



The Visitor



February, 2009

Ash Wednesday Services

February 25

4pm at St. Clare Friedensheim Chapel

7pm at St. John's



Potato Bar Supper

Wednesday February 25

Ash Wednesday

4:30 - 7:00pm in Fellowship Hall

Carry-out 5:00 - 6:30pm

The Potato Bar Supper fundraiser offers steaming hot potatoes with a variety of toppings, fruit salad and dessert for only \$6 for adults and \$4 for children 3 and older. The Senior High Youth Group prepares this meal as a fundraiser for it's annual work trip. This year, the Youth will be heading to South Dakota in July.

Tickets may be purchased on Sunday morning or at the door. Carry-out orders may be placed when you purchase a ticket or by telephoning the church office, 325.2165. Plan now to attend!



Men's Euchre Party

Mark your calendar and join the fun in Fellowship Hall on Thursday night, February 26th for men's euchre. Please

invite a friend or two and join us. More tables makes for more fun. We play from 7 till 9 p.m. The traveling trophy could be yours if you can post the top score!

Making a Casual Necklace

You are invited to create your own casual necklace of leather. Techniques, instructions and tools will be provided by Melissa Thompson. This class will be held in the Upper Room on Wednesday, February 18th from 6:30 - 7:30pm. In the event this class becomes full an additional class will be held from 7:30 - 8:30pm. A class fee of \$20.00 will cover all supplies needed. Please telephone the church office to register by February 11th.

Experiencing the Bible Again for the First Time

A Small Group Bible Study

Led by Kay Carter-Heath

Six Saturday mornings, 7:00 - 8:30am

February 7, 14, 21, 28, March 7, 14



Many of us received a Bible as children and have not looked at it since. Many of us have tried to read the Bible and given up because the language was too difficult to understand and we had no one to help us. Some of us don't have a Bible, yet we want to learn more about this basic book of our faith. Some of us read the Bible daily and find that the more we read, the more we want to learn.

Experiencing the Bible Again for the First Time is a course that will stimulate learners at any level.

For 6 Saturday mornings you will have an opportunity to discuss your questions and be offered new ways to read and understand the Bible. The study is based on a book written by Dr. Marcus Borg and the course is designed for small group discussion, not lecture.

Registration is necessary to ensure a participant book for each person and you may register by contacting the church office, 325.2165.

Creative Card Class

The new year will begin with the Creative Card Class meeting on Monday, February 16 in the library starting at 5:30pm The cost will be \$10. So enough supplies can be provided please telephone the church office, 325-2165, if you are interested in attending.

Euchre at the "Garden"

We hope you will join us for an evening of card playing at Garden Apartments followed by a time of fellowship with light refreshments on **Thursday, February 19 at 7pm.**





“And whenever you fast, do not look dismal, like the hypocrites, for they disfigure their faces so as to show others that they are fasting. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward. But when you fast, put oil on your head and wash your face, so that your fasting may be seen not by others but by your Father who is in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you.”

Matthew 6:16-18

Ashes or Not

At the Ash Wednesday worship service, we have an opportunity to receive a mark of ashes on our forehead or hand. This is an ancient tradition in the Christian Church. But for some people the imposition of ashes seems to be at odds with what the Bible teaches us about public displays of fasting and remorse. In Matthew 6, Jesus clearly instructs his disciples not to fast like the hypocrites, those who publicly disfigure their faces and make a public display to show everyone else that they are fasting. Instead, he says, look the best you can, so your fasting is not evident to others, but only to your Father in heaven. Why then should we mark our faces with ashes on the first day of Lent? Is this practice consistent with the teachings of Jesus?

To answer this question it seems helpful to talk about the meaning and purpose of Ash Wednesday services. This service is one of the most solemn worship times we have at St. John's. It is a frank recognition that we are mortal people who have sinned against God and our neighbor. The cross of ashes is a sign of the shortness of life and our remorse at the ways that we have hurt others by the things we have done and the things that we have left undone. The ashes are meant to be a physical reminder of these stark, inevitable, humbling facts. My first year out of seminary, I remember drawing an ashen cross on the forehead of child, a first-grader with pigtails. I choked on the words, "Remember you are dust and to dust you shall return." There are few acts in the church that so clearly remind us that all life is fragile and limited.

