



# St. John's Lutheran Church

## Mission Statement:

**"Growing disciples who eagerly share Christ's Love!"**

### SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST

Church News - Calendar

News from Pastor Halom

Youth & Family Announcements

Christmas Greetings from Bishop Laurie

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### The CRISIS of CHRISTMAS

Dear Members and Friends of the Northwest Synod of Wisconsin, Christmas 2020 will occur while we are living through of a series of crises. Here's the list: the pandemic, economic losses, protests against racial injustices, an ongoing climate crisis, and a divided country following a contentious presidential election. I'm not going to lie, it's been stressful for me, and I imagine it has been for you, too. As Christians, we have been moving through these crisis-filled days with the expectation that God is present and God's promises are true. We move forward with hope.

The two Chinese characters for the word "crisis," 危机, have often been translated as "danger" and "opportunity." Others say that a better translation is "danger" and "change point." What dangers do you see as your congregation moves toward celebrating the Birth of our Savior – Christmas - in a totally new way? What "opportunities" or "change points" do you see that could propel your church forward in a positive way into God's future?

Mary experienced a theological crisis when the angel Gabriel revealed to her God's plan to enter this world by the baby in her womb. Mary's body was the center of a theological crisis - much like the theological crisis caused by a virus that has invaded the bodies of our loved ones, and the theological crisis of abused and broken black and brown bodies, and the theological crisis experienced in the misuse of this planet on which all bodies live. Where is God in the crisis? What does this mean?

In a crisis, God comes to us. John 1:1,14 *In the beginning was the Word... and the Word was God...And the Word became flesh and lived among us.* Jesus is God, divine and human. God took up residence and moved into our neighborhood. God goes where God's people go and is who the people are. This is the theological promise of John's gospel. God is present with us in our times of crisis and suffering. This is the foundation of Luther's theology of the cross.

God is revealed through the crisis of Mary's pregnancy and Jesus' untimely birth in a Bethlehem barn. God is revealed in the crucifixion; through the body of Jesus, hanging on a cross. God is revealed through the risen body of Jesus on Easter Morning.

No matter how different Christmas is for you this year, no matter what crisis arises, God is there, present as promised, in the WORD made flesh. May the story of Jesus' birth bring you much needed joy and hope this holiday season and may the presence of God comfort you in the new year. AMEN

*Rev. Laurie Halom, Oshkosh*

Office number: 715-568-5446

Like us on Facebook! **St. John's Lutheran Church - Bloomer, WI**

St. John's Website: [www.Stjohns-bloomer.org](http://www.Stjohns-bloomer.org)



## Please Join Our Church Family In Prayer



As we enter the month of December, please join our church family in prayer. Below you will find a list of those who we will be praying for. If you or someone you know would like to be added to one of the list please stop by the church office, call the office at 715-568-5446, or email the information to: [stjohnsl-secretary@bloomer.net](mailto:stjohnsl-secretary@bloomer.net)



### Prayers of Healing for our Church Family

Carolyn Bergh, Maggie Olson, Tom Buchner, Arlene Christianson, Ilene Pingel, Merv Marquardt, Willard Rogge, Rod Martin, Donna Kerckhove & Rene Kerckhove (Pat Prill's daughters), Steve Trubshaw, Family and Friends of Tom Smith.

### Prayers for our Active Military

Jacob Dachel, Jacob Johnson, Danielle Shipman, Kelsey Leavens, Trenton Beaudette, Ryan Heiss

### Prayers for the Saints

Prayers for the week of December 6<sup>th</sup>: Damian, Sara, Ava, Hank and Henry Prince; Kerry, Arianna, Isabella and Rebecca Rauscher; Loraine Reetz; Rosanne Reid.

Prayers for the week of December 13<sup>th</sup>: Amanda, Chuck, Gavin and Grant Richardson; Beverly Rihn; Denise Rihn; Eva Rihn; Jason, Jean, Leo and Wyatt Rihn; Jeff and Brandi Rihn.

Prayers for the week of December 20<sup>th</sup>: Joyce Rihn; Patti and Tyler Rihn; Richard Rihn; Rosella Rihn; Janet and Willard Rogge; Jeff, Shelli and Samantha Rogge; Ashley, James, Athena, Lennon and Paris Rogge.

