



The St. John's

PEARL

The Newsletter of St. John's Lutheran Church in Pearl City, Illinois

"Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant in search of fine pearls; on finding one pearl of great value, he went and sold all that he had and bought it." - Matthew 13:45-46

A congregation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA)

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May 2019

From the Desk of Pastor Ekstrand...

That We May Be One

"I ask not only on behalf of these, but also on behalf of those who will believe in me through their word, that they may all be one. As you, Father, are in me and I am in you, may they also be in us, so that the world may believe that you have sent me. The glory that you have given me I have given them, so that they may be one, as we are one, I in them and you in me, that they may become completely one, so that the world may know that you have sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me. Father, I desire that those also, whom you have given me, may be with me where I am, to see my glory, which you have given me because you loved me before the foundation of the world. Righteous Father, the world does not know you, but I know you; and these know that you have sent me. I made your name known to them, and I will make it known, so that the love with which you have loved me may be in them, and I in them." (John 17:20-26)

We don't usually think very positively about the idea of someone talking about us when we're not around.

But in our lesson this evening, Jesus is talking about us behind our backs. To his Father. Jesus is praying not only for the twelve, but also for us... For you, for me. But it's not gossip. Rather, he is praying, praying that we may all be one.

That we all...*all of us*...may be one.

Just ask the average person out there what "us being one" means, and you'll probably hear something about world peace, and everyone living nicely together, no longer cutting each other off in traffic, no longer suing each other in court, and no longer going through the express lane at the grocery store with a cart full all the way to the top.

Most certainly, that type of accord among God's creation is what God desires. But that is not specifically what Jesus is praying for in his last hours before his betrayal and crucifixion. Rather, he is talking about something bigger, something more substantive. Jesus is talking about the relationship that results among those who are his believers. Of course, it is *already* a foregone conclusion that the Father and the Son are one. That the Father and the Holy Spirit are one. That the Holy Spirit and the Son are one.

And in the beginning, even humankind briefly shared in that one-ness; but soon, humankind fell from that perfection of relationship.

But in this prayer, Jesus is praying that as we, through the power of the Holy Spirit, may come to believe in the Son, and in doing so, come into intimate relationship with him. He is praying that, by the intimacy of that relationship, we come back into relationship with the entire Triune God. Jesus is praying that in our faith in that belief, we will be brought back into one-ness with God; and at the same time, we will come into one-ness with each other.

St. Augustine writes these words about the meaning of this "one-ness." He writes:

For the words, they all may be one, "are equivalent to the world may believe, "since it is by believing that they become one, perfectly one; that is, those who, although one by nature, had ceased to be so by their mutual dissensions. ...the explanation of this sentence will be all the clearer: I pray that they all may be one; as Thou,

Father, in me, and I in Thee ;"I pray that they also may be one in us ;"I pray that the world may believe that Thou hast sent me."And, mark, He added the words "in us" in order that we may know that our being made one in that love of unchanging faithfulness is to be attributed to the grace of God, and not to ourselves: just as the apostle, after saying, "For ye were at one time darkness, but now are ye light," that none might attribute the doing of this to themselves, added, "in the Lord."

Why has God done this? Why does Jesus pray that we may believe, that we may be made one with him? Did you pick up on what good St. Augustine said? For the sake of love. A love which Jesus has always had for us.

Augustine continues:

The love, therefore, wherewith God loves, is incomprehensible and immutable. For it was not from the time that we were reconciled unto Him by the blood of His Son that He began to love us; but He did so before the foundation of the world, that we also might be His sons along with His Only-begotten, before as yet we had any existence of our own. Let not the fact, then, of our having been reconciled unto God through the death of His Son be so listened to or so understood, as if the Son reconciled us to Him in this respect, that He now began to love those whom He formerly hated, in the same way as enemy is reconciled to enemy, so that thereafter they become friends, and mutual love takes the place of their mutual hatred; but we were reconciled unto Him who already loved us, but with whom we were at enmity because of our sin. Whether I say the truth on this, let the apostle testify, when he says: "God commends His love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." He, therefore had love toward us even when we were practicing enmity against Him and working iniquity.

