

A Word from the Pastor...for February

All January we have been hearing "first words." God's first words from Genesis 1: "Let there be light." At Jesus' Baptism, "This is my Son..." Jesus calls his disciples with a simple sentence: "Follow me..."

Words are important. With God, speaks and creating go hand in hand. So it is with our words, what we say can build up, or break down. Our words can soothe a soul, or lose one if we are not careful. Maybe as a discipline for Lent, make your first words each day a word of thanks to God, for bringing you to something new. Then as you go about your day, consider your first words to whoever you meet. Let them be words of kindness and blessing, and then see what reaction you get back.

Words come at us fast and furious, from the radio, on TV, in texts and emails. For fun, I found the following and just had to share. It is from the "When less is more" department, and it has to do with, of course, words.

God so loved the world: 5 words
The Pythagorean theorem: 24 words
The Lord's Prayer: 66 words
Archimedes' Principle: 67 words
The Ten Commandments: 179 words
The Gettysburg Address: 286 words
The Declaration of Independence: 1,300 words

**-The U.S. Government regulation on the sale of cabbage:
26,911 words**

In the 90's a poll asked: "What word or phrase would you most like to hear uttered to you, sincerely?" In the category of "words have power," the first was: "I love you." The second was, "You are forgiven." Number three, believe it or not, was, "Supper is ready." We hear those each and every week when we gather to worship. The simplest of words can and do bring the greatest joy. A blessed February and Lent!

Pastor V.

Pastor Valerie's Bible Study

Bible Study is a great joy for me, and I have a group of curious and eager scholars. Please consider coming some Thursday evening, from 6 to 7. We will continue looking at the First Reading and Gospel for the Sunday that follows the Bible Study.

February 1: Isaiah 40: 21-31 and Mark 1: 29-39

February 8: 2 Kings 2: 1-12 and Mark 9: 2-9

February 15: Genesis 9: 8-17 and Mark: 1:9-15

Also, as we are in Lent, we will meet each Thursday in March, (the 1st, the 8th, the 15th and the 22nd) with the exception of Maundy Thursday on March 29.

Ladies Aid

Just a reminder that the Ladies Aid will not be having a regular meeting until May 3. Until then, see you in church!

Submitted by Connie Arnold

Parish Social Life Feb 2018

Thank you to the 3 souls that braved the freezing weather and attended the January meeting. We are currently working our event calendar for this year. We're exploring activities like day trips, boat rides and more! Stay tuned! If you have an activity idea, please contact Kathy Moody.

St. John's Evangelical Lutheran Church

(3512 Clinton Street @ Union Rd, West Seneca)

Presents: **Our Monthly Community Dinner**

**Time:4pm – 6:30pm or until we
run out- Whichever comes
first**

Date:2/23/18

**Mark's Homemade Tomato Soup with a Grilled
Cheese Sandwich**

We will also have Desserts & Drinks

***** Menu subject to change *****

The meal is provided for ANYONE in need of food,
fellowship or fun... As always, the food, the seat and
the smiles are FREE but good will offerings are always
accepted.

WANTED: coupons from The Buffalo News Sunday paper. These coupons are mailed to Fort Bragg where our military personnel and their families can use them at their PX up to six months after the expiration date. Just drop them in the box on the counter in the Narthex and Sandy Stango will take it from there. Another way to support our troops and their families. Thanks, Sandy Stango

Crossbeam Deadline

Articles for the **March** issue of the Crossbeam are due by **February 11th**. Please e-mail your articles to Sue Koeppel (sekoeppe@gmail.com) or leave them in the Crossbeam mailbox outside of the church office. Electronic articles are preferred, if at all possible.



Food Barrel for WS Food Pantry

Needed for February are soup, condiments, paper products and dessert mixes.