Prayers for the week of December 27<sup>th</sup>: Andrew, Chassy, Cora and Corbin Roggenbuck; Clifford Romfoe; Daniel, Suzette and Travis Rosenbrook; Marlene Rosenbrook; Barbara and Ray Ross.

# Church News



## Give Comfort and Joy to Patients in Need!



The **Bloomer Moose Lodge** will be hosting a

**Red Cross Blood Drive on Wed. Dec. 23, 2020 from 11:30—5:30**

To schedule an appointment, visit [RedCrossBlood.org](http://RedCrossBlood.org) or call Beth at 568-5891. It is about the busiest season of the year for most of us. That makes your donation even more important than ever, as blood shortages occur at holidays.

The **Red Cross** is testing blood donations for COVID-19 antibodies. As part of this effort, plasma from standard blood donations that test positive for COVID-19 antibodies may now help current coronavirus patients in need of convalescent plasma transfusions.

The **Red Cross** takes every precaution for your safety. Temperature screening will take place at the door. Masks will be required, and provided if need be.



### Deadline for

### January Newsletter

If you would like to submit anything for the newsletter please make sure to get it to the church secretary no later than

**December 23rd.**

**Thank You!!**

## FINANCE UPDATE

Year-To-Date as of Nov. 27, 2020

Year-To-Date:

Weekly Contributions	\$179,527.70
Other Raised Funds	<u>11,585.68</u>
<b>Total Received</b>	<b>\$ 191,113.38</b>
- Expenses	<u>\$-223,434.32</u>
<b>Total remaining after expenses</b>	<b>\$ -32,320.94</b>

**NEEDED:** Someone to continue organizing St John's Lutheran Church 'Meals On Wheels' volunteers to deliver meals in the months of January and July for the upcoming year/s.

To volunteer, please contact:  
Pauline Stertz at :

[pauline.stertz@gmail.com](mailto:pauline.stertz@gmail.com) or  
(715) 828-5714

**DECEMBER 2020**

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<b>29</b> 9:00 AM Worship Service Available Online 6:30 PM Fed & Forgiven	<b>30</b>	<b>1</b> 3:30 PM Staff Meeting	<b>2</b> Final Day of Butterbraid Fundraiser 11:00 AM Bloomer Clergy Assoc. Mtg-Pastor 5:30 PM Faith Formation	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>6</b> 9:00 AM Worship Service Available Online 6:30 PM Fed & Forgiven	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b> 5:30 PM Church Council Meeting	<b>9</b> 5:00 PM Dove Healthcare "Honor & Remember Them" tree lighting ceremony 5:30 PM Faith Formation	<b>10</b> 10:00 AM Pastor's Conference	<b>11</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>13</b> 9:00 AM Worship Service Available Online 5:30 PM - 7:30 PM Youth In Action 6:30 PM Fed & Forgiven	<b>14</b> 5:00 PM Youth Committee Meeting (zoom)	<b>15</b> 3:30 PM Staff Meeting	<b>16</b> Confirmation Class- Christmas Caroling 5:30 PM Faith Formation	<b>17</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>20</b> 9:00 AM Worship Service Available Online 4:00 PM Ecumenical Christmas Service- Pageant	<b>21</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>23</b> 11:30 AM - 5:30 PM Red Cross Blood Drive at Bloomer Moose Lodge	<b>24</b> *CHRISTMAS EVE* - Recorded Worship Service Available online	<b>25</b> MERRY CHRISTMAS!! (recorded Worship service online)	<b>26</b>
<b>27</b> 9:00 AM Worship Service Available Online	<b>28</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>

# Church Council Minutes (via Zoom) November 10, 2020

**Call to Order:** Meeting called to order at 5:30 PM by President Tyler Halverson.

**Opening Devotion:** Perspective is important. Praying for continued strength and healing for Steve after lengthy hospitalization and upcoming surgery and comfort and peace for Marcy as his caregiver; prayers for those battling COVID-19 and for the health care workers as they tend to the patients and struggle with becoming overwhelmed; praying for our nation to come together in peace and become less divided and more united.

**Approval of Agenda:** A motion was made by Suzi McInnis, seconded by Tom Ewings, to approve the agenda, with flexibility. Motion carried.

**Approval of Minutes – Regular Meeting, October 13, 2020:** A motion was made by Tom Ewings, seconded by Suzi McInnis, to approve the minutes. Motion carried.

