



St. John's News

February 2018

Message from Pastor James

Church: 507-433-2642

Pastor: Cell 320-336-8149

Church Office:
stjohns@stjohnsaustincms.org

Pastor James Groleau:
shepherd@jamesplace.net

St. John's Webpage:
www.stjohnsaustincms.org

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THE MISSION OF ST. JOHN'S LUTHERAN CHURCH

Through Jesus Christ, we
proclaim God's Word,
encourage one another in faith,
witness to God's love and
serve all people.



This month brings in the beginning of Lent. That somber time of the Church year when we reflect on Jesus' march toward Jerusalem to His death. Of course we know that His death was not the end, it was the beginning. The beginning of the time we call the New Testament. Under this New Testament or New Contract we are saved by Jesus, the Christ, who was the final one time perfect sacrifice for all sin. The introduction to Lent begins with Shrove Tuesday. In older traditions it was the last day you could eat meat, fatty foods or sugar laden sweets and syrups before the Lenten time of fasting from such victuals.

The word 'shrove' is an ancient English word that means 'absolution.' This was the day when Christians would traditionally go to church, for private confession and absolution, in preparation for the somber season of Lent. In the French language "Fat Tuesday" is pronounced "Mardi Gras" which is the name of the celebration, generally associated with New Orleans, Louisiana, that occurs at that time. Fat Tuesday being the last day one could eat meat, fat or sweets, and why that day has become a day of binge eating and partying rather than the day of repentance it was originally meant to be.

Shrove Tuesday is followed by Ash Wednesday. This is the first day of Lent. It falls 40 days before Easter. Traditionally this day was marked with a somber service including the "Imposition of Ashes" on the forehead. The palms from the previous year's Palm Sunday celebration were brought in. The pastor would burn them and use the ashes to mark the foreheads of the members with the sign of the cross. This ancient tradition began because in

much of the biblical era it was the custom to cover one's self with ashes as a sign of repentance or sorrow.

People looking very close at their calendar might notice there are actually 46 days from Ash Wednesday and Easter Sunday. The reason we say there are 40 days is that we do not count Sundays. Every Sunday is a celebration of Easter and is therefore not part of the season of Lent. The Christian Church worships on Sunday because it was on Sunday that Jesus came out of the tomb. It was on Sunday that Jesus met with His disciples after He rose. It was Sunday that the Holy Spirit descended with a great wind and tongues of fire. So our Sunday worship services are a brief respite from the sorrows of Lent to remember Messiah has come and His name is Jesus. Alleluia! He is risen!

I would encourage all of you to use our mid-week services and the Easter season to invite friends and neighbors and even long lost members of our church family to come. The sermons, like Advent and Christmas, will be shorter in length and very purposeful and direct messages of sins affect and God's salvation through Jesus Christ our Lord, and the joy we all have in that knowledge.

God's blessings to all of you during this Lent and Easter season.

Pastor James.

Twelve Days of Christmas – Answers

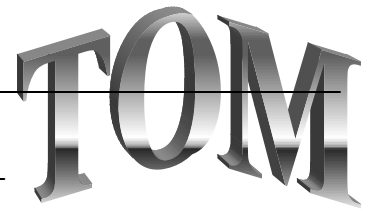


- 1) Who is the predator? Satan. Who is the partridge? Jesus
- 2) Old Testament New Testament
- 3) Love (*Most important*), Faith, Hope
- 4) Matthew, Mark, Luke and John
- 5) Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy
- 6)
 1. Heavens, earth light
 2. Expanse, heaven or sky
 3. Dry land
 4. Sun, Moon and stars
 5. Fish and birds
 6. Land animals and people
- 7) Holy Spirit, Wisdom, Understanding, Good council, Strength or might, Knowledge, The fear of the Lord
- 8)
 1. Poor in spirit
 2. Those who mourn
 3. The meek
 4. hunger and thirst for righteousness
 5. The merciful
 6. The pure in heart
 7. The peacemakers
 8. Those who are persecuted
- 9) Love, Joy, Peace, Patience, Kindness, Goodness, Faithfulness, Gentleness, Self-Control
- 10)
 1. No other gods
 2. Do not misuse God's name
 3. Remember Sabbath day
 4. Honor parents
 5. Do not murder
 6. Do not commit adultery
 7. Do not steal
 8. Do not lie
 9. Do not covet their house
 10. Do not covet their stuff

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Stewardship Thought of the Month (TOM)



Thought of the Month

“I am not commanding you, but I want to test the sincerity of your love by comparing it with the earnestness of others. For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, so that you through his poverty might become rich” (2 Corinthians 8:8-9).

