

St. Andrew Presbyterian Church | Rooted in Faith | Growing to Serve

# MESSENGER

March / April 2024



St. Andrew Presbyterian Church | 140 Gathering Place Lane  
Iowa City, Iowa 52246 | [www.saintandrew-ic.org](http://www.saintandrew-ic.org)

## 2 LENT & EASTER: A TIME TO TAKE THINGS UP, NOT LAY THINGS DOWN

Dear Ones,

In his book, *A Way Other Than Our Own*, theologian Walter Brueggemann writes, “I imagine Lent for you and for me as a great departure from the greedy, anxious anti-neighborliness of our economy, a great departure from our exclusionary politics that fears the other, a great departure from self-indulgent consumerism that devours creation. And then an arrival in a new neighborhood, because it is a gift to be simple, it is a gift to be free; it is a gift to come down where we ought to be.”

Very often, people do not look forward to the season of Lent nor see it as a gift. Childhood memories come rushing back—the giving up of candy or sitting through dark and dank worship services immediately come to mind. Words like “sacrifice,” “discipline,” and “self-denial” are often used in ways that suggest that Lent is something to be endured rather than a time of grace and spiritual growth and renewal.

While Lent is often thought of as a season to “lay things down,” maybe Lent is a time to take something up? Each year the liturgical calendar gives us six weeks to take a clear-eyed, loving look at our lives to see if our values and priorities are in line with God’s desires. And since most of us find that we’ve wandered away from God’s path, Lent becomes that second chance to take up our return to God with our whole hearts and souls!

The prolific writer and profound spiritual leader, Richard Rohr, offers each of us a challenge. Instead of holding our heads down during this season of reflection, Rohr calls us to lift our heads up so we can celebrate that Christ is the light that allows us to see things in their fullness!

“We need to look at Jesus this Lenten season until we can see the world with Jesus’ eyes,” Rohr writes. “In Jesus Christ, God’s own broad, deep, and all-inclusive worldview is made available to us. Too often, we have substituted the messenger for the message. As a result, we spent a great deal of time worshiping the messenger and trying to get other people to do the same. Too often this obsession became a pious substitute for actually following what Jesus taught—he did ask us numerous times to follow him (for example, Matthew 4:19; Mark 10:21; John 1:43), and never once to worship him.”

“Christ is the light that allows people to see things in their fullness,” Rohr continues. “The precise and intended effect of such a light is to see Christ everywhere else. In fact, that is my only definition of a true Christian. A mature Christian sees Christ in everything and everyone else. That is a definition that will never fail you, always demand more of you, and give you no reasons to fight, exclude, or reject anyone.”

I pray your Lenten season has been a time in which you could see Christ in everyone and everything you encountered. And as we turn to Holy Week, I invite you to join with us as committed followers of this way. You can find a full list of our Maundy Thursday, Good Friday, and Easter activities on pages 8 and 9.

Much Peace,

*Pastor Rob*

P.S. I hope you will join me on April 7 for our monthly worship service “Sunday Solace: A Time of Scripture, Song, and Salience.” This service is held at 4 p.m. on First Sundays in the Sanctuary.



*Transfiguration*, by Lauren Wright Pittman. Hand-carved block printed with oil-based ink on paper. Provided by A Sanctified Art.



**The Rev. W. Robert Martin III**  
*Lead Pastor and Head of Staff*  
St. Andrew Presbyterian Church  
140 Gathering Place Lane  
Iowa City, IA 52246

Email: [rmartin@saintandrew-ic.org](mailto:rmartin@saintandrew-ic.org)

Cell: 650-283-0167




General Fund	Actual 2024 Thru Feb.	Budget 2024 Full Year	Actual 2023 Full Year	Actual 2022 Full Year	Thank you
Income	195,495	960,000	919,897	916,470	
Expenses	-168,439	-960,000	-917,143	-907,323	
Net Positive	27,056	0	2,754	9,147	

Breakdown of Expense Categories:					Our required minimum loan payments are \$13,777 per month, but we are paying \$20,000. Loan payments come out of the building (capital campaign) fund and are not included in the figures to the left. Please see below for all that.
Personnel	99,174	607,253	562,707	564,212	
Mission	27,366	134,400	131,035	128,380	
Premises	26,940	139,450	128,469	145,765	
Ministries	9,810	40,500	34,802	37,999	
Other	5,149	38,397	60,130	30,967	
Expenses	168,439	960,000	917,143	907,323	