We are a motley bunch, aren't we? We all come with our own selfish desires, and we all come with our own distinct ways of manifesting the sin that invades our beings; that is, the broken-ness of relationship that we live in have not only lived in but in addition, of all things, we seem to constantly nourish. On our own, we ourselves can do nothing to mend what we have already torn asunder.

With the fall of humankind, our relationship with God and with each other has changed. Like a piece of fine pottery, it fell, and it got broken. But God's love for us has not changed. God desires to take these unattractive, cracked, flawed blocks and shards, and by the power of his saving work, fashion them into a renewed one-ness, with him, and with each other.

That we may all believe. That we may be in a state of perfection of body, and of perfection of relationship. That, out of his love for us, we may share with our Lord in that everlasting and eternal kingdom when our Lord Jesus comes again to gather us together.

In Christ,

Pastor Ekstrand



Thespians in Our Midst, Thank You!

Pastor Ekstrand would like to **extend a warm "thank you" to all who participated as actors and actresses in our 2019 Lenten Drama Series, "The Disciplines of Lent":** Theresa Albers, Karen Bremmer, George Buss, Marion Eden, Susan Ekstrand, Carrie Hass, Kathy Hillmer, Bob Roiland, and DJ Scott. You did a great job!!!

Eve of the Ascension

Holy Eucharist

7:00 pm; Wednesday, May 29, 2019

Please join us as we will gather around the Lord's Table and celebrate our Lord's Ascension, accompanied by the extinguishing of the Paschal Candle, on the Eve of the Ascension, Wednesday, May 29. This service is about a half hour long and allows us to celebrate the time when our resurrected Lord Jesus returned to his Father and promised the coming of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost. Please plan to attend!



In-Kind Offering – Offering of Letters, Northern IL Synod Assembly

By changing policies, programs, and conditions that allow hunger and poverty to persist, we provide help and opportunity at home and far beyond where we live. We can end hunger in our time. But churches and charities can't do it all. Our government must also do its part. With the stroke of a pen, policies are made that redirect millions of dollars and affect millions of lives. By making our voices heard in Congress, we make our nation's laws fairer and more compassionate. We leverage big changes for people in our country and around the world who struggle with hunger.

The Social Ministry Committee of the Northern Illinois Synod invites you to write letters and bring them to the Synod Assembly for this year's In-Kind Offering. The letters can either be hand written by individuals or a signed copy of the sample letter addressed to your District Rep and our Illinois Senators. Find more details on the handout on the table by the church's office door. Letters are due to the St. John's office by June 9, 2019.

MEN'S BREAKFAST

Wednesday, May 1; 7:30 am

Join us for a time of food, fellowship and casual conversation in the midst of another busy week!

BROTHERS INN FAMILY RESTAURANT

103 IL-64, Lanark, IL



Prayer Concerns (March 31-April 21, 2019): Ed Gotwalt, Linda Corbin, Marie Marcotte, Kate Marschang, Dave Carter, Bob Lyvers, Doug Patton, Audrey Wilcox, Norman Willeke, Lynn Lyvers, Sarah Jane Myers, Jean Breit, David Carter, Peggy Lauber, Marcelle Rosensteil, Danell O'Neill, Lee Harbison, Nicole Merboth, Libby Petersen, Luke McDearmon, Cathy Nowak, Deana Gilbert and Matt Smith.

The family and friends of Bill Dyra, Josh Cogagne, Mary Ann Diffenderfer and Evelyn Niehaus.

Visited Another Church . . .

- Carmen Bremmer worshipped on Juno Beach, FL, at the sunrise service on April 21, 2019 at Holy Spirit Lutheran (ELCA).
- Joan Stewart worshipped at First Lutheran Church in Freeport on March 31, 2019 while family **members were in the area for her aunt's 90th** birthday celebration.
- Paul, Dianne and Cheyenne Handsaker worshipped at Prince of Peace, Freeport, IL, on Sunday March 31, April 7, 14 & 21.

Pearl City Food Pantry Needs . . .

