

St. John's Church  
13372 Nature Avenue  
Hutchinson, MN 55350  
(320) 587-5104



## **St. John's Messenger**

### ***Feb., March, & April 2026***

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# **REFLECTIONS**

A member of the church, who previously had been attending services regularly, stopped going. After a few weeks, the pastor decided to visit him.

It was a chilly evening. The pastor found the man at home alone, sitting before a blazing fire. Guessing the reason for his pastor's visit, the man welcomed him, led him to a comfortable chair near the fireplace and waited.

The pastor made himself at home but said nothing. In the grave silence, he contemplated the dance of the flames around the burning logs. After some minutes, the pastor took the fire tongs, carefully picked up a brightly burning ember and placed it to one side of the hearth all alone then he sat back in his chair, still silent.

The host watched all this in quiet contemplation. As the one lone ember's flame flickered and diminished, there was a momentary glow and then its fire was no more. Soon it was cold and dead.

Not a word had been spoken since the initial greeting. The pastor glanced at his watch and realized it was time to leave. He slowly stood up, picked up the cold, dead ember and placed it back in the middle of the fire. Immediately it began to glow, once more with the light and warmth of the burning coals around it. As the pastor reached the door to leave, his host said with a tear running down his cheek, 'Thank you so much for your visit and especially for the firey sermon. I will be back in church next Sunday.'

We live in a world today, which tries to say too much with too little. Consequently, few listen.

Sometimes the best sermons are the ones left unspoken.

The Lord is my Shepherd ---- that's a Relationship!

I shall not want ---- that's Supply!

He maketh me to lie down in green pastures ---that's Rest!

He leadeth me beside the still waters ----that's Refreshment!

He restoreth my soul ---- that's Healing!

He leadeth me in the paths of righteousness --that's Guidance!

For His name sake ---- that's Purpose!

Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death--that's Testing!

I will fear no evil ---- that's Protection!

For Thou art with me ---- that's Faithfulness!

Thy rod and Thy staff comfort me ----that's Discipline!

Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies-----that's Hope!

Thou anointest my head with oil ----that's Consecration!

My cup runneth over ---- that's Abundance!

Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life----that's Blessing!

And I will dwell in the house of the Lord ----that's Security!

Forever ---- that's Eternity!

Face it, God loves you!

What is most valuable is not what we have in our lives, but WHO we have in our lives!

Copy, Paste and Share !!!

Someone has written these beautiful words. Do read and try to understand the deep meaning of it. They are like the ten commandments to follow in life all the time.

1. Prayer is not a "spare wheel" that you pull out when in trouble, but it is a "steering wheel" that directs the right path throughout.
2. So why is a car's windshield so large and the rear view mirror so small? Because our past is not as important as our future. So, look ahead and move on.
3. Friendship is like a book. It takes few seconds to burn, but it takes years to write.
4. All things in life are temporary. If it's going well, enjoy it, that won't last long. If it's going badly, don't worry, that won't last long either.
5. Old friends are gold! New friends are diamonds! If you get a diamond, don't forget the gold! Because to hold a diamond, you always need a base of gold!
6. Often when we lose hope and think this is the end, God smiles from above and says, "Relax, sweetheart, it's just a bend, not the end!"
7. When God solves your problems, you have faith in His abilities; when God doesn't solve your problems, He has faith in your abilities.
8. A blind person asked St. Anthony, "Can there be anything worse than losing eyesight?" He replied, "Yes, losing your vision!"
9. When you pray for others, God listens to you and blesses them; sometimes, when you are safe and happy, remember that someone has prayed for you.
10. Worrying does not take away tomorrow's troubles, it takes away today's peace.

