



# The Informer

February 2023

St. John's Lutheran Church of East Moline, IL

Volume 64 Issue 7

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February 22nd  
Services at:  
12:00pm and 6:30pm

## From Pastor's Pen:

*"I rejoiced with those who said to me, 'Let us go up to the house of the Lord.' " (Ps. 122:1)*

My Dear Family In Christ,

After so many years in the Lord's service to this congregation my heart has grown heavy over the number among us who do not make regular worship with their fellow believers a priority in life. I understand that it is unlikely that those Who do not worship frequently will read this. I pray, though, that it is a message that will keep you steadfast in worship and give you opportunity to speak to your friends and family about their worship practices.

Have you ever heard someone say, "You don't have to go to church to be a Christian!" People who feel this way are right, in a way. Faith in Christ, not the outward act of worship, is what makes one a Christian. Why, then, do we gather together for worship? What is worship? And why is it important for us?

First of all, we have to understand that worship is communion with God. God comes to us with His gifts of forgiveness, life and salvation, and we offer our joyful response of praise and thanksgiving.

In our worship it is God who acts first. He ACTS. He Absolves the repentant of their sins, Confirms the believer's faith in Christ, Teaches the believer the way of life, and Sends His people the Holy Spirit. God wants us to worship so that He can come close to us and bless us through things that are found nowhere else in our lives.

After God ACTS we then respond with faith that receives God's gifts with a grateful heart. In worship we reach out with hearts that are aware of our need for God's love, and seek the fellowship of God and His holy family. Faith leads us to confess our sins and to look to the LORD for forgiveness and strength. It also leads us to confess our faith before God and our fellow saints so as to encourage and spur one another on. Our faith also causes us to give thanks and praise to God in prayer and song.

All too often we think of worship in terms of what we give up; our sleep on Sunday morning, the time we could spend doing other things, or the money we are putting into the offering plate. If we attend worship simply because we must, and it has been drilled into us from little on that you are required to go to church, then we've taken all the joy out of it. The Lord invites us to worship not because we "have to", but because we "want to." That desire comes from faith in the heart. I dare say that where there is not such a desire the existence of living faith is in question.

We would all do well to think of worship in terms of what we receive rather than what we give up. In worship we receive the assurance of God's continued love and presence in our lives. In worship we receive the forgiveness of sins through the merits of Christ. Through worship God creates and strengthens our faith and gives us a living hope of eternal glory. It is true, the act of going to Church does not make us Christians, but by going to Church God makes us Christians through the Gospel, and empowers us to serve in His name.

Dragging our tired old bodies out of bed and getting them into Church is probably the single most important thing we can do, because worship is important to us as Christians. It is probably the single most blessed and beneficial time of our week. With the Psalmist, let us say: "I rejoiced with those who said to me, "Let us go up to the house of the Lord " (Ps. 122:1)

In Christ,

*Pastor Umbarger*

## Vicar's View

### Christians and Conspiracy Theories

This month I've decided to share my perspective on a topic that I think is very relevant to our present culture and that I was asked to write about last year for a class: how should Christians respond to conspiracy theories? Right away that raises other questions: what exactly is a conspiracy theory? Isn't "conspiracy theory" just a term that gets used to discredit certain beliefs without discussion? In this confusing age of competing narratives, what if we disagree about whether an idea should be called by that name? These are valid and important questions. But I believe that we as Christians have a way of cutting through all of that with the 8th commandment.

First, let's try to answer the question: what is a conspiracy theory? I think it's easier to define than we might think. Merriam-Webster defines the term as "a theory that explains an event or set of circumstances as the result of a secret plot by usually powerful conspirators." Notice that, by definition, a conspiracy theory assigns malicious and wicked motives to a group of people in power, and the fact that it is a "secret plot" means that a conspiracy theory is always based on disputed evidence and usually goes against official explanations or accounts by experts and scholars. This means that conspiracy theories are inherently difficult to prove, especially for your average private citizen.

