

## **THE MESSENGER**

**October 2023**

*St. John's Lutheran Church at Stone Bank*  
W334 N6990 Stone Bank Rd., Stone Bank, Wisconsin  
Phone: (262) 966-2034 Website: [stjohnsstonebank.com](http://stjohnsstonebank.com)  
Facebook: [www.facebook.com/st.johns.stonebank](http://www.facebook.com/st.johns.stonebank)

### **The Gospel according to the Green Bay Packers**

[Jesus said,] "So the last will be first and the first will be last." Matthew 20:16.

"If you can't find Christ in the beggar at the church door, you'll never find him in the Communion chalice." St. John Chrysostom.

A funny thing happened at last week's Packer game. And I write this as the most casual Packer fan with only a sketchy understanding of football. But I know enough to notice something extraordinary last week. At the start of the second half, the Packers had fallen behind the New Orleans Saints 0 to 17. Even after they then scored a three-point field goal, I mean, the game was over. Everyone knew it. So when after something like 15 consecutive offensive plays yielding no points whatsoever, the Packers finally got a touchdown, the announcers were talking about how good it was that the loss would not be a complete humiliation. It's not like that one puny touchdown was going to change the outcome, after all. There were maybe eight minutes left in the game. But then the word came that Coach LaFleur had decided to go for the two-point conversion.

For the not-football fans among us, this means instead of getting the sure bet extra point by kicking the ball through the goal posts, the coach had made the risky choice of going into another play with the Saints to try to get the ball across the goal line again. If they succeeded, they'd get two extra points instead of one, but if they failed, they'd get no extra points.

But if you're already going to lose, why bother? That's actually what the announcer we were listening to, asked. Why go for the conversion? Apparently there could be only one reason. Coach LaFleur was trying to win the game. He made the call as if winning were a possibility.

But at that point in the game, Couch LaFleur might have been the only person in the stadium including the Packers themselves, who saw—and believed in—the possibility. And then they won the game.

When Jesus told his disciples that in God's kingdom the last will be first, and the first, last, he was inviting them into an equally preposterous reality shift. If the people we're used to thinking of at the top of our world—the well-dressed, well-educated, well-moneyed power brokers, are actually at the bottom in God's eyes, then who's left for the top other than the poor, homeless, imprisoned, or oppressed folks we usually shift our eyes away from when we pass?

But these, the gospels make clear, are the lost sheep the shepherd never ceases to search for, God's most precious ones, the poor, the captives, the blind, and the oppressed that Jesus declared in Luke's gospel, he had come to liberate—while we farther down in importance, humbly walk in their wake.

Fourth century Bishop and preacher John Chrysostom puts it this way: "If you cannot find Christ in the beggar at the church door, you will never find him in the [Communion] chalice."

Or as one of my seminary professors once told our class, just when you find yourself at the bottom, when you fail miserably, lose everything you love, with no chance of recovery—that's when you win, because that place is where you find Christ.

It doesn't make sense. But when we let go of our set and suffocating assumptions of how things are, and embrace God's radical, new, and liberating reality—then like the Green Bay Packers, unexpectedly, impossibly, we will win. And when we win in Christ, as we know by the breath of the Spirit within us, all creation wins.

Pastor Karen Jost

## CHURCH NEWS



### **Outreach for Hope Ride Run Walk**

This past Saturday, several St. John's community members attended Outreach For Hope's Ride/Run/Walk at Cory Municipal Park in Dousman. Pastor Karen Jost, Jim Edgar and Sally Christiansen participated in the 2 mile walk and Liz Tobolt, Ava Tobolt, Kris Kaptain, Kim Kaptain and their friend completed the 14 miles trail bike ride on the Glacial Drumlin Trail.

Thank you to everyone who contributed to this event which raises money for the Greater Milwaukee Synod's low income area ministries. St. John's has already raised over \$230.00! The Outreach for Hope donation jar will be available in the Fellowship Hall for 1 more week if you have any spare cash or change. You donate directly online at <https://outreachforhope.org/ride-run-walk/>.



