

St. John – St. James Ev. Lutheran

Darin Aden, Pastor

Rick Zimmerman, Principal

Church: (920) 754-4568

School: (920) 754-4432

✠ 219 Manitowoc Street ✠ Reedsville, Wisconsin 54230 ✠



April 24, 2020

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

God encourages us to do one of the things we find most difficult to do in Psalm 46. In verse 10 he says: ***“Be still, and know that I am God; I will be exalted among the nations, I will be exalted on the earth.”*** I pray the Lord helps you to patiently “be still”. So also may He keep you strong and assured in your knowledge and that he is God. He will indeed be exalted. We look forward to gathering together soon to do our part in lifting up his name in praise. For now we will continue to do it online, in our homes and in our hearts.

UPDATES:

Dan Duchow has shared some updates which will come later in this correspondence. I’ll try not to duplicate his thoughts of well-wishing and financial updates. I will reiterate my gratitude, however, for your support of our ministry. Your prayers and offerings are vital (as always) to St. John-St. James’ ministry. Just a reminder that direct deposit, online bill paying, USPS mail, and in person delivery all continue to be options for those who are able to participate in the financial support of our church and school work. Directly below I've included again opportunities for spiritual growth which have been shared previously. New information has been added and is in bold and italics.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR SPIRITUAL GROWTH:

WORSHIP opportunities:

Facebook: We are posting links to abbreviated weekly Sunday worship services on the SJSJ Facebook page. ***We’re also posting SJSJ School Chapel services each Wednesday for all to enjoy. Next week we’ll begin a journey through the gospel of Mark, similar to our Passion History readings.*** The SJSJ Facebook page can be found at <https://www.facebook.com/St-John-St-James-Lutheran-School-133904743312183/>

YouTube: We started a YouTube Channel for St. John-St. James to post worship videos. Search for the SJSJ Channel on YouTube or it can be found at address below (spaces are actually _underscores, not spaces) https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCbFx_HMWIwhQg_IvSrFLwTA/

DVDs: We are producing DVDs of the Sunday worship services each week. They are available in the school entryway (Door A). Please stop by to take one or contact us for more information.

Cable Television: Trinity, Brillion broadcasts their services on local Cable channel 4 (Reedsville) on Tuesday evenings at 6:30pm, and channel 978 (Brillion) on Monday evenings at 6:30pm.

(I’m told these broadcasts are not currently available in Reedsville—keep checking; hopefully access will change soon and it will be broadcast again.) Some of you have found that Trinity, Liberty also has services broadcast on local cable access. I don’t know more details.

Analog Television: “Time of Grace” is produced by a WELS group and is televised on WGBA (NBC26) Saturday night, 12:00 am and Sunday morning, 6:30 am. Visit <http://timeofgrace.org> for details and for other daily devotion options. ***They have added a daily evening devotion.***

Holy Communion: More about this below.

FM Radio: St. John’s & Trinity, Kaukauna cooperate to broadcast sermons on 91.9 FM each Sunday morning at 7:30 am. St. Paul’s, Appleton also broadcasts sermons on 1280 AM each Sunday morning at 8:00 am.



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DEVOTIONAL/GROWTH opportunities:

Bible Study: Our Growing in God's Word Bible study has been meeting through Google Meet. A number of new students have joined the class. We'd love to have more. Please contact me or the office, if you'd like to attend. Our Tuesday night sessions are from 6:30 to 7:30 pm.

We have been talking about starting a small group in home Bible study for much of the year. I'd like to offer one more Bible study opportunity for our congregation. If you have interest in starting this new Bible study virtually, I'd be happy to hear your thoughts and explore starting a new study. Please contact me with your interest.

WELS: Our Synod produces some wonderful devotional materials. Many of them are available for subscription without cost to your email address. Visit <http://wels.net> for resources, encouragement, and synod updates. (They also have a WELS app for smartphones.) We also have a publishing house that produces theologically sound materials. If you are looking for additional devotional or study materials, visit <http://nph.net> or call 800-662-6022 for prices and ordering.

They have begun offering a number of new resources for free. Please check out their wels.net website for more details and resources.

MLHS Chapel: Lutheran High will be livestreaming their chapel services Monday through Friday at 10:03 am. Everyone is welcome to be fed by God's Word. Visit <http://mlhslancers.org> and click on "Lancer Vision."

Written Devotions: ***This time I've enclosed a couple of written devotions from the pastors in the Manitowoc area. You can go online and find a daily devotion at: welsmanitowoc.blogspot.com***

HOLY COMMUNION: Many of you have asked about Lord's Supper. The Worship Committee's emphasis has been on safety and continues to be. We are planning to offer Holy Communion starting Friday, May 1. Below are some details to consider:

We are asking those interested to sign up for a specific time, so that we might keep those communing as safe as possible. There will be online sign up directions emailed and posted on our Facebook page. If you are not able to sign up online, you can contact the office to set up an appointment. We intend to offer times on Mondays and Fridays as needed. (Please sign up just for your "family group"—we are still practicing social distancing as required by "Safer at Home." "Groups" of one are welcome.)

