



St. John Messenger

St. John Lutheran Church
V. 26, No. 12

168 Mound St.

Berlin, WI 54923

January, 2022

We humans like beginnings and endings to be tidy. Finish one calendar page. Turn to the next. Ring out an old year. Ring in the new. Complete one project. Start another. Because of this reality, books give us great comfort. They start on page one. They conclude with the last period. And by the time we turn that final page, all the loose ends have been neatly tied. Movies and TV shows do the same thing in even shorter order. School semesters, likewise, have a first day and a final day. Between those two bookends, a semester may be frightfully demanding and complicated. But at the appointed time, it's over. Finished. Last semester's teacher doesn't keep giving you assignments or expect you to continue showing up for class.

Ah, but life itself hasn't yet come out in the movie version, no matter what the reality shows may say. And in life, beginnings and endings rarely happen so tidily. In fact, they're usually quite messy and often overlap like the homework assignments and projects and tests due during a semester. Funny thing is: We rather expect life to operate in semesters or chapters or other tidy segments. It doesn't. Life operates in seasons. On the calendar, even the seasons appear tidy. Each one begins and ends on a certain day. Yet in reality, the transition from fall to winter or winter to spring is far more protracted and far less predictable than the calendar indicates. In reality, the transition between life's seasons is messy too.

Yes, each person operates between the bookends of birth and death. But death is not the tidy ending we may imagine. And birth? Well, advances in technology have proven what we believers have long insisted: Life exists at conception. During those months, the little one to be born receives nurture in the protected environment of the womb. Meanwhile, the entire

expectant family operates in that protracted and unpredictable overlap of seasons.

The trick in any time of seasonal shift is not to let the messiness and unpredictability keep you from ending what needs to be ended and starting what needs to be begun. A whole nation with a leader named Moses learned this lesson the hard way. After 400 years of living in Egypt, these folks headed for a land God had promised to give them.

They stopped en route at Mount Horeb for a year's worth of instructions and preparations. Then, according to Moses' account in Deuteronomy, **⁶ The LORD our God said to us at Horeb, "You have stayed long enough at this mountain. ⁷ Break camp and...go"** (1:6-7 NIV). Well, off they went. But almost immediately, things got messy. When their new beginning didn't prove tidy at all, the people bailed on Moses. Or, actually, they bailed on God. For the next 39 years, they remained stuck purposeless, powerless, pitiful until God finally said again, **³ "You have made your way around this hill country long enough; now turn north."** (Deut. 2:3)

Any year, any date, may hold for you a new season. When you find yourself moving from one "season" to another remember this: Life's beginnings and endings are never tidy. They're messy and unpredictable and ultimately thrilling. No matter how frightening the change may seem, don't run from the new thing God is setting before you. Trust him. And step into the new season that awaits. Have a blessed New Year in Jesus' name.

Pastor Munding

+In Our Prayers

The Family of Wilfird Polk

Carolyn Schmudlach

Duane Schmudlach

Kevin Parsons

The Family of Janet Ryerson

Orville Behm

Marilyn Schmudlach

Paul Scaffidi – friend of Becky
Nisiewicz

Yvonne Wustrack

Diane Franke

Carol Kosterman

The Family of Ken Schuett

Jaden Schubert

Minnie Blackmore

The Family of Jacob Look – grand
nephew of Karen Wendt

The Family of Vicki Hunt – wife of
Chad, sister of Pat Durrant, Aunt of
Cindy Hartzke

The Family of Brennen Thoma – son of
William Thoma

Our Shut-In and Homebound members

60th Wedding anniversary of Russ &
Robin Henriksen - Dec. 23rd

In the Hospital

Karen Rowen

Kevin Parsons

Liz Butterbrodt



Janet Ryerson

Died – November 25, 2021

Funeral – December 3, 2021

Ken Schuett

Husband of Cindy Schuett

Died – December 5, 2021

Funeral – December 28, 2021

Wilfird “Bud” Polk

Husband of Carolyn Polk

Father of Jim Polk

Died – December 20, 2021

Funeral – December 27, 2021

Brennen Thoma

Son of Bill Thoma



December 12, 2021

Elana Louise Dawson

Daughter of Trevor Dawson and
Ashley Hoppa

December 19, 2021

Lincoln Daniel Parker

Son of Lucas and Morgan Parker





Thank You! Thank You!