Without commands or even arm-twisting, St. Paul encourages, even challenges, the Church in Corinth to demonstrate the sincerity of their faith by their generosity in giving. He does this because giving generously is a gift of the Spirit given to us through the Gospel.

St. Paul wrote: “But just as you excel in everything—in faith, in speech, in knowledge, in complete earnestness and in your love for us—see that you also excel in this grace of giving” (2 Corinthians 8:7). In other words, just as we grow in faith and speech and knowledge of eternal things by the Holy Spirit through the Word of God, so also do we grow in giving from the same Spirit through the same Word.

The problem is that the grace of generosity often grows cold in us. It’s not so much that we stop giving, but we don’t put it first. We treat it like all the other bills that must be paid. It becomes a chore, just one more thing to check off a list of things to do. That empties it of its spiritual power and robs us of the joy that Christ and the Scriptures assign to it.

On top of that, since this generosity is linked to faith and knowledge of divine things, a lack of excelling in giving is a sure sign that our faith and knowledge of God are under attack as well.

Thus St. Paul points to the foundation of generosity: the generosity of Christ Himself. Even though He was rich, He became poor so that we who are poor might become rich. Thus, the incarnation, suffering, and death of our Lord on the cross is the reason, source, and driving force for our generosity in giving to the church.

And since Christ who was rich became poor so that we might be rich in His grace—of which generous giving is part—so we also who are rich in His grace can excel in pressing His grace into service toward the gracious work of the church.

Pay attention to what you give to the church so that you may excel at it. And if you find that your heart has grown cold or indifferent toward it, immerse yourself in God’s Word. Read it at home. Attend Bible Class. Hear and listen to it preached in the Divine Service.

Be reminded of what Christ has done for you in His incarnation, suffering, and death. For this will strengthen your faith and knowledge. And where that excels, so will the grace of giving excel also.



Together in the Word

Sunday Adult Bible Class at 10:25 a.m. led by Pastor James "Stuff They Didn't Teach Me In Sunday School" is very interesting. Plan on coming.

Monday morning Bible class at 9:30 a.m., led by Pastor James is studying the lessons that will be read in the services the following weekend. Come and join us! Bring a friend.

Monday -Albert Lea Home Bible Studies at the Baileys They live at 435 East 3rd Street (corner of Frank Hall Drive & East 3rd street). The subject is The Story of Angels ,,, Their Beginning and Being, Satan and Fallen Angels, Angel Titles: Names and Activities, The Angel of the Lord, Guarding and Avenging Angels, Watching and Communicating Angels, Angels and Jesus, Evil Angels Today, Angels and Believers Today, On Judgment Day and Forever." **Everyone is welcome to come - 6:30 p.m..**

Tuesday - Women's Bible study at 1:00 p.m *Revelation*

Thursday -Men's Bible Study at 5:00 p.m. Ever wondered if some texts were intentionally excluded from the Bible and why? In our next study called *Lost Books?* the **Men's Bible Study** looks at why some ancient writings failed to make the cut for inclusion, why other texts most definitely met the standard, and why others, including those so called "gospels" found in the last century, came up short.

In *Lost Books?*, host Rev. Gregory Seltz, Speaker of **The Lutheran Hour**, asks, "Were books intentionally excluded from the Bible? What if more information about Christ's life was buried for centuries? Are there books that should be in the Bible, but aren't?" Are these questions important? *Absolutely!* With worldwide hits like *The Da Vinci Code* and commercial and cable networks cranking out programs on cracking cryptic codes and unburying ancient secrets, the interest in knowing what the past has to say is running high.

Thursday - 7:30 p.m. Gray Matters meets at Perkins Restaurant. Join us in a free-flowing discussion.

People of all ages need to be studying God's Word in addition to worship.

LifeLight

The LifeLight Bible study of 2nd Corinthians will begin on Thursday March 8th at 10:00 a.m. This is a new Bible study so all are welcome to join. There will be a sign-up sheet on the East bulletin board and study guides will be available the last part of February in the church office. I look forward to leading this Bible study and all are welcome.
Clayton Petersen

ST. JOHN'S CHURCH COUNCIL MEETING

January 9, 2018

The January 9, 2018, meeting was called to order by President Vance Oelkers at 7:01 p.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Pastor James Groleau, Vance Oelkers, David Ruhnke, Donna Bailey, Adam Meyer, Lori Siegfried, Dale Siegfried, Darrel Bahn, Kathy Carlson, Pam Reistad

OPENING DEVOTION: Pastor Groleau

SECRETARY'S REPORT: M/S/P to accept the secretary's report for December 12, 2017, as corrected.