We will be using the east parking lot and door to the Commons (entrance "D") for Communion. When possible we'll prop the door open to minimize the need for physical contact on surfaces in the building. We do not want to prolong our time apart by spreading illness and will strive to lessen the risk to all those on campus. We'll have the elements in disposable vessels so that nothing is reused. We will sterilize the spaces used in between visitors.

We will meet in the Commons. The monitors will be used for a confession of sins and for the devotional text. Please stick to the time period you signed up for, so that we do not infringe on others who will be visiting. Our intent is to comply with current safety practices.

We are offering this option to those who feel the need for Communion. It is proper to desire the Lord's Supper—this is an option for those who desire it now. It is equally proper to trust that the Lord works sufficiently and powerfully through his Word—you may determine that your current connection with the Word is satisfying your spiritual needs during these unusual circumstances. ***We do not want anyone to feel obligated to commune during this time of social concern.*** This is offered as a courtesy, not a requirement. You may choose to wait until we are able to commune together in church. Please decide according to your personal needs and comfort level.

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We have had some audio experts come in to assist us in the sound quality of our online recordings. We have been able to improve the quality with some temporary solutions and are pursuing more permanent solutions with the intent of continuing to offer online worship services after the quarantine restrictions are lifted. Please continue to share your feedback and concerns with issues you are encountering as you attempt to utilize the resources we are developing.

My thanks to Sharie Mack for serving as a contact person on behalf of the congregation. She was able to touch base with many of our members who do not have email or opportunities to connect online. If you were not contacted, feel free to contact us. We'd love to hear from anyone feeling disconnected. I appreciate hearing from you and knowing what is going on in your lives. If you have prayer requests, please share them. I'm looking forward to finishing this strange time of separation and getting back together again soon. We are monitoring the situation and continue to make plans for our return to more "normal" worship opportunities. My thanks to the members of the Worship Committee, who continue to meet with me weekly (They are Gary Bernhardt, chairman; Dave Hoida; Dave Hoepfner; Larry Boettcher; Terry Prochnow; Arlie Olp; and Dan Duchow, ex officio.) My thanks also to Phil & Abby Stuebs, Gary & Deb Bernhardt, Gene Rosera, Gabriel Stuebs, and Josh Aden for their help weekly in producing our online worship services. We are "mixing in" the organists with more traditional musical arrangements as well. Your participation and appreciation has been a blessing to those serving—thank you! Please let me know if you have other spiritual needs. The office phone numbers are listed above. My cell phone number is 920-277-0101. As always, you remain in my prayers.

Blessings,

Pastor Darin Aden

Pastor Darin D. Aden daden@stjohnstjames.com



A Message From the President Of The Congregation

We hope and pray that everyone is doing well and staying safe during these trying times in our country. After a month of staying home, I'm sure most of us are getting cabin fever. One of the hardest things is not seeing our church family every Sunday. Our Gracious God has a plan for us so we have to remain patient. I want to thank Pastor Aden, our faculty, our secretaries and everyone one who is involved in putting together our virtual church services for the wonderful job that you are doing. Many of our members are concerned about the financial status of our congregation during this lock down. We're doing alright. Our church council was very concerned what would happen after churches were shut down. But our members have responded. I'll fill you in on some of the details. If you look at the amount needed each week and the amount given, you'll see that the amount given is more than the amount needed which is good news. The week of April 5th also had the Lenten service offerings from April 1st in it. The Easter Sunday offerings on April 12th also had the Maundy Thursday and Good Friday offerings included.

Budget wise, our Lenten, Holy Week and Easter offerings are a time when we get ahead to make up for summer when attendance and offerings normally go down. I compared the offerings from our 4 week shutdown this year to the same 4 weeks last year. We are down several thousand dollars. But we also have to consider this. I know some of our members have lost their jobs because of the shutdown. In all likelihood there are a lot more members that I don't know about. This no doubt has had an effect on our offerings. A loss of income is very hard to deal with. I feel that we are doing good considering the circumstances we are in right now. We thank all of our members who are remembering our Lord's work with their offerings. And we also thank our Gracious God for all the blessings that he has bestowed upon our congregation.