Thank you to Russ and Robin Henriksen for donating all 5 Christmas trees in church.

Thank You to Kevin Koch, Rich Wallner and Ron Gehrke for putting up the Christmas trees.

Thanks to Don and Barb Rosner for the small wreaths outside.

A special thanks to the LWML and all other congregation members who decorated the church this year.

A special Thank You to Brian and Cindy Drews who set up the Nativity scene outside.

We will undecorate the church on Saturday, January 8th, starting at 9:00 am

Thank you to all!!



Poinsettia Donation

The 2 red poinsettias on the Altar were donated by the family of Alice Janes in honor of her 93rd birthday.



Thank you!

Dear St. John Human care
And Congregation,

Thank you all for prayers during Wayne's illness. He is at peace now. Your comforting expression of sympathy will always be remembered with deep gratitude.

Susan Fink

Trevor and Family

Tyler and Family



New Members

Conrad and Becky Nisiewicz
612 Wisconsin St.
Redgranite, WI

Richard Gehrke and children Jacob
and Jenna
9136 Bell School Road
Omro, WI



January 1, 1977 - Mark & Ricki Schubert
January 2, 1971 - Kris & Ramona Hrebik
January 17, 1976 - Ken & Leanne Hansen

From St. John Lutheran School



Happy New Year to you all. I pray that you all had restful and joyous Christmas celebration. Now that we have recognized the birth of the Christ child in that stable in Bethlehem, we can turn our thoughts to the new year that lies in front of us. It is another gift from God. How will you spend it? How can we use our time to share the Gospel message during the coming year?

Things are ramping up around our school. The Board of Education has been very busy with extra meetings. They have been updating policy manuals and holding special meetings in preparation for our accreditation visit in the spring. We packed the Christmas "goodie sacks" to be distributed to the children following the Christmas Eve and Christmas Day services.

The Board is also involved in the process of filling the 4K and 5th/6th grade teaching positions and the principal's spot. I truly appreciate all their hard work and dedication. They have a lot on their plates.

Our PTL fruit sale was another success this year. We thank everyone who purchased fruit again. We thank the 7th and 8th graders who unloaded the truck. We thank Mrs. Wallner for spearheading this project and Mr. Gehrke, Mr. Koch, and Mr. Krause for sorting the orders and carting everything to customer cars.

We held our second annual drive through Nativity last month. We have lots of thanks to pass around. Mr. Pett and Mrs. Schrader did all the planning. The trustees and some parents helped with set-up. Parents and grandparents provided snacks and supervision in the warm-up area. Karen Vergin, Judith Uchtyl, and Nancy Albright provided animals. Students dressed up

and braved the cold to share the Christmas message. We had around 175 people come through and donated just shy of 700 pounds of food for the Berlin food pantry.

Our basketball and cheerleading seasons are in full swing.

Our school Christmas program had to be postponed until January 7. Due to Covid restrictions we are not able to have congregation members attend this year. The performance is being recorded and will be on the church website to view.

First quarter report cards have been sent home. January 14 will mark the half-way mark for the school year.

We will be celebrating National Lutheran Schools Week on January 23-29.

Watch the narthex in the near future for renderings of the new playground that we are planning. We will be starting a fund-raising campaign to replace the 30 year old equipment with something newer and safer for our students.

We are thankful that the new school sign has been installed and is operational. We thank everyone who donated to make that dream come true.

Have a great January as we head into 2022 with all the possibilities that it holds. God bless you all.

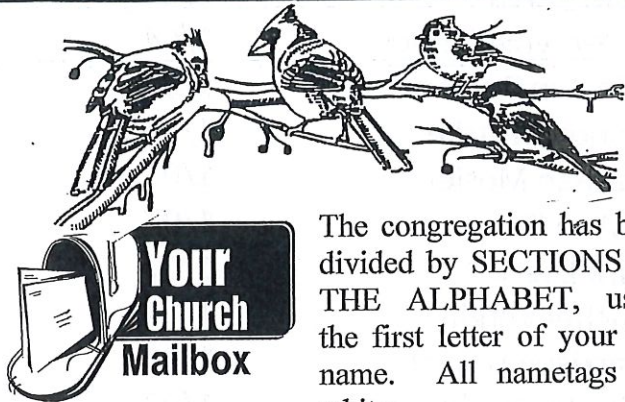
I am yours in Christ's service.