*y Sent to share by Mary Taylor*

## **PLEASE HELP!!!!!!**

**As there was only one volunteer to be on the Ice Cream Social committee, a motion was made and passed at the annual meeting to seek three more volunteers by the end of February. If we do not get three more volunteers, the Ice Cream Social will be cancelled this year! \*\*\* If interested please contact one of the council people**

### ***Pastor's Notes:***

This past year marked my first full year of ministry at St. John's. To say that it was an eventful year would be an understatement. There were so many memorable events, it's hard to know where to begin. First, I want to thank everyone who contributed to the life and ministry of St. John's in the past year. Thank you to the council, women's guild, Sunday school, youth group, ice cream social, VBS, and 160<sup>th</sup> anniversary volunteers and committees. Thank you to everyone who has volunteered to usher, clean, and prepare communion as well. I am undoubtedly forgetting some people. Please know that I am so very thankful to everyone who serves the body of St. John's. It makes serving as your pastor a true delight.

Last year, it was my privilege to preach through the books of Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi and to begin the book of Mark. Besides preaching, I have also had the joy of teaching the adult Sunday school class. On Wednesdays, I provide instruction in the confirmation class and for the youth group on alternating weeks. In the past year, I have also led a men's study on Wednesday evenings. This past year, we studied the books The Measure of a Man and Disciple Making.

A number of significant events were recognized in the past year. Most notably, St. John's celebrated its 160<sup>th</sup> anniversary. Praise God for His steadfast love which endures forever. In 2025, three people became members of St. John's: Travis, Stephanie, and Jayden Brecht. We also recognized six seniors who graduated: Jayden Brecht, Hailey Martin, Jack Rettman, Jayden Schaefer, Olivia Wanous, and Braden Wigern. Two people, Glen and Brenda Schaefer, made a public profession of faith in Christ through baptism this past year. We also said goodbye to three members who passed away this year: Deb Schwanke, Alice Kaufman and David Streeter.

I am looking forward to my second full year of ministry at St. John's. It is my joy and privilege to serve you as your pastor. Please feel free to contact me at anytime if you would like to become a member, desire a visit, or wish to be baptized. It is my desire to continue to get to know you more in the coming year and to connect with you on a more regular basis. It is my prayer that we continue to grow in Christ likeness as a body of believers for the glory of God.

**In Christ,**

**Pastor Bjorn Bakke**

# Council Minutes

November 19, 2025

Technology Improvements - 2,520.00

○ Missions -	217.00
○ Cemetery Spraying -	4,000.00
○ Memorial -	4,477.60
○ Benevolence -	2,806.65
○ Building -	1,640.00
○ Choir -	767.71
○ Cemetery -	4.165.00
○ SS-VBS -	1,683.25
○ Youth -	255.00
○ Pastoral -	245.00

- General Fund - \$42,757.08

Jerome reported that the building fund Citizens Bank checking balance is \$21,744.21 after \$20K in funds were transferred and the Vanguard account balance is \$169,822.75. Property taxes and septic bill will be paid. All financial reports were approved by unanimous consent.

Pastor Bjorn reported that he attended the Hutchinson Ecumenical Pastoral group meeting at which Bev Bonte from Common Cup gave an update. He has made several visits and outreach to members.

## Old Business:

- Church Directories – On final stretch. About 75 sittings done.
- Cemetery – Revisit: Cemetery Information Board Plan – M/S/C to approve cemetery signage as presented.
- New flooring in Faith Center
  - Three quotes shared, decision to one option next meeting.
  - Cory will be working on JAM room door adjustments and looking for possible floor settling beforehand.
- A/V move
  - Trial layout – received positive feedback
  - Back to normal on Sunday
  - Will start with detailed planning in preparation for Annual Meeting
  - Designs will include A/V control area, front equipment rack and wiring plan
- Ushers/Custodian needed – December shortage – council tasked to come up with a plan for next year to alleviate the shortage of volunteers
- Task list updates
  - Draft new pastor contract & prep for review
  - Council candidate names added
  - Review membership list – Outreach ideas tasked to council members
- Update task list – needs many updates such as septic, greasing the bell and parking lot sealing – Dave will work on this.