### **Hope Center - Mission Fest Sunday 2023**

On September 24, Rev. Roy Nelson, President of the Board of Directors of Hope Center, joined us on Mission Sunday to tell us about Hope Center, a nonprofit organization dedicated to reducing the risks of poverty by helping people in Waukesha County meet basic needs such as food, shelter and clothing through services, partnerships and community collaboration.

Hope Center was housed in an older funeral home with limited space and stairs prevented easy access to service. In search of a new home, they found an available building a block away with triple the space and elevator access to all floors. This new location will have space for their current programs and additional space for a social worker, health checkups, dental hygiene, haircuts. There is also room to add guest laundry, guest showers and future needs.

Hope Center is heavily dependent on volunteers. They lost many volunteers during the pandemic. If you are interested in volunteering at the Hope Center, check out their website at [hopecenterwi.org](http://hopecenterwi.org).



### **Change in Offering Collection**

Beginning Sunday, October 1<sup>st</sup>, the offering plate will be placed at the entrance to the sanctuary for offering to be placed in either on the way in or out of the worship service. During the worship service, the Pastor will acknowledge the receipt of the offering with the Offering prayer after passing the peace, but the usher(s) will *not* be walking the aisle to collect it. We are making this change because there are many different ways that our community members give their contributions to St. John's.

## **Cedar Springs Ranch - Meditation: The Father's Love Letter**

I volunteer at Cedar Springs Ranch, an equestrian center/ therapeutic horse riding ranch just outside of Slinger WI and wanted to make you aware of this wonderful experience! Cedar Springs Ranch will be offering a **Meditation: The Father's Love Letter** with scripture on **Wednesdays October 4th and October 18th starting at 7pm**. Join us for meditation with scripture that will impact your heart, soul and spirit.

Horses will be present, please wear shoes (no crocs, sandals). You do not need any horse experience to attend.

This is a free event but donations are welcome. You do not need to register but if you would like more information please contact Kris Kaptain at 414-218-7717 or checkout the FB page for Cedar Springs Ranch.

If you are interested in a tour of the grounds, you are welcome to arrive around 6:30pm to allow some time to do this.

Cedar Springs Ranch is located at 3128 Slinger Road. Slinger, WI. You will see a sign for Cedar Springs church at the driveway when you turn in. Follow the driveway up the hill, past the horses, past the goats and llamas to the barn at the top of the hill where parking is available.

### **Kris Kaptain**

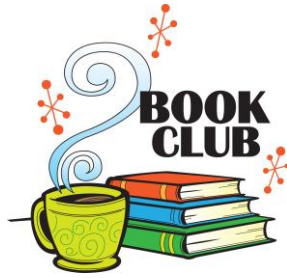
### **Youth Education Classes**

Youth Education classes will resume November 12th and run through December 17th. The classes will begin after Communion is served and end around 10:30 am. The classes are designed as preparation for Confirmation. All youth from Kindergarten through 7th grade are invited to attend.

### **Open Church Treasurer Position**

We are looking for someone to replace Barb. It is a flexible up to 4 hours a week position that requires bookkeeping skills. If you or anyone you know is interested in this position, please call the church office.

## Listening Book Club News



**Join us on Thursday, November 9<sup>th</sup> at 1 pm to discuss Yossi Klein Halevi's *Letters to My Palestinian Neighbor*:** "One Israeli's powerful attempt to reach beyond the wall that separates Israelis and Palestinians. In a series of letters Yossi Klein Halevi explains what motivated him to leave his native New York in his twenties and move to Israel to participate in the drama of the renewal of a Jewish homeland and help ensure that it succeeds as a morally responsible, democratic state in the Middle East." (Goodreads.) Interestingly the author has generously offered this book in Arabic translation for free downloading.

Listening Book Club seeks to love and understand our neighbor by listening to our neighbor, so we read books written by people who are not like us. Everyone is welcome to join us for one or more of our quarterly discussions.