The Pearl City Food Pantry supplies and funds are very low. They could use your help with the following food items or make a monetary donation at the Pearl City State Bank: Boxes with packets of Oatmeal (flavored), pudding (regular size, regular and sugar-free), Jello (any flavor but orange in regular or sugar-free), packets of instant potatoes, macaroni and cheese, Rice-A-Roni, Pasta Roni, canned spaghetti and meatballs or ravioli, noodles, canned diced tomatoes, kidney beans-light and dark, tomato sauce (15 oz cans), soups (except tomato or cream of broccoli), individual 4 packs of pudding and fruit, canned fruits (pineapple, mandarin oranges and fruit cocktail), canned vegetables (carrots, beets, mushrooms, potatoes), canned meats (chicken, tuna, SPAM), brown sugar, ketchup, mustard and black pepper.

If you would like to donate items from your garden or bread, please deliver items directly to the food pantry on the 2nd and 4th Saturdays of the month between 8:45 and 9:15 am. All non perishable food items may be brought to St. John's or delivered directly to the food pantry on the 1st Saturday of the month between 9 and 11 am.

Women's Gathering Ministries . . .

Starting the EMAIL Prayer Chain: To start the email prayer chain, contact Karen Bremmer at [\(815 443 2478\)](tel:8154432478) or [815 821 4698](tel:8158214698)) or email at rkbremmer@gmail.com You may also contact the church office at [815 443-2215](tel:8154432215) (please leave a message as they are checked after hours, etc.) or email at prshadmin@gmail.com. You may also contact Leann Heimerdinger at [\(815-443-2191\)](tel:815-443-2191) or cell at [\(815-541-3081\)](tel:815-541-3081) or email at jamleading@gmail.com. If you are not receiving the Prayer Chain email and would like to be included, please contact the church office.

The Women's Gathering Activities:

First a BIG thank you to all who helped in any way with:

- *Cleaning the kitchen and closets*
- *Delivering the Easter Balloons to the shut-ins*
- *Helped in any way with the Pastors meal on April 25th*
- *Tying quilts for Prayer Shawl Ministry*
- *By donating to our projects-Mother Hubbard's Cupboard and the Pearl City Food Pantry*

The items suggested for May for Mother Hubbard's Kiddie Cupboard are baby wipes or any new or slightly used baby items- and for the Pearl City Food Pantry are Condiments such as catsup, mustard, relish, BBQ sauce or mayonnaise

May 5th- Prayer Shawl Ministry at 10:00 following church in Luther Hall

May 5th- Ladies serve meal to Legion Commanders at 6:00 pm. in Luther Hall

May 7th- Mexican Train Dominos at 9:00 am in Luther Hall

May 19th-Graduation Reception following church in Luther Hall

*May 21st- Woman's Gathering Bible Study at **Logan's** in Freeport*

NOTE- CHANGE OF LOCATION FROM PROGRAM BOOK

Meet at 10:00 am for coffee

Bible study at 10:15 led by Kathy Hillmer

Noon- order lunch from the menu

May 23- Musical "Grumpy Old Men" at Circa 21 in Moline

Bus leaves church at 9:45

There are three tickets left-cost \$66.00 each-contact Karen Bremmer if interested in going.

May is the month that our church works at the Pearl City Food Pantry. Contact Janet Ferguson or Doris Kness if you would like to help for 2 hours on a Saturday Morning.

Thank you . . .

From the PRAYER SHAWL MINISTRY

A Big Thank You to THE FOLLOWING LADIES for tying graduation quilt tops on Monday April 22nd. Many hands make light work!!! Kris Eden, Lee Frey, Darla Hasselman, Joyce Kempel and Marge Roiland – again many thanks.

Grace Meal News. . .

The April Grace meal was created for deliveries and carry-outs for 48. Thank you to Marvin, Monica, Mary, Mae, and John Baier, Angie Niehaus, and Leann Heimerdinger for their time.

From the Finance Committee . . .

We need your help—Now that there are a lot of daylight hours we sometimes do not notice when we leave the church that lights are still on. Monday morning after Easter all the lights in Luther Hall were still on. If you are the last person leaving a church room, please make sure the lights are turned off.

From the Stewardship Committee. . .

Members of St. John's Lutheran Church

Why do you give? I know most of the letters and notes and messages you receive from the Stewardship committee focus more on what you give, but let's instead focus on why you give for now.