Quarterly Voter's Meeting

Sunday, February 13th

Following the service, beginning
at approx. 10:30 am.



The congregation has been divided by SECTIONS OF THE ALPHABET, using the first letter of your last name. All nametags are white.

Elders assigned to each section are listed below.

Elder 1	Tyler Kettlewell	A thru D
Elder 2	Stan Hartzke	E thru H
Elder 3	Mark Podoll	I thru L
Elder 4	Brian Thiel	M thru P
Elder 5	Rich Wallner	Q thru S
Elder 6	Michael Herbst	T thru Z

There will be a chart on the wall by the mailboxes with these names as well to inform members.

YOUR NEW 2022 OFFERING ENVELOPES ARE IN YOUR MAILBOXES!

Please note the following as you pick them up:

1. **Your mailbox slot is ABOVE the label with your name.** Make sure you pull out of the correct mailbox.
2. **CHECK the label on the envelope box immediately** as you pull it out of your mailbox. If the envelope box is not yours, notify Pastor, an Elder or the church office.
3. **Only one envelope box fits in the mailbox.** If your family has more envelope boxes, check the table in the Narthex.
4. Begin using your 2022 envelopes on Sunday, January 2nd.
5. **All contributions made after Dec. 31, 2021 will appear on your 2022 statement.**

Memorials



IN MEMORY OF ORLOW SOMMERFELDT

For General Fund

From Rich & Nancy Wallner.....\$ 50.00

IN MEMORY OF GENE PARSONS

For Maintenance & Repair

From Bob & Karen Wendt.....\$ 25.00

IN MEMORY OF ALICE PARSONS

For St. John School

From Greg & Victoria Parsons.....\$ 100.00

IN MEMORY OF JANET RYERSON

For General Fund

From Donna Nicholaisen.....\$ 20.00

From Family & Friends.....\$ 65.00

For St. John Senior Choir

From Mariel Fink.....\$ 25.00

From Rich & Nancy Wallner.....\$ 30.00

IN MEMORY OF KEN SCHUETT

For Maintenance & Repair

From Bob & Karen Wendt.....\$ 25.00

For General Fund

From Arden Patchett.....\$ 20.00

For St. John Senior Choir

From Rich & Nancy Wallner.....\$ 30.00

IN MEMORY OF GENE SUMM

For Human Care

From Delbert & Barbara Krause.....\$ 20.00

IN MEMORY OF BRENNEN THOMA

For Maintenance & Repair

From Bob & Karen Wendt.....\$ 20.00

IN MEMORY OF WILFIRD POLK

For General Fund

From Arden Patchett.....\$ 20.00

DONATIONS

For Playground Equipment

From Linda Hertzberg\$ 50.00

From Famer's & Merchants Bank

.....\$1,000.00



Human Care

*Listen my children and you shall hear,
Of the midnight ride of Paul Revere,
On the 18th of April in '75;
Hardly a man is now alive
Who remembers that famous day and year.*

A teacher read this familiar verse to his class one day and some students were able to identify it as the first verse of Henry Wadsworth Longfellow's poem, *Paul Revere's Ride*.

Then the teacher read the last four lines of the poem:

*In the hour of darkness and peril and need,
The people will waken and listen to hear
The hurrying hoof-beats of that steed,
And the midnight message of Paul Revere.*

The teacher's question this time was, "What was the name of Paul Revere's horse?" He had the students read the entire poem and no one could come up with an answer. The reason? Despite the references to the horse in the poem's 13 verses, its name is never mentioned. The point to the teacher's exercise was that while Paul Revere got all the acclaim for spreading his message, an unknown horse made a significant contribution by taking him where he wanted to go.