This is where the 8th commandment comes in, which we know as "you shall not bear false witness against your neighbor." Luther's Small Catechism teaches us that this means that Christians should be people of the truth who "explain everything in the kindest way." That is, we should always assume the best about people unless they prove otherwise. We also should not spread harmful rumors about people (even if we know them to be true!). That includes people in power. Therefore, the best response for a Christian to anything that might meet the above definition is this: avoid it! Don't spread it. Because conspiracy theories assign the worst motives to people, Christians should be automatically hesitant to believe them without solid proof. And because they are inherently hard to prove, spreading conspiracy theories puts a Christian at risk of spreading falsehood.

But couldn't it still be true? Yes. It is a possibility. We live in a sinful world where people in power do often conspire for evil. Officials and experts can be wrong. But the question is, is it your responsibility and calling as an ordinary Christian citizen to prove and expose this conspiracy to the public? I can't rule out the rare possibility that you might be in that situation. But 99.9% of the time, no. You probably aren't the person God is calling to thwart a conspiracy. So, my humble advice is this: stay informed about what's going on, listen critically and with an open mind, and always keep the 8th commandment in mind. And when you've done your due diligence as a citizen, pray to God and be at peace. God can thwart evil and conspiracies in this world even without your help. And I think that's a comforting thought.

In Christ,  
*Vicar Moellenhoff*



## Serving the Lord This Month:

### Ushers

**Feb 4:** Greg Burke, Chuck Brokaw, Todd Miller, Rick Newlon, and Larry Ripka  
**Feb 5:** Esther Cashion, Jeff Belan, Rex Newman, Carole Krouth, & Scott Mattly  
**Feb 11:** Greg Burke, Chuck Brokaw, Todd Miller, Rick Newlon, and Larry Ripka  
**Feb 12:** Esther Cashion, Jeff Belan, Rex Newman, Carole Krouth, & Scott Mattly  
**Feb 18:** Greg Burke, Chuck Brokaw, Todd Miller, Rick Newlon, and Larry Ripka  
**Feb 19:** Esther Cashion, George Aukee, Rex Newman, Carole Krouth, & Scott Mattly  
**Feb 22, Ash Wednesday:** Dave & Esther Cashion  
**Feb 25:** Greg Burke, Chuck Brokaw, Todd Miller, Rick Newlon, and Larry Ripka  
**Feb 26:** Esther Cashion, George Aukee, Rex Newman, Carole Krouth, & Scott Mattly

### Communion Assistants

**Feb 5:** Jim Homann  
**Feb 19:** Kevin McAnally

### Greeters

**Feb 4:**  
**Feb 5:** Dennis & Marsha Boarts  
**Feb 11:**  
**Feb 12:** Dennis & Marsha Boarts  
**Feb 18:**  
**Feb 19:** Dennis & Marsha Boarts  
**Feb 25:**  
**Feb 26:** Dennis & Marsha Boarts

### Acolytes

**Feb 5:** Sloane Churchill  
**Feb 12:** Joel Duffy  
**Feb 19:** Brayden Medinger  
**Feb 26:** Lydia Merritt



### Altar Guild

Marsha Boarts  
 Jennifer Schmidt

### Eternal Candle

**Feb 5:** Karen Schmidt  
**Feb 12:** OPEN  
**Feb 19:** OPEN  
**Feb 26:** OPEN



### Altar Flowers

**Feb 5:** Flo and Danny Moore, in honor of their Anniversary  
**Feb 12:** Sharon DeWulf  
**Feb 19:** Karen Schmidt  
**Feb 26:** LENT



## Church News

### Birthdays

**February 4:** Chad Gosa, Aaron Homann, Devon Hurley, & Carole Krouth

**February 5:** Lois Deal, Samantha Hansen, & Steven VanRycke

**February 6:** Taylor Murphy,

**February 7:** Margo Blaser, Diana Caldwell, Cynthia Christopher, & Mark Hariss

**February 8:** Ralph Grotelueschen, Larry Ripka, & Tyler Rusk

**February 9:** Loretta Nielsen

**February 10:** Cora Whipple

**February 12:** Lucille Perley

**February 14:** Alyssa McAnally, Alyssa Nitz, & Rick Robinson

**February 15:** Alena Rossmiller & Nile Pena

**February 16:** Ethan Sountris

**February 17:** Barbara Veskauf

**February 20:** Morgan Murphy

**February 22:** Zachery Chellew, Stephanie Gray, Mallory Hawkins, Brian Nielsen, Isaac Stone, & Carl Weathers

**February 23:** Dustin Fischer

**February 24:** Ryan Dosch & Alexander Lange

**February 25:** Taryn Kosche

**February 26:** Caleb Engebrecht

**February 27:** Fred Krack & Rex Newman

**February 28:** Dennis Schaefer



### Weekly Attendance & Offerings

Date	This year	Last Year
12/24/22	143	167
12/25/22	60	46
01/01/23	63	48
01/08/23	161	114
01/15/23	139	127
01/22/23	131	169