When you give, whether it is your time, your talents, or your treasures, what is your motivation? Do you give to because that is what you are expected to do? Do you give because you are trying to bank some good deeds for future benefits? Do you give because you are hoping to get something back at a later time? Do you give in order to get a reaction or praise from someone? Or do you give because of the feeling it gives you to give--no strings attached.

Over the next few months, the Stewardship Committee is going to be asking you to answer some questions that will get you to think about your personal money autobiography. It is an important step in expressing one's stewardship journey. The questions reveal one's attitudes, behaviors, and feelings about money. While answering questions, focus on different points in your life (childhood, adolescence, young adult, mature adult, etc.). While these questions will focus on money, don't forget that money is only one aspect of being a steward.

As answers come in, we are going to display answers that people have given. So, if you don't want to put your name on it, that is perfectly OK. As we progress through the year and move towards Commitment Sunday in October, these questions will help you to focus on the role money plays in your life and help you to come to a decision on how giving also plays a role in your life.

DJ Scott

Stewardship/Outreach committee chairperson

Summer Brat Stand Dates: **It won't be long and it will be grilling season and time for the St. John's Brat Stand. New Location:** The Brat Stand will be at the American Legion parking lot this year!!



Mark these dates on your calendar to either help out with the Brat Stand or to stop for a brat or hot dog: May 25, June 8 & 22, July 6 & 20 and Aug. 3, 17 & 31. Thank you to the **Stewardship and Outreach Committees for promoting St. John's and continuing with this summer fundraiser.**



Mexican Train Dominoes: We plan to play Mexican Train Dominoes on the first Tuesday of the month at 9 am in May. Invite a friend and join us on Tuesday, May 7 from 9-Noon in Luther Hall. **All are invited.** You don't have to know how to play to join in on the fun!

From the Calendar Committee . . .

March-April Winners:

March 31: Kegan DeZell, Pearl City, IL April 7: Mikayla McHugh, Onalaska, WI

April 14: Dillan Boeke, Freeport, IL

March 24: Chad & Deb Bremmer Family, Pearl City, IL



Helping Hands/Health Ministry Committee . . .

The Health & Wellness Expo served 20 community members with health screenings, presentations, and informational booths. Thank you to the Sharon Knoup, Bob Roiland, Mike Palmer, Brenda Hass, Bonnie Dittmar, Gerte Heimerdinger, Joan Stewart, Dianne Handsaker, and Chris Kempel for contributing to the success of this outreach event. Leann Heimerdinger, Health Ministry Coordinator.

From the Worship & Music Committee. . .

Pentecost Flowers

We will be celebrating Pentecost on June 9; we are again going to be doing our "red" Sunday with red geraniums in the front of the sanctuary. We will be taking orders for red geraniums in May. They will be in 4 inch pots and will cost \$4.00 each. If you would like to donate your geraniums to the church after the service, they will be used in planters outside the handicapped entrance. We will be taking orders and collecting money on May 12 and May 19. We must have the order in on May 20 because of Memorial Day. If you have any questions, contact Kris Eden or Jerilyn Strohecker.

Lent World of Giving Offering: Thank you so much for your support of our Lent World of Giving Offering for World Hunger \$543.75 was collected in the baskets during the worship services, an additional \$270.00 was given through World Hunger envelopes for a total offering of \$813.75. We exceeded our goal!



Rogation Sunday on May 5th: *Would you like to have your flower or garden seeds blessed during Rogation Sunday? If so, bring your packaged seeds with you to worship to be placed in a basket when you enter the Nave. PLEASE, put your name on the seed packages, so you are able to retrieve them at the conclusion of worship.*

From the Social Ministry Committee . .

ELCA Good Gifts Project: The Social Ministry Committee invites you to participate in the ELCA Good Gifts Offering on May 5-26, 2019. The offering will take place during the first hymn at worship each week. The goals of the project are \$72 to purchase 6 bibles for a growing church, \$100 to purchase 5 Honeybee Hives, \$300 for Vaccinations for 10 Children, \$60 to purchase 2 Water Filters and \$200 to purchase a Community Vegetable Garden. Each item has a container with a giving thermometer on it! Watch the progress of each collection weekly!! Thank you for getting involved! Every little bit helps!



From the Children & Youth Coordinator. .

