

***St. John's Evangelical Lutheran Church & School***

*711 & 805 W 5<sup>th</sup> St., Neillsville, WI 54456*

**Member of the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod.**

*Humble  
Yourselves  
Under  
God's Powerful  
Hand*

*Epiphany 4  
February 4, 2024*



# 624 Praise to the Lord, the Almighty CW 21



1 Praise to the Lord, the Al - might - y, the King of cre -  
 2 Praise to the Lord, who o'er all things is won - drous - ly  
 3 Praise to the Lord, who has fear - ful - ly, won - drous - ly,  
 4 Praise to the Lord, who will pros - per your work and de -  
 5 Praise to the Lord! O let all that is in me a -



a - tion! O my soul, praise him, for he is your  
 reign - ing and, as on wings of an ea - gle, up -  
 made you, health has be - stowed and, when heed - less - ly  
 fend you; sure - ly his good - ness and mer - cy shall  
 dore him! All that has life and breath, come now with



health and sal - va - tion! Let all who hear now to his  
 lift - ing, sus - tain - ing. Have you not seen how all that's  
 fall - ing, has stayed you. What need or grief ev - er has  
 dai - ly at - tend you. Pon - der a - new what the Al -  
 prais - es be - fore him! Let the a - men sound from his



tem - ple draw near, join - ing in glad ad - o - ra - tion!  
 need - ful has been sent by his gra - cious or - dain - ing?  
 failed of re - lief? Wings of his mer - cy did shade you.  
 might - y can do as with his love he be - friends you.  
 peo - ple a - gain; glad - ly for - ev - er a - dore him!

Text: tr. Catherine Winkworth, 1827–1878, alt.; Joachim Neander, 1650–1680  
 Tune: Ander Theil Des Erneuerten Gesang-Buchs, Stralsund, 1665, alt  
 Text and tune: Public domain

## ***Order of Worship: The Service Setting 2 (CW 21)***

*Throughout the service, the congregation speaks (or sings) the parts printed in bold.*

In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

**Amen.**

### **Confession**

Blessed are they whose transgressions are forgiven, whose sins are covered.

**Blessed are they whose sin the Lord does not count against them.**

Let us confess our sins to the Lord.

**Almighty and merciful Father,**

**we have strayed from your ways like lost sheep.**

**We have followed what we have devised and desired in our hearts.**

**We have offended you and sinned against your holy law.**

**We have done those things that we should not have done,  
and we have not done those things that we should have done.**

**Have mercy on us, Lord!**

**Spare us, forgive us, and restore us,  
according to your promises in Christ Jesus.**

God, our merciful Father, has forgiven all our sins. He sent his Son, Jesus Christ, to be our Redeemer and Savior. Jesus paid the penalty for our guilt by his death on the cross and freed us from death by his resurrection from the grave. We have peace with God now and forever.

**Amen.**

# Lord, Have Mercy

In peace let us pray to the Lord.



Lord, have mer - cy.

For the peace from above and for our salvation, let us pray to the Lord.



Lord, have mer - cy.

For the peace of the whole world, for the well-being of the Church of God, and for the unity of all, let us pray to the Lord.



Lord, have mer - cy.

For this holy house and for all who offer here their worship and praise, let us pray to the Lord.



Lord, have mer - cy.

Help, save, comfort, and defend us, gracious Lord.



A - men.

Tune: Marty Haugen

Tune: © 1984, 1985 GIA Publications, Inc. Used by permission: OneLicense no. 716538

# Glory Be to God



Glo - ry to God in the high - est, and peace to his



peo - ple on earth. Lord God,



heav - en - ly King, al - mighty God and Fa - ther, we



wor - ship you, we give you thanks, we praise you for your



glo - ry. Glo - ry to God in the high - est, and



peace to his peo - ple on earth.



Lord Je - sus Christ, on - ly Son of the Fa - ther,



Lord God, Lamb of God, you take a - way the sin of the



world; have mer - cy on us. You are seat - ed at the

right hand of the Fa - ther; re - ceive our prayer.

Glo - ry to God in the high - est, and peace to his

peo - ple on earth. For you a -

lone are the Ho - ly One, you a - lone are the Lord,

you a - lone are the Most High, Je - sus Christ,

with the Ho - ly Spir - it in the glo - ry of

God the Fa - ther. A - men. A - men.

Glo - ry to God in the high - est, and peace to his

peo - ple on earth.