Lenten Journey 2018

Date	Church	Speaker
2-21-18	14 Holy Helpers	Pastor Roger Griffiths
2-28-18	St. Nicholas Anglican (Covenant UM church—Main St)	Rev. Luke Uebler
3-7-18	St. John's Lutheran	Rev. Claudia Schedn
3-14-18	Ebenezer UCC	Rev. Dave Vasquez
3-21-18	Trinity Lutheran	Rev. Dennis Kruezer

Offerings will go to Kids Escaping Drugs and Heifer International

Lenten Devotional

The 2018 Lenten Devotional, "***Christ's Light: from Love to Laughter***" will be available in the Narthex by 02/10/2018 and also electronically on St. John's website. If you would like one mailed out to you, please contact Mark Koeppl at (716) 823-2071 and leave a message. Leave your name, address and phone number. He will call you back to verify information before mailing it out.

Power Point Schedule

	Preparer	10:45 am Presenter
February 4	Nick Barnhard	Matthew & Autumn Brown
February 11	Nancy Kessler	Trevor Godus
February 18	Nick Barnhard	Linda Altman
February 25	Nancy Kessler	Jean Stankowski

Fund Raising Committee

Re: monthly mystery box 3 for \$1.00

If we want to continue this monthly mortgage fund raiser—that Marie Ramey so faithfully mans the Parish Hall table on Sundays with tickets 3 for \$1.00—we are in need of quite a few monthly wrapped surprises—they can be in any amount but wrapped—see Sandy Haase or Marie Ramey with your ideas and schedule.

CPR/AED Red Cross Training

I'd like to schedule a springtime 3 hour class with Ryan's Hope Foundation—if you are interested in taking this course, please contact Sandy at 668-3584—preschool or 674-8109—home.

Assisting Minister Schedule

	9 am	10:45 am
February 4	Pat Lipka	Nancy Kessler
February 11	Sandy Gordon	Karen Rothenberger
February 14	Ash Wednesday—7 pm: Nancy Kessler	
February 18	Jim Steiner	Adam Wolff
February 25	Sue Springer	Caroline Rackl

Attention Thrivent Members

Please contact Bernie in the church office to let her know that you are a Thrivent member—each Thrivent member is eligible to receive \$500 a year to donate to an Action Team to support programs such as the Seneca Babcock lunch. St. John's is sponsoring the first Sunday of every month.

Child Seat Check

I'd like to schedule this free car seat check done by WS Police and Erie County Sheriff—it is usually done on a Saturday in our Educational Bldg. parking lot—interested—contact Sandy Haase

Hospitality Committee

What we do:

The Hospitality Committee is the group to join if you're not interested in a long term commitment, but are interested in lending an occasional hand. Hospitality is defined as the friendly and generous reception and entertainment of guests, visitors or strangers. This is exactly what we do through set up, staffing and tear down of events throughout the year. We may also ask members to provide a snack if the occasion calls for it.

Recent events supported include the choir concert fund raiser and Pastor Roger's installation pot luck.

Upcoming events include the hosting of the Lenten journey in March.

How can you help? Please complete the volunteer form that will be in the church bulletins in Feb. There will be extras in the Narthex. Our hope is that we create a list of volunteers that we can call on occasionally. Have a question? Please contact Bethann Hintzman or Kathy Moody.



This is the QR code for the St John's website. If you're not familiar, a QR code will take a mobile device directly to our web site, just by taking a picture of it.

Altar Guild

I'm hoping everyone weathered the frigid cold temps and the quick thaw that we recently experienced. Like they say "if you don't like the weather in Buffalo, stick around it will change soon!"

THANK YOU to everyone who purchased Poinsettias for the church this Christmas. As always the church looked beautiful and the music was fantastic!

Thank you to Beverly Weixlman for the beautiful new altar cloth she made and donated to the church. Also we thank her for her many years of devotion and talents that she gave to the guild. Bev is retiring from her duties, but has graciously stated that she will help if needed.

We welcome Sue Springer who has accepted our request to step into Bev's place and help the guild with her sewing talents. Thank you Sue.

The next meeting will be on February 25th at 9:30 am in the copy room. Hostesses are Erma Fitzpatrick and Judy Kelly.

Caring for the altar in February are Sharon Tyler, Arline Semlitsch and Jill Wolf.

Submitted by Nancy Weber

Church blooper! Potluck Supper at 5 pm on Sunday—prayer and medication to follow!