## New Business:

- New employment law issues, Dawn will check into.
- Parking lot sealing – due in 2026, Jerome will get a quote
- Ideas to make annual meeting go more quickly: Provide information in advance such as for the flooring and audio. Committee representatives give summary of annual report items instead of reading the report.
- Task list – no items as we were a month ahead
- Suggestion Box – none
- Upcoming events – Thanksgiving Service @ 9:30am
- Other new business –
  - Risers will move on Nov. 30 after service.
  - Joint Sunday School and Youth group deposit account discussed. M/S/C to approve combining SS & Youth group finances pending approval of both groups.
  - Unanimous consent given to approve the decision that the women's guild makes on the upholstery of chairs in the front of the church.
-

Next meeting – Dec 18 @ 7:00pm, meet at 6:00 to do offerings first  
M/S/C to adjourn the meeting following the Lord's Prayer  
.Respectfully submitted,  
Deb Froemming/Secretary

### **December 18, 2025**

**Council Members Present:** Council members present via Zoom were Dave, Dawn, Deb, Barb, Jerome, and Pastor Bjorn. Elmer was absent.

Dave called the meeting to order, and Pastor Bjorn opened with prayer.

The secretary's minutes were approved by unanimous consent for the November 19<sup>th</sup> meeting.

Dawn gave the treasurer's report. The beginning balance was \$65,534.29 and the ending balance was \$66,444.88.

- Designated Funds - \$23,942.21
  - Technology Improvements - 2,520.00
  - Missions - 217.00
  - Cemetery Spraying - 4,000.00
  - Memorial - 4,477.60
  - Benevolence - 2,981.65
  - Building - 1,795.00
  - Choir - 792.71
  - Cemetery - 4,770.00
  - SS-VBS - 1,748.25
  - Youth - 280.00
  - Pastoral - 360.00
- General Fund - \$42,502.67

Jerome reported that the building fund Citizens Bank checking balance is \$11,697.21 and the Vanguard account balance is \$172,069.91. Jerome obtained a quote of \$3600 for the parking lot sealant coat. All financial reports were approved by unanimous consent.

Pastor Bjorn reported that he had visited with members Glen & Barb Bemis and to Alice Kaufmann and family.

#### **Old Business:**

- Funeral for Alice Kaufmann, her family appreciated the care
- Pastor vacation coverage plan includes Ron Stewart filling in for both services.
- Church Directories
  - 72 printed directories are mostly distributed.
  - Cost ended up being ~\$13 each, or \$1,051 for 84 total, covered with funds from the 160<sup>th</sup> anniversary.
  - Celine has supplies to make about 12 more at no additional cost to St John's.
  - She'll make 4 or 5 more for immediate sale, then additional copies as needed.
  - Recommended price for additional books is \$15 each.
  - A church copy is in the cabinet with the Cemetery documents that can be marked up with corrections or changes for future updates.
- Endowment fund proposals – M/S/C to advance 7 funding requests to present to the congregation at the annual meeting.
- New flooring in Faith Center
  - Selected a quote to propose – M/S/C to use Fashion Interiors as our bid of choice.
- A/V Proposal
  - Will have an A/V plan at Jan mtg to review before Annual mtg
- Custodial plan
  - 2 potential people interested in position.
- Membership review – Pastor Bjorn and Dave will reach out to members designated.
- Annual meeting preview packet will be emailed out before the annual meeting. Dave will have printed copies available after services in January.
- Council member candidates, we have one nominate, Elmer has served his two terms.

#### **New Business**

- Pastor review and contract proposal for pastor was deferred.
- Task list
  - Annual Mtg Preparation

- Alter guild/Custodian/Usher Sign-up sheet has been posted
- The Pastor review will be presented later this week
- Contact staff on their pay
- Update record keeper with year's member changes, Deb will do.
- Suggestion Box – There were none in the box.
- Upcoming events –
  - Dec. 21, 10:30 am - Baby Jesus Sunday School Christmas program
  - Dec. 24, 5 pm - Christmas Eve Service
- Other new business included discussion for the 2027 offering envelope options.
- Next meeting – Jan 15 @ 6:30 pm, meet at 6 to count offerings before.