Tune: Marty Haugen

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The Lord be with you.  
**And also with you.**

***Prayer of the Day***

Almighty God, you sent your one and only Son as the Word of life for our eyes to see and our ears to hear. Help us believe what the Scriptures proclaim about him and do the things that are pleasing in your sight; through Jesus Christ, your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

**Amen.**

***First Lesson: Isaiah 40:27-31***

*<sup>27</sup>Why do you speak, O Jacob?*

*O Israel, why do you say,*

*“My way is hidden from the LORD,*

*and justice for me is ignored by my God”?*

*<sup>28</sup>Do you not know? Have you not heard?*

*The LORD is the eternal God.*

*He is the Creator of the ends of the earth.*

*He will not grow tired, and he will not become weary.*

*No one can find a limit to his understanding.*

*<sup>29</sup>He is the one who gives strength to the weak,*

*and he increases the strength of those who lack power.*

*<sup>30</sup>Young men grow tired and become weary.*

*Even strong men stumble and fall.*

*<sup>31</sup>But those who wait for the LORD will receive new strength.*

*They will lift up their wings and soar like eagles.*

*They will run and not become weary.*

*They will walk and not become tired.*

The Word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

**Psalm 103 CW 93**

*Refrain*



I will hear what the Lord pro-claims: peace to his peo - ple.

*Psalm tone*



Praise the LORD, O my soul;\*

all my inmost being, praise his holy name.

He forgives all your sins\*

and heals all your diseases;

he redeems your life from the grave\*

and crowns you with love and compassion. **Refrain**

The LORD is compassionate and gracious,\*

slow to anger, abounding in love.

He does not treat us as our sins deserve\*

or repay us according to our iniquities.

For as high as the heavens are above the earth,\*

so great is his love for those who fear him;

as far as the east is from the west,\*

so far has he removed our transgressions from us. **Refrain**

As a father has compassion on his children,\*

so the LORD has compassion on those who fear him;

for he knows how we are formed,\*

he remembers that we are dust.

Our days are like grass, like a flower of the field;\*

the wind blows over it and it is gone.

But the LORD'S love is with those who fear him\*

from everlasting to everlasting.

**Glory be to the Father and to the Son\***

**and to the Holy Spirit,**

**as it was in the beginning,\***

**is now, and will be forever. Amen. **Refrain****

Refrain Tune: From *The Psalms for the Day, Series C*. © 1976 Fortress Press. All rights reserved. Used by permission of Augsburg Fortress.

## Second Lesson: 1 Peter 5:6-11

*<sup>6</sup>Therefore humble yourselves under God's powerful hand so that he may lift you up at the appointed time. <sup>7</sup>Cast all your anxiety on him, because he cares for you. <sup>8</sup>Have sound judgment. Be alert. Your adversary, the Devil, prowls around like a roaring lion, looking for someone to devour. <sup>9</sup>Resist him by being firm in the faith. You know that the same kinds of sufferings are being laid on your brotherhood all over the world.*

*<sup>10</sup>After you have suffered a little while, the God of all grace, who called you into his eternal glory in Christ Jesus, will himself restore, establish, strengthen, and support you. <sup>11</sup>To him be the glory and the power forever and ever. Amen.*

The Word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

## Verse of the Day



Refrain



Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia.

## John 8:12

*Alleluia! Jesus said, "I am the Light of the World. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life." Alleluia!*

Refrain



Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia.

Tune: © 2010 GIA Publications, Inc. Used by permission: OneLicense no. 716538

**Gospel Lesson: Mark 1:29-39**

*<sup>29</sup>They left the synagogue and went with James and John to the home of Simon and Andrew. <sup>30</sup>Simon's mother-in-law was lying in bed, sick with a fever. Without delay they told Jesus about her. <sup>31</sup>He went to her, took her by the hand, and raised her up. The fever left her, and she began to serve them. <sup>32</sup>That evening, when the sun had set, the people kept bringing to him all who were sick and demon-possessed. <sup>33</sup>The whole town gathered at the door. <sup>34</sup>He healed many people who were sick with various diseases and drove out many demons. But he did not allow the demons to speak, because they knew who he was.*

*<sup>35</sup>Jesus got up early in the morning, while it was still dark, and went out. He withdrew to a solitary place and was praying there. <sup>36</sup>Simon and his companions searched for him, <sup>37</sup>and, when they found him, they said to him, "Everyone is looking for you!"*

*<sup>38</sup>He told them, "Let's go somewhere else, to the neighboring villages, so that I can preach there too. In fact, that is why I have come." <sup>39</sup>Then he went throughout the whole region of Galilee, preaching in their synagogues and driving out demons.*

The Gospel of the Lord.

**Praise be to you, O Christ!**

# 831 Why Should Cross and Trial Grieve Me CW 21



1 Why should cross and tri - al grieve me? Christ is near  
 2 When life's trou - bles rise to meet me, though their weight  
 3 God gives me my days of glad - ness, and I will  
 4 From God's joy can noth - ing sev - er, for I am  
 5 Since I know God nev - er fails me, in his voice



with his cheer; nev - er will he leave me.  
 may be great, they will not de - feat me.  
 trust him still when he sends me sad - ness.  
 his dear lamb, he, my Shep - herd ev - er.  
 I'll re - joice when grim death as - sails me.



