



St. John Messenger

St. John Lutheran Church
V. 28, No. 2

168 Mound St.

Berlin, WI 54923
March, 2023

As I write this month's newsletter article, Holy Week just over a month away. But I'm pretty confident I know how things will go beginning with Palm Sunday, Maundy Thursday, Good Friday, and Easter Sunday. We will come to church and hear the Passion history once again. We will see the tremendous love that God has for us by sending His Son to suffer terribly and die a horrible death - all on account of us. We will have rejoiced greatly on Easter morning with the festive music of Easter and the Good News of Jesus' resurrection from the dead.

On Easter Sunday there will be the traditional large crowds in worship at St. John hearing this Good News. We certainly praise God for His faithfulness to our church throughout the last 150+ years. We have much to be thankful for during this time and there have been many fine achievements accomplished by our congregation during that time. To God alone be the glory!

But what does the future hold for the next 150 years at St. John? What kind of church does God want St. John to be for ourselves and for our community? Certainly we need to continue doing the many important things we do to care for the sheep already in God's fold. Preaching God's Word, administering the Sacraments, and Bible based teaching will always remain central to our purpose. But what about the unchurched? What about those who have no church to call home and therefore aren't hearing the Good News we are privileged to hear each week? Consider the following facts regarding unchurched people, some of which may surprise you:

1. Research shows that most unchurched people have a very positive view of church and pastors.
2. The vast majority of unchurched people would respond very positively to a kind Christian willing to spend time with

them to foster a non-judgmental relationship.

3. 82% of unchurched people would respond positively to a church invitation – **if invited!** However, only 21% of active churchgoers invite anybody to church in a one year period. Of those, only 2% actually invite an unchurched person.
4. Most unchurched people don't have anyone to tell them what Christianity is all about.
5. Most unchurched people feel guilty about not going to church but stay away because church intimidates them.
6. The vast majority of unchurched people would prefer to worship on a Sunday if asked.

(Lost in America by Tom Clegg)

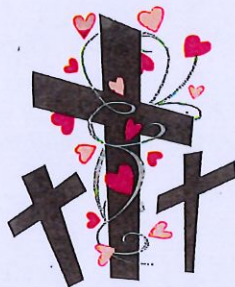
What do these facts tell us? They tell us that there are many unchurched people in Berlin just waiting to be invited to church so they can learn about Jesus Christ. I believe that our future years need to be devoted to being a harvest minded church. This will involve developing relationships with people which will enable us to talk freely to the unchurched about our faith and church. People want to hear what we have to say. God wants to use us to be His mouth. Please pray that God would place people in our lives who are unchurched. What better time to invite someone to church to hear the Good News of Jesus? And let the Holy Spirit guide you as you do God's work in their lives. Have a blessed Lenten season!

Pastor Munding



+In Our Prayers

Darwin Krause
 The Family of Lyle Smerling
 Vern Lichtenberg
 Bob Kersten
 Ed Marks
 Sandy Gregor
 Jackie Albert
 Ken Fink
 Carolyn Schmudlach
 Duane Schmudlach
 Cathy Steinke
 Joan Parsons
 Gerald Krause
 Brenda Podoll
 Sylvia Wells



Lyle Smerling
 Died - February 10, 2023
 Funeral - February 17, 2023

Judy Tetzke
 Daughter of Joan Hardel
 Sister of David Hardel and
 Cathy Herbst



Memorials

In the Hospital

Darwin Krause



DIRECT THRIVENT CHOICE DOLLARS® BY

MARCH 31: Eligible Thrivent Financial members who have available Choice Dollars® from 2022 have until **March 31, 2023**, to direct them. Don't miss this opportunity to recommend that Thrivent Financial provide outreach funding to St John Lutheran Church and School. Go to Thrivent.com/thriventchoice to learn more. Or call 800-847-4836 and say "Thrivent Choice" after the prompt.



IN MEMORY OF ORVILLE BEHM

For Human Care

From Judy Mehn.....\$ 10.00

IN MEMORY OF FRANK WEISS

For Human Care

From Bob & Betty Dewhurst...\$20.00

From Judy Mehn.....\$20.00

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

IN MEMORY OF JUDY TETZKE

For Human Care

From Russ & Robin Henriksen

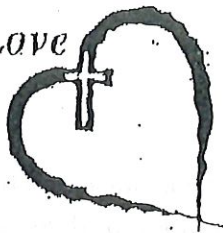
.....\$25.00

IN MEMORY OF DICK FORTNUM

For Maintenance & Repair

From Bob & Karen Wendt.....\$50.00

Divine Love



Human Care

There's an old story about a farmer, who, when asked to lead prayer in church, would end with a peculiar statement: "And, O Lord, prop us up on our leaning side."