TREASURER'S REPORT: Net Operating Income: \$36,005.82. Net Decrease in Designated Assets: (\$34,870.28). M/S/P to accept the Treasurer's report, as written.

ELDERS' REPORT: Pastor could use some help with shut-in calls and Pastor Bailey is agreeable to help with that. M/S/P to utilize Pastor Bailey to make shut-in calls to be paid per call plus mileage. It will involve approximately 2 to 3 days per month to be worked out with Pastor James. M/S/P to grant a request to release Teri Watkins from membership. February 4th is Boy Scout Sunday. We as sponsors of Boy Scout Troop 113 will invite the troop and their families to worship with us and possibly help hand out bulletins and Pastor will recognize them. Communion and distribution of ashes will be included in the Ash Wednesday service on February 14th. In anticipation of the closing of Holy Cross Church, their members would like to get to know Pastor James and asked if he would preach and lead bible class a couple of Sundays in the near future. We would like them to feel welcomed to join us once their doors are closed so Pastor James will contact them to make arrangements. The Elders decided to provide the supper before the Lenten service on March 21st.

TRUSTEES' REPORT: The normal monthly bills have been paid. We are having problems with one of the boilers and it needs to be replaced and may be under warranty. Christmas decorations have been taken down. A small dormer will be built above the east entry, when weather permits, to divert water away from the door to keep ice from forming on the sidewalk.

BOARD OF EDUCATION: The Sunday School Christmas program and birthday party for Jesus went good. The next meeting will be on Tuesday, January 16.

STEWARDSHIP BOARD: The Scrip gift card distribution schedule is set for January. The "Thought of the Month" stewardship message in the monthly newsletter continues.

YOUTH & FAMILY BOARD: No January meeting was held. We have a youth event planned for Sunday, January 28th to make Valentine cards for the shut-ins. M/S/P to donate/provide muffins once a month for the Youth for Christ get together for a cost of \$36.00 to come out of the Youth balance.

SOCIAL MINISTRY: No report.

EVANGELISM: They have not met yet in January. They will serve for the March 14 Lenten supper.

PASTOR'S REPORT: *Shut-in calls:* 20. *Classes Taught:* Sunday mornings – Stuff They Didn't Teach in Sunday School; Monday mornings – Lectionary Readings; Wednesdays – CASE & Confirmation; Thursday evenings – Grey Matters. *Worship Services:* Saturday & Sunday, Advent, Christmas & New Year; *Funerals:* 1 for Arlene Borchard; *Other:* 12/14 Meeting at Holy Cross to discuss mission ministry opportunities; Planning to show "The First Rosa" on 2/11/17 at 5:00 p.m.; 2/11/17 St John's will host the Circuit Forum at 4:00 p.m. to elect a Circuit Visitor and elect delegates for the District Convention; Lent and Easter planning: planning a Shrove Tuesday, may plan for a Maundy Thursday Seder and planning a Saturday Vigil; Starting to meet with kids at Youth for Christ; Vacation and Conference February 19-25. Beginning to explore preschool/daycare, using a model developed in previous parish. There is a great need for this in Austin and it can be a good tool for outreach, but there are many hurdles to get started. Met with Asian African Emigrant Services to discuss how we can help them assimilate emigrants into our culture and the Austin community. Many of the leaders of those various cultures are seeking specifically Christian place to help with that here in Austin.

OLD BUSINESS: We are still waiting for the sample padded chairs to come in because they are backordered.

NEW BUSINESS: Board Lenten suppers schedule: Social Ministry on February 14, Board of Education on February 21, Stewardship and Youth on February 28, Trustees on March 7, Evangelism on March 14, Elders on March 21.

ADJOURNMENT: M/S/P to adjourn @ 8:02 p.m.