Who can rob me of the heav - en that God's Son  
 God, my lov - ing Sav - ior, sees them; he who knows  
 God is good; his love at - tends me day by day,  
 I am his be - cause he gave me his own blood  
 Trust - ing in my Sav - ior's mer - it, safe at last,



for me won when his life was giv - en?  
 all my woes knows how best to end them.  
 come what may, guides me and de - fends me.  
 for my good, by his death to save me.  
 trou - bles past, I shall heav'n in - her - it.

Text: Paul Gerhardt, 1607–1676, abr.; (sts. 1–3): tr. Christian Worship, 1993; (st. 4): tr. Stephen P. Starke, b. 1955; (st. 5): tr. Harlyn J. Kuschel, b. 1945

Tune: Johann G. Ebeling, 1637–1676

Text (st. 4): © 2004 Stephen P. Starke, admin. Concordia Publishing House; (st. 5): © 1993 Harlyn J. Kuschel, admin. Northwestern Publishing House. Used by permission: OneLicense no. 716538

Text (sts. 1–3) and tune: Public domain

**SERMON TEXT: 1 Peter 5:6-11**

**TAKE ADVANTAGE OF GOD'S POWER**

- I. That depends on what you do.**
- II. That depends on God's promises.**

**NICENE CREED**

**We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty,  
maker of heaven and earth,  
of all that is,  
seen and unseen.**

**We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God,  
eternally begotten of the Father,  
God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God,  
begotten, not made,  
of one being with the Father.**

**Through him all things were made.**

**For us and for our salvation, he came down from  
heaven,**

**was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the virgin Mary,  
and became fully human.**

**For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate.**

**He suffered death and was buried.**

**On the third day he rose again in accordance with the  
Scriptures.**

**He ascended into heaven**

**and is seated at the right hand of the Father.**

**He will come again in glory to judge the living and the  
dead,**

**and his kingdom will have no end.**

**We believe in the Holy Spirit,**

**the Lord, the giver of life,**

**who proceeds from the Father and the Son,**

**who in unity with the Father and the Son is worshiped  
and glorified,**

**who has spoken through the prophets.**

**We believe in one holy Christian and apostolic Church.**

**We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.**

**We look for the resurrection of the dead**

**and the life of the world to come. Amen.**

**Offering**--*The members of St. John's have joined together to do the Lord's work in this community and around the world. Guests need not feel obligated to participate in this offering which supports our ministry, but please use this QR code to fill out a short form giving us a digital record of your attendance.*



*Visitors can also sign our guest register in the entryway by the drinking fountain.*

## **Prayer of the Church**

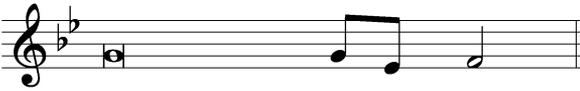
### **Preparation for Holy Communion**

The Lord be with you.



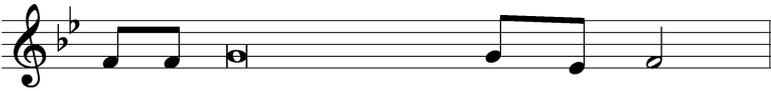
**And al - so with you.**

Lift up your hearts.



**We lift them up to the Lord.**

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.



**It is right to give him thanks and praise.**

Tune: Marty Haugen Tune: © 1984, 1985, 2010 GIA Publications, Inc. Used by permission: OneLicense no. 716538

It is truly good and right that we should at all times and in all places give you thanks, O Lord, holy Father, almighty and everlasting God, through Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lived among us as a human being and revealed his glory as your only Son, full of grace and truth.

Therefore, with all the saints on earth and hosts of heaven, we praise your holy name and join their glorious song:

# Holy, Holy, Holy



Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of pow - er,



God of might. Heav - en and earth are full of your



glo - ry. Ho - san - na in the high - est.



Bless - ed is he who comes in the name of the



Lord. Ho - san - na in the high - est, ho -



san - na in the high - est!

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## **Prayer**

Lord God, you are worthy to receive thanks and praise from all people. You created the world and all who live in it, and in your mercy you saved us. We give thanks to you for the grace of your Son, Jesus Christ.

Though in very nature God, he took the nature of a servant and became obedient to death, even death on a cross. He offered himself as a sacrifice for sin and redeemed us from its curse and penalty. He rescued us from the terrors of death and restored eternal life with you. He conquered our enemies and gained for us the kingdom of grace and glory.

