

St. Stephen the Martyr Lutheran Church, ELCA

6101 So. 51st Street, Greendale WI 53129

(414)421-3543...www.ssmelca.org

Worship Opportunities at SSM

Saturday - 5:00 pm Worship

Sunday - 9:30 am Worship

Sunday School - 9:30 am



THE MARTYR MONTHLY MAY 2019

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PASTOR'S PAGE

Dear Friends in Christ,

EASTER ISN'T OVER! And we sometimes forget that fact. With all of the buildup, the forty days of Lenten preparation, Palm/Passion weekend, and Holy week services...Easter Day can seem like the end of a long journey, or the 'light at the end of the tunnel.'



On the Monday following Easter Sunday it's hard to not approach the day with a feeling of "well now we can get back to the *normal* church life". But there isn't anything normal about it: **Alleluia! Christ has risen! Christ has risen indeed, Alleluia!** And he isn't going anywhere for the next FIFTY DAYS and beyond!

From now until Pentecost, we will journey with Christ's disciples as they carry out God's mission: to spread the Good News. The resurrection is not simply a one-time-event but, as author Gail Ramshaw puts it, "is the continuing power of God in the believing community".

Listen closely over the next seven Sundays to the first lessons from Acts as they recount the actions of the disciples in the wake of the events of Easter Day. They are a witness to the power of Christ's resurrection, made known in the actions of the disciples as they (guided by the power of the Spirit) journey forth to build up the body of Christ in the world.

Easter rolls on for fifty days, and with it a continual reminder of the awesome power of God's work through Christ.

Easter is remembering and participating in Jesus' death and resurrection.

Easter is renewing our vows to live our baptism in the world.

Easter is the world coming back to life in the yearly miracle of spring.

Easter is about God's love.

Peace in Christ,
Pastor Brian

Imagine That

“Receive our gifts of money, imagination and labor.” Sound familiar? It is from the offertory prayer we have been using during Lent. Like the youth who wrote new versions of the Lord’s Prayer in the April newsletter because they found themselves not really paying attention to the words, I too, sometimes go on autopilot during parts of the service. So I looked more closely at the bulletin and thought “imagination?”

What does giving God our imagination mean? We didn’t put it on our “Response to God’s Love” form. And although Paul doesn’t include it in his list of gifts of the Holy Spirit, I suspect it might be one.

One theologian described “prophetic imagination.” The prophets were called to describe current reality to the people and showed how it failed God’s will. They were then to call people to the realm of God. Jesus does this but more completely. Living in a world of brokenness, he offers forgiveness and calls us to new life in the realm of God which is starting to break into the broken world. But how do we live in that new life? Unlike John Lennon’s song Imagine, imagining things is not easy to do. That is why Jesus used parables and metaphors. The new life is so different from the old, that it really takes imagination to figure it out.

So we are back to “what does giving God our imagination mean?” If the realm of God is like the Good Samaritan, can we show goodness and kindness to strangers, even when it is a cost to us? What would that look like in our broken world—challenging hate speech, speaking up for immigrants, serving the homeless? When we share the peace in church it is more than a social greeting but training us to become peacemakers in our communities? What do we imagine, not only for our own actions but for the community in Christ as well.

The new Lord’s Prayers the youth created show that imagination can pay tribute to tradition without falling into traditionalism. Can you imagine a church where the words “We’ve never done it that way” or “We tried it before and it didn’t work” are never uttered? Imagine that.

Barbara Fritschel



MUSIC NOTES FROM THE MUSIC DIRECTOR



A huge thank you to all the singers and instrumentalists of all ages who participated in Holy Week and Easter services! Your work and music is a blessing to all of us.

Regular Wednesday choir and handbell rehearsals continue through May 22nd.

Summer choir will sing June 7th, and August 4th. Rehearsals are the same day beginning at 9am. All veteran and new singers are welcome!

Any vocal or instrumental soloists or ensembles who are interested in participating in summer services, please speak with me regarding scheduling and repertoire.



MUSIC & WORSHIP

The joyous season of Easter continues throughout May. For these 50 days, we adorn the church in white, recalling the joy of the resurrection.

Looking ahead, we have some needs for volunteers in the fall and winter months:

Candle Box Set-Up: Two or three people are needed to set-up the candle boxes for All Saints Weekend (November 2-3). This does require some lifting.