## Worship, Music, & Hospitality Ministry News

### Mark Calendars:

#### **Sunday, October 29<sup>th</sup>**

- Reformation Sunday

#### **Sunday, November 5<sup>th</sup>**

- All Saints' Sunday

- Deadline for worship assistant 2023 volunteer forms

**Sunday, November 26<sup>th</sup>** - Decorate the sanctuary for the Holiday season after the worship service



### **Revised Fall Choir Schedule**

This fall, the choir is scheduled to sing on the following Sundays:

October 8<sup>th</sup> and 24<sup>th</sup>

November 5<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup>

December 3<sup>rd</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup>

Practices will be following the coffee fellowship on those days, as well.

Singers are invited to join our St. John's choir. If you like to sing, the choir would like to have you. Just call or email the church office with your contact information.



### **Worship Team**

#### **Worship Assistants for 2024**

The worship assistant volunteer forms for 2024 are now available. Assistants are needed in all areas: ushers, readers, communion assistants, service video streamers and altar care. At present ushers are the greatest need. Please prayerfully consider helping us to enhance our worship services by volunteering to help in one or more of these areas.

Deadline for form submission will be November 5<sup>th</sup> so that the schedule can be finished by the beginning of December.



### **Flowers or Plants Needed for Church Altar**

Forms are now available in the pews if you are interested in providing flowers or plants for the altar,

There are a few options for donating:

- Flowers or plants can be brought to church. If desired, flowers can be arranged by staff if brought to church by Thursday.
- Money can be submitted to go toward purchasing flowers or plants (minimum \$20 please)
- Arrange for a florist to deliver flowers or plants. Keep office hours in mind when arranging delivery.

Donations can be designated as an honorarium, memorial, or occasion may be noted so that it may be included in the bulletin. A schedule of altar flower/plant donations is posted in the narthex. Forms and donations may be placed in the offering plate.



### **Join Us for After Worship Fellowship**

Fellowship following services offers a valued time of socialization and togetherness. If you would like to volunteer to bring treats one week, there is a sign up sheet on the counter near the coffee maker. If you are bringing baked goods, consider making a few extra loaves and putting them in our freezer with the date on the container. Thank you!

## **Mt. Meru Price Increase Information**

Mt. Meru coffee will be increasing the prices of their products as of October 1, 2023. They have had the current prices since 2011. Inflation has increased here and in Tanzania over the past 12 years, and most of their costs have increased over 30% during that time with some even doubling. Raising prices will allow Mt. Meru to pay their specialty coffee partners more so they can invest more in themselves, their farms, and their families. This will also offer an incentive for the younger generation to continue to grow coffee and to employ best practices associated with Mt. Meru coffee.

It is easy for members of the congregation to order Mt. Meru coffee from home. Just e-mail your order to: [orders1@mtmerucoffee.org](mailto:orders1@mtmerucoffee.org). The order will be shipped to your home. Attached is an order form with the new prices. You can also pick up a form from the Mt. Meru display table in the fellowship hall, and leave your payment in the coffee pot on the table or in the church office, identifying the payment to Mt. Meru.

Mt. Meru continues to be an important and vital outreach project of the Greater Milwaukee Synod and provides a quality product to their congregations.

Megan Rollefson, Mt. Meru Coffee Ambassador

---

## **ST. JOHN'S GOOD NEWS REPORT**

New tenants have moved into the parsonage. Welcome to Rebecca, her sons, Peyton and Bentley, and their dog, Luna!

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

---

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

Everyone who contributed to the Lutheran World Relief school supply and health kits

Kris Kaptain for providing a demonstration of St. John's new website

Nancy Kutzt for the table decorations in the Fellowship Hall

Megan Rollefson for acting as a Mt. Meru Coffee Ambassador and Cemetery Association President

Judy Swanton for coordinating the Lutheran World Relief project

Liz Tobolt for all her work to find new tenants for the parsonage



Try A Yummy New Recipe -  
Kris Kaptain's Blue Ribbon Apple Cake

3 cups flour  
2 1/4 cup sugar-divided  
1T. baking powder  
1/2 tsp salt  
4 eggs  
1 cup vegetable oil  
1/3 cup orange juice  
2 1/2 tsp vanilla  
4 medium apples, peeled and sliced  
2 tsp cinnamon  
confectioner's sugar

Combine flour, 2 cups sugar, baking powder, and salt.

