The Mustard Seed*

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





As someone who grew up in Wisconsin (Menomonie, in west central WI)), I've been enjoying the success of the Milwaukee Brewers and all the fun that's accompanying their trip to the World Series. (And as we go to press today, 10-29, the Brewers are the champions!)

I've learned some history along the way, too: 1) the creator of the glove logo was a design student in neighboring Eau Claire—a big rival when it came to games between UW-Stout in Menomonie and UW-EC. Consider:

2) Mascot Bernie the Brewer was born in 1973. He was a man in lederhosen who lived in a beer-barreled chalet and slid into a giant beer stein. Nowadays, he has his own full body mascot uniform in Brewers colors and slides down a giant slide for celebrations.

3) The Brewers rank 19th in payroll of MLB teams and is ranked as the smallest media market.

4) Manager Pat Murphy was 65 before he became the manager, having joined the Brewers as bench coach when he was 57.

Why does any of this matter? The thread running through these stories—and the connection they make--is the story of assets. Of using what we have and doing our best to make the most of those assets for self and for others.

That theme of assets came up at most recent Jordan Project meeting when one of our assignments was to start creating an asset map. We focused our thoughts on the five recommended categories: *Physical, Individual, Economic, Institutions We're Connected With* and *Associations We Have*.

The asset map we're creating will help guide next steps when it comes to project planning.

Asset mapping is helpful because we sometimes underestimate what we're capable of or undersell/downplay our abilities.

We may even think our assets are not worthy of celebrating because they may seem so commonplace to us: of course,

(Olson, continued page 2)

November

1	9 AM	Sunday School
	10 AM	All Saints Worship with communion
4	7 PM	Confirmation
8	9 AM	Sunday School
	10 AM	WELCA THANKOFFERING SERVICE with Anna Weepie sharing about her mission trip to Nicaragua; noisy offering
	11:15AM	Jordan Project
11	7 PM	Confirmation
12-17:	Pastor on vacation	
15	9 AM	Sunday School: Begin Christmas program practice
	10 AM	Lay-led Worship
18	7 PM	Confirmation
22	9 AM	Sunday School; Worship at 10 w/communion
25	NO Confirmation; Thanksgiving Eve	
26	Thanksgiving, office closed	
29:	NO SUNDAY SCHOOL; Worship at 10.	

December

2:	7 PM	Confirmation
6	9 AM	Sunday School; Worship at 10 w/communion
9	7 PM	Confirmation
13	9 AM	Sunday School
	10 AM	Worship
16	7 PM	Confirmation
20	**9:30 Children arrive; 10 AM Christmas Program**	
23:	NO Confirmation	
24:	**6 PM Christmas Eve Worship** with candles, carols, communion	
27:	NO Sunday School; 10 AM Worship, Lessons and Carols	

***In Matthew 17 and Luke 17**, Jesus says mustard seed size faith is enough. God is the one who makes things happen! This newsletter is a little glimpse into life here at SJB. You can learn more at www.stjohnsbennington.com. Also, look for us on Facebook: St John's Lutheran Church Bennington and St John's Lutheran Bennington Youth and Sunday School.

Olson, cont. from page 1

we can bake, fix things, send a card, share resources and so on. The question for us in the JP is what else we can do with those things (and more!) on a larger scale.

Which brings me back to the Brewers: a smaller payroll than many teams, a smaller market than other franchises, a manager at the big leagues at an age when many turn toward thoughts of retirement. The Brewers used their assets to earn a berth in the World Series.

As we move into November and Thanksgiving and beyond, I invite us all to consider our assets—to write out or draw out an asset map.

What does each family member bring? Are the kids good at making you laugh?

Does your spouse know how to encourage you?

Do you know how to take a break and treat yourself?

Are you already using your skills to make something better?

These can all be translated into assets to serve God, our families, our communities and our church. Using what we have is a good reminder that God can take what seems ordinary to us and do extraordinary things with it. Like how bread, wine and water combine with God's word to bring the grace of God into our lives.

Likewise, the people we are, the skills we have, the things we can do are sources of grace for us and for others.