His pastor asked him what he meant by that. He explained: "I've got an old barn, and it's been there a long time. It's been through a lot of storms, and the bugs have eaten at it. I got to looking at it one day, and I noticed it was leaning to one side. So, I thought to myself, this can't be good: it's only a matter of time before it falls."

"So, I got some pine beams, and I propped it up. It still leans, and probably always will. But it's not going to fall down because I supported it on its leaning side."

"I got to thinking about it," he went on. "I thought about the kind of year I've had, and some of the storms I've been through, and some of the people who are bugging me - eating away at my joy. And I got to thinking, I'm still here! I'm still standing after all I've been through. The howling winds: they couldn't topple me. It's because God's grace was propping me up on the leaning side."

Perhaps it was this same idea that prompted Anthony Showalter to pen the lyrics, together with Elisha Hoffman, of the old and well-known hymn, "Leaning on the Everlasting Arms." Showalter said (according to an article in Wikipedia) that "he received letters from two of his former pupils saying that their wives had died. When writing letters of consolation, Showalter was inspired by the phrase in the book of Deuteronomy 33:27, 'The eternal God is thy refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms.'"

*What a fellowship, what a joy divine, leaning
on the everlasting arms;
What a blessedness, what a peace is mine,
leaning on the everlasting arms.*

Refrain: *Leaning, leaning, safe and secure
from all alarms; Leaning, leaning, leaning
on the everlasting arms*

Prayer: *Thank you, O God, for knowing the "joy
divine" of being supported by Your "everlasting
arms," supporting me on my "leaning side." Amen.*



March 5, 1988 - David & Christine Dretske

March 18, 2000 - Bill & Debbie Wissell



LENTEN SUPPERS

The Lenten suppers will begin on Wednesday, March 1.

March 1 - PTL will host with brats, hot dogs, baked beans, salads, and desserts.

March 8 - Ladies Aid will host with barbecues, salads and desserts.

March 15 - Senior Choir will host with hot turkey sandwiches, salads and desserts.

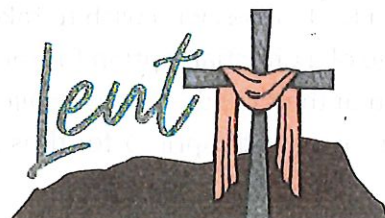
March 22 - Altar Guild and LWML will host with chili, chicken noodle soup, sandwiches and desserts.

March 29 - Council/Boards will host with Taco Night.

Along with food, beverages will also be provided. A free will basket is on each table.

Supper begins at 5:15 with church services at 6:30.

See you there!



From St John Lutheran School



Greetings to our church family. We praise God for the opportunity to share the Good News of Jesus Christ with our students and their families every day in our school. We thank our congregation for supporting us in this mission.

We just wanted to remind you that our 3K/4K program next year will be offering a half day or full day option. This program only has 20 spots, and they are filling up fast. 4K is also available as part of the School Choice Program to families that qualify financially. If you know of a family who would like to take advantage of this option, please have them contact our school office soon.

We held our open house on Thursday, February 16, at our school for families who are considering a Christian education for their children. Our staff and Board of Education members were on hand to provide tours and answer questions about our program. Thank you to the trustees for coming in and helping to make our school shine for the open house. If you know of a family who might benefit from a Christian education, but missed the open house please have them contact our school office to arrange a tour.

The School Choice application window is now open for families who wish to take advantage of a Christian option for the education of their children. This application window is open until April 21 for those

families who qualify financially. Call the office for more information or if you have questions (920-361-0555).

Spring break this year is scheduled for March 20-24.

The 5th and 6th grade class went to an outdoor education camp on February 16-17 at the Central Wisconsin Environment Station in Amherst Junction. This over-night field trip offers the opportunity for our students to learn about Wisconsin winter animals and environment. It was chilly, but they had a good time learning about God's wonderful creation.