Choir Concert Reception Organizer: Are you a party planner? We need an individual to organize a reception to follow the annual choir concert (tentatively Saturday, December 7th or 14th). Responsibilities include planning the reception, recruiting and supervising volunteers, and promoting the event.

Watch for upcoming worship volunteer training sessions after services. We'll take 10-15 minutes to refresh our current volunteers and train new volunteers on the tasks needed for worship.

For more information on volunteer needs, contact Denise Sanders at 414-423-0608 or the.family.sanders@gmail.com.

HUMAN CONCERNS

Thanks to the new volunteers who recently helped at the Unity Soup Supper!
Also, thanks to the regular volunteers!

Human Concerns is considering new projects like Break The Chains Prison Ministries.

Blankets, toiletries, sweat pants and jackets, socks and underwear are always needed to Tippecanoe and Unity!

Thanks to all who donate!



CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

Our regular studies continue, please see the calendar for dates and times for the Women's Study on Luke, Men's Study continuing the synoptic gospels and monthly study continuing to look at John. Please note that in May the Women's Study will meet on the fifth Wednesday instead of the fourth which is usual. This is a one time move only. In June we will be back to our usual schedule.

If you enjoyed the two Adam Hamilton studies that we completed recently, Unafraid, Living with Courage and Hope in Uncertain Times and Simon Peter: Flawed but Faithful Disciple you may be interested to know that the accompanying books are available in our library. We have only a few copies of each, so if you go to look for them and can not find them let me know (see me at church or put a note in my box) and we can develop a wait list. You will find these books very informative. They are easy to read and are short. I found them to be very beneficial to my personal spiritual growth.

Looking forward to learning with you,
Bonnie Zimmermann



WOMEN OF THE ELCA

SSM WOMEN OF THE ELCA STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING

This is a reminder to all who are part of the SSM Women of the ELCA Steering Committee. We have a meeting scheduled for June 27th at 9:30 a.m. in the Fellowship Hall to begin the planning details for the Bake and Basket Sale being held on November 23rd and 24th. If you haven't already done so, please mark the date and time on your calendar.

CONVENTION OF THE GREATER MILWAUKEE SYNODICAL WOMEN'S ORGANIZATION (SWO)

This year's convention will be held at Holy Cross Lutheran Church, off of Pilgrim Road in Menomonee Falls, WI on October 12, 2019. The theme for this one-day event is "Choose to Make a Difference". SSM will want to send a woman from our congregation to act as our "Voting Member". The individual serving in that position would attend the business portion of the Convention, voting for Board members and other business items that may be presented. Please notify Carole Ropel, at 414-719-2468, if you are interested in being our voting member. Convention Registration forms will be posted on the kiosk sometime in June.

HELP NEEDED BY YOUR SYNODICAL WOMEN'S BOARD

The position of Secretary of the SWO Board has become vacant due to the death of Betty Warber, the elected secretary. Would you be willing to step into this position for a few months? You would be required to write the minutes of the SWO Board meetings for the next three meetings until a new secretary would be elected at the annual Convention in October. There could be other responsibilities assigned to you by our SWO president, Sue Seidemann. We are grateful to Karen Hoffman who has agreed to cover these duties until a replacement is found. If you are able to fill this temporary position, call Sue at 920-452-1634 for more information.

LOOSE ENDS LUNCHEON

Loose Ends Luncheon will be at The Forum Restaurant, 4711 South 108th Street, May 8th, 2019. Any questions or for more information please call Diane Gastrau at 414-304-8284 or email to dgdiana835@gmail.com





On MONDAY JUNE 3rd at 6:30 pm the KNIT WITS are hosting another PLARNING NIGHT!!! The 1st one was very successful and many people are now plarning away at home. However, WE sure could use some more HELP!! Never heard of PLARN, that's ok we will show you how to take plastic grocery bags and turn it into PLARN (Plastic YARN) for MERCY MATS (sleeping mats) for the homeless. It's EASY, FUN, and no EXPERIENCE needed at all. **EVERYONE** is welcome to join us.