Summary Of Our Church Offerings

Needed each week for the General Fund, Missions & MLHS—\$9,616.00

Needed each week for the Building Fund—\$2,312.00

April 1—April 5 including electronic offerings

General Fund, Missions & MLHS—\$ 12,614.00 **

Building Fund—\$ 665.00

MLC Scholarship—\$ 50.00

Vivian Herzog Memorial Offering—Debt Retirement—\$ 1,456.00, Ladies Aid—\$ 400.00, MLHS—\$ 250.00, Building Fund—\$ 200.00, Time of Grace—\$100.00

**Included in the total is a \$500.00 special gift given to use towards any fund the Church Council chooses. Fund chosen was the General Fund.

**April 9—April 12 included in these dates are Maundy Thursday,
Good Friday and Easter Sunday**

General Fund, Missions & MLHS—\$ 13,947.00

Building Fund—\$ 3,347.00



Announcements From St. John - St. James

We also have some more good news. I'm sure most of you heard about the government Paycheck Protection Plan loan program which just ran out of money. We found out from our District President, Pastor Zank that churches are also eligible to apply for a loan because the government told us to shut down. Our Synod recommended that our WELS churches apply for the loan. You apply for the loan through your Bank. We applied through Denmark State Bank. Our Business Manger, Amanda Schrubbe did a wonderful job getting everything filled out. We were approved for the loan. The loan is based on how much we paid in salaries and benefits from February,2019 to February,2020. We will receive a loan of \$99,900. The purpose of this loan is to keep all of our employees working. By doing this most of the loan should be forgiven. Right now our janitors and the teachers aides/ before and after care providers are not working. We brought the janitors back and the teachers aides will be coming back toward the end of the school year to help our faculty close out the school year and prepare for next school year. According to the formula from the government, Amanda said it looks like we should only have to pay back a small percentage if it. 75% of this loan has to be spent on salaries and benefits. The other 25% can be used for utilities and mortgage payments. This will help our budget. I want to personally thank Amanda for all the work that she did so we could get this loan.

~ Dan Duchow, Church Council President

MLC SCHOLARSHIP—This Fall Maya Aden, Josh Aden, Lynsey Marohn and Michaela Bubolz will be attending MLC. They plan on being Called Workers in our Synod. The cost of attending MLC is \$27,900/ year, so we have established a scholarship fund to help fund their education. Each student can receive up to \$1,000.00 from their congregation and MLC will match it. Last year we received \$5,100.00 from the offering and as a result each of our 3 students received \$1,700.00 from SJSJ. Together with the \$1,000.00 match they received \$2,700.00. This year we have set a goal of \$6,800.00 so we can again give each of our 4 students \$1,700.00. This special offering will go until Sunday, June 28th. Please make out checks to St. John—St. James.

SYMPATHIES—Our most sincere sympathies to the families of Myrtle Stecker(3-23) and David Stecker (4-18), parents of of Ken(Ellen) Stecker and Jean(Myron) Peters who passed away on March 23rd. and April 18th, Carol Holtz, sister of Joan (Allen) Behnke who passed away on March 27th, and Wayne Wehausen, brother of Wesley(Lorraine) Wehausen who has passed away on March 29th. May God hold you in his loving arms!

A CALLING FOR YOU—Are you feeling lonely, isolated, not many people to talk to or visit? You can't see your church family on Sunday because of the stay at home order. Undoubtedly, a lot of our older members are feeling this way. We have a solution for you. Grab your church directory and call members of our church family. Have a conversation with them. It could even be members that you see in church every Sunday. You say hi to them but you've never really talked to them a lot. Give them a call. This would be a good way to ease the loneliness that a lot of our older members are now experiencing.

LAWN MOWER FOR SALE—Our lawnmower is 19 years old. It has cut a lot of grass on our church property. This past year we had a lot of issues with it. We have decided to purchase a new mower. We bought another Gravely which is made by Ariens in Brillion. The cost was \$9208.35 after the employee discount. We had \$7477.43 in the lawnmower fund. The remaining \$1730.92 was taken out of one of the funds in the Charities account. They would not trade in the old lawnmower. We have decided to offer it to the congregation. It's a 60 inch cut. We are asking \$750.00 O.B.O. If you are interested or if you know of anyone who is interested, please call Gary Bernhardt at 920-629-5221. If any member would like to donate to the lawnmower fund or give a memorial toward it, mark the envelope Lawnmower Fund. We also want to thank Jim Matznick for using his employee discount for the new mower. We saved 40% on the cost of it.

PAPER COPY NEWSLETTERS—Due to the high cost of postage to send out our newsletters our administration has decided to email out copies to church members who have email addresses. This newsletter will be emailed and a paper copy will be mailed to every household. Please let us know if you would like both an emailed copy and a paper copy. You can contact us by replying back to the newsletter email sent to you or email us at cbubolz@stjohnstjames.com or call the office at 920-754-4568. Thank you for the continued support and speedy reply!

