imposed when loss occurs. Times of joyful celebration and holidays can bring on periods of difficulty for some people. Case in point, I remember the first Easter after my Dad died. He so loved Holy Week and took part in the festivities of the entire week at our church. Easter just wasn't Easter without Dad. In fact, it was almost like missing Easter. As you know, it has been many years now since his death, and although I remember that year, I have yet again regained that Easter feeling.

When I read the Resurrection stories in the gospels with this reality in mind, I find that the people who longed for Jesus had similar experiences. Our ancient biblical narratives of the Resurrection of our Lord contain a mixture of ecstasy and despondency, an intermingling of delight and discouragement. Just as the joy of Easter caused immense celebration, others experienced an erosion of hope

The 24th chapter in the Gospel of Luke tells of a story of two followers of Jesus, who after hearing about the Resurrection, decide to head to Emmaus, downcast and disappointed, despite the news. They don't seem to believe the women who declared they had seen the Lord. Clearly, they think it's over - the hope, the promise, the joy of possibility. When hearing the Gospel message of joy, they are instead confused and upset about what happened to Jesus that they didn't understand. Easter came, and they missed it. It happened in Jerusalem. It happens here in Eau Claire. It happens every year. Jesus Christ, the living God, was raised from the dead and not all of his followers realize his presence with them. People missed it. Maybe sometimes we still do, too.

Yet, what is staggering is that somewhere along the way, the journey opens our eyes and we see Jesus breaking bread and

blessing it. Like the two followers of Jesus who journey to Emmaus in Luke 24, Jesus journeys with us. And, even though we may not always see that it is Jesus in our disappointments and depressions, we hear the stories of Christ raised from the dead over and over, one day finding our joy yet again.

In their journey to Emmaus, the two followers of Jesus could not see what had truly happened, even when Jesus was walking with them. They had missed Easter. It took Holy Communion to open their eyes. When Jesus broke bread and gave it to them, they had an Easter awakening. In fact, the Greek says it right there - (Greek - pronounced epinosko) - sudden awakening or opening! Their eyes were suddenly opened and they saw the risen Lord. They had missed Easter, but found it again in the breaking of the bread.

As Easter comes to us once again late in this springtime, if you have had reasons for disappointments and sadness, if you have found no joy in the Resurrection Day, and if you wonder where Jesus is in your life, come to the table. Come to God's holy supper, where forgiveness is given, where Christ is truly present, and where Easter is never, ever...missed.

### **WHAT'S INSIDE:**

- 1. Missing Easter?
- 2. The Problems With Plastic
- 3. Upcoming Concerts
- 4. A Message From Bishop Martin
- 5. Easter Flower Memorials
- 6. Ecofaith Summit
- 7. Upcoming JONAH Events
- 8. SJCP News
- 9. Education & Youth News
- 10. Calendar



# The Problems With Plastic

### Caretakers of Creation

April is the month that the world focuses on our environment on Earth Day, April 22. Earth Day was started by Gaylord Nelson, the former governor and senator of Wisconsin. This month the Caretakers of Creation will provide adult education forums the first and last Sundays of April. April 6 there will be a video focusing on the problems with plastics. On April 27, Cynthia Wahl the chair of the Spirit Lutheran Green Team, will talk about Spirit's Environmental Initiatives.



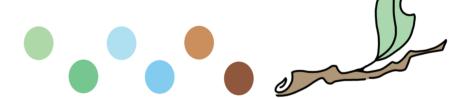
Most of us think that when we toss plastic into our recycling bin that it will be put to good use. The truth is that only about 8.7% of discarded plastic is recycled. In 2018, 16% of discarded plastic was incinerated and most of the rest went to the landfill. The problem is that over time the plastic in the landfill breaks down into smaller particles called microplastics. The microplastics end up in our food, water, air and eventually our bodies. An article in Time magazine (Feb. 24, 2025) suggests that microplastics may be a risk factor in the rising incidence of cancers in young adults. OUR BEST CHOICE IS TO WORK AT USING LESS PLASTIC. We can't end plastic use overnight, but we can take small steps to reduce our use of plastics. Here are some ideas:

- \*Bring your own reusable bags to the grocery store.
- \* Use mesh bags for veggies and fruit. Avoid the prepackaged produce.
- \*Buy products in bulk.
- \*Start composting your food waste. You can purchase compost bins from Eau Claire County.
- \* Cut back on takeout. Dine in or cook at home.
- \* Don't buy drinks in plastic bottles. Switch to aluminum cans.
- \* Carry a reusable water bottle and refill with tap water.
- \*Stop using plastic wrap and zipper food storage bags. Use glass containers or aluminum foil instead.

For more ideas, check "How to Quit Plastic" from Consumer Reports (September 8, 2021).

# **2025 Ecofaith Summit**

Siblings in Christ,



The 2025 EcoFaith Summit is coming up quickly! We are excited to have over 160 people already committed to attending the Summit both on live-stream and in person. We look forward to seeing you and people from your congregation in Duluth on April 5!

We look forward to gathering to share in hearing a message of hope in these times in which many are searching for where hope lives in our world today.

2025 EcoFaith Summit of the Upper Midwest: Earth's Cries, Earth's Call: Becoming Midwives of Hope for the Healing of Creation: Saturday, April 5, 9:30am - 5:00pm, First Lutheran Church in Duluth and Online. The day includes impactful speakers, action-oriented engagement sessions, vibrant worship, inspiring art, table exhibits, and networking time to equip disciples in congregations, camps, campuses and communities to respond to God's call in the cries of Creation. To register and for more information including a carpool discount, free registration under age 30 and free childcare provided: ecofaithnetwork.org/ecofaith-summit-2025

# **Monthly Readings**

### April 6

Isaiah 43:16-21 John 12:1-8

### April 13

Isaiah 50:4-9a Luke 22:14-23:56

### April 20

Acts 10:34-43 Luke 24:1-12

### April 27

Acts 5:27-32 John 20:19-31

### **Special Offerings This Month**

### Lent & Holy Week - April

Starting Ash Wednesday, there will be 8 Lenten offering envelopes including Maundy Thursday and Good Friday.

### Summer Stretch - April

This program allows middle school aged youth to go out and do local community service work in June and July!

### **EC Area Ring Concert**

April 26th, 2:00 - Trinity Lutheran

Come support our wonderful handbell choir at this year's Eau Claire Area Ring Concert! Tickets are free, so go check it out!







Diner's club will meet Tuesday April 15th at Grizzly's near Oakwood Mall at 11:30. Please

# Diner's Club - April

call Louise Alt to RSVP by Monday the 14th at 715-834-1693.

### Thank You!

St. John's Caring Ministry would like to thank everyone who helped to make our collection for CVTC Food Pantry a success, whether you donated food, personal care items or gave a monetary donation. We also would like to thank Fountain of Life and Thrivent Financial for their monetary donations.

Sandy Huebscher **Caring Ministry** 

## "Together We Shine" Concert

Join Stand in the Light Memory Choir for their 2025 Spring Concert! This group features people in the early to mid-stages of memory loss, their care partners, and singing volunteers who all come together to share their love of music.

Tickets are \$15 for adults and \$5 for students. Visit www.standinthelightmemorychoir.org to buy tickets and find more information.

# Trivia Corner

In the time of Moses, what ingredients were used to clear a house of leprosy?