M/S/C to adjourn the meeting following the Lord's Prayer.

Respectfully submitted,  
Deb Froemming/Secretary

### January 15, 2026

**Council Members Present:** Council members present were Dave, Dawn, Deb, Barb, Elmer, Jerome, and Pastor Bjorn. Dave called the meeting to order, and Pastor Bjorn opened with prayer.

The secretary's minutes were approved by unanimous consent for the December 18<sup>th</sup> meeting.

Dawn gave the treasurer's report. The beginning balance was \$66,444.88 and the ending balance was \$47,493.96.

- Designated Funds - \$8,548.96
 

○ Technology Improvements -	2,520.00
○ Missions -	217.00
○ Memorial -	4,987.60
○ Benevolence -	376.65
○ Choir -	447.71
- General Fund - \$38,945.00

Jerome reported that the building fund Citizens Bank checking balance is \$14,138.61 and the Vanguard account balance is \$174,657.45. All financial reports were approved by unanimous consent.

Pastor Bjorn reported his outreach has included texts to members and he presented a prayer sheet for members to use to pray for one another.

#### Old Business:

- Pastor vacation coverage assessment was that Pastor Ron did great with sermon and service.
- Annual meeting discussed the following:
  - Preview packet was sent via email 1/12/26, copies to be available at church.
  - Pastor contract discussed and travel rate will increase from \$0.70 to \$0.725 for 2026.
  - Budget was reviewed.
  - Service Calendar had a suggestion to consider moving service time ahead by 30 minutes, this was decided to stay as is for now.
  - Membership review – 120 final total for 2025 and 3 to be removed pending meeting
  - Annual Meeting Agenda
  - A/V Proposal – established price estimate. Will request permission to select supplier of our choice.
  - Custodial plan
    - Pending congregation approval for a church cleaner: establish staff, set work expectations, write a guide.
  - Annual report
    - Planning to send out via email in advance if possible.
    - Request each representative to give highlights, to not read full report aloud.
  - Council member candidate will be attending meeting.

#### New Business:

- M/S/C to allow piano lessons at church given by Mary Huebert to a student, the church use policy allows this.
- Endowment fund member vote, Dave Swift is up for a second term.
- Potential Faith Center lights were found to test. If favorable, an order will be placed for 24 units at \$22 each. Dave will put in one to test sample.
- Task list

- Annual Mtg Preparation - done.
- Establish Budget - done.
- Snow call list will be updated by Deb, following the annual meeting,
- Suggestion Box was empty.
- Upcoming events –
  - January 25 - Annual meeting and potluck following the service
  - February 15 – Jesus Loves you Snow Much
- Next meeting – February 12 @ 6:30 pm, meet at 6 to count offerings before.

M/S/C to adjourn the meeting following the Lord's Prayer.

Respectfully submitted,  
Deb Froemming/Secretary

### **Endowment Fund Update**

For 2026, the Endowment Fund is distributing \$8,300 of the \$8,770 that is available. The recipients/distributions are:

\$1,500 – Missionary Support for the Andersons on the Red Lake Indian Reservation  
 \$1,500 – Missionary Support for the Solheims in Honduras  
 \$ 600 – Sunday School Child Sponsorship – Irene in Liberia  
 \$1,000 – VBS Celebration – Meal, Program and “Cruise-in”  
 \$1,200 – Cemetery Information Board  
 \$1,250 – Faith Center Flooring  
 \$1,250 – Audio Video System Upgrade

The distribution **funds available for 2027 will be \$15,845.** Please ask a committee member for a form to submit your proposal of how we can put these funds to work. The committee is: Glen Schaefer, David Swift, & TBD.

If you are working on estate planning, please consider St John's Endowment Fund in your plan, so we can broaden the impact of the great gift that the Nemitz's began.

### These are Cemetery highlights from 2025:

The committee met on Feb 4 to revise, update and review policies and other items.

\*Met with former members of the cemetery committee to brainstorm ideas for revising policies.