Capital Campaign History		Total Pledged	Total Received	Avg Pledged Per Year	Required Loan Payments Per Year
2022-2025	Rooted in Faith-thru 2-29-24	886,300	556,387	295,433	165,324
2019-2022	Connecting Hearts	1,365,868	1,573,550	455,289	Unpaid Loan Balance
2016-2019	With Our Eyes on Christ	1,390,008	1,476,830	463,336	
2013-2016	Our Journey With Christ	2,307,254	2,206,847	769,085	
2008-2011	Our Place to Grow	1,553,382	1,501,118	517,794	

**Capital Campaign Notes:** As of February 29, 2024 for Rooted in Faith: \$886,300 has been pledged and \$556,387 has been received. If you are new to St. Andrew, or newly inspired, please consider joining the chorus of generous givers. We'd like to get to \$1,000,000+ for this 3 year period, if possible, so we can continue to prepay the loan. Thank you.

Unpaid Loan Balances As Of:				The Soft Landing Descent continues....	
6/15/18	5,115,000	12/31/22	3,420,886		
12/31/18	5,045,792	12/31/23	2,385,476		
12/31/19	4,500,000				
12/31/20	3,925,142				
12/31/21	3,566,394	2/29/24	2,357,863		

**Regarding Our Loan:** Our loan rate is fixed at 3.125% until December of 2027. So anything we can do to reduce the balance before we face the music of higher rates (in December 2027) will be great.

**Regarding Our Land:** In March, 2023, we closed on the sale of Outlot A to Western Home Communities! Purchase price was \$825,000 with the net sales proceeds of \$781,871 (after deducting commission and standard closing expenses) fully applied to our loan. As a result of that and several years of loan payments, our loan balance has reduced to *less than half what it was less roughly 5 years ago*. Our one remaining land parcel - the "South Triangle" (you drive by it if you turn north from Melrose onto Camp Cardinal) remains listed for sale with Lepic-Kroeger.

**Regarding Per Capita...**per capita is \$42.28 per member for 2024. St. Andrew is assessed this amount per St. Andrew member by our Presbytery and your paying your per capita restores those funds to us.

**And Finally ....**Please consider the church in your estate planning. Thanks!

— John Benson, Finance Administrator

REPAIRING THE BREACH

— ISAIAH 58

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## 4 LEARNING THE BENEFITS OF 'LETTING GO' WHEN IT COMES TO ...

On Jan. 24, A large group gathered in Zion Lutheran Church to celebrate the 150-year legacy of Mercy Iowa City, just days before the private hospital began its transformation into a downtown campus for University of Iowa Healthcare. **The Rev.**

**Jenny Seylar**, a friend of the St. Andrew community and the lead chaplain for Mercy Iowa City, offered the following blessing from the pulpit on that day:

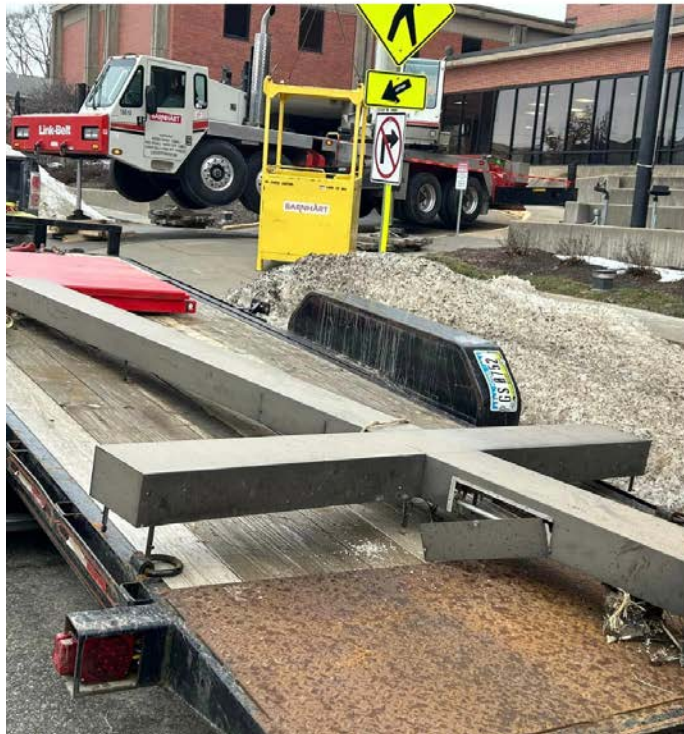
As God has blessed us in the listening and in the telling, so too, bless us as we bring memories to mind and share them in the coming weeks, months and years.