CLOSING PRAYER: The Lord's Prayer

Respectfully submitted: Pamela Reistad, Council Secretary

Twelve Days of Christmas – Answers (cont)

11) Simon Peter, Andrew, James, John, Philip, Bartholomew, Matthew, Thomas, James, Simon, Judas son of James

12) 1. God creator

2. Jesus His Son

3. Conceived by Holy Spirit

4. Pilate, crucified, died buried

5. Hell, rose 3rd day

6. Heaven, right hand

7. Will come again

8. Holy Spirit

9. Church communion of saints

10. Forgiveness of sins

11. Resurrection of body

12. Everlasting Life

Christian Women-

February is an opportunity to start preparing our hearts and minds for Easter. Ash Wednesday starts the season of repentance and reflection as we concentrate on our Lord's suffering and His love for us. The month of love seems very appropriate—we love our Lord and we love each other.

We would like to collect mites this month. Please put your mite donations in the mite box at the back of the church.

Quilting on Mondays is ongoing. We can use extra help. Stop in for a few hours and help out if you can—all women and men are welcome.

Our LWML donation for February is to a seminary student.

Enjoy the month of love and serve our Lord. Sandy Grant



This is a schedule of when the children will sing. Please put these dates on your calendar! Remember to please have your children to the church at 8:40 a.m. the days we sing.

January 21, 2018
 February 18, 2018
 March 25, 2018
 April 22, 2018
 May 20, 2018

Rejoice in the Lord Always
 My God is so Great
 Palm Sunday Hosanna
 Hallelujah! Jesus Lives
 The Butterfly Song

St. John's Lutheran Church Financial Recap
January 1, 2016 through December 31, 2016

<u>Undesignated Assets</u>	<u>Balance 1/1/17</u>	<u>Activity</u>	<u>Balance 12/31/17</u>	<u>Notes</u>
Cash	\$180,843.59	\$34,513.48	\$215,357.07	Undesignated Assets represent the funds available for general operating purposes.
Prepays/Other Assets	15,598.00	-110.07	15,487.93	
Buildings & Land	3,015,781.00	0.00	3,015,781.00	
Liabilities	-5,832.33	<u>1,602.41</u>	-4,229.92	
Net Operating Income		<u>\$36,005.82</u>		
<u>Designated Assets</u>				
Building Fund	\$45,694.43	\$55,364.87	\$101,059.30	Designated Assets represent all of the various funds that can be contributed to for the designated purpose.
Building Fund-Roof Repair	79,007.56	-79,007.56	0.00	
Building Fund-Parking Lot	10,000.00	-10,000.00	0.00	
Needy Family Fund	3,772.08	-1,705.00	2,067.08	
Women's Ministry Fund	2,066.56	-5.69	2,060.87	
Rachel's Hope Fund	0.00	0.00	0.00	
Musical Equipment Fund	283.68	0.00	283.68	
Library Books Fund	412.76	100.62	513.38	
Choir Robes Fund	3,111.00	0.00	3,111.00	
Sunday School Fund	20.00	50.00	70.00	
Memorial Fund	14,713.80	590.00	15,303.80	
Praise Band Fund	3,194.40	-59.00	3,135.40	
Youth Fund	10,317.64	908.17	11,225.81	
Multimedia Fund	700.00	0.00	700.00	
Scrip Fund	8,293.00	2,005.06	10,298.06	
Sumner School Fund	15,650.53	-3,413.43	12,237.10	
Endowment Fund	43,581.44	<u>301.68</u>	43,883.12	
Decrease in Designated Assets		<u>\$-34,870.28</u>		

Volunteer Schedule

***Thank you
to all of our
volunteers
who make
our worship
special.***

February Ushers

Head Usher: Randy Graff

Saturday evening: Gene Pfeifer, Clayton Petersen, Rocky Schammel

Sunday morning: Albie & Connie Gilsrud, Beth Saurer

February Communion Assistants

04 Nathan Wradislavsky, Dave Ruhnke, Tim Carlson

18 Dick Hueton, Dave Ruhnke, Nathan Wradislavsky

February Lectors

04 Larry Waters 18 Gloria Dirksen

11 Carol Schleicher 25 Dick Heuton

February Acolytes

Kylea Rupe and Randi Lynn Strouf



February Birthdays for Shut-ins

22 Janet Augustin Cedars #132, 700 1st Drive NW, Austin, MN 55912

22 Grace VanProosdy Cedars #255, 700 1st Drive NW, Austin, MN 55912

Our shut-ins would truly appreciate a card, phone call or visit during the month. A list of all the shut-ins is on the bulletin boards.



St. John's Lutheran Church
1200 13th Avenue NW
Austin, MN 55912

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ST. JOHN'S NEWS



NEWSLETTER

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