When a professional racer wins the Indianapolis 500, few people can name those who designed and built the car that brought the driver to victory or the mechanics who maintained it.

So it is with us. At some point in our lives, we all have received support and encouragement from some unsung friend, conscientious teacher or loving parent. And we still do even today.

No one who achieves success does so without acknowledging the help of others. The wise and confident acknowledge this help with gratitude.

Prayer: Thank you, O God, for supporting me through life, and I give You thanks for the countless people in my past and those in my present, who have helped and assisted me through difficult times. In Jesus' name. Amen.



January Birthdays

Stan Hartzke	1/02
Kristen Mertens	1/03
Kyle Verch	1/04
Caleb Voigtlander	1/04
Weston Deibert	1/05
Ronda Dretske	1/06
Nathan Mosier	1/06
JoAnn Kaufman	1/07
Dirk Lueck	1/07
Rachel Vergin	1/07
Harrison Drover	1/09
Charles Nechkash	1/09
Susan Fink	1/10
Ralane Tuinstra	1/10
Rev. Paul Mundinger	1/11
Kevin Parsons	1/12
Debra Wissell	1/12
Cindy Drews	1/13
Curt Snow	1/13
Haley Bevers	1/15
Ryan Bolen	1/16
Emma Krueger	1/16
Sandy Londowski	1/16
Hallie Coronado	1/17
Sandy Gregor	1/18
Viz Ries	1/18
Antonette Kracht	1/19
Eugene Ficken	1/22
Brandon McCormick	1/22
Julie Hess	1/23
Cassandra Snow	1/25
Jack Weiland	1/25
Brock Wilde	1/25
Connie Boening	1/26
Kashton Mehn	1/27
Pat Durrant	1/28
Bill Brooks	1/29
Noah Kaufman	1/31



It seems that not a day goes by that we don't hear someone say how stressed they are about some aspect of their lives. Our health, our families, our jobs are often at the top of our lists. Even the holidays, our time to celebrate our spiritual lives in Jesus Christ can bring on special stresses—both positive and negative.

Whether your stress is acute (an unexpected threat to your nervous system, good or bad such as an accident or the birth of a child) or chronic (a long term illness for example), it's affect on your physical, psychological and spiritual health may challenge you in an overwhelming way.

In Psalm 31 David talks of the emotional ups and downs of his life's journey, from anguish to assurance, aided by his faith in God.

When we recognize and acknowledge how common stress is in our lives we can begin to cope with our stressors more effectively.

Signs of stress may include that may signal need for change

- Emotional numbness, reduced interest in usual enjoyable activities
- Feelings of sadness, frustration, helplessness
- Recurring fears and anxiety
- Anger, tension, irritability
- Difficulty concentrating or making decisions
- Loss of appetite or eating too much
- Irregular sleep patterns, nightmares
- Headaches, digestion problems
- Increased use of alcohol and drugs, medications

One method of countering stress may be to simply turn away from the cause when possible. Turn off the TV, take a 24 hour break from social media, listen to music rather than talk radio. Stop reinforcing the

negative messages that are directed towards you to sell products or instill fear.

Then during this period of "quiet", consider completing an act of kindness, large or small. A phone call to someone who may not expect it, an offer to take a person to the grocery store, letting someone go ahead in a waiting line.

Kindness, or harboring a spirit of helpfulness, without expecting anything in return can actually boost brain substances—serotonin, dopamine and other endorphins—that can lead to a feeling of satisfaction and calm. It also can decrease cortisol, a stress hormone that can raise blood pressure. This may help to break the cycles of negative thinking that can increase anxiety.

Additionally, you may consider simply taking a few minutes every day to write down kind gestures that you witness others doing and therefore become inspired to do the same.

In Proverbs 12:25 it is written "an anxious heart weighs a man down but a kind word cheers him up". Learn to treat yourself as kindly as you would treat others. Take time to talk to yourself positively.

Reach out when you need help. Sometimes stress is causing enough disruption in your life that you may need Pastoral guidance or a visit to your family doctor. The Lord will answer you. Trust in him. As David recognized God as his strength "since you are my rock and my fortress, for the sake of your name lead and guide."