Not everything we do will be "World Series" level, which is a big relief! But we can make a big difference when we combine Thanks + Giving and use our assets as a source of blessing. A blessed November to you!



Youth Group News



The LYO will meet on Nov. 8 to plan events for the rest of the year. Some events being looked at include a service project, a bowling outing and getting ready for the annual candlelit cross on Christmas Eve.

They'll also be collecting socks, hats, mittens and gloves for our partnership with Kelli's UNI Athletic training classes and the Salvation Army Free Clinic.

Council Snapshot

Action items for the council that met on 10-18 included M/S/C to renew the maturing CD, move forward with the water fountain replacement, and use $500 from Helping Hands a special LSI Early Childhood program.

Also established 12/13 as Christmas sack-packing day, November council meeting on 11/22, January council meeting on 1/13 and Annual Meeting on Feb. 7 with reports due in early January.

Council also heard that contract for propane has been sent in, discussed names for upcoming year and reviewed the budget prep work that has been done to date.

Mission Collections for Rest of Year

November will see us partner with the Salvation Army Free Clinic and Kelli Snyder's Athletic Training students at UNI. They offer a clinic that works with the local homeless population.

Our mission collection will be **hats, socks gloves and mittens** for adults. We'll also be applying for a Thrivent card with this project.

Donations of candy for the Christmas sacks will also be welcomed before the sack packing day of Dec. 13.

December, WELCA will lead us in the **Christmas Family** project. Watch for gift tags and more information as that time draws closer. Part of that collection has typically included an ingathering of blankets, also.

Worship Notes:

A couple things to note as we keep moving forward in God's grace**.**

1) On more than one occasion, the bulletin has been delightfully full. Brenda and PB have had to be extra creative with space usage, type size and tight editing. This has been true for both the announcements and the right side worship order *aka* the "line-up."

To alleviate that, one side of our weekly insert will now be the prayer list and the other side will contain the calendar and scripture. This will free up space and make it easier to post at home, too!

2) The other thing we'll be doing is introducing a QR Code for offerings. Scanning the code will take a person directly to the Vanco site.

Thankfully, we have a good record of solid stewardship at SJB, and this additional tool is another way we can give our thanks to God in an age when we have many ways to share our resources.

Both of these will be rolled out by year's end.





Left: Some of the SJB Youth Group, fresh off leading worship, gathers with young friends Oct. 11. **Right:** St John's Sunday School Costume Party and prepping for Sing and Share at worship on Oct. 25. Two of the best fall traditions at SJB!! **Middle: The joyous occasion of** celebrating Chuck and Jane Happel's 65th wedding anniversary with family and friends from near and far on Oct. 18. ! And after worship, the family hosted a yummy potato bar for all who were able to stay! Such a special day.

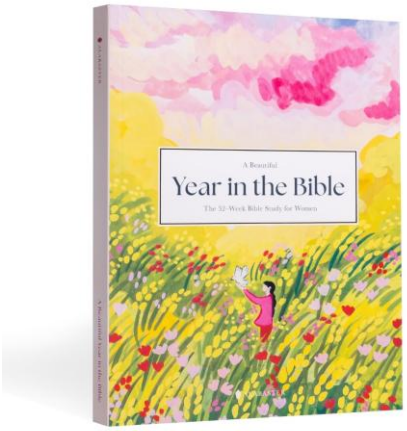








Left: Pumpkin painting and mummy making were on the docket as part of the Sunday School Halloween Party. Thank you to all who helped make this happen. *Pictures from Bethany Anderson*.



Coming in 2027--A Beautiful Year in the Bible: The Fifty-Two Week Bible Study for Women.

Display copies of our Bible Study book for 2027 are now by the small table next to the Pastor's office. Both spiral and non-spiral bound are there.

If you're interested in being part of the group order to save on shipping, please let Pam Wright know by Dec. 6. Plans for meeting are being firmed up, so stay tuned!

Why this book?

-- It's richly and whimsically illustrated, for one, in ways that draw readers in with its lush and bold colors.

--It gives a defined reading plan for each day that's do-able for people with full lives.

--It has a reflection that flows from the readings.

--There are questions that allow a deeper dive.

--You can get the book for your own resource without committing to the study group, too!

November 2026

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