\*Created (& Cong. approved) new cemetery policy, affirming that the cemetery committee is subordinate to council like any other church committee (instead of separate "Association")

\*Created/documenting: Committee roles and responsibilities, Procedures for reserving plots, Procedure for burials, Approved digging contractors. Additional procedures still in draft phase.

\*Implemented new mapping system that is directly linked to Cemetery data.

\*Renumbered rows in reverse order, moved all markers and updated maps/data accordingly.

\*20 new plots (26 burials) were reserved. All previously reserved plots were corrected / confirmed location / verified paid or received payment / updated map.

\*Information Board installation plan submitted to council. Council approved.

\*Propane tank was moved in preparation of installing Board in the Spring of 2026.

\*Flag installation proposal submitted to council. Council seeking congregation approval.

\*Four monument installations in the past year and no burials.

St. John's Cemetery Committee:

David Huebert

Celine Swift

Dave Sanken

### Sunday School Happening



Keira Kottke receiving her Bible



Holly & her friend Sydney & Jodi changing Kids hutch bags



Puppet show in November with Connor & Mason

**Sunday School Christmas program Dec. 21, 2026**



“  
The kids did a wonderful job of sharing the Christmas news at their program! Their dedication and love for Jesus shows!

The kids have been taking turns writing to Irene and learning about her life in Liberia. Sunday School has upcoming dates to remember:

**January 18- A puppet show will be performed during the church service.**

**February 15- "Jesus L♥ves You Sn\*w Much" event during Sunday School time. and kids will sing during the church service**

## Christmas Advent Season



Brenda & Cory



Dave & Jodi



Pam & Dave



Jerome & Julie



**Km, Mason, Mike Conner & Hailey Martin**



**Special Christmas Eve Music by Jenny & Braathen  
Daughter & granddaughter of Deb & Dean  
Froemming**

**These 3 students received Nemitz Scholarship's presented by Lea Ette Peters**



**Dylan Wigern**



**Jayden Schaefer & Hannah Wigern**

***Remember these friends in Christ with a prayer, card or call***

**Glen Bemis Birthday 8/28**

**Barb Bemis Birthday 1/31**

**55530 County RD 38**

**Buffalo Lake, MN. 55314**

**Kari Eischens Birthday 4/21**

**% Dennis Schwanke**

**225 Major Ave**

**Glencoe, MN. 55336**

**Randy Knick Birthday 11/28**

**1388 Bradford St.**

**Hutchinson, MN. 55350**

**Dave Martin**

**72555 280th St.**

**Dassel, MN. 55325**

**Myra Martin Birthday 03/18**

**% Ken Feltmann**

**66 1st Ave. N.**

**Lester Prairie, MN. 55354**

**LorenMielke Birthday 1/19**

**11031 Page Ave.**

**Brownton, MN. 55312**

**Michelle Moyer Birthday 3/27**

**736 Maple St.N.E.**

**Hutchinson, Mn. 55350**

**Nita von Wold Birthday 6/07**

**1096 Sherwood St.**

**Hutchinson, MN. 5535**

**Mrs. Lin Ziemer Birthday 12/06**

**Woodstone Sr. Livg. #208**

**955 Cleveland Ave. S.W.**

**Hutchinson, MN. 55350**

**PASTOR**

Bjorn Bakke .....320-368-0889  
21838 CSAH 4  
Dassel, MN. 55325  
Email [pastorbjornb@gmail.com](mailto:pastorbjornb@gmail.com)

**COUNCIL**

President David Swift... 320-296-1305  
Adam Garoutte .....