Mix eggs, oil, orange juice and vanilla. Add to flour mixture, mix well.

Toss apples with cinnamon and remaining sugar.

Spread 1/3 batter into greased bundt pan, top with half the apples. Repeat layers, add remaining batter over apples. (batter will be thick).

Bake at 350 degrees for 1 hour. Cool in pan 15 minutes before moving to wire rack. Cool. Dust with confectioner's sugar.

Yield: 16 servings. Note: This also freezes quite well.

**If you have a recipe that you would like to share, please mail, email or drop it off at the church office.**



## OCTOBER READINGS

### October 1

- [Ezekiel 18:1-4, 25-32](#) - *The fairness of God's way*
- [Psalm 25:1-9](#) *Remember, O LORD, your compassion and love.*
- [Philippians 2:1-13](#) *Christ humbled to the point of death on a cross*
- [Matthew 21:23-32](#) *A parable of doing God's will*

### October 8

- [Isaiah 5:1-7](#) *The song of the vineyard*
- [Psalm 80:7-15](#) *Look down from heaven, O God; behold and tend this vine.*
- [Philippians 3:4b-14](#) *Nothing surpasses the value of knowing Christ*
- [Matthew 21:33-46](#) *The parable of the vineyard owner's son*

### October 15

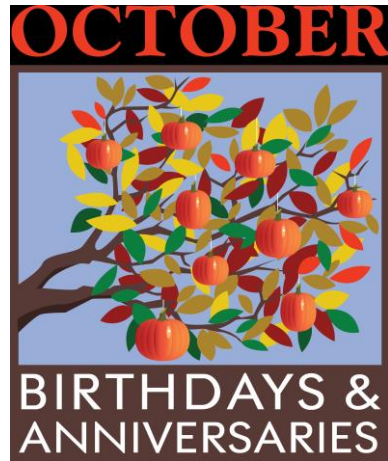
- [Isaiah 25:1-9](#) *The feast of victory*
- [Psalm 23](#) *You prepare a table before me, and my cup is running over*
- [Philippians 4:1-9](#) *Rejoice in the Lord always*
- [Matthew 22:1-14](#) *The parable of the unwelcome guest at the wedding feast*

### October 22

- [Isaiah 45:1-7](#) *An earthly ruler as the instrument of God's will*
- [Psalm 96:1-9 \[10-13\]](#) *Ascribe to the LORD honor and power*
- [1 Thessalonians 1:1-10](#) *Thanksgiving for the church at Thessalonica*
- [Matthew 22:15-22](#) *A teaching on giving to the emperor and to God*

### October 29

- [Leviticus 19:1-2, 15-18](#) *Holiness revealed in acts of justice*
- [Psalm 1](#) *Their delight is in the law of the LORD*
- [1 Thessalonians 2:1-8](#) *The apostle's tender care for the Thessalonians*
- [Matthew 22:34-46](#) *Two great commandments: love for God and neighbor*



October 4 – Dillon Michael  
October 5 – Phil Baird  
October 6 – Paul Tobolt  
October 11 – Ruth & Richard Wrubbel  
October 13 – Richard Wrubbel  
October 15 – Jim Edgar  
October 16 – Elizabeth Dove  
October 18 – Jim Hanson  
October 18 – Darrick & Renee Novobielski  
October 20 – Grant & Terri Schuldt  
October 25 – Barb O'Connor  
October 27 – Paul & Diana Tobolt



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

President: Judy Runt

Vice President: Nancy Barr

Council Members at Large: Julie Bohlen and Kris Kaptain

Financial Secretary: Judy Swanton

Acting Treasurer: Barb O'Connor

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

Music Minister: Jim Edgar

Pianist: Lauren Genthe

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

### **Worship Assistants**

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

### **Altar Ministry**

Nancy Barr, Brigitte Katz, Julie Kuhtz, Nancy Kuhtz, Anita Olson, Kris Kaptain