And in Matthew 6:27 we are reminded by Jesus "who of you by worrying can add a single hour to his life" and verse 34 "therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own".

Blessings and prayers for good health,

Maren Krause RN, BSN Parish Nurse



Creation Corner

From the Bi-Monthly Journal

"Does God Exist?"

A regular feature of the journal *"Does God Exist?"* is a section entitled *"Dandy Designs."* Here are various examples from God's creation pointing to the undeniable existence of our Creator.

Whirlpool Fishing

Many times we see animal behavior that seems impossible to explain. A small wading bird called the red-necked phalarope (*Phalaropus lobatus*) spends its summers in the Arctic regions and winters in tropical oceans. These birds have a curious way of stirring up a meal when the food is too deep in the water for them to reach.



The phalarope swims in a small, tight circle faster and faster to form a whirlpool. The spinning vortex will bring up food from the bottom of shallow waters in the way a tornado can lift objects from the ground. When the whirlpool brings some insects or crustaceans to the surface, the phalarope reaches its bill into the vortex and plucks them out. Sometimes the bird saves energy by finding a spot where converging currents or tidal action bring food to the surface.

Using high-speed photography, researchers found that the phalarope creates a vortex that is over three feet deep. The vortex acts as a miniature tornado bringing food up to where the bird can reach it. You could understand how one bird might learn this skill, but it seems to be genetically implanted since baby birds do the spinning even when they have had no contact with adult birds.

Another strange thing about these birds is that the females display brighter colors than the males, and they go after and even fight over males. The males are left to incubate the eggs and raise the chicks while the females may even head south for the winter. There is a never-ending variety of fascinating creatures in this world. We think the design, balance, and variety we see in nature testifies to the genius and creativity of God.

We see in phalaropes, as in most animals, that God has given them a genetically-based technique for acquiring food so they can survive.



CONFIRMED 100 YEARS AGO IN 1922

Be sure to check out the new items on display in the **Historical Display Cabinet** located in the south entrance to our church. The cabinet was a memorial gift given in memory of Otto and Hedwig Korwitz. It was built by Carl Krueger and contains many interesting historical items and pictures.

Presently, there is a Confirmation picture of the class of 1922 on display in the cabinet. Confirmed 100 years ago at St John are "Arthur and Delaphine Miller. Viola,,Alvin and Harvey Modenhauer. Theopillus Roerig, Gertrude Wendt, and Arthur Zabel. Years ago, it was quite common, in large families, to wait until 2 or 3 children were ready and then Confirm them all at the same time. That may be the case here with the **Miller and Moldenhauer** children.

Do any of the above names sound familiar to you? Perhaps a Grand-parent, Great Grandparent Great Aunt or Uncle? If so, then you know someone who was Confirmed in our church 100 ago.

If you are related to any of these families and have information you would like to share please contact - Karen Wendt: 920-369-6822.



St. John Lutheran Church Council Meeting

Date: December 22, 2021

The December meeting was called to order at 6:30 pm by Adam Ewald. Pastor Mundinger opened with prayer.
Present: Keith Krause, Debra Thiel, Pastor Mundinger, Rich Wallner, Amy Radliff, Curt Snow and Amy Brooks.
Absent: Bob Radliff

Secretary's Report by Amy Radliff

Motion by Wallner/Krause to accept November minutes. Motion approved.

Financial Secretary's Report submitted by Bob Radliff

	<u>November 2021</u>	<u>November 2020</u>
General Fund	\$92,154.42	\$96,011.85
Children's Fund	\$27,263.56	\$ 199.85
Elderly Fund	\$.00	\$.00
Memorials	\$ 795.03	\$ 501.01
Attendance	190 per week	128 per week

Motion by Wallner/Krause to accept the Financial Secretary's report. Motion approved.