Christian Education

- ❖ **Christian Education Meeting – May 7th @ 6pm**
- ❖ Dig-In Sunday School
 - May Teacher – Karen Bremmer
 - May Offering – Project Bloom
 - Collecting the following items –
 - Flower Seeds
 - Vegetable Seeds
 - Potting Soil/Mix
 - \$Money\$ toward items listed above
- ❖ Vacation Bible School
 - **Registration coming out soon!**
 - Theme – Veggie Tales
 - Dates – June 4-8th
 - Time – 8:30-11:30am
 - Program – June 8th @ 6pm

SPLAT Youth Group

- ❖ **Thank you to everyone who helped at the Palm Sunday Brunch! We served 116 people! And thank you to everyone who came to support the youth!**
- ❖ Upcoming Events
 - **May 4th – Trampoline Park & Lunch – Rockford**
 - Leave church @ 9:30am – we will need drivers!
 - Trampoline Park – 10-11am
 - Lunch afterwards
 - **May 5th – Parent Meeting @ 11am**
 - May 12th – SPLAT Meeting? – will discuss at next Parent Meeting
 - July 20th – Grace Meal Prep @ 9am
 - July 21st – Grace Meal Serve & Deliveries

Duties of the Church for May 2019

Date	Greeters	Ushers	Lector	Comm. Asst.	Acolyte
May 5	Judy & Jim Robinson Family	April & Stan Eberle	Karen Bremmer	Marion & Kris Eden	Abby Hass
May 12	Richard Brinkmeier	Marlyse & Scott Johnson Family	DJ Scott	Tracy Downs Keith Kness	Jayden Downs
May 19	MaryAnn & Rich Kliman	Kathy & Ken Hillmer	Kim Williams	Rhonda Brudi Lynda Palmer	Mary Baier
May 26	Karen & Ron Bremmer	MaryAnn & Rich Kliman	Marion Eden	Kathy Hillmer Richard Brinkmeier	Kyle Niehaus

Organist: Karen Bremmer/Kathy Hillmer

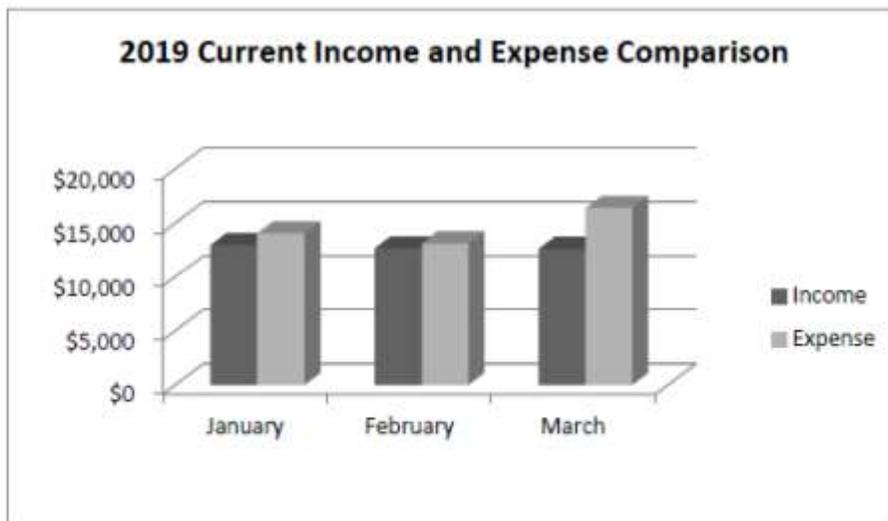
Counters: Jerilyn Strohecker and Cindy Heimerdinger

May Birthdays

4 Kendra Hillmer	12 Alison Hille	27 Heidi Erbsen
5 Gordon Sheffey	Jim Robinson	Coe Kempel
Chris Knoup	15 Daphne Frey	Devin Schiess
7 Mikayla Palmer	16 Kristine Block	29 Ross Bremmer
Mary Ellen Aurand	18 Colt Kempel	30 Theresa Albers
8 Adam Ditzler	20 Jim Heimerdinger	Jennifer Klatt
Erica Albrecht	21 Kim Williams	31 Fred Mather
Brinkley Knoup	22 Virginia Heimerdinger	Heather Blackmore
9 Lindsay Hass	24 Carmen Bremmer	Earlene Domberger
10 Brogan Mitchell	25 Lucas Bremmer	Sharon Knoup
11 Joan Frey	Jayden Bremmer	Kay DePrisco
Marge Roiland		