Bless us as we receive your Son's body and blood, and lead us to remember his suffering, death, and resurrection. Forgive our sins and fill us with the hope of new life in heaven. Hear our praise and receive our thanks as we worship you—the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

**Amen.**

## **Lord's Prayer**

**Our Father in heaven,  
hallowed be your name,  
your kingdom come,  
your will be done  
on earth as in heaven.**

**Give us today our daily bread.**

**Forgive us our sins,  
as we forgive those  
who sin against us.**

**Lead us not into temptation,  
but deliver us from evil.**

**For the kingdom, the power,  
and the glory are yours  
now and forever. Amen.**

## Words of Institution

Our Lord Jesus Christ, on the night he was betrayed, took bread; and when he had given thanks, he broke it and gave it to his disciples, saying, "Take and eat; this is my  $\text{✠}$  body, which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me."

Then he took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, "Drink from it, all of you; this is my  $\text{✠}$  blood of the new covenant, which is poured out for you for the forgiveness of sins. Do this, whenever you drink it, in remembrance of me."

The peace of the Lord be with you always.

**Amen.**

## Jesus, Lamb of God



Je - sus, Lamb of God, you take a - way the



sin of the world; have mer - cy on us.



Je - sus, Lamb of God, you take a - way the



sin of the world; have mer - cy on us.



Je - sus, Lamb of God, you take a - way the



sin of the world; grant us your peace.

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**Distribution-St. John's practices "member communion." We ask, therefore, that only those who are members of St. John's or another WELS/ELS congregation partake of the sacrament.**

## 850 It Is Well with My Soul CW 21



1 When peace like a riv - er at - tend - eth my way, when  
2 Though Sa - tan should buf - fet, though tri - als should come, let  
3 My sin— oh, the bliss of this glo - ri - ous thought— my  
4 And, Lord, haste the day when my faith shall be sight, the



sor - rows like sea bil - lows roll— what - ev - er my lot, thou hast  
this blest as - sur - ance con - trol, that Christ hath re - gard - ed my  
sin, not in part, but the whole, is nailed to the cross, and I  
clouds be rolled back as a scroll; the trump shall re - sound, and the



taught me to say, it is well, it is well with my soul.  
help - less es - tate and hath shed his own blood for my soul.  
bear it no more: praise the Lord, praise the Lord, O my soul!  
Lord shall de - scend; e - ven so, it is well with my soul.

### *Refrain*



It is well with my soul, it is well, it is well with my soul.

Text: Horatio G. Spafford, 1828–1888, alt.

Tune: Philip P. Bliss, 1838–1876

Text and tune: Public domain

# 866 *If God Had Not Been on Our Side* CW 21



1 If God had not been on our side and had not  
2 Their fu - rious wrath, did God per - mit, would sure - ly  
3 Blest be the Lord, who foiled their threat that they could



come to aid us, our foes with all their pow'r and  
have con - sumed us and as a deep and yawn - ing  
not de - vour us. Our souls, like birds, es - caped their



pride would sure - ly have dis - mayed us, for we, his  
pit with life and limb en - tombed us. A hell - ish  
net; they could not o - ver - pow'r us. The snare is



flock, would have to fear the dev - il's wolves, both far and  
storm would o'er us roll from Sa - tan, who de - sires our  
bro - ken— we are free! Our help - er and our strength is



near, who rise in might a - gainst us.  
soul and seeks to o - ver - whelm us.  
he who made the earth and heav - ens.

Text: tr. The Lutheran Hymnal, 1941; Martin Luther, 1483–1546

Tune: Christian Egenolff, 1502–1555

Text: © 1941 Concordia Publishing House. Used by permission: OneLicense no. 716538

Tune: Public domain

Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good;  
**his mercy endures forever.**

Whenever we eat this bread and drink this cup,  
**We proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.**

We give you thanks, O Lord, for the foretaste of the heavenly banquet you have given us in this Sacrament. Through this gift you have fed our faith, nourished our hope, and strengthened our love. By your Spirit, help us to live as your holy people until that day when you will receive us as your guests at the wedding supper of the Lamb, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

**Amen.**

## **Blessing**

The Lord bless you and keep you.

The Lord make his face shine on you and be gracious to you.

The Lord look on you with favor and give you peace.