News From the Pews

In The Hospital

Glenn Mitzel
Deb Kerner

Baptism

Camille Schindler December 17, 2017 daughter of Daniel and Suzanne Schindler

Funeral

Glenn Mitzel, November 25, 2017

Installation for Pastor Roger Griffiths, Jr. - December 3, 2017

"I would like to take this time to express my sincere THANK-YOU to all the members of St. John's Lutheran Church; for all the prayers and cards during my surgeries and continue recovery. As, I continues to rehab and get stronger, I would also like to THANK, Pastor Valerie and Pastor Roger for the hospital visits and home visits. Pastor Roger was at the hospital twice when I needed spiritual guidance the most, when I was receiving the bad news from the doctors. He helped me to refocus and give me hope. After being away from St. John's for so many years to be members of Trinity Lutheran Church and now back to where my family roots are, I believe that I am truly back home.

Thank you again and may God bless each and everyone of you!"

Warmest Regards, **Deborah Kerner**

"Please accept my special thank you to all at St. John's. Pastor Valerie visited me and sent communion. Ladies Aid and WELCA and all my thoughtful church friends. Thank you my many relatives. Your telephone calls were appreciated. It was wonderful to have a surprise birthday party. Thank you. Happiness is being a member of St. John's." **Rose Doster**

"Thank you to all who included me in their prayers as I recovered from shoulder replacement surgery. A special thank you to Connie & Charlie Arnold who were there whenever I needed help or a ride and Nancy Kessler for bringing the word of the Lord and communion to my apartment. God Bless you all." **John Anderson**

LOST & FOUND

If you find items around our complex, please place them in the lower cabinet in the Foyer, next to the Guest Book stand. Please do not leave them lying where you found them.

If you lose something please look in that cabinet first.

Items of value are kept in the church office.

If you bring in goodies for our many receptions during the year, please take your dishes home. Those left in the kitchen will be placed on the pew next to the Classified Ads bulletin board in the Parish Hall.

We do thank everyone who brings in goodies but we just don't have room to store the dishes left behind.

Please call Carolly Huth if you can't find what you are looking for at 826-0506.

Women of the ELCA

Hope everyone has been enjoying and sharing their blessings in this new year. We will not be meeting again until March 13 when it will be our Caring and Sharing Night. Watch next month for further details on this. We are always looking for new faces to come for an enjoyable evening out with the ladies so feel free to join us when you can.

Thought for the month:

Remember that every day is a gift from God, use it kindly.

Submitted by Connie Arnold

HAPPY FEBRUARY BIRTHDAY TO:

2/1 Richard Fredericks
2/3 Denise Brady
2/4 Sue Koeppel
2/6 Kris Hicks
2/6 Ruth Jacobs
2/7 Sandy Marzahn
2/9 Mark Koeppel
2/10 Arline Semlitsch
2/13 Pastor Valerie
2/16 Rhonda Drezek
2/17 Leah Leipler
2/18 Donna Heine
2/18 Mike Woodard
2/20 Sandy Gordon
2/20 Gerald Szalanski Sr.
2/23 Devon Brady
2/24 Hunter Sherer
2/25 Ruth Merckel
2/26 Charlie Arnold
2/26 Kirsten Brady



HAPPY FEBRUARY ANNIVERSARY TO:

2/6/1988 Daniel & Mary Ann Leary
2/12 Keith & Alexis Lang
2/17/1968 John & Lynn Boldt
2/19/1972 Jeff & Felicia Kline
2/24 Keith & Linda Altman

DINING OUT CLUB

invites you to join us:

WHEN: FEBRUARY 22 - Thursday - 6:00 p.m.

WHERE: THE RED LOBSTER

PRICES: \$ 12.99 & up entrees + appetizers, soups, salads, fish fry, chicken, beef dishes too.

4 - course dinner \$ 16.99 Coupons may be used.

DIRECTIONS: 1000 McKinley Pkwy. Hamburg NY
Take Milestrip Rd. entrance to McKinley Mall and
turn right.

**PLEASE CAR POOL AND MEET AT THE
RESTAURANT.**

**RESERVATIONS MUST BE MADE DUE TO THE
SIZE OF OUR GROUP. PLEASE SIGN UP ON THE
SHEET ON THE COUNTER IN THE FOYER AND
NAME WHO YOU ARE RIDING WITH.**

RESTAURANT REVIEW:

We did not dine out in November & December.