After the service is over, we go home and wash our faces. The purpose of the ashes (to remind us of the reality of sin and death) is complete, and we have no further use for them. This fact is why I believe that the imposition of ashes is consistent with Scripture. You can bet that the hypocrites that Jesus criticizes wouldn't have washed off the ashes for weeks! Instead they would make sure as many people as possible had seen them. It seems to me Jesus criticized them and called them hypocrites, not for their act of contrition, but for their desire to be noticed and praised for it.

It is easy to get caught up in the desire for attention and praise, even in moments of prayer and worship. Jesus says that we should be careful that we show remorse for the right reasons. This criticism makes sense to me. Have you ever heard someone give a testimony about finding God that seemed to cross some invisible line? To me, this line is crossed when the focus is no longer on the grace of God, but instead on just how low-down, depraved and miserable the person used to be. It seems to me that Jesus' real criticism is not of public acts of contrition, but of anyone making an attention-grabbing show of their remorse.

These passages of scripture remind us that we shouldn't take pride in our ability to express remorse. We shouldn't take pride in our repentance. With or without ashes, to repent has nothing to do with feeling guilty and inadequate or with bleeding ourselves of our self-esteem. It simply means *to turn around*.

*Peace,
Gretchen*

Elder of the Month

Zee Bauman is our Elder of the Month. Zee celebrated her 90th Birthday on January 24. Zee has always been a willing volunteer for projects at St. John's. When she was younger, she taught Sunday School. She particularly liked working with the youngest class of students. Zee was a Parish Visitor spending many hours visiting people in the nursing homes. But most people know Zee for her many years working with the Sewing Ladies. Zee's quick needle and sure hands have been making quilts for St. John's for decades. You can see Zee's (and the rest of the Sewing ladies) handiwork in the quilt hanging up outside the Link room.



To send Zee a belated birthday card, or thank her for all her good works, her address is 1743 13th Street, Monroe, WI 53566.

St. John's Prayer Tree



It is a new year and we are counting on a better one than 2008 has been for most of us. However, we all know that somewhere in 2009 we will be experiencing some challenges, illnesses, disappointments, loss of job, etc. It is times such as those that you are encouraged to call upon members of this church, helping through prayer, to carry your burden. Our prayer tree consists of people willing to take the time daily, to offer your concerns to God. We pray, then wait knowing that sometimes it is not the answer we are expecting. The following may be called upon in February should you have a prayer request.

February 1: Diana Weckerly 325.4697
or email at drweckerly@tds.net

February 8: Marie Wunschel 329.7881
or email at joshies_mom@yahoo.com

February 15: Gloria Rieder 325.6854
or email at glorch@tds.net

February 22: Mary Deininger 325.6394
or email at Deininger@tds.net

Remember, if you want to write out your request, there are locked boxes; one in the narthex of St. John's and one at Friedensheim. "I call on you, O God for You will answer me; give ear to me and hear my prayer."

Psalm 17:6

2009 Women's Retreat

Friday evening March 27 at 7:00pm –
Lunch on Saturday March 28, 2009
The Lodge at Geneva Ridge
Lake Geneva, Wisconsin
www.genevaridge.com

The theme for this retreat is "Seasons of Friendship" and the cost is \$100. The cost is based on double occupancy in double queen suites and breakfast and lunch on Saturday. The leader is Rev. Lucia Oerter, a decades-long friend of Kay Carter-Heath, Director of Christian Education at St. John's. Brochures for the retreat and *The Lodge* are available in the brochure racks.

Registration information is in the retreat brochure and your early registration is encouraged. If you have questions, please contact Kay Carter-Heath, 325-2165 or kaystjohns@tds.net.



Give Camp A Try

By Karen Sylvester

Last summer I went to the 2nd grade camp at Pilgrim Point Camp. We learned about God's creation. We played animal games. We went swimming in the lake (in the morning we called it the Polar Bear Swim. Brrrrr...) Everybody was nice. The food was delicious and I made new friends. If you want to have fun this summer, give camp a try.