We remember...

- Mother Borromeo Johnson and her companions, Sisters M. Catherine Slattery, M. Philomena Early, and Alexis Crotty. They journeyed by train from Davenport to Iowa City in September 1873 to respond to the need, and to begin a new health care venture.

- The Sisters of Mercy, who faithfully sculpted, guided, and served Mercy Iowa City as staff and administrators, especially Sr. Mary Venarda Lance, the last Sister President and Chief Executive Officer who served in that position for 20 years.

- The Board of Directors and hospital administration, whose work tendered the mission, navigated



On her Facebook page, the **Rev. Jenny Seylar** documents the removal of crosses from the former **Mercy Hospital** as it transitions to its next identity as a downtown campus of the University of Iowa Hospitals and Clinics.

change, and responded to community health needs despite challenges, disappointments, and setbacks. The benefactors and donors who financially supported the vision of the Sisters of Mercy to expand and develop the hospital.

- Skilled doctors and practitioners who offered their expertise, insight, and knowledge in providing quality care, compassionate service, and tireless commitment to Mercy Iowa City.
- Dedicated nurses who collaborated and extended a healing presence as they generously focused on excellence of care, response to patient needs, and a holistic experience.
- The supportive staff who promoted the spirit of hospitality, providing simple and ordinary service in extraordinary ways to advance the Mercy mission through their work.
- The caring volunteers who often went above and beyond through the giving of their time and talents.
- The patients who entrusted their medical care to Mercy Iowa City and who helped realized its mission: To seek healing and comfort and to improve the health of the community in the spirit of Jesus Christ, and in the Catholic tradition of the Sisters of Mercy.
- The greater Iowa City area and surrounding communities who afforded opportunities, provided financial and personnel resources, and promoted Mercy Iowa City as a community-based institution.

• Those whose work tirelessly brought us to this moment of transition ... may they be blessed generously and abundantly for their goodness and work.

• Those who will execute the new chapter in Mercy Iowa City history as the University of Iowa Health Care Medical Center Downtown. May this hospital continue to offer quality health care and compassionate service to all people.

There is heartache around the closing of Mercy Iowa City, yet, as we let go, there is new birth as the healing of body, mind and spirit will continue in the community as this hospital becomes part of University of Iowa Health Center.

Help us to let our disappointment go so we may begin our journey toward renewal and peace. As we grapple with thoughts of “What might have been,” guide us to move forward into what is and what has yet to be. As we let go of the old possibilities, let it help us to grasp fresh possibilities with our new partners in health care.

Help us to let our old mind-sets go so we will be ready to serve in new and wonderful ways.

We do not know what God has in store for Mercy Iowa City as it becomes part of University of Iowa Hospital. We do know that the loving work of the past 150 years will continue forward, and that the hospital will care well for patients. Into tomorrow, we will stand as a pillar in this community and in southeast Iowa. May the Spirit of Mercy permeate today and into the future.

— The Rev. Jenny Seylar, Jan. 24, 2024

## Letting Go

Unknown

To let go isn't to forget,  
Not to think about,  
Or ignore.  
To let go is to cherish memories.  
It's having an open mind and confidence in the future.  
Letting go is learning  
And experiencing  
And growing.  
To let go is to be thankful for the experience  
That made you laugh,  
Made you cry,  
And made you grow.  
It's about all that you have  
All that you had,  
And all that you will have again.  
Letting go is having the courage to accept change,  
And the strength to keep moving.  
Letting go is “growing up” in wisdom.  
To let go is to open a door,  
And to clear a path,  
And to be set free.