**Approval of Minutes – Special Meeting, October 29, 2020:** A motion was made by Marcy Trubshaw, seconded by Tom Ewings, to approve the minutes. Motion carried.

## **Financial Report:**

Due to lack of funds, Line of Credit will need to be utilized to pay expenses.

A motion was made by Kathy Tozer, seconded by Suzi McInnis, to approve the financial report. Motion carried.

## **Committee Reports:**

**Property Committee:** Fall clean up was held November 7, 2020.

**Youth/Family:** Learning events are being held via Zoom.

## **Council President's Report:**

Reminder to submit items to be included on the next agenda by noon Tuesday of the week prior to council meeting. **Next regular council meeting will be December 8, 2020 at 5:30 via Zoom.**

## **Pastor's Report:**

### **Membership Update:**

*Baptism:* Joselyn Bowe

*Transfer to Church Triumphant:* Marge Melberg.

A motion was made by Melissa Sarauer, seconded by Suzi McInnis, to approve the membership update. Motion carried.

## **Old Business**

### **COVID Update:**

All in-person events are suspended due to COVID-19. Learning is via Zoom. Worship is via Facebook. Advent services will begin Wednesday, December 2 via Facebook with Sunday messages from Synod.

### **Preschool Proposal:**

A motion was made by Suzi McInnis, seconded by Marcy Trubshaw, to approve the Agreement in Principle for Proposed Merger of St. John's Preschool with St. John's Lutheran, and to authorize Tyler Halverson to sign Letter of Intent on behalf of council. Motion carried.

## **New Business**

### **Constitution and Bylaw Amendments:**

A motion was made by Suzi McInnis, seconded by Tom Ewings, to approve proposed changes to St. John's Lutheran Constitution to be forwarded to congregation for review. Motion carried.

# Church Council Minutes *(continued)* News from Pastor Martin

## **Budget:**

Committees need to submit budget items ASAP as council will vote on budget at December meeting.

## **Additional Items and Comments:**

**2021 Annual Meeting is scheduled for Sunday, January 17, 2021 at 10:00 AM, with a make up date of Sunday, January 24, 2021, via unanimous consent.**

Due to COVID restrictions, meeting may take place via Zoom, with considerations taken for those unable to access internet. 50 people are needed for a quorum. Congregation members will be informed and given opportunity to "practice Zoom" prior to the Annual Meeting.

Tyler and Lydia will compose an informational letter to the congregation thanking them for their generosity and imploring them to remember St. John's in their giving.

**A motion to adjourn was made at 6:54 PM by Suzi McInnis, seconded by Kathy Tozer. Motion carried.**

**Closing Prayer:** The Lord's Prayer led by Pastor Martin.

Reminder to submit items to be included on the next agenda by noon Tuesday of the week prior to council meeting. **Next Meeting will be December 8, 2020 at 5:30 via Zoom.**

*Lisa Prill, Secretary*

**Present via Zoom:** Pastor Martin, Tyler Halverson, Melissa Sarauer, Lydia Blaha, Suzi McInnis, Kathy Tozer, Tom Ewings, Adam Anderson, Marcy Trubshaw, Pat Prill, Lisa Prill. **Absent:** Driah Zakrzewicz.

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## **A COVID CHRISTMAS PAGEANT**

Christmas is usually a time of tradition. But 2020 has brought us very little "usual". Usually we pack the church for our annual Christmas pageant as told by our kids. We have all seen the usual developments: little girls flip up their skirts, little boys make faces, someone gets sick, and all declare the Christmas pageant as perfection! Well, usually...

This year, we will not be indoors as usual. In fact, we won't even be solely at St. John's as usual! This year, things will be different. And it may even be the most memorable part of your Christmas experience this year.

Several Bloomer churches have come together to plan an ecumenical five scene Christmas pageant that will take us to FIVE different churches!

- St. Paul's Catholic church – The Annunciation
- Christ Lutheran offices – Joseph's Dream
- Bloomer United Methodist Church – The Journey to Bethlehem
- First Congregational United Church of Christ – The Nativity
- St. John's Lutheran Church – The Shepherds in the Fields

On **Sunday, Dec. 20**, each scene will be set outdoors to help us be safe and allow for appropriate physical distancing for family units. Masks should be worn for safety, not to mention warmth!