Brochures for UCC Summer Camp opportunities will soon be available in the church office. The Christian Education scholarship fund will pay 1/2 of the activity fee.

Blanket's Sunday Offering

This year the Blanket's Sunday Offering will be collected on Sunday February 8, 2009. In the past this special collection was known as Tools for Hope and Blanket Sunday. That was a long name, but it explained the cause pretty well.

Basic areas of coverage are Disaster Preparedness, Hurricane Recovery, Tools for Recovery, Vulnerable Children, and Water Restoration. Approximately 8,000 congregations across the United States take part in this effort in conjunction with the Church World Service organization. Church World Service has worked in partnership with local agencies to identify needs for over 60 years.

Blankets, tents, food, and other emergency supplies are provided to disaster areas. Tools and seeds are provided to refugees returning to their homes to replant the soil. Wells are constructed for families living in drought prone areas in order to provide not only clear water to drink, but also water to irrigate crops and gardens. Literacy training and micro credit is given to women struggling to reach their true potential. Each of these projects is designed to assist people in becoming self-sufficient.

St. John's has participated in this program for many years. You may not recognize it because of the change in name, but it is the same program and deserves our wholehearted support.

Many thanks,
St. John's Mission Committee

Green County Food Pantry

Sunday, February 1, containers will be placed at the entrances for non-perishable food items or personal care items for the Green County Food Pantry.

In the month of December 2009 boxes of food were distributed serving 368 adults and 220 children for a total of 588. Please check the expiration dates as outdated items cannot be used and dented and rusty cans cannot be used. January 4th, St. John's gave 74 pounds toward the Pantry.

Special thanks to Stewart and Christie Strait, who come on Monday morning and take the Sunday collection to the Food Pantry.

Second Harvest Mobile Food Pantry

On **Thursday, February 19**, the Second Harvest Food Pantry will be **held indoors at the St. Vincent de Paul store**. You may need to wait outside for a period of time before entering the building to get your food so dress warmly. If you or someone you know plans to attend, bring boxes, plastic tubs or bags in which to place the many items you will be given.

Distribution begins at 3pm.

Feeding the Hungry via the Internet

For those of you with computers, each day you have the opportunity to feed the hungry, provide health care for children, support literacy programs and other causes by going to www.thehungersite.com. Sponsors support the efforts of these causes throughout the world and all we need to do is click each day on the appropriate boxes from the comforts of our warm homes. It is such a simple effort on our part and does so much for the poor of this world. Hopefully you will make this a daily habit.



S.A.M.

The next Salvation Army Meal that St John's is scheduled to serve is on the calendar for April 25th. Please mark your calendars with this special date. We will be looking for food and monetary donations and willing volunteers to both prepare the food and to serve the meal in Madison. Complete details will be furnished in the March Visitor with follow up in the April Visitor and the weekly church bulletin.

Any questions or to volunteer to help, please telephone Lois Meinert at 325-2292.

Matthew 25: 35-36 *"For I was hungry and you fed me; I was thirsty and you gave me water; I was a stranger and you invited me into your homes; naked and you clothed me; sick and in prison, and you visited me."*

Church Records

Our Sympathy to the family and friends of Robert Sutter, Alice Schoepfer, Robert Stauffer and Nathan Roth

