

The Mustard Seed*

Newsletter for members and friends of
St. John's Lutheran Church, Waterloo
(Bennington) ELCA



2024



A word from Pastor Beth

Spring is trying awfully hard to come! Despite what the weather may say, the calendar says spring is here. I encourage you to keep watch for the signs of new life that are all around us and to also celebrate the best gift of new life: our resurrected Lord and the new creation he has made possible. That gift is here regardless of weather!

April dates to be aware of:

April 7 9 a.m. Sunday School with the theme of Peace, tying in with the gospel lesson that day.

10 am: worship with Holy Communion & Miller baptism

April 14: 9 a.m. Sunday School Generations Together: Mat making instruction with Kelli Snyder and special guest (See story pg. 2)

10 am worship

April 21: 9 a.m. Sunday School Generations Together: Jerry Gallmeyer will teach us about stones, bricks and masonry, tying in with the lesson about Jesus being the cornerstone.

10 am worship with Holy Communion

April 28: 9 a.m. St Grubby's Day—special projects for the Sunday School and then a party to wrap up the year!

10 a.m.: Brief worship followed by St Grubby's day projects, memorial tree planting and the introduction of a wind-break plan for the north side of the church.

May 5: Note: Sunday School concluded April 28.

10 a.m.: Worship with Holy Communion.

St. John's Scholarship

Once again it's time to apply for the SJB scholarship.

Persons applying must have completed at least a semester of their post high-school education.

Firm deadline to apply for the funding is June 1.

Details and the form are on the St. John website, stjohnsbennington.com

Battle for Betsy = Baskets for Betsy

The major fundraising event "Battle for Betsy" is scheduled for June 29.

Betsy McDougall's family started this event in 2020 to help Betsy in her battle with early onset dementia.

There are multiple ways to get involved; go to the Facebook site for details. Last year's event raised more than \$49,000

Here at SJB, we're putting out the call for baskets from SJB for the silent auction.

Betsy was an active member of SJB, and we had her service here on Oct. 15, 2021.

Need ideas for baskets? Go to Google or Pinterest for ideas.

Talk to Bobbi Seamans for information. Baskets can be brought to the church before May 1.

Thank you in advance!

***Why "The Mustard Seed?"** In Matthew 17 and Luke 17, Jesus said that mustard seed size faith is enough. God is the one who makes things happen! Even a little belief is enough from us! This newsletter is a little glimpse into life here at SJB. Enjoy! We're also on Facebook! Look for the church page and the youth and Sunday school page, too

Youth Group News: Make Mats. Help Others Sleep Better.

Bring your clean plastic grocery bags to church!

LYO Advisor Kelli Snyder has lined up a special event for the whole congregation. On Sunday, April 14th, Rus DeB-
onis, founder of the free clinic that our church and youth group have been
so generous to, will be at St John at 9:00 to guide us through making sleep mats (see
photo.)

The youth group is making a donation to Midwest Mission so we can keep a loom
of our own. The sleep mats are distributed locally at the free clinic and are also sent
to locations throughout the world.

People in developing countries, who often have no choice but to sleep on the
ground, greatly benefit from these mats. Being off the ground helps prevent parasitic
infection and also helps the body retain moisture.

Mat-making day will be a collaborative day for Sunday school and youth group; all
in the congregation are invited to join in.

The mats are made from plastic grocery bags, so the congregation is invited to bring
their plastic bags to church between now and April 14. The grocery bags will need to
be cut to make the plarn (plastic yarn) from which the mats are made, so any extra
hands to help the kids with scissors would be great :)



Because we will have a loom here, this will then be an on-going project we can work on at St. John's.



**Palm Sunday
Generations
Together
Sunday
School:** cross-
es with Mr.
Larry, pet
beds with
Mrs. Denise
and (not pic-
tured) the
Easter story
with Mrs.
Dawn and
resurrection
eggs.



Church Council Highlights

(full minutes are posted on the board in the small conference room.)

March 17 council meeting. President Mixdorf called the meeting to order. Pastor Olson provided an opening devotion.

Present were: Josh M, Dennis M, Chris H, Jim M, Gary M and Pastor Beth. Absent were Kayla B, Alivia S, Jon R, Amy M.

Pastor volunteered to be secretary *pro-tem*.

Jim went over financial reports and income.

Deacons: Dennis is looking into the photo directory process.

Trustees: Jerry M will take care of spraying for weeds. Discussion about the fans in the Faith and Life Center: best option to deal with aging fans Also, with dumpster onsite Trustees desire to get rid of burn barrel. No objections. Trustees to also more clearly mark the road into the cemetery.

Finance: met and is working to update paperwork to reflect what will happen with the move to a 5 year term for service.

This move allows for greater consistency and easier access to funding should that need arrive.

Hope to have items ready to present at semi-annual meeting. Gary, Ronda, Drew and Jeff are on this team.

Old business: WELCA to take lead on dementia-friendly status for SJB.

Please keep turning in household surveys.

Chris H and Jeff S heading up the facility access and facility usage documents.