**Amen.**

520

Your Hand, O Lord, in Days of Old



1 Your hand, O Lord, in days of old Was  
 2 Your touch then, Lord, brought life and health, Gave  
 3 Oh, be our great de - liv - 'rer still, The



strong to heal and save; It tri - umphed o'er dis -  
 speech and strength and sight; And youth re - newed and  
 Lord of life and death; Re - store and quick - en,



ease and death, All dark - ness and the grave. To  
 fren - zy calmed Re - vealed you, Lord of light. And  
 soothe and bless, With your life - giv - ing breath. To



you they came, the blind, the dumb, The par - a -  
 now, O Lord, be near to bless, Al - might - y  
 hands that work and eyes that see Give wis - dom's



lyzed and lame, The lep - ers in their  
 as be - fore, In crowd - ed street, by  
 heal - ing pow'r That whole and sick and



mis - er - y, The sick with fe - vered frame.  
 beds of pain, As by Gen - nes - 'ret's shore.  
 weak and strong May praise you ev - er - more.

Text: Edward H. Plumptre, 1821-91, alt.  
 Tune: KINGSFOLD (CM D) English folk tune, 19th century, adapt.

# ***This Week at St. John's: Feb 4, 2024***

## **SERVING US TODAY**

Greeters: Dawn Arndt & Anita Berry

Ushers: Team 1-Joel Zschernitz' team

Altar Guild: Rachel Anderson & Jenny Shadrick

Donating Bulletins: Henry & Julie Berry

February Website: Ray & Sharon Wetzel in thankfulness for our Savior

## **SERVING US NEXT SUNDAY**

Greeters: Lynn Crothers & Janice Suckow

Ushers: Team 2-Verlyn Shaw's team

Altar Guild: Judy Trunkel

## **~OPPORTUNITIES TO GROW & SERVE~**

### **TODAY**

9:00 AM Communion Service

10:15 AM Sunday School & Bible Class

10:30 AM Grades 3K-3<sup>rd</sup> sing at Christie

11:30 AM Sunday School Teachers Meeting

### **MONDAY**

6:00 PM LIGHTS

### **WEDNESDAY**

8:20 AM Chapel

3:45 PM Confirmation Class

### **THURSDAY**

4:00 PM Bible Study

6:30 PM Choir

### **NEXT SUNDAY**

9:00 AM Communion Service

10:30 AM FSJ Pancake Breakfast

*No Sunday School or Bible Class*

## **Worship the Lord with Gladness:**

Last Sunday: 104

## **Worship with Our Care of God's Wealth:**

Thankoffering Given Last Sunday:

\$15,425.43 (Home); \$881.50 (Missions)

Needed per week for Home: \$8,400.00.

## **CHURCH NEWS**

**Communion:** We will be celebrating the Lord's Supper today using the regular style of distribution (at the rail). Helpers will be standing by for anyone who needs assistance getting up and down the steps.

**Bible Class:** Bible Class resumes today in the church basement following the worship service. All are invited to join us as we continue our study of 1 Peter.

**Sunday School:** Sunday School will be held today after the worship service as normal.

**Thursday Bible Study:** Join us in the school conference room at 4:00 this Thursday as we continue our study of the book of Romans.

**Care Packages:** Our LIGHTS group will be packing 7 care packages to be sent to college students and military personnel. Donations of items to include in the packages are needed and welcomed.

Some ideas for donations could include: Kleenex, pens, post-it notes, hand lotion, microwave popcorn, fruit snacks, candy bars, raisins, chips, pudding, dried fruit, cookies, tea, dried soup mix, gum, soap, coffee, etc. Anything that can be individually wrapped works well; the list is almost endless. Cash donations for postage are also needed. Donations can be placed in the entryway.

This is a nice way to show our young people that they are in our thoughts and prayers. Thanks for your assistance!

The boxes will be packed up **tomorrow**.

## **Lent 2024**

The overall theme for the Lenten services for 2024 is **"God on Trial."** This series takes us back to the moments when God was literally on trial before men in the person of Christ. In these inspired episodes, we find forgiveness for us and all people, love for our enemies, strength for our faith, and courage to testify to the truth.

*Ash Wednesday-Accusations*

*Midweek 2-Restraint*

*Midweek 3-Testimony*

*Midweek 4-Misconceptions*

*Midweek 5-Truth*

*Midweek 6-Sympathy*

*Maundy Thursday-Respite*

*Good Friday-Evidence*

*Easter Sunday-Vindication*

We will have three pastors in the Lenten rotation again this year, Pastor Biebert, Pastor Wilke from Globe/Christie, and Pastor Naumann from Trinity, Marshfield. On the weeks when supper is served, serving begins at 6:00 p.m. in the school gym, and all are invited to that as well. The service schedule is below.