Memorials given to St. John's
In loving memory of

Nathan Roth from

Bob and Gloria Rieder

R. Bruce Reichert from

Bob and Gloria Rieder

Robert Stauffer from

Bob and Gloria Rieder

Otto and Gladys Schild

Henry and Melva Tschanz

Robert Sutter from

Bert Benkert

Randy and Sue Armstrong

Bob and Gloria Rieder

Elizabeth and Margrit Affolter

from Linda Boyle and

Mavis Hexom

Clifford Hexom from

the family

Alice Schoepfer from

Otto and Gladys Schild

Robert Brauchle from

Merlin and Tam Olson

Dorothy Johnson from

Inez Goecks

Lauren and Lois Meinert

Rita Farris

Gary Northrop from

Mike and Angie Werth

Don Pehl from

family and friends

Albert Abplanalp from

Charlotte Abplanalp

Naida Johnson from

Harris Ace Hardware

Ted Wyss from

Don and Jean Van Wagenen

Carol Lanz from

Don and Jean Van Wagenen

Happy Anniversary February

- 1 Charles and Ruth Ingold
- 4 Jack and Ginny Drake
- 7 Alvin and Lucy Kubly
- 8 William and Judith Frazier
- 9 Clarence and Marion Leaver
- 22 Forrest and Mildred Kubly
- 24 Harold and Heddy Shager
- 26 Merlin and Tam Olson
- 28 Delbert and Norma Wyss

This anniversary list is church members who are celebrating at least 50 years of marriage or more.

Our Congratulations!

**Donation given to St. John's
In honor of
90th Birthday of
Zee Bauman** from
Bob and Gloria Rieder

**Donation given to St John's for a
kitchen dishwasher
in loving memory of
Larry Steinmann** from
Ernie and Joyce Steinmann

**Memorial given to St. John's
Building Fund
In loving memory of
Robert Sutter** from
Lauren and Lois Meinert



February

- 1 Gladys Von Kaenel
- 3 Colleen Hasler
- 3 George Wells
- 3 Geraldine Wulf
- 6 Elder Hanson*
- 7 Dorothy Amans
- 8 Harris Meyers
- 12 Nora Rubi*
- 12 Ena Schuetz
- 15 Clara Blumer
- 15 Margaret Wyss
- 18 Cleo Rufi
- 18 Delbert Wyss
- 19 Lila Reinking
- 21 John Wagner
- 22 Eldon Ott
- 23 Kenneth Horstmeier*
- 24 Frieda Siedschlag
- 27 Marian Foulker
- 27 Lillian Hefy
- 27 Katherine Schuetz*

To make our special birthday list you will need to reach the young age of 75. The names with the * are members who have reached the young age of 90.

March Service Group 9

Men and women of St. John's are assigned to a Service group and each Service group is assigned a month of the year with a chairman. If you see your name on the list, don't wait, please telephone the monthly chairman to volunteer for the monthly event. You will be asked for money, food, or serving at the monthly event. Thank you for your generosity with your time, talents or resources.

Chairperson - Chris Zeal 608.527.2660

George and Susan Abrams
Marian Ackermann
Amber Allen
Larry and Debra Allen
Kimberly Allen
Lindsey Allen
Wilma Anderson
Wanda Austin
Tony and Lisa Beaver
Christine Beer
Dale and Beverly Bertalot
Richard and Pat Budsberg
Judi Cleasby
Evelyn Coleman
Dorothy Cromwell
Jerry and Catherine Dwyer
Esther Elmer
Dorothy Goecks
Dale and Gail Grossen
Dorothy Gruenberg
Janet Hauri
Arthur Hendrick
Stephanie Hutchison
Keith and Josephine Kischer
Evelyn Kubly-Jacobs
Lawrence and Christine Leitzinger
Elizabeth Leopold
John and Marilyn McElhaney
Scott and Connie O'Brien
Arthur and Brenda Payne
Mary Regez
Donald Rothenbach II
Marie Rufener
David and Holly Schmid
Craig Schmidt
Leland Jr. and Connie Showers
Frieda Siedschlag
David and Patra Smith
Roxann Snyder
Thom and Jacqueline Solberg
LaVerne Springer
Donald and Donna Steiner
Jeremy and Amy Steiner
Stewart and Christie Strait

Karen Sutter
Jeffrey and Rhonda Thomm
Betty Timm
Jeff and Kathy Trewartha
Harold and Marian Trumpy
Roger and Gertrude Voelkli
Mary VonKaenel
David and Marcia Wald
Alan and Diana Weckerly
Lori Wild
Louise Wild
Doris Wilde
Marci Ziltener
Doran and Belva Zwygart
Marshall and Lori Zwygart

Fellowship Time

Sunday morning between services
February 1, 8, 15, 22

Other News

On The Move

Did you make a New Year's resolution to do some exercising? Are you having trouble keeping this resolution as you are finding excuses? You don't like doing the exercises alone? Well, just wanted you to know that you are welcome to join *On the Move* group in the Cinema Room from 5:30 - 6:00pm on Tuesdays and Thursdays. The group is doing a 30 minute fun DVD workout to Leslie Sansone's "Walk it Home Workout". You don't need to register just come and you are welcome to bring a friend and join in on the fun!