Participants can travel from scene to scene on foot or vehicle, but those on foot will be escorted by a song leader so that we can sing our favorite Christmas Carols with everything we've got!

# News From Pastor Martin *(continued)*

There are also multiple starting times. At St. Paul's Catholic Church, scenes will start at **4:00, 4:10, 4:20, 4:30, 4:40, 4:50, and 5:00**. So you can come for any of those starting times and make your way to the remaining four scenes. Groups will be limited to 25 people per scene for safety purposes, not including those who choose to remain in their cars. Once you've made your way through the five scenes, you will have heard the entire Christmas story as portrayed by each church and likely sung your heart out. Like I said, things are not as usual, but just as memorable.

A monetary offering will be collected at St. John's Lutheran for the Bloomer/New Auburn Food Pantry so that we can still reach out in love to those in need. Checks should be made out to "Bloomer Food Pantry". Your generosity will make a long-lasting difference. Your generosity will spread God's love throughout our local community. "Oh Come let us adore him – Christ the Lord!"

*Pastor Martin.*

## ADVENT/CHRISTMAS WORSHIP

One of the great St. John's worship traditions is to offer multiple worship experiences each week when the season of Advent begins, which will be Nov. 29 this year. This year, we will do our best to once again give quality and meaningful worship experiences online since we cannot meet in person yet.

On Sundays, our synod leadership has put together a shorter interactive worship experience that will focus on justice themes. Home worshipers are encouraged to find up to four candles to light as a make-shift Advent wreath lighting, something we customarily do each week.

The weekly themes are as follows:

<b>Nov. 29</b>	<b>Hope Lives</b>	<b>Dec. 6</b>	<b>Peace Grows</b>
<b>Dec. 13</b>	<b>Love Unites</b>	<b>Dec. 20</b>	<b>Joy Overflows</b>

As usual, these services will be available on our website and Facebook page by 9 am on Sunday morning and you can watch them all at your leisure.

On Wednesdays, we will continue our annual tradition by offering "Holden Evening Prayer". I will offer my weekly sermon on typical Advent themes each week. Many thanks to our amazing musicians: Bobbi Stouffer, Tyler Halverson, Melinda Halom, and Kim Schulze. They have done an amazing job of providing the liturgy that surrounds the weekly message. We are truly blessed! These services can also be found on our website and Facebook page by 6 pm each Wednesday (Dec. 2, 9, 16, and 23) for your worship experience.

Finally, our Christmas worship opportunity will also be online. Christmas Eve falls on a Thursday this year and the pre-recorded worship will be available by 9 am. There will be no Christmas Day worship this year. The Christmas Eve service will be a fuller worship experience than our normal pre-recorded services due to the addition of Christmas carols as well as an at home communion experience. You will need to provide your own bread, wine, and/or grape juice, but we want to make sure you have an opportunity to participate in the sacrament on such a special day.

## ANNUAL MEETING SET

The church council has set the annual meeting date for **Sunday, Jan. 17 at 10 am**. This year, we will in all likelihood meet virtually due to the worsening pandemic. Those with internet accessibility will be invited to participate in a Zoom meeting. Those without internet accessibility can either go to the home of someone who does or call into the meeting with any phone. Details will be forthcoming.

On Jan. 10, we will have a test run to practice. For those with little Zoom experience, this would be a great opportunity to try it out. The good news is that any of our voting members across the country will be able to attend the virtual meeting, which is a blessing for those who travel!

On the agenda we will consider several bylaws changes as they relate to the St. John's Preschool and St. John's Foundation. The Nominating Committee will also present three adult and one youth candidate for three adult and one youth opening. Finally, our 2021 operating budget will be presented for adoption as well.

The annual meeting for the **St. John's Foundation** will immediately follow.

# Youth Announcements

## YOUTH & FAMILY MINISTRY

### CONFIRMATION SCHEDULE

Confirmation students, please join us on Zoom for class! If you have any questions about which week you are in, please email or call Katie or Pastor Martin.

12/2: Group A

12/9: Group B

12/16: Christmas Caroling

12/23: Merry Christmas Eve Eve!

12/30: Happy New Years Eve Eve!



### YOUTH IN ACTION



**Who:** 9<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> Grade Youth

**When:** Sunday, December 13<sup>th</sup> @ 5:30-7:30pm

**Where:** Online via Zoom

Join us for a time of virtual fellowship, playing games, eating dinner, story telling, and a whole lot of fun!!