MEDITATIONS—Northwestern Publishing House distributes a daily devotion book called Meditations, which are available in the vestibule area of entrance "A" near the office. The current edition (3-1-20 to 5-31-20) is available from NPH for free, mailed to your home. If you would like a Meditations book, please email or call the church office (920-754-4568)ASAP. The supply of Meditations books are limited.

Devotions

God is our refuge and strength, an ever-present help in trouble (Psalm 46:1).

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

When I was a little kid I loved going to carnivals. The food, the rides, the bright lights, the games, the sights, the sounds, the smells - I loved it all. I mean, who doesn't love chowing down on a sweet and greasy elephant ear or funnel cake? My favorite was the haunted house, which wasn't a house at all but a trailer that was set up to look and feel like a haunted house. Usually it worked like this: You went in through the door and walked a dark, winding tunnel. At certain points a sensor in the floor would trigger a loud sound and a bright light revealing the statue of a scary monster. Aaaaa! What fun!

I don't want to give you the impression that I was brave. I was not. I would only go in one of these haunted trailer if my dad went with me. He would hold my hand as we walked through the scary tunnel. When a monster was revealed I would scream and crush dad's hand. We would both come out smiling and laughing, but if I had gone in by myself it would have been a different story. My dad gave me courage. I knew that as long as he was with me, holding my hand, nothing bad could happen to me.

Lately this world seems like a haunted house with strange images and scary monsters lurking around every corner. Covid-19 has left us feeling startled, confused and just plain scared. What's going to happen next? How many people will die? Will the economy survive? Will our nation ever be the same again? This is scary stuff!

Take courage, my friends. Our heavenly Father has not left us! He is still by our side, holding our hands, watching over us night and day. He is an ever-present help in trouble.

As we walk the scary path of the Coronavirus into an uncertain future, he will be with us. He is our security. Not our savings accounts, not our jobs, not our stockpiles of toilet paper and hand sanitizer. God is our refuge and strength who will see us through this and every trouble and even cause it all to work out for our eternal good (Romans 8:28).

My friends, move forward with confidence. The God who loves you so much that he sent his Son to save you is holding your hand. And he's not going anywhere.

Prayer: Heavenly Father, be with us during this time of trouble and uncertainty. Take us by the hand and never let us go. Amen.

Yours in Christ our Savior,
Pastor Daniel Sims
Immanuel Lutheran Church, Manitowoc



Devotions - Continued

THE BLAME GAME

If we claim to be without sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness (1 John 1:8-9).

Perhaps the current health care crisis and all of the fallout that goes with it has made it clear to you, as it has to me, just how much people look for someone to blame whenever there is a problem. Democrats blame Republicans. Republicans blame Democrats. Medical leaders blame business leaders and business leaders blame medical leaders. Young people blame seniors and seniors blame young people. You get the picture.

Actually those who know the Bible shouldn't be surprised at any of this. Back in the Garden, Adam blamed Eve, Eve blamed the snake, and everyone blamed God. It's the timeless 'blame game.' It's a part of human nature, our fallen state. We inherited the skill and we know how to play the game. We do it because we want to be right, not wrong.

While we see this in many situations of life, St. John makes it clear that all of this blaming is both needless and harmful. If we claim to be without sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us. John points out that the real reason for the blame game is to attempt to transfer guilt – away from ourselves to someone or something else. And we're not fooling anyone, least of all God. We are only fooling ourselves.

And it is all so unnecessary! God took care of guilt once and for all on the cross of Jesus Christ, and in a most remarkable way. St Paul tells us, God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God. (2 Cor. 5:21) Despite all the wrong we have done and have inherited, Jesus made it right by suffering the punishment for our sin and offering to God his perfection and crediting it to our account. John put it so beautifully, If we confess our sins, [God] is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.

Dear friend, there is no reason to play the blame game because Jesus already won the game. He became guilty so we would be innocent. Thank God for his gift and let your light shine when the darkness of blaming invades your world.

Heavenly Father, help me keep my eyes fixed on Jesus' cross in the midst of a world trying to affix blame. Remind me and my world that you took the blame and declared the world innocent for Christ's sake. Help me live as your redeemed child. Amen.

Pastor David Laabs
First German, Manitowoc



Both of these devotions can be found at: welsmanitowoc.blogspot.com

Check out the blog for more daily devotions!



219 Manitowoc St., Reedsville, WI 54230

Non-Profit Organization

U.S. POSTAGE

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Reedsville, Wi 54230

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COVID-19 Newsletter—April 24, 2020

St. John—St. James Evangelical Lutheran Church Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod

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Church/School Temporary Office Hours:

Monday	8:00 am to 12:00 pm 4:00 pm to 6:00 pm
Tuesday	8:00 am to 12:00 pm
Wednesday	8:00 am to 12:00 pm
Thursday	8:00 am to 12:00 pm
Friday	8:00 am to 12:00 pm