2019 Current Income and Expense Comparison by Month

	January	February	March	Total
Income	\$12,999	\$12,680	\$12,621	\$38,300
Expense	\$14,066	\$13,126	\$16,403	\$43,595
Difference	-\$1,067	-\$446	-\$3,782	(\$5,296)



May 2019

See an updated and complete calendar throughout the month at www.stjohnspearlcity.org

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
<p><i>April 28</i> 9 am Worship 10:15 am Dig In Sunday School 10:15 am Confirmation 10:15 am High School Hour 11 am VBS Planning Meeting</p>	<p>29 7 pm Bible Study</p>	<p>30 6:30 pm Al-Anon</p>	<p><i>May 1</i> 7:30 am Men's Breakfast</p>	<p>2 9:30 am Bible Study 3:15 pm Joy Choir Rehearsal</p>	<p>3 Pastor's Day Off</p>	<p>4 9:30 am Youth to Trampoline Park <i>Luther Hall used for meal Prep</i></p>
<p>5 SCRIP Orders Due 9 am Worship Service 10 am Prayer Shawl Ministry 10:15 am Dig In Sunday School 10:15 am Confirmation 10:15 am High School Hour 10:15 am Property Committee 10:15 Grace Meal Committee Meeting 11 am SPLAT Youth & Parent Meeting 5 pm Luther Hall Rented</p>	<p>6 7 pm 4-H 7 pm Bible Study</p>	<p>7 9 am Mexican Train Dominoes 6 pm Christian Education Committee Meeting 6:30 pm Al-Anon</p>	<p>8</p>	<p>9 9:30 am Bible Study 3:15 pm Joy Choir Rehearsal</p>	<p>10 <i>Luther Hall used for rental prep</i> Pastor's Day Off</p>	<p>11 8 am Luther Hall Rented</p>
<p>12 9 am Worship Service 10:15 am Dig In Sunday School 10:15 am Confirmation 10:15 am High School Hour 10:15 am Stewardship & Outreach Committee Meetings 10:15 am: Memorial & Finance Committee Meeting 11 am SPLAT Youth Group 6 pm 4-H Meeting</p>	<p>13 6 pm Girl Scouts 7 pm Bible Study</p>	<p>14 10 am Staff Meeting 6:30 pm Al-Anon</p>	<p>15 7 pm Council Meeting</p>	<p>16 9:30 am Bible Study 3:15 pm Joy Choir to Parkview & Krape Park</p>	<p>17</p>	<p>18 <i>Luther Hall used for Grace Meal Prep</i></p>
<p>19 9 am Worship Service 10:15 am Dig In Sunday School 10:15 am Confirmation 10:15 am High School Hour 11 am SPLAT Deliver Grace Meals 11:30 am Grace Meal 1 pm Luther Hall Rented</p>	<p>20 June Newsletter Deadline 7 pm Bible Study</p>	<p>21 10 am Women's Gathering at Logan's (Freeport) 6:30 pm Al-Anon</p>	<p>22</p>	<p>23 9:30 am Bible Study 9:45 am Grumpy Old Men Bus Trip</p>	<p>24 Pastor's Day Off</p>	<p>25 11 am Brat Stand (American Legion Parking Lot)</p>
<p>26 9 am Worship 11 am Luther Hall Rented</p>	<p>27 <i>Memorial Day-office closed</i></p>	<p>28 6:30 pm Al-Anon</p>	<p>29 7 pm Ascension of Our Lord Worship Service</p>	<p>30 9:30 am Music & Worship Committee Meeting</p>	<p>31 Pastor's Day Off</p>	

Announcing the Summer Brat Stand Dates



Mark your calendar for this year's St. John's Brat Stand!
The brat stand will be held at the American Legion Parking lot.
May 25
July 6 & 20
June 8 & 22
August 3, 17 & 31
Hope you to see you there!