The 7th and 8th graders are currently selling pizzas to help finance their class trip in May. Pizza orders are due by March 13th. Thank you for your support.

Thank you to everyone that ordered from the PTL hanging basket plant sale.

Achievement tests are scheduled for the week of March 13th.

Our students are participating in a reading challenge with other Lutheran schools across the country. At this point our first graders are in 3rd place and our 2nd graders are in 2nd place. Way to go kids.

We thank you for your prayers and support as we share the love of Jesus with our students and families entrusted to us.

I am yours in Christ's service.

Miss Melissa Lincee





A heartfelt thank you to our St. John family for all of your prayers, thoughts and well wishes for our 5 yr. old granddaughter and great granddaughter, Olivia Stracy, with her brain tumor diagnosis and surgery. God truly blessed Olivia with a talented surgeon and medical team who were successful in removing her benign tumor and she is progressing extremely well. Kristin & Justen also send a big Thank You!

Bonnie Schumacher & Arden Patchett"



President Robin Henriksen opened the February 2 meeting with a devotion on share your love. Tell your friends and relatives how much you love them and you care how they feel.

The Ladies Aid is in charge of refreshments for the Berlin Bloodmobile on Tuesday, February 28. Barbecues and egg salad sandwiches will be served. A sign-up sheet was passed for workers and cookies/bars.

The Ladies Aid will host the Lenten supper on Wednesday, March 8. Barbecues, salads, and desserts will be served.

Thank you to Debbie Wissell and Carol Gelhar for the games, refreshments and prizes.

The next meeting will be Thursday, March 2 in the church lower level at 1pm.



The St. John LWML needs your help with a few things. First on Sunday, March 19th the LWML will be collecting Mites in the large Mite boxes. The money raised will go towards packing meals for kids for the Orphan Grain Train which will take place at the National Convention.

The second thing we need help with is an in-gathering which will be running through Sunday, April 23rd. Below is a list of items we are collecting. If you are interested in donating, there will be bins in the card room to collect the items in. The items collected will be put in Christmas gift boxes for the Orphan Grain Train (all items are for ages 8-12).

- Coloring books
- 24 ct box of crayons
- Small plastic or rubber ball (tennis balls are ok)
- Small stuffed animals (Beanie baby size)
- New toothbrush in pkg
- Hairbow
- Lip balm
- Jump rope
- Socks
- Underwear
- T-shirt (non-military or offensive)
- Stickers
- Deflated soccer ball with pump

On Wednesday, March 22nd we will be hosting the Lenten Supper along with the Altar Guild. Come and join us for food and fellowship.

The Spring Rally will be on Tuesday, April 25th at 3:30pm at Immanuel Lutheran Church in Mt. Morris if you would like to attend, we will be assembling the Christmas gift boxes for the Orphan Grain Train.

Come and join LWML, we would love to have you. Our next meeting is Monday, March 20th at 6:30 in the church. If you have any questions about LWML, see Cynthia Schuett, Bonnie Sperberg, Deb Schrader or Kelli Mundinger.



March Birthdays



April Lueck	3/01	David Johanknecht	3/17
Morgan Parker	3/01	John Kobishop	3/17
Sylvia Wells	3/01	Elaine Gates	3/18
Karissa Dallman	3/02	Adam Gilmour	3/19
Russ Pomplun	3/03	Samantha Henriksen	3/19
Waylon Nechkash	3/04	Delbert Krause	3/19
Dorothy Schrank	3/04	Anita Krepke	3/19
Joshua Henriksen	3/05	Carolyn Polk	3/19
Aspen Kettlewell	3/05	Hudson Webb	3/19
Maria Krueger	3/05	Tammy Wood	3/19
Debra Thiel	3/05	Jean Hoffman	3/20
Jerrold Lueck	3/06	Maximus Chappa	3/23
Julie Snow	3/06	Candace Joram	3/24
Judith Uchytel	3/06	Jayson Mosier	3/24
Gail Chappa	3/07	Brad Resop	3/24
Aimee Vergin	3/07	Bonnie Nehring	3/24
Casey Wollert	3/07	Sophia Nechkash	3/24
Muriel Kroening	3/08	David Brown	3/25
Jenna Gehrke	3/09	Adam Ewald	3/25
Julie Deibert	3/10	Brenda Marks	3/26
Barbara Rosner	3/10	Margaret Retzlaff	3/28
Peter Gravunder	3/11	Peggy Seaman	3/28
Cindy Hartzke	3/11	Austin Wilson	3/29
Sharon Stumpner	3/12	Nancy Wallner	3/31
Russell Thom	3/12		
Terry Krueger	3/14		
Sara Verch	3/14		
Douglas Wiese	3/14		
Darrell Dretske	3/16		