### JESUS & ME (JAM) LIVE LESSON SCHEDULE

Join Katie for a live Zoom JAM lesson where we will read our Bible story of the week, play some games, and have some discussion about what we've learned!

12/2: 3<sup>rd</sup>/4<sup>th</sup> @ 5:30pm, 5<sup>th</sup> @ 6pm

12/9: K/1<sup>st</sup> @ 5:30pm, 2<sup>nd</sup> @ 6pm

12/16: 3<sup>rd</sup>/4<sup>th</sup> @ 5:30pm, 5<sup>th</sup> @ 6pm

12/23: Merry Christmas Eve Eve!

12/30: Happy New Years Eve Eve!



### CHRISTMAS CAROLING

We invite you to join the confirmation students on Wednesday, December 16<sup>th</sup> at 6:30pm

for some outdoor

*Christmas caroling!*

Masks are required.



### BUTTER BRAIDS FUNDRAISER

**End Date:** Dec. 2<sup>nd</sup>

**Delivery Date:** Dec. 11

If you are selling Butter Braids, please return the order form and ONE CHECK to:

**St. John's Lutheran Church**

**Attn: Katie O'Connell**

**1403 Newman St.**

**Bloomer, WI 54724**

If you've ordered through the church, you can send your money to this address as well.



### FED & FORGIVEN

Join Pastor Martin and Wendy LaGesse for

**Fed & Forgiven Classes**

*(first communion)*

**Who:** 5<sup>th</sup> & 6<sup>th</sup> Graders

**When:** Dec. 6 & 13 @ 6:30pm

**Where:** Online via Zoom

# Youth Committee Meeting November 16, 2020 *(via zoom)*

**Present:** Pastor Martin, Katie O'Connell, Kathy Tozer, Melissa Sarauer, Beth Halverson, Lisa Prill.

**JAM:**

Live Zoom sessions are going well (3-6 per session.)

Adjustments may need to be made (combining grades 3-5?)

**Rite of Confirmation:**

Meeting on Wednesday, November 17<sup>th</sup> at 7:30 PM. Tentatively planning for spring.

Will discuss alternatives to stoles (prayer box?)

**Fed & Forgiven:**

First session was held with three more planned. Hope to be finished by mid-December.

8-9 youth are participating.

**Butter braid fundraiser:**

Orders are due by December 2, 2020.

Hard to tell how many are participating in sale at this point.

**Quake:**

St. John's will participate virtually, but if possible, may gather as small group in sanctuary.

Friday, February 26, 2021 is pre-recorded session. Live Quake is Saturday, February 27, 2021.

Cost is \$50 per person. St. John's would pay half the cost.

**Christmas:**

Instead of a Christmas pageant, we are participating in an ecumenical Christmas program.

Begins at St. Paul Catholic, to Christ Lutheran Service Station, the United Methodist, next UCC Congregational and ending at St. John's Lutheran. Each congregation will portray a scene.

Anticipated date is Sunday, December 20, late afternoon. Back-up date of Wednesday, December 23, evening.

**Mission Trip:**

Katie will reach out to youth that were signed up last year to see if they are interested.

Suggested that deposit of \$50 should be turned in before the end of December.

Air travel is inexpensive at this time; might be incentive to book early?

**Budget:**

Budget request for 2021 Youth and Family Committee is \$15,000.

**Next meeting will be Monday, December 14 at 5:00 PM via Zoom.**



**ST. JOHN'S LUTHERAN CHURCH**  
1403 Newman Street  
Bloomer, WI 54724

**ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED**

**715-568-5446**  
Email: [stjohnsl-secretary@bloomer.net](mailto:stjohnsl-secretary@bloomer.net)

**Non-Profit Org.  
US Postage Paid  
Permit #15  
Bloomer, WI**

**PASTORAL/ CONGREGATIONAL CARE**

Need a visit? Yearning for Holy Communion? Have a problem? Want to suggest ways we can be of more help to you and your family? Feel you'd like to pray with someone?

**CALL: Pastor Martin Halom**

Church # 715-568-5446, extension 11

Home # 715-568-1515

Cell # 517-505-6509

Email: [pastormartin@bloomer.net](mailto:pastormartin@bloomer.net)