### JONAH | **Upcoming Events**



### Book Club - April 15th

The second book in JONAH's 2025 Book Club is A More Perfect Union by Adam Russell Taylor. Come ready to discuss and get to know other JONAH members on April 15th at 6:15pm at Dotter's Books, 307 South Barstow in Eau Claire. Register here:

https://jonahjustice.org/event/11711/

### Film Festival - April 3-5

Join JONAH for their Second Annual Film festival! This is a free event that will take place in various locations April 3rd-5th. The short film time slot will be available in person and online. For more information, visit:

https://jonahjustice.org/film-festival/

Thrivent Choice Dollars allows eligible Thrivent Financial members to direct their charitable dollars to St. John's Lutheran Church. To be a benefit member with Thrivent Financial, you must own one of the following Thrivent products: life insurance, health insurance, disability insurance or annuities, and based on your premium and cash value, your Thrivent Choice dollars will be calculated. Letters or emails are sent annually to these members indicating the amount of charitable dollars available to them. If you believe that you qualify and have not received a letter, please contact your Thrivent Financial representative.

For the period September 1, 2024 to August 31, 2025, St. John's is designating the Thrivent Choice contributions to our general operations fund to help support our ministries, programs and maintain our day to day operations. When you are contacted by Thrivent Financial, please prayerfully consider directing these charitable dollars to St. John's.

The Thrivent Financial members who have directed their "Choice Dollars" to St. John's Lutheran Church for March was Donald Brott, Steven Droivold, Kathryn Freitag, Jacklyn Hansen, Mary Haukeness-Mack, Gary & Cora Klawiter, Judith Rumphol, Karen Stuber and Jean Yolitz.

St. John's thanks you for doing this.

### **Angel Gown Sewing Day**

St. John's, once again, has the opportunity to host an Angel Gown Sewing Day. It will be Saturday, April 12th from 9am to 4pm. If you can sew, please bring your sewing machine. If you don't sew, there are plenty of other tasks related to the gowns for you to do-deconstructing dresses, removing beads and appliques, cutting fabric, ironing, hand sewing and more! Lunch is potluck. Feel free to come for the day, just the morning or afternoon or even for a few hours.

> For more information, check out the Eternal Angels Facebook page or contact Kathy Freitag 715-835-9034 or kfreitag1952@gmail.

# Memorials and Honorariums

General Operations: IMO Karen Jorgensen by Elizabeth Speckien General Operations: IMO James Kiser by Steve Newman

General Operations: IMO David Kinderman by

John & Shelby Blomberg

General Operations: IHO Jean Jirovec by Jean Doty Mission Trip: IMO our grand-nephew Noah Staszcuk by John & Judy Staszcuk

General Operations: IMO Ruth Kruschke by Deb Machmeier

We Mourned the Death of

Ruth L. Kruschke, 97

We Celebrated the Baptism of Brinley Maas, child of Greg & **Ashley Maas** 

Noa Schwieters, child of Kurt & **Sydney Schwieters** 

# Easter Flower Memorials and Honorariums

IMO my mother Velma Alt by Louise Alt IMO Helen Larrabee by Frank Larrabee IMO Earl & Lynn Kerker by Frank Larrabee IMO Clarice & Joe Fall by Frank Larrabee

IMO my mother, Marguerite Branham-Miller by Bonnie Branham IMO Husband, Darrel Mattison by Cheryl Mattison IMO Parents, LaMoine & Alvina Bunce by Cheryl Mattison

IHO Our St. John's Family by Jeff & Nancy Putnam

IMO Don and Corinne Brimmer, Ernest, Selma, and Richard Otto by Carole Veness IMO Many Dear, Beloved Friends by Carole Veness

IHO 70th Anniversary of the St. John's Building by Pastor Christine IMO my dad & brother by Genny Gorton

IMO Our Little Charlie by Bryan and Mona Sedlander

IHO our Parents by Bryan and Mona Sedlander

IMO Nan & Jim Lewis by Kristine Nelson

IMO Buz McAdam & Alice Goulet by Arlene McAdam

IMO parents Erv & Virginia Lawin, brother Tom, husband Jim by Barbara Graham IMO Tim Wolter by Vicki Wolter