Treasurer's Report by Debra Thiel

Square Account November 2021:

Beginning Balance:	\$1,432.80	Income:	\$ 235.79
Expenses:	\$ 175.22	Ending Balance:	\$1,493.37

Hot Lunch Account November 2021:

Beginning Balance:	\$ 5,289.17	Income:	\$51,179.60
Expenses:	\$51,338.58	Ending Balance:	\$ 5,130.19

Elderly Fund November 2021:

Beginning Balance:	\$6,702.28	Income:	\$.00
Expenses:	\$.00	Ending Balance:	\$6,702.28

Children's Fund November 2021:

Beginning Balance:	\$91,925.81	Income:	\$ 27,263.56
Expenses:	\$ 1,811.53	Ending Balance:	\$117,377.84

Motion by Radliff/Krause to accept Treasurer's report. Motion approved.

Board of Trustees Report by Keith Krause

- Electronic sign has been wired and ready for use, messages are being displayed.
- Repairs to the teacherage bathroom will be evaluated over Christmas break with work to begin after the first of the year.
- Future lawn mowing plans. Bids for equipment have been received. A member of the congregation is generously volunteering to do the mowing. Motion by Amy Radliff for council's approval of Trustees to purchase a mower not to exceed \$6,000. Seconded by Debra Thiel. Motion approved. The Trustees will bring the matter to the voters for final approval. The previous outsourcing mower services will be notified of plan to change.
- Battery back-ups will be purchased for Church office's (Cathy's) personal computer.
- New desks and desktops are now in the classrooms. Old desks are being offered to members.

Motion by Wallner/Ewald to accept Trustee's report. Motion approved.

Board of Elders Report & Pastor's Report

- List of delinquent members to be dropped will be brought before the voters for approval at the next quarterly meeting.

- Mark Podoll has agreed to fill vacant Elders position. He will be appointed at the next voters meeting.

Motion by Krause/Thiel to accept Elder's report. Motion approved

Official Acts:

Affirmation of Faith – Wingate Barraclough.

Transfer In – David Brown, from Trinity, Wautoma.

Deaths – Orlow Sommerfeldt. Wayne Fink Fr. Janet Ryerson.

Non-Member Funeral/Committal – Donald Krueger, Oakwood Cemetery.

Transfer Out – Donald Riedel, to Good Shepherd Lutheran, Oshkosh, WI.

Communicant Members 483

Baptized Members 569

Church Families 299

Board of Education Report by Curt Snow and Amy Brooks

- Basketball season has started.
- In-class Christmas parties held with limited number of parents assisting.
- 5th/6th Grade classroom quarantined prior to Christmas break according to Covid-19 protocol.
- School Christmas Program has been moved to January due to the quarantine of one classroom.
- Personnel Manual is being reviewed and updated as needed for approval in preparation for accreditation.
- Playground equipment – continue to review design and equipment options.
- Families who receive member tuition rates will be reminded of communion attendance.
- "Guidelines for Calling a Teacher/Principal" has been updated. Motion by Debra Thiel to approve Call Guidelines with 2021 revisions. Rich Wallner seconded. Motion approved.

Motion by Wallner/Ewald to accept the Board of Education report. Motion approved.

Old Business:

- Personnel Manual revisited, compare old version to new version for changes.

New Business: (none)

Meetings next month: Trustees – Monday January 10th -6:30pm. Board of Education – Tuesday January 11th - 6pm.

Elders – Tuesday, January 11th - 6pm. **Council – Wednesday, January 19th – 6 pm.**

Quarterly Voter's Meeting – Sunday, February 13th, following worship service

Motion by Snow/Brooks to adjourn. Meeting adjourned at 7:31 pm. Meeting closed with The Lord's Prayer

*Respectfully submitted,
Amy Radliff, Secretary*

****Note:** These minutes have not yet been reviewed by the Council and are subject to revision and correction at the next meeting.

Be of good cheer

Near the end of every January, stories circulate about "Blue Monday," supposedly the year's most depressing day. Factors include broken New Year's resolutions, Christmas debts and cold weather. But this phenomenon actually originated as a PR gimmick. U.K. marketers invented Blue Monday as "the best day to book a summer holiday," and a psychologist they enlisted to help later admitted the saddest-seeming day became a self-fulfilling prophecy.

January may lack the excitement of December, but it doesn't have to be a letdown. Christmas is over, but Jesus isn't! No matter the season of the year or our season of life, Christians always have reason for joy: God's promises of forgiveness and eternal victory. As Jesus says in John 16:33, "In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world" (KJV).