Saturday Night, March 7th

Set your clocks ahead one hour

Wednesday Schedule

5:00pm Mid High Fellowship
 5:15pm Kids Club, Junior Choir, Youth Ensemble
 6:00pm Kids Club, Children's Choir, Confirmation
 Lunch
 6:30pm Confirmation Class, Senior High Fellowship

Worship Schedule

8:00am at St. Clare Friedensheim Chapel
 9:00 & 10:30am St. John's
 9:00am Faith Zone

February 2009

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
<p>1 Worship Communion Food Pantry Blood pressure</p>	<p>2 Daisy 6pm Webelos 6pm Wolfs 6:30pm AA 8pm</p>	<p>3 On the Move 5:30 pm Orion 5:30pm Bells of Praise 7pm Harmony 7:30pm</p>	<p>4 Staff 10:30am Sewing Ladies 1pm 7:00pm Sanctuary Choir Wednesday Schedule</p>	<p>5 On the Move 5:30 Men's Ministry 5:30pm Book Study 6pm Creative Circle 6:30pm AA 8pm</p>	<p>6</p>	<p>7 Bible Study 7am</p>
<p>8 Worship</p>	<p>9 4-H 6pm Webelos 6pm AA 8pm</p>	<p>10 Scrip Orders due 9am On the Move 5:30 pm Orion 5:30pm Bells of Praise 7pm Harmony 7:30pm</p>	<p>11 Staff 10:30am Sewing Ladies 1pm Wednesday Schedule 7:00pm Sanctuary Choir Church Council 7:30pm</p>	<p>12 On the Move 5:30 pm Book Study 6pm AA 8pm</p>	<p>13 Wedding Rehearsal 5pm</p>	<p>14 Bible Study 7am Wedding 4pm</p>
<p>15 Worship Mission Committee meeting 11:30am</p>	<p>16 Daisy 6pm Webelos 6pm Wolfs 6:30pm Sarah Circle 7pm AA 8pm</p>	<p>17 On the Move 5:30pm Orion 5:30pm Bells of Praise 7pm Harmony 7:30pm</p>	<p>18 Staff 10:30am Sewing Ladies 1pm Wednesday Schedule Necklace Class 6:30pm</p>	<p>19 2nd Harvest Food at 3pm On the Move 5:30pm Book Study 6pm Euchre at the Garden 7pm</p>	<p>20</p>	<p>21 Bible Study 7am</p>
<p>22 Worship</p>	<p>23 Webelos 6pm Christian Education Committee 6pm Women's Ministry 7pm AA 8pm</p>	<p>24 Assemble Visitor 8am Scrip Orders due 9am Parish Visitors 1:30pm Orion 5:30pm On the Move 5:30 pm Property 7pm Bells of Praise 7pm Harmony 7:30pm</p>	<p>25 Sewing Ladies 1pm Ash Wednesday Communion Services 4pm & 7pm Baked Potato Supper 4:30-7pm</p>	<p>26 On the Move 5:30pm Men's Euchre Night 7pm AA 8pm</p>	<p>27</p>	<p>28 Bible Study 7am</p>

February: Jesus washes the Disciples' feet

The story of Jesus washing the disciples' feet is found in the Gospel of John., Chapter 13, verses 1-20.

This story is set in the context of Passover, the last meal that Jesus shares with his disciples before the events of his arrest, trial and crucifixion. It begins a lengthy series of discourses and prayers that have been called the "farewell discourses," and constitute a recapitulation of his teachings. Ultimately, they form his final words or testimony, the legacy that he hands down to his followers.