IMO Loved Ones by Kathy Schellfeffer

IMO Randie, Eric, Gram, Pops, & Grandpa by Lydia Elko

IHO Theo, Luke, Noah Zack, & Mitch by Lydia Elko

IMO Howie & Lois Klavetter and Duane Stage by Cheryl & Dick Stage IMO Ruth, Wally, and Sharon Fischer by Scott Olsen

IMO Pastor Langhough, Bill Watsen, Joel Desprez by Scott Olsen

IMO Grandparents: Marion & Chet Hahn by Mark & Beth Schultz

IMO Parents Shirley & Paul Johnson & Laurence Fenske by Paulette & David Fenske IMO John & Jean Tighe by Mark & Patti Sontag

IMO Cathy Olson, Patti's Sister by Mark & Patti Sontag

IMO Dave & Lucy Sontag by Mark & Patti Sontag

IMO Tom & Barbara Sorebo by Pam Sorebo

IMO our parents Lorna & Ed Spryer and Ellen & Lyle Heck by Richard & Mary Spryer

IMO Karen Jorgensen by Jerry Jorgensen IHO Linda Ranney by John & Sharon Price

IMO Aaron Ahles-Iverson by Valerian Ahles & Christine Iverson

IMO Benjamin Ahles-Iverson by Valerian Ahles & Christine Iverson IHO Clara and Thor, my grandchildren by Eric Nielsen



# An Easter Message From Bishop Martin

I can still remember the pound of my heart to this day. It was Good Friday in the year 1995. I was working at Lutherdale Bible Camp as a year round staff and my task that day was to dismantle the several hundred foot zipline. It was a warm spring day, but I still experienced the wind that caused the tree that I was attached to to sway far more than I wanted it to. The tree itself was dying and thus it could no longer serve as the anchor of the zipline where the platform was. It was on that platform where youth and staff alike would find themselves transferring the rabbit ears attached to their harness to the zipline that would lead to the ensuing rush of emotions. As I stood on that platform, connected to a couple of tree staples with my own rabbit ears, I loosened the hardware that secured the zipline cable to the tree, bolt by bolt. It was quite a surreal experience.



As I loosened the final bolt, that cable released about a foot away from my face, causing my heart to beat in a way it has never beaten before or since. The sound haunted me for those few seconds as the cable fell to the ground about 40 feet below. Once I collected myself, all I could think about was how appropriate it was to watch the death of the zipline on Good Friday. That element was always the climax on the high ropes course. It was the final adventure for countless youth as they experienced the challenges of that course. Just step off the platform, trust, and fly!

I was saddened to see that zipline fall. But then I was overjoyed to see it rebuilt in a new and more secure location! It reminds me of that great Easter spiritual that states, "It's Friday, but Sunday's coming." It's the reminder that we call it Good Friday only because as Christian believers, we know that Easter is coming. Without Easter Sunday, Friday would have been even more devastating as it already was. Jesus' followers were lost, confused, and in deep sorrow. Those emotions resulted from the trauma that they were experiencing. But Easter reversed the pain of that trauma and turned it into a joyous chorus of "Alleluias" where we can now see God's almighty power being revealed! We can see how God has power over death itself and not just for Jesus. God's power to give life to all believers in all times and in all places through the death and resurrection of Jesus is what brings us joy, hope, comfort, and faith itself! God's power to renew our lives each and every day through the gift of forgiveness cannot be understated. God's desire to heal our broken relationship because of our sinfulness indicates the depth of that love, knowing that God so desperately desires to be with us forever.

That old zipline was a source of joy for so many people. But when contrasted with the joy we can experience daily, it simply pales in comparison. Friends, live into that joy of the resurrection. Remember the gift that Jesus embodies that is truly the greatest gift we've ever had - the gift of God's unconditional love. Despite the various losses that we grieve each year, some that appear to be quite unbearable at the time, remember the gift of Jesus. We are a resurrection church. We are a forgiven and forgiving people. And we bask in the glory of God's amazing grace.

Christ is risen! He is risen indeed! Alleluia!