## 6 THIS YEAR'S FINAL MELODIOUS HARMONY OFFERS A HOMECOMING

The final event in this year's **Melodious Harmony** concert series will start 3 p.m., Saturday May 4, when the Arsenal Duo presents a concert of piano and organ music. Composed of organist (and former St. Andrew Director of Music) Edward Alan Moore and pianist Nathan Carterette, the Arsenal Duo presents concerts that unite their respective instruments in a unique and spectacular fashion.

The May 4 concert will feature solo works for piano and organ by Liszt and Mendelssohn and will close with a spectacular duet arrangement of Gershwin's "Rhapsody in Blue."

A free-will offering will go towards the music ministry. An informal reception will be held in the Atrium following the concert.

The Arsenal Duo, formed in 2013, was scheduled to play at St. Andrew in the spring of 2020, but that year's global pandemic derailed those plans. Four years later, we are thrilled they are finally able to bring their skills to St. Andrew's grand piano and the Krapf Organ!

Pianist Nathan Carterette has distinguished himself in the concert world by performing a huge range of works from Elizabethan keyboard music to music written today. His innovative programming has inspired audiences to approach unfamiliar music with open ears and familiar music with new appreciation. He has performed extensively both domestically and abroad, including recitals in Boston, New York City, Cleveland, Hamburg, and Munich, Germany.

Nathan will also be performing in the University of Iowa Duo Piano Extravaganza on Wednesday April 10 at the Voxman School of Music.

More than two decades after leaving Iowa City, Edward Alan Moore — better known simply as "Ed" to many St. Andrew folks — is now Organist and Music Director at East Liberty Presbyterian Church in Pittsburgh. He previously was a member of the organ faculty at the Catholic University of America Benjamin T. Rome School of Music in Washington, D.C.; director of Music Ministries at Lewinsville Presbyterian Church in McLean, Virginia; and minister of music at National City Christian Church in Washington, D.C.. As a recitalist, Ed was the first organist chosen to perform on the Millennium Stage concert series at the Kennedy Center in 2004. Sites for his recitals include New York City, Atlanta, Princeton, Los Angeles, and Interlochen, Michigan.

We're excited that this long-delayed concert will soon become a reality.

*Laura*



**Laura Kastens**

*Assistant Director of Handbell Ministries*

**Email:** lkastens@saintandrew-ic.org



For a slice of history, watch a short video from 2020 in which Arsenal Duo members Edward Alan Moore and Nathan Carterette bemoan the fact that they cannot come to play a concert in Iowa City.

Four years later, their (and our) wish has finally been granted.

<https://tinyurl.com/arsenal-duo-2020>

# AFTER EASTER, LEARNING ACADEMY FOCUSES ON CHRISTIAN HISTORY 7

On **April 7 and 14**, St. Andrew's Sunday Learning Academy is offering a special series of lectures by John Sheridan, a religious studies doctoral candidate at the University of Iowa. John's areas of interest are religion in North America, ethnographic approaches to the study of religion, Hutterites, and Anabaptist studies.

As an ethnographer of religion, John looks at the intersection of work, religion, and gender. His fieldwork with the Hutterites focuses on the lived experiences of Hutterites and how these intersections contribute to their identity formations. He has spent more than 10 years visiting and staying at Hutterite colonies across the United States and Canada. By showing how people's emotional background and material world impacts their practices, values, and worldviews, John works to bridge the gap rather than further the seemingly growing social, religious, and political divide in the U.S. and Canada.

John's class on April 7 will focus on the history of Anabaptism. The Hutterites, Mennonites, and Amish are all Anabaptists. Beginning around 1525, Anabaptists have a fascinating and troubling history of persecution, communalism, and counter cultural beliefs and practices. Did you know that four Hutterites were imprisoned in Alcatraz during World War I for being pacifists (conscientious objectors)? Some of them experienced such horrible conditions and torture that they died in Alcatraz prison. Despite their persecution, Anabaptists formed tight-knit communities that emphasized adult baptism, pacifism, and hard work. There are many lessons to be learned from the history of Anabaptists.