Average monthly attendance for St. John's: 20%

FOR GOD SO LOVED THE WORLD  
THAT HE GAVE  
HIS ONLY  
BEGOTTEN  
SON SO  
THAT WHOSOEVER  
BELIEVES IN HIM  
SHALL NOT PERISH  
BUT HAVE ETERNAL LIFE

### Membership Report

**Transferred Out**

Jonathan Pratt

**New Member:**

Kathy McDowell



## Church News

### Year-end Statements

2022 year-end statements are now available upon request only. Please let the office know if you would like yours.

Also, please throw away your 2022 envelopes. Your envelope numbers can change yearly, so if you use old ones, you may not get credit for your offering.



### Ladies Luncheon

All ladies of St. John's are welcome for a lunch date on Thursday, February 17th at the Deerfield Restaurant in East Moline.

We meet at 11:30am for food and fun. Please join us!



### LWML

**LWML MEETING** There will be no meeting in the month of February. The next meeting will be Thursday, March 26th at 1:00pm. Please watch the Bulletin for more information. Hope to see you there.

### LWML THANK YOU FOR YOUR MITE DONATIONS

The LWML Mission Goal for the 2021–2023 biennium is \$2,150,000. National LWML has great news!

"We are filled with gratitude and joy as we announce that God has worked through your generosity and stewardship to **surpass this goal**. The Mite offerings you have shared now total \$2,154,511! We continue to praise God for His provision and for your generosity in stewarding the gifts you have been given. Thank you for coming alongside LWML as together we proclaim Christ, support missions, equip women, and serve others! If you would like to take a look at the various ministries the 2021–2023 Mission Grants are supporting, please visit our website: [www.lwml.org/mission-grants](http://www.lwml.org/mission-grants)."



*And my God will supply every need of yours according to his riches in glory in Christ Jesus (Philippians 4:19).*

### LWML CONVENTIONS

The **CID (Central Illinois District) Convention** will be in Quincy this year on April 28- 29 which will include servant events, speakers, bible study, fellowship and delegates voting for the CID mites and goal. Keynote speaker will be Dr. Dale Meyer and mission speaker will be Cindy Steinwedel from LERT (Lutheran Emergency Response Teams).

The LWML 40th Biennial National Convention is being held June 22-25 at Milwaukee where the new mite mission goals and recipients will be selected. Keynote speaker will be Rev. Greg Seltz plus mites in action speakers from LAMP, Rev. Steve Schave; LCMS Ministry in the Armed Forces, Chaplain Craig Mehler; Phil's friends founder Phil Zielke; LHM, Kurt Buchholz and Rev. Doua Xiong from Hmong ministries. Also special appearances by the LWML Comic Relief Duo Jan Struck and Abby Goehring.

For more information about these events see any of your LWML officers.

## Church News

### Youth Lock-Up

February 10th: We will have our Valentine's Day lockup from 7-11pm. We will be making cards for our shut-ins and doing lots of fun activities and games throughout the evening. Please bring snacks to share.

### Senior Saints

Wanted: Are you a creative writer? Do you enjoy learning about people? The Board of Human Care would like to relaunch the "Senior Saints" project. Please see Carrie Homann if you have an affinity for people, linguistic expression, and composing captivating tales of memories past.



### 2023 Life Conference

The world today pressures people on all sides to reject God's design for human life.

The 2023 LCMS Life Conference, which is part of *Making Disciples for Life*, is set for March 2–3, 2023, in St. Louis and online. The conference will provide Lutherans with the resources to faithfully proclaim what God's Word teaches about life, health, marriage and family.

Presentations at the 2023 conference will focus on three main subject areas: advocacy for the sanctity of human life and God's design for marriage and the family; teaching God's Word to people of all ages so they learn the truth about life, health and family; and sharing Christ's love and mercy with a focus on life, health and the family.