**St. John Altar Guild
would like to carry on
the tradition of
banking the Altar and
the cross with masses
of Easter Lilies or
Spring plants to
commemorate the
resurrection of
Jesus Christ.**

If you would like to share your Easter flower, in honor of or in memory of a loved one, please sign up on the sheet in the Narthex. **Deadline for signing up and having your dedication in the Easter morning bulletin is Palm Sunday, April 2nd** Anyone signing up after that will have their dedication appear in the bulletin the week following Easter, when we will reprint all of the flower memorials.

You may bring your plant to the church on Saturday, April 8th, between 9:00 AM and 11:00 AM. You may take your flower(s) home following the service on Easter morning. **Please LABEL your flower with your name so you can identify it to take home!**

If it would be more convenient for you to bring your flower at another time, please feel free to set it in the Altar Guild workroom. You should check with Cathy in the office (361-9935) or a committee member to make sure the church will be open when you want to bring it. Also, a reminder, the church is always open at least thirty minutes before a service begins.

Altar committee ladies for the month of April are Robin Henriksen (361-2863), Deb Schrader (920-539-5289) and Joyce Parsons (920-369-6828.) If you have any questions or concerns please contact one of these ladies. Thank you for your help in beautifying the church at this special time.



On Feb 21, 2023 Amy Radliff brought our meeting to order with prayer.

The secretary's and treasurer's reports were given and approved.

Thank you's were read from Sandy Gregor, Barb Rosner and Linda Hertzberg

Sympathy cards were sent to Pastor and Kelly Mundinger and Joan Hardel.

Joan will now become an honorary member of our guild. Thank you Joan for all your help in God's house.

A large plexiglass has been replaced on the altar with the help of the general fund.

Three acolyte robes have been purchased by the guild in 3 sizes for the youth who serve on the altar.

A discussion about grape juice on the communion tray was held. In order to keep it at its best, it will be used in conjunction with the coffee hour fruit juices. We only need a very small amount for the communion tray.

Lenten supper duties were discussed. We serve with LWML on March 22. They will be making chili and we will be making chicken soup. There will also be sandwiches, pickles, crackers, bars and beverages for supper that night.

Altar Guild would again invite the congregation to bank the altar with flowers for Easter. There is a separate article in this newsletter about the flowers for the altar. Deadline to sign up is on April 2. Please bring your flowers on April 8 between 9-11 am.

We decided to again provide fresh palms for Palm Sunday services.

Our meeting adjourned with the Lord's Prayer.
Respectfully submitted by Judy Mehn



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.



Plants use a wide range of methods to spread their seeds. Some plants have seeds encased in a shell or a fleshy bundle that various animals, including humans, like to eat. We are all familiar with nuts and fruits, but the basic design of these foods is to spread their seeds. If you live in an area where poison ivy is a real nuisance, getting rid of it this year will not stop it from being a problem next year because birds eat the berries and replant the ivy all over your property. For good or bad, plants spread their seeds.

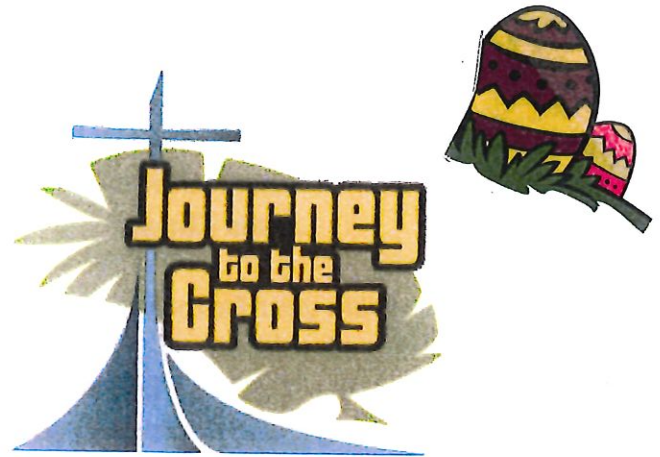
Plants that shoot their seeds use one of the most interesting methods of seed dispersal. The seed pod in the picture is from the sandbox tree (*Hura crepitans*) nicknamed "the dynamite tree" because of



the explosive way the pods burst open. In the segments of the pod, the outer and inner layers grow at different speeds. This creates tension as the surfaces push against each other. When the seeds are ready, the pressure becomes so great, that the capsule explodes. The sections that were initially convex rapidly flip to concave in a process known to engineers as snap-buckling. That explosion can shoot the seeds 100 feet (30 meters) at speeds of 160 miles (257 kilometers) per hour.