# st. john's Christian PRESCHOOL

# Thank you!

The annual Shrove Tuesday fundraiser was a huge success! Thanks to everyone who worked, baked, donated, ate and played at the event. The dinner, carnival, and silent auction raised about \$2,400.00.

Thank you! Thank you! Thank you!



# Registration for the 2025-26 School Year

We are currently enrolling children for the 2025-26 school year. We would love to welcome your family to SJCP! Call Nancy Hanson for more information or to arrange a tour. 715.834.9571.



Parent Activity Day: April 24th and 25th "Parent Activity Day" is a preschool favorite. We welcome parents and grandparents to plan and lead an activity here at SJCP. Activities may include simple games, crafts, sports demos, music, or sharing a career or hobby.



Conferences

Parent/Teachers conferences are scheduled this month. We appreciate the chance to connect with each family, share some discussion about their child's progress and experience here at SJCP.







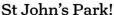


### **Preschool Days**

We are enjoying a busy year at preschool and cannot believe that it is April already. God's love abounds and the children are learning and growing!

### **Outdoor Play**

With a not-so-wintery season, it has been especially easy to get outdoors. It has been great to get moving and find fresh air at beautiful





# **Youth & Education Ministry**

# **Education Ministry**

### Confirmation

8th Grade - April 2, 9 & 23

### **Looking Ahead**

Summer Stretch sign up is here! Sign up forms are available on the Youth Facebook page and our website. More information can be found on the bulletin board outside of the CYF office.

### Hope to see you at Sunday School!

April 6, 13 & 27

# Youth Ministry

### **CREW News**

April 2, 9, 23 & 30 @ 6:15 On April 2nd & 9th CREW will be held between soup supper and worship









# 2025 Luther Park **DAY CAMP**

### DATE

June 9-13

June 16-20 June 23-27

July 7-11

July 14-18

July 21-25

July 28-Aug 1

### **CAMP THEME**

Get outside! Do art!

It's all games!

Explore it! Fun in the sun!

Sports Galore! Splash

**CAMPER AGE** 

Completed K-5th

**HOURS** 

8:30 am - 4:30 pm

**PRICE** 

\$35/day

\$130/week \$750/Summer

944 42 1/4 St. Chetek, WI 54728

Visit lutherpark.org to register and find more information

# **Church Council**

President: Richard Freitag

Vice President: Dramus Peuse

**Secretary:** Karla Spies **Treasurer:** Norb Kirk **Caring:** Mary Spryer

Community & World: Louise Alt

**Education:** Stacy Kelly

Faith Family: Nancy Putnam

Seniors & Home Visitation: Larry Schaefer

Worship & Music: Richard Spryer

Youth: OPEN

**At-Large:** Jeff Putnam **At-Large:** Greg Johnson

## **Your Church Staff**

Ministers: All the Congregation Pastor: Pr. Christine Emerson Music Director: Mark Lundin

**CYF Director: OPEN** 

Nursery Attendant: Tyeanna Segura

Communications Coordinator: Lydia Elko

Organist: Linda Ranney

Administrative Assistant: Genny Gorton

Bookkeeper: Marlee Agner

Facility & Grounds Manager: David LaRose

**Custodian:** Tyeanna Segura **St. John's Christian Preschool:** Nancy Hanson, Sarah Wergeland,

Amanda Schroeder, Amanda Downing,

Bria Lindstrom

### Trivia Corner

Answer: Two live & clean birds, cedar wood, crimson yarn, and hyssop. Leviticus 14:1-9

Good job! This one was tricky!



### Adult Education Guest Speaker - April 27th

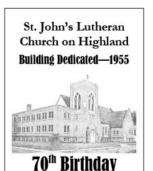
Cynthia Wahl was a presenter at the September 2024 Day of Awareness for the Northwest Synod Synodical Women's Organization on September 28, 2024. Her topic was "Composting 101: A Small Step with a Big Impact".