#### In-person registration

The in-person portion of the conference, which will be held at the LCMS International Center in St. Louis, is limited to 100 participants. [Registration, which is \\$49 per individual, includes meals and snacks.](#) Attendees will also have access to view recorded sessions for 60 days after the conference ends.

***The deadline for in-person registration is Feb. 17.***

#### Online registration

Online participation is unlimited. [An online registration, which is \\$29, can be used by an individual, couple, family or group.](#) Registration provides access to view recorded sessions for 60 days after the conference ends.

***Participants attending virtually can register until March 2.***

## Notes From the Balcony

Fill in the letter of the hymn title matching the clue

Put letter of matching hymn here:	Clue	Hymn Title
	1. Better than a New Pair of Glasses	A. Praise God, From Whom All Blessings Flow
	2. Ambulatory Accompaniment	B. America the Beautiful
	3. Forest Glades	C. This is My Father's World
	4. Thomas A. Dorsey	D. Swing Low, Sweet Chariot
	5. Pillar of Fire (Exodus 13:21)	E. Amazing Grace
	6. Music of the Spheres	F. Onward Christian Soldiers
	7. Lamentations 3:22-23	G. Holy, Holy, Holy
	8. Written When the Organ Conked Out	H. Come Ye Thankful People Come
	9. Old Hundredth	I. Joy to the World
	10. Elijah's Final Transportation (2 Kings 2:11)	J. O Master, Let Me Walk with Thee
	11. Time for a Heavenly Lawyer	K. A Mighty Fortress is Our God
	12. Parable of the Wheat and Tares (MT 13:24-30 and 36-43)	L. Guide Me, O Thou Great Jehovah
	13. No Geographic Distinctions	M. How Great Thou Art
	14. Revelation 4:2-11	N. Seek Ye First
	15. Martin Luther	O. Silent Night
	16. Sunday School Marching Song	P. In Christ There Is No East or West
	17. Psalm 98:4-9	Q. In the Hour of Trial
	18. Inspired at Pikes Peak	R. Precious Lord, Take My Hand
	19. Matthew 6:33	S. Be Thou My Vision
	20. Written by a Former Slave Ship Master	T. Great is Thy Faithfulness

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**Answers:**

**S J M R L C T O A D Q H P G K F I B N E**



## Chili Cookoff Fundraiser

Sunday, February 26  
5:00-7:00pm



\$10 adults, \$5 for 5-12 years, under 5 free

St. John's Lutheran Church, 1450 30<sup>th</sup> Avenue, East Moline

Last year St. John's spent \$13,350 to provide 806 boxes of food to our neighbors in need.

The pantry is sustained by donations & fundraisers only.

Come try over a dozen types of fresh, homemade chili with various chili toppings, and don't forget to cast your vote for the "Fan Favorite" by 6:30pm

Pop, water, desserts and Bake Sale items will also available for sale.

Bring a package of TP, tissues, or paper towels and get a **free** \$1.00 dessert item.

All donations will be matched.

A donation basket will be available if you'd like to sponsor a food pantry box for a family for one month. The cost of food for one family for one month is \$35.



Please help us plan for this event by signing up on the library counter.  
Bring your friends! Bring your family! Bring your neighbors and co-workers!



