

## **THE MESSENGER**

**February 2024**

*St. John's Lutheran Church at Stone Bank*

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Office Hours: Monday thru Thursday 10:00 am -2:00 pm

### **Taking a Ride on the Peace Train**

Working out at my neighborhood fitness center the other day, I happened to catch the day's news on the big TV, which reported that Israeli forces had fired on five Palestinians carrying a white flag of surrender, killing one man. The five civilians were attempting to reach friends who were trapped at the end of the street, which was actually part of what the Israeli's had designated a "safe zone." The report has since been confirmed by several other sources.

That was just Friday's news. On other days there have been interviews with the families of the Israeli hostages and recent photographs they have received, showing their family members looking pale and ill, along with grim video footage of some of the underground tunnels where the hostages have been held.

But somehow the fact of atrocities and civilian killings on both sides brings me no comfort.

Just as I was viewing the report of the shots fired at the Palestinians trying to surrender, the album I was listening to through my ear phones, began playing Cat Stevens' 1970's classic song, "Peace Train."

"Cause out on the edge of darkness  
There rides a peace train  
Oh, peace train take this country  
Come take me home again."

At first I wondered what Cat Stevens may have been smoking when he wrote the song, and then I tried to figure out at which time in our history that was nothing like ours today, could anyone write such a fairy tale song; and finally I just decided that whatever was happening back then, it's certain that the "Peace Train" will not be heading out to the Middle East anytime soon. I was about to turn the song off in disgust, but the beat is so infectious, that I had to keep listening.

Oh, peace train soundin' louder  
Glide on the peace train  
Ooh-ah, ee-ah, ooh-ah  
Come on the peace train

Later I learned that Cat Stevens wrote the song in 1971 during the Vietnam War, before the US withdrawal had started—so not a great time either. Maybe he had just attended a really inspiring peace demonstration—or maybe he simply threw the song out there into the bullets and the dying soldiers and heart-sick families, so that people could have something to hang onto, a vision of the possibility for a better world.

Yes, peace train holy roller  
Everyone jump on the peace train  
Come on the peace train

Maybe war is exactly the right time to sing about peace, just like times of hatred like ours are exactly the right time to sing about love.

Jesus declared: "You have heard that it was said, 'You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy,' but I say to you, 'Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, so that you may be children of your Father in heaven, for he makes the sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the righteous and unrighteous.'" (Matt. 5:43-45)

Just as Jesus proclaims love we need to proclaim the possibility of loving past barriers of political parties, race, sexual orientation, culture, and religion. And we need to proclaim the possibility of peace, even when there is no peace.

Now I've been cryin' lately  
Thinkin' about the world as it is  
Why must we go on hating?  
Why can't we live in bliss?

'Cause out on the edge of darkness  
There rides a peace train  
Oh, peace train take this country  
Come take me home again

May God bless you with hope during these dark winter days!  
Pastor Karen



## CHURCH NEWS



### **Annual Meeting and Potluck**

The Annual Congregational Meeting will be held on February 4<sup>th</sup> following the worship service. The meeting will take place in the fellowship hall where we can enjoy a pot luck brunch while we discuss the future of our wonderful church. The sign up sheet for the pot luck is posted on the bulletin board outside of the women's bathroom. So, pick out your favorite brunch recipe to make and plan to attend the service and meeting that day.

### **We Appreciate Julie Bohlen's Service on Council**

As Julie Bohlen steps away from the church council, we acknowledge her time, insight and commitment to the church council and for developing a master plan for on-going property projects and creating a Sunday School curriculum. Thank you Julie!



### **St. John's Bringing Lunch to Stone Bank School**

St. John's is excited to show some neighborly appreciation to Stone Bank School teachers and staff by providing them with lunch on February 14. More details coming soon including signup sheet!



### **Listening Book Club Meets Mid February**

Listening Book Club meets next on Thursday, February 15<sup>th</sup> at 1 pm in St. John's Genesis Room. Our book is *The Sentence* by Louise Erdrich, a part-Ojibwe Indian and Pulitzer Prize winning novelist. *The Sentence* is a wise, funny novel and ghost story set in the Minneapolis book store which the author actually owns! Don't miss the chance to read and talk about it!



### **Midweek Lenten Services**

Beginning on Wednesday February 21st we will have weekly Lenten devotional services at 6:30 p.m. following a soup and sandwich supper fellowship at 6:00 p.m.. See the sign up sheet on the bulletin board across from the steps to sign up to contribute soup and/or sandwiches for the supper.