We will be cutting up bags, joining them together, and rolling them into plarn balls – that's it!!! (you can even pick what YOU want to do). We will NOT be crocheting the mats, just doing the prep work. The “plarn balls” will be delivered to the people who make the mats. Just bring a scissors (not your fancy one) and some plastic grocery bags (pick n Save , Dollar Store, Meijer's TYPES). NO bags, NO problem -- We will have plenty of bags AVAILABLE.

If you wish to donate BAGS please drop off in the coatroom. So we PLEASE hope you consider joining us for the evening, you might just meet some new people, share in some laughter (because you don't have to concentrate TOO hard while doing this), get out of the house due to nicer weather, I hope by JUNE , and make good use of those “plastic grocery bags” while helping others. Many thanks to those experienced plarners, who are working away and to you the ones thinking about it! Any questions see or call Diane Moraza 414-281-8677 (home #)



EASTER BREAKFAST REVIEW

Thank you to everyone who participated in the annual Easter Breakfast. Many hands spread the work of this large event. 1200.00 will be donated to four food ministries. They are Unity Dinners, Bayview Community Center, Faith/Santa Fe and Central City food pantries.

I would especially like to thank Bob and Karen Rasmussen who mentored me through out the process. They did retire last year but really only semi-retired, as they helped me to "see the big picture" and still did some of the detailed work. I am grateful for their continued presence. - Pam Gustafson

Vacation Bible School Kick-Off Event May 18–19, 2019

Learn more about how you can get involved:

- **Register** your child (or your grandchild, niece, nephew, neighbor!).
- **Volunteer** as a crew leader, snack helper, or other ways.
- **Contribute** by purchasing a cupcake or sponsoring a child.
- **Donate supplies** to build breathtaking adventures for the students.



Roar! VBS

JULY 15–19, 2019

God's wild about you!

NEWS & NOTES

FIRST COMMUNION:

What is the appropriate age for my child to receive their first communion?

This is a good question. First communion can and does happen at many different ages throughout congregations of the ELCA. A guiding resource from the ELCA called the *Use of the Means of grace* notes that, “*There is no command from our Lord regarding the age at which people should be...first communed.*”

If you feel your child is ready to receive first communion we will have an instructional class on Sunday May 5 following 9:30 a.m. worship. We will be using a resource called *Fed and Forgiven*. Please contact Pastor Brian at pastorbrianhooper@gmail.com to indicate attendance, or with any questions.

SIMON PETER: FLAWED BUT FAITHFUL DISCIPLE

Following the 9:30am worship on May 12 we will watch the last video session "The Rest of the Story" in the Luther room.

ELCA CHURCHWIDE ASSEMBLY

The Greater Milwaukee synod will be the host for the assembly August 5-10, 2019 at the Wisconsin Center. About 600 volunteers will be needed in the coming months to usher, iron albs, provide technology assistance to voting members, monitor doors, greet visitors and much more. You can find out more information at [/www.elca.org/churchwideassembly](http://www.elca.org/churchwideassembly), or let Pastor Brian know if you have interest or questions.



CONGRATULATIONS

To

John and June Rech

Who are celebrating their
70th Wedding Anniversary

On April 30th, 2019

NEWS & NOTES



A special thank you to Bob Soderstrom for cleaning the cushions on pews and chairs.

HELP OUR PARTNER CHURCH WITH THEIR FUNDRAISER

(To support general needs for their church)

When: Saturday, May 4th , 5:30-7:30.

Where: Unity Church

Meal will be catered.

Cost: \$20 Adults, \$10 Children (Tickets sold in advance)

There will also be a SILENT AUCTION.



**Church
Fundraising**

WE ARE OPEN FOR BUSINESS AGAIN

Warmer weather means it is aluminum can collecting time.

Please crush the cans if possible, then drop your bagged cans off at the garage door behind the church in the lower parking lot. Sale of the cans will raise money that goes to support area food pantries.



Thank you for your continued support.

Bob Rasmussen - collection coordinator.

ELCA CHURCHWIDE YOUTH CHOIR OPPORTUNITY

Young singers with unchanged treble voices, having completed 3rd through 8th grade, are invited to participate in a mass children's choir for the festive opening worship of the ELCA Churchwide Assembly held at the Wisconsin Center in Milwaukee, on Monday, August 5. The choir will participate in the service of Holy Communion with Presiding Bishop Eaton, singing selections throughout the service and helping to lead an assembly of over 1,500 people in song. Please let our children's choir leader Jennifer Ortega, olson_jr@yahoo.com or Pastor Brian, pastorbrianhooper@gmail.com know if you are interested by May 1.