Sec. Deb Froemming .....320-583-4876  
Treas. Dawn Norrbom.. 952-484-1326  
Fin Sec. Barb Buckentin320-510-4130  
Bldg.Fund:Jerome Karl 320-583-6031

**WOMEN'S GUILD 2025**

President Julie Karl ..... 320-587-7702  
Vice Pres Lea Ette Peters .....864-3282  
Sec. Michelle Moyer ... 320-250-7088  
Treas. Brenda Schaefer. 507-766-7486  
Sunshine Cr:Elaine Carrigan 864-3330

**CEMETERY BOARD**

David Huebert ..... 320-296-9153  
David Sanken ..... 320-583-7777  
Celine Swift..... 320-296-9083

**BENEVOLENCE COMMITTEE**

Elaine Carrigan .. .....320-864-3330  
Mavis Mielke ..... 320-328-5339

**SUNDAY SCHOOL TEACHERS & SUBSTITUTES 2024-2025**

Preschool- Dawn Norrbom &  
Jayme Sparby

Grade 1<sup>st</sup> -2<sup>nd</sup> Jodi Sanken &  
Michelle Moyer

Grade 4<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> June Knick-Andrea Wigern

**Young Adult Class**

Michelle Alsleben

**Substitute List:**

Brenda Garoutte  
Leslie Smith

**YOUTH GROUP LEADERS**

Pastor & Crystal Bakke

**CHURCH SECRETARY & RECORDS****UPKEEP**

Karen Konerza..... 320-864-4554  
cell 320-510-4859

## **Job Sign-Ups 2026**

### **COMMUNION & ALTAR PREP**

January.....Swift  
February.....  
March Alsleben  
April.....Rose  
May.....  
June.....  
July Julie Karl  
August.....  
September.....Schaefer  
October .....Garoutte  
November .....  
December.....

### **CUSTODIAN**

January .....Swift  
February .....Knick  
March Alsleben  
April.....  
May.....  
June.....  
July .....Julie Karl  
August.....  
September.....Schaefer  
October .....Garoutte  
November .....  
December .....  
7<sup>th</sup> .....  
14<sup>th</sup>.....Knick  
21st .....  
24th 5 p.m.....  
28th .....

January 2027.....

January 2027 .....

### **USHER/GREETER**

January .....Swift  
February .....  
March Alsleben  
April .....t  
May .....  
June .....Lea Ette & Michelle  
July .....Karl/Kaufmann  
August .....  
September.....Schaefer  
October .....Garoutte  
November .....  
December .....  
7<sup>th</sup> .....  
14<sup>th</sup> .....  
21st.....  
24th.....  
28th .....

January 2027.....

## February 2026

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1 Communion	2	3 Isaac S.	4	5	6	7
8	9	10 Mike N.	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18n Ash Wed. At 7 p.m. Desiree S	19	20	21
22	23	24 Jettie M..	25 Glotia W. Mark W. Lenten Serv 7 p.m.	26	27 Deb F,	28

## March 2026

	Mon.	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1 Communion Mary G.	2 Hannah W.	3	4 Sharon M. Lenten Service 7p.m.	5 Robin S.	6	7
8	9	10	11 Lenten Service 7.p.m.	12	13	14
15	16	17 Travis B.	18 Lenten Service 7p.m.  Myra M.	19	20	21
22	23	24	25 Lenten Service 7 p.m.	26 Randy R.	27 Michelle M	28 Morgan K.
29 Jerry B.	30	31				

## April 2026

J

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1	2	3	4 Brenda S.
5 EASRER 9:30 a.m. Communion .Lea Etta P Layla B..	6 Celine S.	7	8	9	10 Marley S.	11 Kari E.
12	13 Allan B.	14	15	16	17	18 Elmer B.
19	20 Glen S. Jodi S.	21 Adam S. Leslie S.	22	23	24 Mike M.	25
26	27 Laura S.	28 Mason M. Hattie S.	29	30		

## Mark Your Calendar

**Lenten Service begin on Wednesday, Feb. 18th go thur Wednesday, March 25th at 7:00 p.m.. Good Friday Service is on April 3rd at 7:00 p.m.**

**Sunday March 8th Daylight savings begin!!!**

**Easter Sunday is April 5th Service time is 9:30 a.m. NO SUNDAY SCHOOL**

### **NOTE FROM THE EDITOR**

Information for the next Newsletter will be needed by April. 26th give to me at church or email at [chubbers67@gmail.com](mailto:chubbers67@gmail.com)