*Ash Wednesday, Feb. 14: 7:00 p.m. communion service*

*Wednesday, Feb. 21: 7:00 p.m. service (GPS serves supper)*

*Wednesday, Feb. 28: 7:00 p.m. service (Choir/Bells serve)*

*Wednesday, Mar. 6: 7:00 p.m. service (FSJ serves supper)*

*Wednesday, Mar. 13: 7:00 p.m. service (LIGHTS serve supper)*

*Wednesday, Mar. 20: 7:00 p.m. service (Pioneers serve supper)*

*Maundy Thursday, Mar. 28: 7:00 p.m. communion service*

*Good Friday, Mar. 29: 1:00 p.m. service*

*Easter Sunday, Mar. 31: 6:30 a.m. and 9:00 a.m. communion services*

**Pancake Breakfast:** The Friends of St. John's will be sponsoring their annual Pancake Breakfast next Sunday, February 11, from 10:30-1:00 in the school gym. All are invited to attend. Free will offerings given will go toward tuition assistance.

If you can help out by donating needed items for the breakfast or by helping with serving and clean-up, please fill out and return the donation slips that can be found on the table in the entryway. Thank you!

**Pancake Breakfast Bake Sale:** We will be having a bake sale during the Pancake Breakfast next Sunday in order to start raising money for next year's 7<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> graders to go to the Creation Museum and Ark Encounter (summer of 2025).

**Basketball:** We won both of our games this past Tuesday. We won our game this past Thursday.

We have home games tomorrow against Immanuel of Medford. The B Team will play at 4:00, and the A Team will play at 5:00.

We have home games this Tuesday against St. Peter of Schofield. The B Team will play at 4:30, and the A Team will play at 5:30.

Come and cheer for the Hornets!

**Penny Wars:** Penny Wars started up this past Thursday. This will go until Easter Sunday. We will have the money containers here at church starting next Sunday, but you can stop in at school any time during the week if you'd like to drop off coins (or bills). Funds raised will go toward the school bathroom project. Please see more details below.

### **St. John's Penny Wars!**

**Purpose:** To help raise money for your school to update the old bathrooms next to the gymnasium!

**Goal:** For your class to gain the most points by collecting the most pennies. The winning classroom will get a pizza party! Our goal is to collect at least \$1500. If we do there will be a special reward which will be announced soon.

**Scoring:**

- Penny: +1 point (put these in your classrooms jug)

- Nickel: -1 points (put these in someone else's jug)
- Dime: -5 points (put these in someone else's jug)
- Quarter: -10 points (put these in someone else's jug)
- Dollar Bill: -25 points (put these in someone else's jug)
- 5 Dollar Bill: -100 points (put these in someone else's jug)
- 10 Dollar Bill: -200 points (put these in someone else's jug)
- 20 Dollar Bill: -400 points (put these in someone else's jug)

*How to Play: Each classroom will have a jug that they are trying to collect the most pennies in. Other classrooms can put money into a different classrooms jug to make them lose points. (Ex. A 1<sup>st</sup> grade student can bring a \$1 bill and put it into Mr. Allard's milk jug and his class loses 25 points!) Pennies are the only way you earn points for your room, anything else you want to put in other classrooms jugs.*

*Who can Participate? EVERYONE, students, teachers, parents, church members...*

*How long does this last? The Penny Wars will start this week Thursday @ 7:45 AM (Feb 1) and will go until Sunday @ 9:00AM (March 31).*

**Coffee Fundraiser:** *We are once again selling Berres Brothers coffee. Order forms are available on the table in the church entryway. Proceeds from coffee sales will go into our Camp Phillip tuition assistance fund. Order forms and money should be turned in to the school office by Friday, March 15<sup>th</sup>. The coffee should be here and ready to be picked up early in April.*

**Winter Carnival:** *Our church's HIS Group (Hands in Service) is sponsoring a children's carnival on Saturday, February 24<sup>th</sup> as part of Neillsville's Winter Carnival. The children's carnival will be held here in our gym from 11:00-1:00. There will be bounce houses, a cake walk, face painting, balloon animals, a giant slide, concessions, crafts...activities for all ages! Parents are expected to stay while their children are here. Cost will be \$5.00 per child (ages 1-12). Infants and ages 13+ are Free! Cost for the cake walk is \$1. We hope many parents and children can attend!!*

*Volunteers are needed to help with the carnival. We also need bakers who would be willing to bake cakes or cupcakes for the cake walk. If you would be able to help, please talk to Mrs. Allard or contact the school office. You can also sign up on the sheet in the entryway. Thanks!*



**Student of the Week:** *The student of the week is Owen Kallian. Owen is in 1<sup>st</sup> Grade. He has been working hard, participates in class, is friendly to his classmates, and is polite and respectful to the teachers and other adults. Congratulations Owen!*

**Feb FIC:** *The February edition of "Forward In Christ" is available in the entryway.*

**Calendars:** *February calendars are available in the entryway.*

**Large Truck or Trailer Needed:** *A collection of clothes and household goods is being taken to raise additional funds for the school bathroom project. A large truck or trailer is needed to haul collected items to Eau Claire. It would be needed for approximately three days, possibly in May, but date and time frame are flexible depending on when the vehicle or trailer would be available. Contact Becca Biebert (507-766-1159) or Linda Biebert (715-819-0455) for more details.*