The class on April 14 will focus on an in-depth look at contemporary Hutterites. As communal groups in North America go, most exist around five to ten years at the most. However, Hutterites have lived communally for nearly 500 years. What is their secret? They live in small communities of around 100 members, called colonies. In terms of longevity, Hutterites are one of the most successful communal groups in the Western world. Their colonies are essentially small towns, and they are nearly completely self-sufficient. They build their own homes, grow their own food, and have colony carpentry shops and mechanic shops.



On April 7 and 14, **John Sheridan**, a religious studies doctoral candidate at the University of Iowa, will be offering a two-part Sunday Learning Academy course on the history and legacy of Anabaptism groups in the post-Reformation period.

## What Kind of Christianity?

From **April 28** through **May 12**, **Twila Finkelstein** will lead a **Sunday Learning Academy** discussion of William Yoo's book, *What Kind of Christianity?*, which tells the story of the Presbyterian Church's journey through enslavement and racism.

Twila has been in touch with William Yoo, who has made the first chapter of the book available for free download on his publisher's website: <https://www.wjkbooks.com/Products/0664264670/what-kind-of-christianity.aspx>.

Yoo is also making himself available for a Zoom discussion during the May 5 gathering of the class.

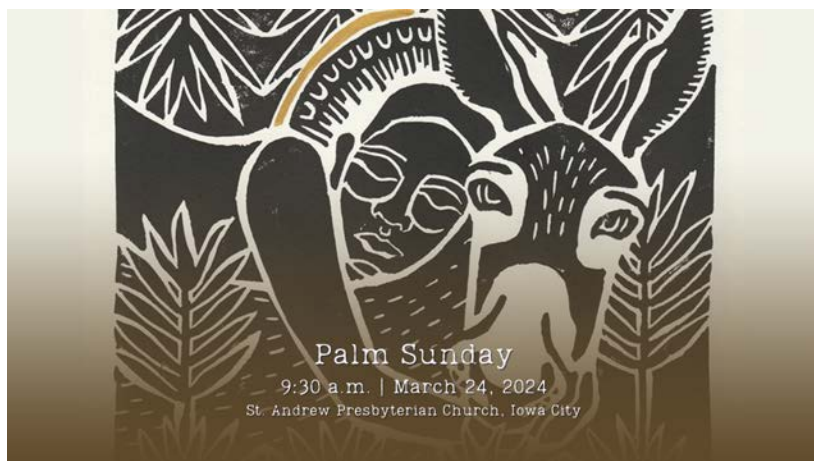
### WHAT KIND OF CHRISTIANITY

A HISTORY OF  
**SLAVERY**  
AND ANTI-BLACK  
**RACISM** IN THE  
PRESBYTERIAN  
CHURCH

**WILLIAM YOO**



## 8 HOLY WEEK INCLUDES PALM BRANCHES, FOOD, CANDLES, AND LOTS OF SONG



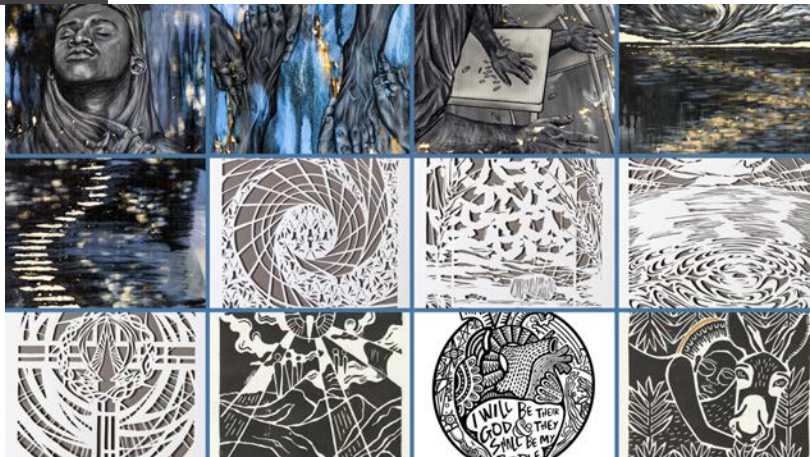
As usual, this year's **Palm Sunday** worship service will include waving palm branches and singing songs of praise. The sermon will be offered by **Pastor Kyle Otterbein**, and the service will be followed by our usual mix of **Sunday School** and **Learning Academy** classes.