As Jesus prepares to sit down to dinner with his disciples, he alone knows something of the events that would follow. He must have looked at the group with both love and sorrow, knowing that shortly Judas would betray him, setting up the events that would lead to his crucifixion.

Jesus used visual images to create a lasting memory that would impress upon them his love and challenge them to reflect that love to the world. Although he was the host of the din-

ner, he also took on the role of house servant. Normally, a host would order a servant to wash the guests' feet. But Jesus himself got down on his hands and knees (a position of great humility), and personally washed the sand and grit from between the disciples' toes. His purpose in doing this was to show them who he was in relation to God and to them; and to model the way he envisioned their ministry in the world. It is significant to note that Jesus included Judas Iscariot in this act of foot washing.

Some see in the foot washing a symbol of baptism. Some also say it reminds us of the commission to all who are baptized: to serve each other and the world with a humble attitude. Jesus did not come to run the world. He was given the opportunity when he was tempted in the wilderness, and turned it down. His life was always one of care and concern and service to all people, and it was his hope that his followers, including each of us, would model that care and concern with a servant's heart.

MEMORY VERSE

I am the way, the truth and the life.

John 14:6

HERE'S WHAT WE'LL BE DOING

Our rotation schedule for February as we explore Jesus washes the Disciples' feet

Corner Cafe: Make cookies to symbolize the different events of Holy Week.

Bible @ Your Fingertips: Learn the story of Holy Week and write letters to God about questions the class has.

Cinema: Sit back, have some popcorn and a drink and watch a movie.

Moved by the Spirit: Discover some of the scripture related to Jesus' last instructions to the Disciples before he was arrested. Play miniature golf using the symbols that Jesus used to explain his instructions.

Where in the World Is?: Learn about the physical geography of Holy Week. Create small booklets as a reminder of their "Journey to Jerusalem."

... AND WHAT YOU CAN DO AT HOME

Here are some offerings to expand on our monthly theme you can do at home.

- Read and talk about the story of the foot washing.
- For a moving experience, wash each other's feet.
- If that idea is intimidating, symbolically wash each other's hands before a special dinner.

A primer to discuss Lent with your children

As we approach the Lenten season, here is an overview about the season and why it is celebrated. This is not all-inclusive, but is intended as a starting point to discuss Lent with your children.

Lent is a 40-day season of preparation for the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ on Easter Sunday. The season begins with Ash Wednesday, which this year begins on Feb. 25 and ends on Easter. On Ash Wednesday, some denominations make a sign of the cross on the forehead of the parishioners. (St. John's does this at the Ash Wednesday worship service). The ashes serve a dual purpose. First, we are reminded of our mortality and humanity. Second, the ashes are a Biblical symbol of repentance, sorrow, and humility.

St. John's begins the Lenten season with a Wednesday evening service at 7

p.m., preceded by a Potato Bar supper.

During Lent we follow Jesus from his adult ministry through his suffering during Holy Week and his crucifixion and death on Good Friday.

Holy Week begins with Palm Sunday and continues through Maundy Thursday (when bread and wine were offered for the first time at supper with the disciples) and Good Friday, when Jesus was tried, crucified, and buried. Because the Last Supper was celebrated during the Feast of the Passover, which is calculated on the phases of the moon, Easter is called a movable feast. Lent is scheduled backwards from Easter. Easter falls on the first Sunday after the full moon after the spring equinox. The forty days of fasting and penitence during Lent do not include Sundays.

Many Northern Europeans celebrate the day before Ash Wednesday,

Mardi Gras (French for Fat Tuesday, also called Shrove Tuesday); by eating up everything good in the house that medieval Christians believed was inappropriate to eat during Lent (eggs, butter, cream, meat). This celebration has expanded into all sorts of festivals all over the world, although most modern Christians do eat some - or all - of those foods during Lent.

Lent is a time of stripping down to essentials, as each Christian focuses on his or her individual relationship with God. It is a time when Christians remember our baptisms, when Jesus washed away our sins, giving us newness of life to celebrate in the triumph of Palm Sunday and the glory of Easter.

The color of Lent is purple. When you are in church, notice the color of the altar cloths.