**Hospitalized: Jane Zank** *remains hospitalized in Marshfield. Let's keep her in our prayers.*

**Special Thanks:** *Our LIGHTS group would like to take this opportunity to thank the many people who volunteer to call members on their birthdays and anniversaries throughout the year. Your willingness to keep in touch with fellow members in this way is greatly appreciated!*

**Financial Presentation:** *DVDs of Mr. Allard's financial presentation given on January 7<sup>th</sup> have been made available in the church entryway, along with copies of the sheet handed out to those who attended. If you know of a fellow member who was not able to attend the presentation, please feel free to pick up a DVD and information sheet and get it to them. It's very important that all members have a chance to be informed about this. We also sent out an email to all members for whom we have email addresses with links to view the information online.*

The presentation and accompanying documents can also be viewed from our website. Go to the following link: [www.stjohnsneillsville.com/church](http://www.stjohnsneillsville.com/church) and you will see the links for the video presentation and the handout.

**Help Needed:** One of our members, Luzia Gustavson, was brought to church on a regular basis by David Meyer, who is now in heaven. Is there someone else who would be able to bring Luzia to church and take her home again, either on a regular basis, sharing the opportunity with others, or periodically when needed? Luzia lives 13 miles south of Neillsville on Grand Ave. If you would be willing to help out, please contact Linda Biebert at 715-743-3015. Thanks!

**New Member:** **Kayla Ogle**, who recently completed adult instruction class, was received as a communicant member this past week. Her son Greyson, who attends 3<sup>rd</sup> grade here at St. John's, was baptized last summer. Let's make them feel welcome!!

**Call Received:** "My dear members of St. John's,

On January 16<sup>th</sup> I received a Divine Call from Christus Lutheran Church in Delavan, WI to be their next Pastor. I must say that came as a complete surprise, especially at this stage in my life. This means that I now hold two Calls, as I am still called to serve you here at St. John's.

Needless to say, I am in need of your loving and honest input as to how best I can serve the Lord and His Kingdom with the humble and limited gifts I still have. Wherever I serve the Lord as Pastor, I want to be useful in and not hinder the spread of His Word.

Christus Lutheran Church is in a rural setting, outside the city of Delavan. It has a membership of 117 souls. (There is no Lutheran Elementary School.) As soon as more details regarding this Call to Christus are available, I will be talking with their members and leadership as to their expectations.

Please feel free to talk with me personally. Also, may I please ask that you talk with our gracious God, praying for Him to give proper guidance in this matter.

As always, but especially now, the words of John the Baptist regarding his position in the Kingdom of God and his relationship

to Jesus ring true for me: "He must become greater; I must become less." (John 3:30)

Continuing to join you in service to Jesus," Pastor Biebert

**Women's Retreat:** Information on the WELS Coulee Women's Retreat at Luther High School in Onalaska on April 20 can be found on the table in the entryway.

### **Annual Voters Meeting Highlights**

**Guest Pastor:** Voters approved having Pastor Jon Guenther continue to guest preach for us once a month. This is a very helpful service to Pastor Biebert, as it allows him more time to visit our shut-in members.

**Communion Distribution:** After discussion, voters decided that on the first Sunday of the month, we will go back to having communion at the rail. On the second Sunday of the month, we will have communion in the front pew, but it will still be "regular communion." In other words, we will commune ten people together in the front pew, alternating sides. Voters agreed to discontinue the continuous style of distribution.

When we commune at the rail, helpers will be standing by to offer assistance to those who need help with the steps. If you can't make it up to the rail, either come up and sit in the front pew as you are being ushered up and receive communion there, or please let Pastor or one of the ushers know before church, and you will be served where you are seated.

**Membership Changes:** All membership changes over the last six months of 2023 were ratified by the voters.

**ELC Update:** The ELC continues to be full, with over 30 children on our waiting list.

**Endowment Fund:** Our endowment fund money was taken out of Thrivent and invested with WELS Investment Funds this past December. Balance of the endowment fund on December 31, 2023 was \$119,314.38.

**2024 Budget:** The proposed 2024 budget, as presented by Mr. Allard during his special presentation on January 7<sup>th</sup>, was approved by the voters.

**Mission Pledge:** Our 2024 mission pledge was set for \$36,000 by the voters.

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**WELS Weekly Prayer:** Pastoral Studies Institute – Lord of the Church, we thank you for our synod’s strong ministerial education program that provides extensive training to our future pastors. We also thank you for the flexibility of the Pastoral Studies Institute, which trains men from other cultures to become pastors without leaving their communities. We praise you for providing a diversity of well-trained pastors proclaiming the gospel throughout the world. We pray that many more people hear your good news of salvation, repent of their sins, and trust in Jesus. Amen.