This year's **Maundy Thursday** commemoration will begin with a **potluck meal** in the Atrium at 6 p.m. Events will move down to the Hub at 7 p.m. for a special edition of St. Andrew's **At the Table** Thursday evening worship service. The message will be offered by **Pastor Kyle Otterbein**.



This year's **Good Friday** candlelight service will feature various Scripture and dramatic readings, the Logos Choir, and the Matins Handbell choir. The Prompting will be offered by **Pastor Rob Martin**.

*The artwork and liturgies used throughout the Lent Season have come from the artists and writers at **A Sanctified Art** (<https://sanctifiedart.org>).*





EASTER SUNDAY INCLUDES FIRESIDE GATHERING, POTLUCK, AND THREE SERVICES 9

Christ is risen!  
He is risen, indeed!

Easter Sunday will kickoff with a 6:30 a.m. gathering around St. Andrew's outdoor fire pit, with a special word of encouragement and celebration from Pastor Rob Martin.



St. Andrew's **Student Ministries** will continue the tradition of organizing and leading a 7 a.m., high-energy **Sunrise Service** to help everyone wake up to the reality of a risen Christ. The prompting will be offered by **Matt Moore**.

Food, fellowship, and conversation will be available in the MPR from immediately following the Sunrise Service to the beginning of the 11 a.m. worship service. *Please bring a breakfast dish to pass.*



For both the 9 a.m. and 11 a.m. services on Easter Sunday, St. Andrew's **Sanctuary** will be filled with the sounds of bell, brass, organ, and voice. Come ready to sing and celebrate the risen Christ. The prompting will be offered by **Pastor Rob Martin**.

ROOTED IN FAITH ...

# 10 WHAT CAN GET US THROUGH ANY TIME OF DARKNESS?: HOPE

*"Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven" — Matthew 5:3.*

How many of you are feeling a bit (or a lot) "poor in spirit" right now? Have the long, dark days of winter caused you to feel a little blah, or more tired—lacking in energy to do the things you normally enjoy or need to get done? I know I've felt that way.

Every year I feel this huge post-holiday let-down. The twinkly lights come down, but the darkness remains with nothing to fill it. I take more vitamin D, turn on the "Happy Light" on my desk, and hunker down for what seems like the two longest months: January and February.

But more than the supplements or the therapy light, the thing that helps me get through this time of darkness is **hope**. Before this period of dispiriting blah-ness, came the brightest light, the One who brought us this hope—our Savior, the baby Jesus was born. In the bleak midwinter began the life that leads us to that Easter promise we all so desperately need: Jesus was born on a dark night so that we might have the hope of the kin-dom of heaven.

That kin-dom of hope can begin here on earth ... and that is what we will be talking about and acting out with the children of 25Live this month. We plan to create placemats to deliver to people who receive Meals on Wheels in Johnson County—a little brightness and hope to those who might need it.



**Sara Penn**

*Family Ministries Event Coordinator*

**Email:** [spenn@saintandrew-ic.org](mailto:spenn@saintandrew-ic.org)

**Cell:** 405-880-9957



Neon Night at 25Live was electric as the kids learned to take God's light into the world! They danced, played charades and monkey tails. Then, the kids filled out time capsules to be opened in four years.

The children will also be preparing for and taking pledges on behalf of our culminating service project: a **Walk-a-Thon for the Ronald McDonald House of Iowa City!** Having a sick child in the hospital can definitely lead one to feel "poor in spirit" and lacking in hope, and our children want to help families find light during some of their darkest and scariest times.

We will hold the walk-a-thon from **4:30-5:30 p.m. on Thursday April 25** in St. Andrew's upper parking lot. Everyone is invited! Please use this form to let us know you will attend and/or that your child(ren) would like to raise pledges: <https://bit.ly/walkathon-rsvp-2024>. You can also be on the lookout for children asking for pledges and donations over the next few months, and in the Atrium after worship on April 7 and 14.

When we experience even our darkest moments on earth, we know we can look forward to Christ's coming on Easter, the time when we will be able to shout, "He is Risen!!" Easter always reminds me I will once again be able to see all those I've loved and who have gone before me, because Jesus brought us this hope when he sacrificed himself for me—for all of us!

I hope you don't mind me saying it a little early, but the expectation of this hope is hard to contain, so ... Happy Easter! He is Risen!