Old business, continued:

Congregation received a gift certificate last year to thank Pastor and council members for sharing their story of love and care after Pastor's husband died. Pastor to get tree this spring.

Memorial tree placement led to larger conversation about creating a windbreak along the north side. Josh M to set up draft plan and then in 2025, congregation can lean more fully into this as desired.

Could also use some memorial monies if desired. The Gremmels/SJB tree will be separate from the windbreak section. Dedication of memorial tree to be on April 28.

New business:

1. LYO set up for Easter breakfast on Palm Sunday; will also seek donations of candy for the Easter Egg Hunt.

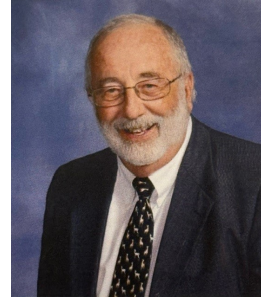
2. Holy Week services: 7 p.m. Maundy Thursday will also be First Communion for students grades 2-5; Pastor teaching classes Palm Sunday weekend. 7 p.m. Good Friday will be a sensory service. 7 p.m. Holy Saturday will be a bonfire in the cemetery parking lot area. Chris Hesse to bring fire pit.

3. St Grubby's Day to be earlier this year, before school lets out. Set April 28 as date. Project list to be determined; will also include dedicating and then planting the memorial tree. Pastor to get tree.

Meeting adjourned and closed with The Lord's Prayer.



Information for the funeral for Pastor Bill Thalacker



The funeral for Pastor Bill Thalacker will be Saturday, April 20, 2024, at St Paul's Lutheran Church and School, 301 1st St NW, Waverly.

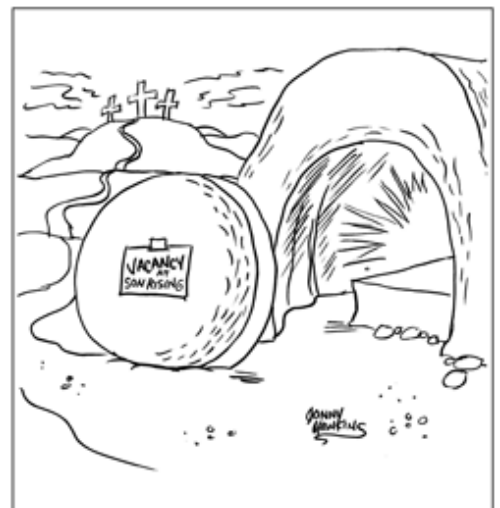
The family will greet people starting at 1, with the funeral to follow at 2. Fellowship after the service will be in the parish hall.

At approximately 4:30, the family will host an informal gathering to share memories and stories at the 4-H building, 717 5th Ave SW, Waverly. A light meal will be served.

A private family burial for Pastor Thalacker, who served SJB from 2003-2019 will take place in Harrisville, WI, in August.



A Little Church Chuckle



See the story in Matthew 28, Mark 16, Luke 24 and John 20.

April 2024 – From Sheep to Shepherd: An LSI Early Childhood Services Story

Amid the COVID-19 pandemic, a mother, recently released from treatment, found herself in her new empty apartment with her son. She felt lost and needed a shepherd to guide her. So, Hali contacted LSI's Early Childhood Services, and Gretchen O'Brien, a Family Support Worker, answered the call. Gretchen began virtual home visits using the Healthy Family America home-visiting model.

For the next three years, Gretchen connected Hali and her son to community resources, served as a support system and a shoulder to cry on, and celebrated Hali's sobriety milestones with her.

Even when Hali doubted herself, Gretchen guided and believed in her. "I just remember sitting in that empty apartment crying, but I had Gretchen on the phone. You guys believed in me when nobody else did," shared Hali.

Today, Hali serves on the Healthy Family America (HFA) National Parent Advisory Committee, the first of its kind. The group is composed of 10-12 parents from around the country who have graduated from their local HFA program, each participant with their own story to share.

Hali needed a shepherd in her time of trouble and self-doubt, and Gretchen answered that call. Now, Hali serves as a shepherd to thousands of parents through the National Parent Advisory Committee. The LSI Early Childhood team couldn't be more proud of Hali and Gretchen.

Our Mission: Lutheran Services in Iowa responds to the love of Jesus Christ through compassionate service. LSI is an affiliated social ministry partner of the Iowa congregations of the ELCA (Evangelical Lutheran Church in America) and a member of LSA (Lutheran Services in America). We proudly serve people of all ages, abilities, religions, sexes, gender identities, national origins, ethnicities, races, and sexual orientations. Learn more at LSIowa.org and facebook.com/LSI.iowa.

For more information, please contact Deb Whitford, LSI's Director of Philanthropy and Church Relations, at Deborah.Whitford@LSIowa.org or 563-676-2065.

The Mustard Seed

St. John's Lutheran Church (Bennington)

4110 East Mount Vernon Rd

Waterloo, IA 50703

worship@stjohnsbennington.com

319-291-6225

On the web: www.stjohnsbennington.com

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