## Lenten Schedule

Wednesday, February 22nd— Ash Wednesday— 12:00 & 6:30pm

Wednesday, March 1st— 6:30pm

Wednesday, March 8th— 6:30pm

Wednesday, March 15th— 6:30pm

Wednesday, March 22nd— 6:30pm

Wednesday, March 29th— 6:30pm

## Holy Week

Sunday, April 2nd— Palm Sunday and Rite of Confirmation

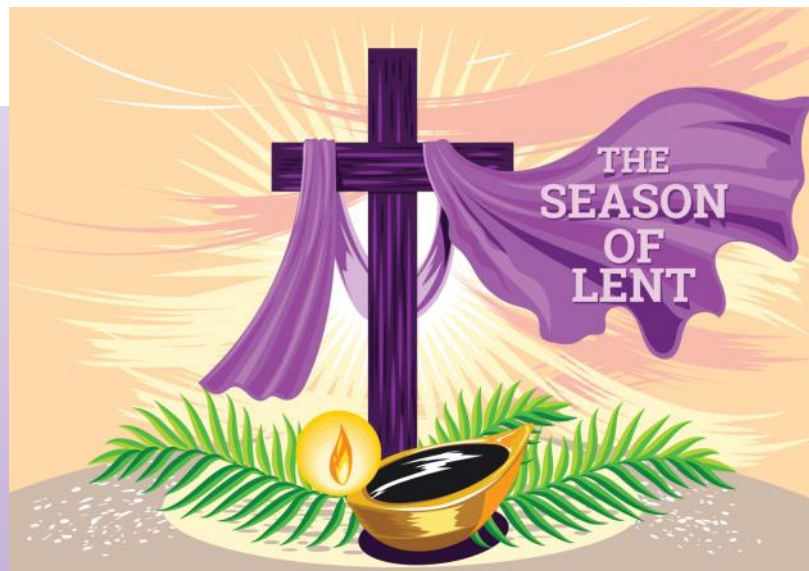
Thursday, April 6th— Maundy Thursday— 12:00 & 6:30pm

Friday, April 7th— Good Friday— 6:30pm

Saturday, April 8th— Easter Vigil— 5:00pm

Sunday, April 9th— Easter Sunrise— 6:30am

Easter Festival— 9:00am



Please consider signing up to host a Lenten supper!

Suppers are served at 5:30pm prior to the  
midweek service

## December 2022 Voter's Meeting Minutes

1. Devotion: Pastor Umbarger
2. Acceptance of new voting members- None
3. Approval of last Voter's meeting minutes as printed in the informer – Motion made by Kris McAnally; 2<sup>nd</sup> by Flo Moores. Motion passed.
4. Old Business- Accepting of board nominees and approving the 2023 budget.
5. Board Reports

Executive- Norm Anotilk- Budget accepted as proposed. Norm went over the financials, the projected 2023 budget. Talked about the uncertainties of the gas bill over the winter months which makes a difference on the bottom line. Little discussion regarding the budget; accepted as proposed. Motion to approve the 2023 budget was made by Ralph Grotelueschen; 2<sup>nd</sup> by Larry Dodge.

Treasurer's report- Missions Allotment. \$1550 monthly to Central Illinois District Plus a total of \$6300 for Mission Central (James Sharp Ministry), Armed Forces Ministry, Lutheran Bible Translator and Bethesda (AbleLight).

2023 Board Nominees- Still need to fill the Vice President and Secretary positions. Brian Engebrecht volunteered to take the VP position. Motion was made by Pastor Umbarger to nominate Brian Engebrecht for VP; 2<sup>nd</sup> by Flo Moore. Motion passed. Still need a secretary. A motion to accept board nominees pending a secretary was made by Margie Schaefer; 2<sup>nd</sup> by Flo Moore.

Board of Elders- No Report

Board of Youth and Family Ministry- No Report

Board of Outreach Ministry- No Report

Board of Human Care Ministry- No Report

Board of Trustees- Evan Antolik

Report on signage- Preparation for new sign is complete, just waiting for sign to arrive.

Brick sealing- the board has received 2 bids for the brick sealing project, 75k and 42k.

Parking lot sealing- in the works, seal and stripe has run 30k in the past.

Roof replacement- Roof on gym and sanctuary are old but holding up as of now. Going to need work- only been resurfaced twice in the last 60 years.

The issue is borrowing from ourselves (endowment fund) or adding to an existing loan (carport loan).

A motion to pursue funding through the endowment fund to pay for brick sealant, parking lot restriping/resurfacing was made by Jim Homann; 2<sup>nd</sup> by Larry Hipple.

Pastor Umbarger brought up the possibility of using a fund for building projects, some discussion followed.

Pastor conference to be held in October at St. Johns. Church getting new ceiling in Janssen Room, Keyl Room and front of church to be pressure washed.

Pastor's Report- No Report

6. New Business- None
7. Move to Adjourn- Motion made by Jim Homann; 2<sup>nd</sup> Kris McAnally. Motion passed.
8. End with Lord's Prayer-

Very much appreciated to all members who attended the Voter's meeting!

Respectively submitted by Val McDonald - December 2022.