**WELS Annual Report:** “Your gifts, God’s blessings: An annual report to our members” is now available. The 24-page report includes photos of Christian brothers and sisters around the world, stories of faith, and updates on WELS’ ministry. View the stories and updates, download a PDF or Powerpoint, or order copies at [wels.net/annualreport](http://wels.net/annualreport).

### **A Father’s Love**

**Jesus said, “The son got up and went to his father. But while he was still a long way off, his father saw him and was filled with compassion for him; he ran to his son, threw his arms around him and kissed him” (Luke 15:20).**

He was homeless, smelly, and almost starving to death. But the worst thing was that he knew it was all his fault. He thought his father was cruel and overbearing; there were too many rules. He wanted freedom. He wanted to have fun, but his father was all about responsibility and hard work. So, he asked for his share of the inheritance. He didn’t care about the farm; he just wanted the money. As soon as he got it, he left. He could finally do what he wanted to do. But it didn’t take long, and all that money was gone—partying is expensive. Those he thought were his friends left as soon as he ran out of money. He was all alone and miserable. He had two choices, and neither seemed pleasant. He could continue as he was and hope he could scrape enough together each day so that he wouldn’t starve to death, or he could go back home.

*He headed for home. He was prepared to grovel, to ask to be just a hired hand on his father's farm. But he didn't get the opportunity to do much groveling. As soon as his father saw him coming, he ran out to meet him. He hugged and kissed him and gave orders for a huge celebration in his honor. The rebellious son had expected a cool reception. He had expected an "I told you so." Instead he got what he knew he didn't deserve: a joyous welcome home.*

*You and I are that young man who rebelled against his father. We have all rebelled against our heavenly Father. We have considered him to be cruel and overbearing and having too many rules—someone who doesn't want us to have any fun. We have all separated ourselves from him and broken his commandments. Our consciences tell us that he is angry, that we deserve whatever pain or suffering comes our way. Could our heavenly Father still love us? Could he still welcome us to his eternal home in heaven?*

*Jesus' story about the disobedient son in Luke 15:11-24 is a short story that speaks volumes for our lives. It assures us of God's love and our heavenly home. Our heavenly Father loves us so much that he punished his obedient Son, Jesus, in our place so that he can welcome us as his dear children and heirs of eternal life. Instead of giving us what we deserve for our rebelliousness, he gives us what we don't deserve: complete forgiveness in Jesus.*

*Invite someone you know to gather with us for worship and learn more about our heavenly Father's love.*

### **To assist you in worship:**

- ✚ Personal listening devices are available for anyone to use. Please talk to the ushers for assistance.
- ✚ Large-print bulletins available in the entryway.
- ✚ Personal Prayers: Red Hymnal (pp. 10-11); Blue Hymnal (inside front cover)
- ✚ Preparation for Lord's Supper: Red Hymnal (p. 156); Blue Hymnal (pp. 295-296)
- ✚ Luther's Small Catechism: Blue Hymnal (pp. 286-293)

**We love seeing young children in church** as we want families to worship together. We also love to hear children making a "joyful noise to the Lord." If you need some privacy for feeding an infant or changing a diaper, please make use of our parents' room off the north side of the entryway where you can still listen to the service.

*Visitors, if you would like to know more about our church or school, please introduce yourself to our pastor. He would be delighted to speak with you and serve you in whatever way he can.*

### **St. John's Lutheran Church & School 711 & 805 W 5<sup>th</sup> St., Neillsville, WI 54456**

#### **Contact Info**

- Church & School Office: [stjohns1886@gmail.com](mailto:stjohns1886@gmail.com)  
715-743-2501
- Tim Biebert, Pastor: [1fisheromen@gmail.com](mailto:1fisheromen@gmail.com)  
715-819-0456 (cell)  
715-743-3015 (home)
- Mike Allard, Principal: [allardmj1@gmail.com](mailto:allardmj1@gmail.com)  
715-937-7534 (cell)
- John Hagedorn, Chairman: [hagedornjohnw2@gmail.com](mailto:hagedornjohnw2@gmail.com)  
715-743-4653 (home)

- Website: [www.stjohnsneillsville.com](http://www.stjohnsneillsville.com)
- Facebook (church): [www.facebook.com/stjohnsneillsville/](https://www.facebook.com/stjohnsneillsville/)
- Facebook (school): [www.facebook.com/stjohnshornets/](https://www.facebook.com/stjohnshornets/)

#### **Worship Schedule**

- Sunday-9:00 a.m. (Year-Round)
- Tuesday-6:00 p.m. (After Easter through November)