"Growing up on a small crop farm, I watched my parents and grandparents seamlessly integrate composting into their daily routines. This early exposure planted the seeds of interest in me. As a young adult, I pursued a Master Gardener certification to deepen my understanding of garden design and care. Despite the decades that have passed since that course and the various moves across the U.S. during my career, composting and my passion for environmental sustainability and green living have remained an integral part of my life."

- Cynthia Wahl

### Thank you!

This month we would like to honor and thank all of our wonderful volunteers! As you all know, our volunteers contribute an incredible



Celebration
Sunday, May 18, 2025
9 A.M. service and
birthday reception
immediately afterwards

More details to come

amount of time, talent, and service to help keep our community thriving. We truly couldn't go on without the dedication of all of our wonderful volunteers. From soup masters to ushers, we thank you all from the bottom of our hearts.

-St. John's Congregation



	FINANCIAL SUMMARY							
		Income	<u>Expense</u>	Surplus(Deficit)				
•	February							
	2025	24,677	30,695	(6,018)				
	2024	37,020	41,257	(4,237)				
	Year-To-Date							
	2025	54,438	72,707	(18,269)				
	2024	63,772	83,364	(19,592)				
	2022-24 Average	75,935	76,779	(844)				

### Saturday, April 5th

-8:00 Day of Renewal

-9:30 Ecofaith Summit

### Saturday, April 12th

- 9:00 Angel Gown Sewing

### Friday, April 18th

- No Preschool

-Office Closes at Noon

-12:00 & 7:30 Worship

### Saturday, April 19th

-9:00 Easter Decorating

-10:00 Choir Rehearsal

-8:00 Holy Saturday Vigil

Saturday, April 26th

-2:00 Eau Claire Ring Concert

# **April Calendar**

Tues - 1	Wed - 2	Thurs - 3
1:00 Staff Meeting 7:00 STEP	9:00 Quilting 3:00 Master Builders 5:30 Soup 5:30 Choir 6:15 Lent Activity Night 6:15 CREW 6:15 8th Grade Confirmation 7:00 Worship	1:30 St. J's Apartment Service 4:30 Troop 30 Spaghetti Feed 5:15 Education 6:30 Youth
`ues - 8	Wed - 9	Thurs - 10

-2:00 Eau Claire Ring Concert			7:00 Worship	
Sun - 6	Mon - 7	Tues - 8	Wed - 9	Thurs - 10
9:00 Worship 10:15 Sunday School 10:30 Adult Ed -Plastic Wars	6:30 JuBellation	9:30 Staff Meeting 1:00 Worship & Music 2:00 Senior & Hom Visitation 6:00 Faith Family 6:30 Preschool Boa 7:00 STEP	5:30 Choir 6:15 CREW	9:30 Rostered Leaders @Our Savior's Bloomer 7:00 Property
Sun - 13	Mon - 14	Tues - 15	Wed - 16	Thurs - 17
9:00 Worship 10:15 Sunday School 10:15 Palm Sunday Brunch 10:30 Caretakers 11:15 Mission Trip Meeting		9:30 Staff Meetin 11:30 Diner's Clu @ Grizzley's 7:00 STEP	9	No Preschool 9:00 Volunteer @ The Community Table 7:00 Worship
Sun - 20	Mon - 21	Tues - 22	Wed - 23	Thurs - 24
9:00 Worship	No Preschool 3:00 Bible Study @ The Classics 4:00 Finance 6:30 JuBellation		9:00 Quilting 3:00 Master Builders 6:15 8th Confirmation 7:00 CREW	9:30 Retired Rostered Leaders 10:00 Oakwood Health Services
Sun - 27	Mon - 28	Tues - 29	Wed - 30	
9:00 Worship 10:15 Sunday School	6:30 JuBellation	9:30 Staff Meeting 7:00 STEP	9:00 Quilting 3:00 Master Builders	

5:45 Choir 7:00 CREW

10:30 Adult Ed