We choose our next restaurant from a sheet that is passed around at each dinner. The restaurant with the most Xs is where we go next. Sometimes a favorite is included on the list and we go there again. This is a chance to visit a restaurant you wouldn't normally go to and get to know your fellow members of St. John's. Your family and friends are always welcome. Please call Carolly Huth at 826-0506 should you have questions or suggestions.

Submitted by Carolly Huth

Sunday Church School

Thank you to everyone: children, parents and loving grown ups that supported our children in the Christmas program. Many hands helped to make the enjoyable program run smoothly.

Offering envelopes were distributed to our classrooms. If you haven't received them, please see your child's teacher.

Our Epiphany party was held January 7th. We played Minute to Win It, Advent bingo, made crowns and had a 3 Kings photo-booth. Thank you to our teachers and parent volunteers and Thank you to Keith Lang for capturing our fun on film. Pictures are on our Facebook page.

Notable dates:

- Feb 4th: Brief teachers/aides meeting @ 10:15
- Feb 11th: We'll distribute our Valentine Hearts, asking our congregation to pray for one of our children daily throughout the rest of the school year.
- March 18th: First Communion
- March 25th: Palm Sunday aka Lord's Prayer Sunday as we celebrate with our Kindergarten, 1st and 2nd grade classes, the achievement of memorizing the prayer that unites all Christians.
- April 1st: Easter Sunday, no classes, see you in church
- May 20th: Confirmation and the last day of Sunday School classes

See you in Sunday School!

Submitted by Kathy Moody

BOLD WOMEN'S DAY WILL BE CELEBRATED FEB 25TH.

Women, have you acted boldly? Think about that! What are your bold acts? The Women of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of America and our congregation are celebrating you! Feb 25th celebrates all Lutheran women who have acted or are acting boldly on their faith in Jesus Christ. Katharina von Bora Luther was a practical and bold women of faith. Some women are bold in their unceasing prayers. Other women are bold in their service to those in need. Still other women are bold in their advocacy or through their hospitality. For thought: What's the boldest thing you or someone in your family has done? Whom do you admire for his or her boldness? What does acting boldly on your faith in Jesus Christ mean to you? Who have been the bold women in your life? How have I acted boldly on my faith in Jesus Christ? On Feb 4th, 11th and 18th, we'll ask you to share your bold acts with our congregation, your contributions will be gathered on a bulletin board, available on the 25th for viewing. You may have many bold acts, or maybe one, we'd love to hear about it! More info to come via the weekly bulletins.

St. John's Community Preschool 4th Annual Toy Sale will take place May 4-5, 2018

Please consider donating to our biggest Preschool fundraiser of the year!

We are looking for

- * Gently used or antique Toys
- * Gently used or antique Books (kids books only please)
- * Baby items
- * Outdoor play items
- * Homemade items for children

All money raised to be used for new toys/equipment for St. John's Community Preschool & the classroom used by our littlest Sunday School Students (3 & 4 year olds). Donations may be dropped off upstairs in the educational building-room 203a.

Also, won't you please consider volunteering to help. I am looking for help with publicity and to set up and price during days on May 2 or 3 as well as on the sales days from 9-1 to cashier or assist. Please call or text me with any questions or to offer assistance. 901-6570 or tracylml@aol.com
Tracy Lumb

Spring Fling

Clean out your closet and bag up the items you no longer want in a 13gal.bag; We can turn them into cash!

Bring clothing, bed/bath/shoes and household items into church or call for your items to be picked up.

Call Bethann 668-0833

Please support our building and community dinner funds.

Collecting starts March 1st -April 30th

Worship and Music

With Ash Wednesday falling on Valentine's Day (14 February) and Easter on April Fool's Day (1 April) this year, the WM Committee is already focusing on Lent and Holy Week. As usual, we will have Ash Wednesday services at 11 am and 7 pm, with a potluck lunch following the early service. Both services will include both Communion and imposition of ashes.

Saint John's will host a Lenten Journey at 7 pm on 7 March, with St. John's Senior Choir offering a prelude.

Look for more information on Holy Week and Easter services, coming up next month.