Measurements of snapping plants show a g-force of 2400. Fighter pilots can handle about nine gs before passing out. A wide variety of designs allow plants to shoot seeds or snap shut to trap food.

Plants spread their seeds by many amazing mechanisms God has built into them, and which scientists are still trying to understand.



An old spiritual song asks this question: "Were you there when they crucified my Lord?" In all honesty, we have to say no, but soon St. John will have a different answer to that question.

St. John Lutheran Church will be hosting *Journey to the Cross*, an Easter learning experience on Saturday, April 8 from 9:30 – 11:30 AM for children age 3 to grade 6. Our Easter Egg Hunt will follow at the school.

As a traveler, you have the opportunity to walk in Jesus' footsteps during Holy Week. Smell the aroma of anointing perfume, taste Passover food, feel a crown of thorns, and so much more. You will hear about Jesus from Bible witnesses and be a part of the Passion experience.

We need some great volunteers to make our *Journey to the Cross* as meaningful as possible, and we're hoping that you will help. Please prayerfully consider serving our church as Actors, Station Helpers, Meet-and-Greet Volunteers, and Tour Guides. For more information about ways in which you might contribute to the *Journey*, please see the sign-up sheet located in the narthex

Please save April 8th on your calendar. Come join us as a volunteer or a traveler. And please pray for all those involved-volunteers and journeyers-so that the Holy Spirit may truly bless our experience together.

St. John Lutheran Church Council Meeting

Date: February 20, 2023

The February meeting was called to order at 6 pm by Adam Ewald. Adam Ewald opened with prayer.

Present: Rich Wallner, Debra Thiel, Bob Radliff, Amy Radliff, Kevin Koch, Adam Ewald, Keith Krause, Melissa Linse.

Absent: Pastor Munding

Secretary's Report by Amy Radliff

Motion B Radliff/Koch to accept the January minutes. Motion approved.

Financial Secretary's Report by Bob Radliff

	<u>January 2023</u>	<u>January 2022</u>
General Fund	\$81,115.79	\$62,317.16
Children's Fund	\$ 5,352.55	\$ 5,345.85
Elderly Fund	\$.00	\$.00
Memorials	\$ 261.20	\$ 6,229.00
Attendance	177 per week	146 per week

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

Treasurer's Report by Debra Thiel

Square Account January 2023:

Beginning Balance:	\$160.85	Income:	\$.00
Expenses:	\$159.09	Ending Balance:	\$ 1.76

Hot Lunch Account January 2023:

Beginning Balance:	\$13,996.16	Income:	\$ 3,625.40
Expenses:	\$ 3,034.41	Ending Balance:	\$14,587.15

Elderly Fund January 2023:

Beginning Balance:	\$7,702.28	Income:	\$.00
Expenses:	\$.00	Ending Balance:	\$7,702.28

Children's Fund January 2023:

Beginning Balance:	\$69,432.00	Income:	\$ 5,737.55
Expenses:	\$.00	Ending Balance:	\$75,169.55

- Memorial funds Flower Vase Liners and Hymnals will be moved to Altar Guild and Music Ministry respectively.

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

Board of Trustees Report by Keith Krause

- Phone equipment and system experiencing problems of both inbound and outbound calling at both church and school. Replacement options were explored and presented to the Trustees. At the time of the council meeting a simpler repair was made to replace the main communications board at a low cost. The part has been ordered and repair will take place as soon as the parts arrive.
- Preliminary work has started to transform the former computer lab into a classroom. Carpet has been removed, the electrician has been contacted to do rewiring. Painting and flooring options are being evaluated.
- Repainting of the church narthex is being evaluated.

Motion by Wallner/Thiel to accept Trustees report. Motion approved.