CONDENSED MINUTES OF COUNCIL MEETING 04/09/2019

President Jason Covert called the meeting to order at 6:33 P.M.

Council members present were: J. Covert, B. Daleness, B Fritschel, J. Konop, A. Matusiak, J. Muroi, N. Mineau, D. Sanders, L. Sweet, A. Woerpel and B. Zimmermann. Pastor Brian was also in attendance.

February council minutes were approved with corrections.

FINANCIAL SECRETARY'S REPORT:

One member gave their entire pledge for 2019 in March.

TREASURER'S REPORTS:

J. Muroi indicated that no disbursement had yet been made for the Ash Wednesday special offering but 60% of the total will go to Tippecanoe. Hopefully we are done with snow blowing expenses for this spring. The bill for the circulating pump replacement was paid out of the general fund but could be moved to the Building Capital Reserve account if needed. There is still a bill coming for the air compressor. Balance Sheet and Offerings and Disbursements reports were reviewed.

Treasurer's report was approved.

PASTOR'S TIME:

Pastor asked for feedback on the Lenten services presentations. Most liked them but some thought they were more a travelogue than a medium for reflection and worship. Facebook and our web page will be updated for the special Holy Week and Easter services. Pastor also asked if council felt it was time to update the church membership rolls. Most felt that would be a good idea and that we should also look at the database we are currently using to store the information to see if there is something more current. B. Zimmermann and N. Mineau volunteered to assist with the process. Council also agreed it would be good to set up a walk through of the building with the Greendale Police Department and reactivate the Safe Worship committee. There will be opportunities to participate in the ELCA Churchwide convention in Milwaukee August 5th through the 10th.

OLD BUSINESS:

Committee Positions Expiring – Human Concerns, Property and Financial Secretary positions are expiring. N Mineau is willing to stay on as the Human Concerns chair. J. Schultz will continue until the end of 2019. J. Muroi is in need of someone to cover for vacations as he may be going south for a few months starting next year. May 19th will be the special congregational meeting to nominate and vote on replacements. The new council will be installed on June 8th and 9th.

Council came up with a new tagline to use on our Bulletins, Newsletter, Web Page and Stationary. WELCOMING ALL, WORSHIPPING GOD, SERVING OTHERS

CONDENSED MINUTES OF COUNCIL MEETING [Cont.]

Anyone interested in attending the Synod Assembly on May 31st and June 1st at the Italian Community Center should see Pastor or Jason.

The Council discussed our relationship with the Salvation Army based on their stance on the LBGQT community. We decided to write a letter to the local office to see how they respond to our concerns. We will also be gathering information on what it takes to become a Reconciling in Christ church in our synod.

D. Sanders reported that the church organ has had numerous issues recently and repair has been needed. It is old and the electrical system is starting to degrade. We may need to look at options. New organs are extremely expensive but good used organs can be obtained for around \$25,000. If needed we may start a fund raiser for a used organ.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION:

B. Zimmermann and Pastor are discussing new Sunday morning programs for adults.

WORSHIP & MUSIC:

Holy Week and Easter services are being planned. Foot washing will be available at the Maundy Thursday service. The Passion Gospel will be performed on Palm Sunday. There will be an outdoor service in Greendale August 10th.

STEWARDSHIP:

B. Fritschel reported that new giving programs are being reviewed for our drive next fall.

HUMAN CONCERNS:

Tippecanoe meals are all done. Clothing is being collected for Unity. Unity is having a fund raiser and silent auction on May 4th.

FELLOWSHIP:

Dan Resterhouse will take over the Coffee Hour as Doug Winter has resigned. He is looking at pricing of other bakeries as the cost of doughnuts continues to rise. A. Matusiak needs someone to take on the oversight for Rally Day this year as she will be out of town. Will check with Bob De Frank to see when Rally Day will be this year.

Next Mega Meeting is May 7, 2019.

Next Council Meeting is May 14, 2019.

Respectfully submitted,

Bonnie Daleness
Council Secretary