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
<div>29</div> <div>9am - Worship 10:15am - Bible Study / 10:15am - Voter's Meeting</div>	<div>30</div> <div>9am - Morning Prayer @ 1pm - Staff Mtg. 6:30pm - Heavenly Ringers</div>	<div>31</div> <div>10am - Food Pantry 6:30pm - Guitar Jam</div>	<div>1</div> <div>9am - TOPS 10am - Midweek Bible Study 6pm - Chimes 6:30pm - Confirmation 6:30pm - Woke Bible Study</div>	<div>2</div> <div>6:30pm - Board Meetings</div>	<div>3</div> <div>8am - Mens Bible Study 9:30am - Adult Choir 2pm - Braddy- Paint Party 5pm - Worship w/</div>	<div>4</div>
<div>5</div> <div>9am - Worship w/ 10:15am - Bible Study /</div>	<div>6</div> <div>9am - Morning Prayer @ 1pm - Staff Mtg. 6:30pm - Heavenly Ringers 6:30pm - Strategic Planning</div>	<div>7</div> <div>10am - Food Pantry 6:30pm - Guitar Jam</div>	<div>8</div> <div>9am - TOPS 10am - Midweek Bible Study 6pm - Chimes 6:30pm - Confirmation 6:30pm - Woke Bible Study</div>	<div>9</div> <div>7pm - Youth Lock-Up</div>	<div>10</div> <div>8am - Mens Bible Study 9:30am - Adult Choir 5pm - Worship</div>	<div>11</div>
<div>12</div> <div>9am - Worship 10:15am - Bible Study /</div>	<div>13</div> <div>9am - Morning Prayer @ 1pm - Staff Mtg. 6:30pm - Heavenly Ringers</div>	<div>14</div> <div>10am - Food Pantry 6:30pm - Guitar Jam</div>	<div>15</div> <div>9am - TOPS 10am - Midweek Bible Study 6pm - Chimes 6:30pm - Confirmation 6:30pm - Woke Bible Study</div>	<div>16</div> <div>11:30am - Ladies Luncheon</div>	<div>17</div> <div>8am - Mens Bible Study 9:30am - Adult Choir 5pm - Worship w/</div>	<div>18</div>
<div>19</div> <div>9am - Worship w/ 10:15am - Bible Study /</div>	<div>20</div> <div><b>Informers Deadline</b> 9am - Morning Prayer @ 1pm - Staff Mtg. 6:30pm - Heavenly Ringers 6:30pm - Strategic Planning</div>	<div>21</div> <div>10am - Food Pantry 6:30pm - Guitar Jam</div>	<div>22</div> <div>9am - TOPS 10am - Midweek Bible Study 12pm - Ash Wednesday 5:30pm - Lenten Supper? 6pm - Chimes 6:30pm - Ash Wednesday 6:30pm - Woke Bible Study</div>	<div>23</div>	<div>24</div> <div>8am - Mens Bible Study 9:30am - Adult Choir 5pm - Worship</div>	<div>25</div>
<div>26</div> <div>9am - Worship 10:15am - Bible Study / 5pm - Chili cookoff</div>	<div>27</div> <div>9am - Morning Prayer @ 1pm - Staff Mtg. 6:30pm - Heavenly Ringers</div>	<div>28</div> <div>10am - Food Pantry 6:30pm - Guitar Jam</div>	<div>1</div> <div>9am - TOPS 10am - Midweek Bible Study 5:30pm - Lenten Supper? 6pm - Chimes 6:30pm - Lent Service 6:30pm - Woke Bible Study 7pm - Confirmation</div>	<div>2</div> <div><b>All Boards Meet in Prep for</b> 6:30pm - Board Meetings</div>	<div>3</div> <div>8am - Mens Bible Study 9:30am - Adult Choir 5pm - Worship w/</div>	<div>4</div>

## St. John's Lutheran Church of East Moline, IL

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Web: [www.stjohnsem.org](http://www.stjohnsem.org)



### Worship Times

Saturday 5:00pm

Sunday 9:00am

Sunday School/ Bible Study 10:15am

Ash Wednesday February 22nd

12:00pm and 6:30pm



### Office Hours

Monday- Thursday:  
8:30am-12 noon



*St. John's in Winter Snow*