We meet on the first Thursday of each month at 7 pm and always welcome new folks interested in the work of making the worship experience a vital and vibrant part of discipleship at St. John's.

Submitted by Adam Wolff

DECEMBER 2017 Financial Notes

Regular Budgeted donations for the month of December 2017 totaled **\$21,080**, averaging **\$5,270** per week for that 4-week period. YTD Budgeted Receipts (Weekly Envelopes, Simply Giving and Plate Offerings) totaling \$86,311 has increased by \$2,348 or 2.8% compared to the prior year. We also benefited from additional RMD donations of **\$17,781** from qualified IRA plan distributions donated directly to the church. Budgeted expenses of **\$17,697** for the month, or **\$4,424** per week, and matching the Budgeted Expenses requirement of **\$4,423** per week. Fiscal year Actual Expenses of \$105,469 are still below Budget Expenses of \$115,000 for the YTD.

Total Benevolence YTD through 6 months of **\$12,638** is already at 78% of the annual budgeted goal. Included in that amount: (i) **\$4,000** has been sent to SYNOD for general mission work, (ii) **\$1,245** has been donated to St. Johns Preschool from various sources (congregation, chili dinner, Roger's ordination), (iii) total Hurricane Relief efforts from the congregation and church council totaled **\$4,935** (Sept/Oct/Nov), that was sent to SYNOD to be match-funded by Thrivent and forwarded to Lutheran Disaster Response to assist with the hurricane clean-up, and (iv) \$551 in cash and 30 full turkey dinners provided Thanksgiving dinners for our friends in the Seneca Babcock community.

A total of \$22,700 was transferred from Checking back to Saving December 2017 thanks to a strong month of donations and the additional RMD's. The Checking account ended 12/31/2017 with a positive balance of **\$41**. The operating savings account ended 12/31/17 with a balance of **\$53,855** plus **\$20,491** in the investment C.D.

Continued on page 19

DECEMBER 2017 Financial Notes, continued

Building Fund donations totaled **\$19,074** for the month of December, including \$12,781 from RMD's; however, YTD donations are down **\$(9,821)** or **(15.8%)** from the prior year. The regular loan payments were made on the M.I.F. Mortgage Loan, and two smaller loans, plus as extra \$1,000 was paid on the Cornerstone Loan, and the remaining \$14,633 on the Cemetery Loan paid that Loan in full. The remaining balance in the Building Checking account was **\$7,123** as of 12/31/2017.

The M.I.F. Mortgage and the Cornerstone Loan, carry a remaining principal balance of **\$818,788** as of 12/31/2017. The Loan principal balances have reduced by **\$64,158** compared to the prior year.

Summation: For the 6 months of the fiscal year 2017 ended **12/31/2017:**

The Church account: We had a strong December for collections, bringing income up 2.8% compared to the prior year, plus with \$17,781 from RMD's, overall income is up 4.0%. YTD Benevolence is at **12.0%** of Total Budgeted Expenses. YTD a net amount of **\$14,875** has been transferred from Checking back into the Savings account. Only 69% of the congregation regularly donates to the Church, with the Church account used to pay the salaries and Church bills.

The Building Fund: Donations are down (15.8%) as compared to the prior year; however, all of the Loans continue to be paid, plus with the extra RMD's, the Cemetery Loan was paid-off early, leaving just the MIF mortgage and the Cornerstone Loan. Only 34% of the congregation regularly donates to the Building Fund, which pays the mortgage payments.

Respectfully submitted,
Michael Woodard, Treasurer (as of
12/31/2017)

INDEX

Assisting Ministers	7
Altar Guild	9
A Word from Pastor Valerie	1
A Word from Pastor Roger	See insert
Pastor Valerie's Bible Study	2
Birthdays & Anniversaries	12
Community Dinner	3
Dining Out Club	13
Financial Report	18-19
Food Pantry	4
Fundraising	6
Greeters	See insert
Hospitality	8
Ladies Aid	2
Lenten Journey	5
Lost & Found	11
New from the pews	10
Parish Social Life	2
Power point	6
Sunday Church School	14
Ushers	See insert
WELCA	11
Worship and Music	17