### **Why Are We Collecting Grocery Receipts?**

Fox Bros. Piggly Wiggly has an ongoing promotion for churches to receive a percentage of rebates on their grocery slips. These grocery slips are turned in the end of June and the end of December. The money that is received from Piggly Wiggly is then given to Lutherdale Bible Camp in Elkhorn for their youth ministry. So, continue to place your grocery slips in the box provided on the table near Pastor Karen's office so they can be calculated and turned in. Thanks for your help.

--Judy Swanton, Financial Secretary

### **ELCA Partners with Global Refuge to Assist Refugees**

Since 1939, Global Refuge (formerly the Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service) has provided humanitarian aid to refugees from Europe, Cuba, Uganda, Vietnam, the Balkans, Sudan, Afghanistan, Ukraine and more. The ELCA has partnered with Global Refuge to continue the "legacy of compassion and grace for people in crisis" ([globalrefuge.org](http://globalrefuge.org)). The ELCA assists Global Refuge in providing essential support to refugees in need of food, shelter, safety, foster care, legal assistance and more. Through our support of the national church, we can be a part of this good work.

Help us continue to love and serve our neighbors who are suffering. Learn more about Global Refuge today at [globalrefuge.org](http://globalrefuge.org).

## WORSHIP, MUSIC, & HOSPITALITY MINISTRY NEWS

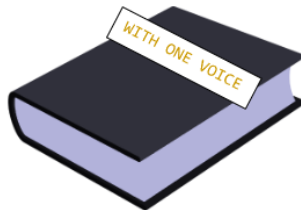
- Sunday, February 4th - Annual meeting and Pot Luck Brunch
- Wednesday, February 14th – Ash Wednesday service at 7 pm
- Wednesday, February 21st, February 28th, March 6th, March 13th, and March 20th – Lenten soup and sandwich supper at 6 pm and mid-week Lenten service at 6:30 pm
- Sunday, March 24th – Palm Sunday worship with distribution of palms at 9:00 a.m.
- Sunday, March 31st – Easter Sunday Worship Service at 9:00 a.m. followed by a Continental PotLuck brunch.



### **Videographers Needed!!**

Can you use a computer? Do you send and receive emails? Then you can help with the weekly live streaming of our worship services. We need at least two more volunteers to take turns at setting up, monitoring and ending the live stream of the worship service. The basic set up of the camera is done as is the loading of the you tube channel on the computer. So, most weeks the videographer just has to click on the “create” tab, jot in the worship service in the title box, click a couple of options and start the live stream. Then, at the end of the service, click on “end stream”, unplug the computer from the camera and put the computer away. There is an instruction page with step-by-step instructions available.

*This is a very important part of our weekly worship service ministry as it allows those who are not able to attend in person the ability of worshiping with us. Please let Pastor Karen, Nancy Barr, or Barb M., our office manager if you are willing to help.*



### **Hymn Book Giveaway**

*With One Voice* hymnals are available to anyone who would like one. Since we no longer use them on a regular basis, it is not necessary to hang on to all of the books. We are saving a few copies to have on hand, but many of the hymns in this hymnal are now in the ELW and those that aren't can be accessed using our publishing/copy licensure. The books are in a box at the entrance to the Sanctuary, so help yourself. They will be available until the beginning of March.

## ST. JOHN'S GOOD NEWS REPORT

Dave Droegkamp Heating company very generously donated a new furnace and air conditioner to St. John's!

*Call or email the church office to let us know of any "Good News" to include in future newsletters.*

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### **WE APPRECIATE ST. JOHN'S COMMUNITY MEMBERS:**

Nancy Barr, John Baumann, Jim Edgar, Pastor Karen Jost, Kris Kaptain and Judy Runt for assistance with the annual report

Nancy Barr, Scott and Debbie Hampton, Kris and Kim Kaptain, Grant Schuldt, Jim Edgar and Pastor and others who helped take down the Christmas decorations

Everyone who contributed time and effort for Brett Schuldt's funeral

Scott Hampton for decluttering and organizing many areas in the Fellowship Hall plus the pavilion

Judy Runt for all her time overseeing the work of the new church treasurer and reviewing the budget for St. John's long term benefit

Worship assistants and council members who helped make our Advent and Christmas Eve services so meaningful

Try A Yummy New Recipe -  
Roasted Salmon and Parsnips with Ginger  
From Pastor Karen

Several years ago our oldest daughter Maris (soon to be a mom!) gave me a colorful cookbook filled with recipes featuring healthy foods called *Power Foods*. Maris is always reading up on healthy meal options but in spite of how healthy it is, this easy salmon recipe turned out great! I had never cooked much with parsnips--similar to carrots and near them in the grocery store--but roasted they became butter soft and delicious, the salmon cooked exactly in the time stated and I just left the skins on until it was time to flip the salmon and then just slipped them off. The sauce took only a few minutes to stir together. I served this with jasmine rice and gave thanks for Maris!