Board of Elders Report & Pastor's Report by Rich Wallner

- Call meetings are set to begin early March.

Official Acts:

Baptism – Aza Rae Mittelstaedt, daughter of Alex and Samantha Mittelstaedt.

Communicant Members 480

Baptized Members 574

Church Families 299

Motion by B Radliff/A Radliff to accept Elder's report. Motion approved.

Board of Education Report by Kevin Koch

- Open House held February 16th, 10 families attended. Information materials were handed out.
- Rachel Berry has accepted the Call to teach grades 3 and 4, Janel Wenzel will be added to staff as a contracted teacher, both for the 2023-2024 school year.
- Classroom scheduling is being reviewed for next school year for grades 3K and 4K.
- Father/Daughter Dance to be held Saturday, February 18th.
- Melissa Linse and Amy Brooks attended Webster Foundation Grant presentation. St. John was awarded \$2,000 toward the playground project.

Motion by Thiel/B Radliff to accept the Board of Education report. Motion approved.

Old Business:

- Rich Wallner presented proposed budget updates and hypothetical scenario based on additional teacher staff. Some variables will exist pending benefits selected. Other variables include number of student families that qualify for School Choice Program. Goal is to increase salaries to align within district guidelines based on tenure and education level.
- Call meeting for selected committee members is scheduled for March 2nd. Pastor nominees have been received from congregational members and will be considered as part of the call process.

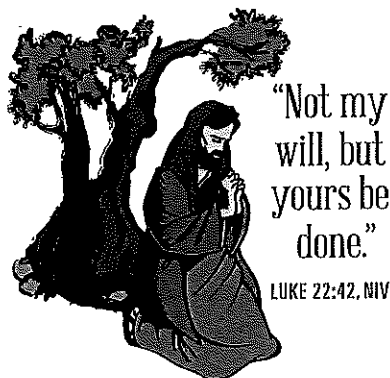
New Business: (none)

Meetings next month: Trustees – Monday March 13th – 6:30 pm. Board of Education – Tuesday March 14th - 6pm. Elders – Tuesday March 7th – 6pm. Council – Tuesday, March 21 – 6pm.

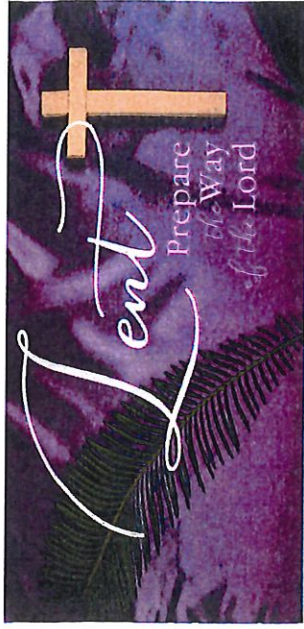
Motion by Linse/B Radliff to adjourn. Meeting adjourned at 6:45 pm. Meeting closed with The Lord's Prayer

*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.



March 2023



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
Chop Suey Supper Wednesday, April 19th			1 3:45 Public Confirm 5:15-6:30 Lent Supper 6:30 Lent Service Sr. Choir follows	2 1:00 pm Ladies Aid	3	4
5 LENT 2 9 am Worship/HC 10:15 Bible Class 10:15 Sun. Sch	6	7 6:00 Bd. of Elders	8 3:45 Public Confirm 5:15-6:30 Lent Supper 6:30 Lent Service Sr. Choir follows	9	10	11
12 LENT 3 9 am Worship/HC 10:15 Bible Class 10:15 Sun. Sch	13 6 pm Journey to the Cross Planning mtg. 6:30 pm Trustees	14 6:00 Bd. of Ed.	15 3:45 Public Confirm 5:15-6:30 Lent Supper 6:30 Lent Service Sr. Choir follows	16	17	18
19 LENT 4 9 am Worship/HC 10:15 Bible Class 10:15 Sun. Sch	20 School Spring Break 20-th—24th 6:30 pm LWML	21 Council Mtg. 6:00	22 NO Public Confirm 5:15-6:30 Lent Supper 6:30 Lent Service Sr. Choir follows	23	24	25
26 LENT 5 9 am Worship/HC 10:15 Bible Class 10:15 Sun. Sch	27	28	29 3:45 Public Confirm 5:15-6:30 Lent Supper 6:30 Lent Service Sr. Choir follows	30	31	