1 lb parsnips about 5, peeled and sliced  $\frac{3}{4}$  inch thick  
3 tbs neutral tasting oil such as canola or safflower  
2 tsp finely grated peeled fresh ginger  
2 tsp finely chopped fresh rosemary  
2 tbs low sodium tamari soy sauce  
 $\frac{1}{4}$  cup plus 2 tbs fresh orange juice (from 1 to 2 oranges)  
4 skinless wild Alaskan salmon fillets (about 6 ounces each)

Preheat oven to 425 degrees. Place parsnips on a rimmed baking sheet and drizzle with 2 tbs oil; toss to coat, then spread in a single layer. Roast until beginning to brown around the edges, about 15 minutes. Meanwhile, combine ginger, rosemary, tamari, orange juice and the remaining 1 tbs oil.

Flip parsnips and push to edges of baking sheet. Place fillets in the middle. Cook, flipping halfway through, until fillets are opaque around the edges and flake slightly in the center when pressed, 12 to 15 minutes. Remove from oven.

Transfer a fillet to each of four plates. Pour ginger mixture over parsnips and gently toss to coat. Divide parsnips among plates. Spoon extra sauce from baking dish over fillets.



## **FEBRUARY READINGS**

### **February 4**

Isaiah 40:21-31 - The creator of all cares for the powerless

Psalm 147:1-11, 20c - The Lord heals the brokenhearted.

1 Corinthians 9:16-23 - A servant for the sake of the gospel

Mark 1:29-39 - The healing of Peter's mother-in-law

### **February 11**

2 Kings 2:1-12 - Elijah taken up to heaven and succeeded by Elisha

Psalm 50:1-6 - Out of Zion, perfect in beauty, God shines forth in glory.

2 Corinthians 4:3-6 - God's light seen clearly in the face of Christ

Mark 9:2-9 - Revelation of Christ as God's beloved Son

### **February 18**

Genesis 9:8-17 - The rainbow, sign of God's covenant

Psalm 25:1-10 - Your paths, O Lord, are steadfast love and faithfulness.

1 Peter 3:18-22 - Saved through water

Mark 1:9-15 - The temptation of Jesus in the wilderness for forty days

### **February 25**

Genesis 17:1-7, 15-16 - God blesses Abraham and Sarah

Psalm 22:23-31 - All the ends of the earth shall remember and turn to the Lord.

Romans 4:13-25 - The promise to those who share Abraham's faith

Mark 8:31-38 - The passion prediction



# FEBRUARY



## BIRTHDAYS & ANNIVERSARIES

February 7 – Braden Wetzel  
February 8 – Toni Vinkavich  
February 13 – Scott Hampton  
February 16 – Terri Schuldt  
February 16 – Allison Barr  
February 18 – Royce Kutzt  
February 21 – Vivian Novobielski



### **St. John's Council**

President: Judy Runt

Vice President: Nancy Barr

Council Members at Large: Kris Kaptain

Financial Secretary: Judy Swanton

Acting Treasurer: Judy Runt

### **St. John's Music Program**

Music Minister: Jim Edgar

Pianist: Lauren Genthe

Choir: Nancy Barr, Oscar Kraft, Shirley Kraft, Bennett Shebesta, Judy Runt

### **Worship Assistants**

Alan Abeld, Carol Baird, Phil Baird, Nancy Barr, John Baumann, Julie Bohen, Jim Edgar, Ann Greenseth, Kris Kaptain, Oscar Kraft, Shirley Kraft, Julie Kuhtz, Nancy Kuhtz, Megan Rollefson, Deb Runt, Judy Runt, Grant Schuldt, Judy Swanton, Cynthia Tobolt

### **Altar Ministry**

Nancy Barr, Julie Bohen, Kris Kaptain, Brigitte Katz, Julie Kuhtz, Nancy Kuhtz, Anita Olson, Judy Runt