*Sara*



# SOME NERDY, BUT IMPORTANT, WINS FROM BUILDING & GROUNDS 11

This won't surprise you, but I'm a huge nerd, and I've had the ability to do two very nerdy things since I've started my position.

The first was installing new ecobee smart thermostats for our rooftop HVAC units. At minimum, I had hoped they would give us greater control of our heating and cooling. But my true hope was that they would save us money and let us be better stewards of our finances and God's world.

While the building was closed, my nerdy heart was happy as I turned down thermostats from my phone and computer from the comfort of my own couch. My nerdy heart was even happier when I saw that December's gas bill was half as much as the previous December's bill. Beyond saving money, that also means St. Andrew put 4.7 tons less carbon dioxide into the atmosphere.

The second nerdy endeavor was the new ultrasonic humidifier to keep the Krapf Organ behaving and happy. I've heard many interesting comments regarding the large, vaguely barbecue-shaped stainless-steel enigma. "When are we having burgers?" asked Pastor Rob. "Is the sanctuary on fire?" asked several other people. "It looks like a droid from Star Wars," commented Austen Wilson. I offered R2-H2O or HU-M1D as suggestions for names.

It's much quieter and provides much cleaner humidification than the large swamp cooler we had been using, and except for the very coldest part of January, it kept humidity levels exactly where they needed to be.

In the coming months, I'm going to tackle our electrical usage, primarily by tweaking the lighting control system that we already have in place. If you've ever driven past church at night and wondered why all those lights are on, so have I. Some energy savings will be as simple as configuring motion sensors properly. Some of it will hopefully come in the form of new fixtures using rebates from our energy provider.

As always, I welcome your comments, questions, and concerns. I pay close attention to the building, but our members are invaluable in helping us stay on top of maintenance and improving usability.

*Tim*



**Tim Patrick**

*Building & Grounds Coordinator*

**Email:** [building@saintandrew-ic.org](mailto:building@saintandrew-ic.org)

**Cell:** 319-338-7523

**GROWING TO SERVE ...**

# MESSENGER

March / April 2024

## St. Andrew Presbyterian Church

140 Gathering Place Lane  
Iowa City, IA 52246

**Website:** [www.saintandrew-ic.org](http://www.saintandrew-ic.org)

**YouTube:** <http://bit.ly/SAPCYouTube>

**Email:** [office@saintandrew-ic.org](mailto:office@saintandrew-ic.org)

**Facebook:** [www.facebook.com/saintandrewic.org](http://www.facebook.com/saintandrewic.org)

**Phone:** 319-338-7523

### Worship Schedule:

- **Weekly Worship** | 9:30 a.m. Sundays
- **At the Table** | 7 p.m. First Thursdays
- **Sunday Solace** | 4 p.m. First Sundays

### Holy Week Schedule

- **Maundy Thursday**
  - 6 p.m., Meal
  - 7 p.m., Service
- **Good Friday** | 7 p.m., Service
- **Easter Sunday**
  - 6:30 a.m., Fireside Gathering
  - 7 a.m., Sunrise Service
  - 8 a.m., Breakfast Potluck
  - 9 & 11 a.m., Service

## SUMMER LUNCH BUNCH 2024

It's time to think about summer! Just as we did last year, St. Andrew will be coordinating the Lunch Bunch at Pheasant Ridge Neighborhood Center from June through August. This is a free lunch program for children and youth under 18, no matter where they live. We serve at the neighborhood center, 2651 Roberts Road, Iowa City, Monday through Friday, from about noon to 1.

Last year, we served 2,553 meals over 44 days. We averaged 58 kids a day, although we welcomed 79 kids on one busy summer day. It's not part of the Iowa City School District or any other agency or organization. This is a community project we started to feed kids. It's that simple.

This is a big program that takes big-hearted volunteers, and lots of them! There is a Sign-Up Genius with slots for every day we'll be serving. Volunteers can sign up for one or more days, starting now. Here is the link: <https://tinyurl.com/sapc-summer-lunch-2025>.

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## Pastoral, Ministry, and Administrative Staff

### Pastors

**Rev. W. Robert Martin III**, Lead Pastor & Head of Staff

[rmartin@saintandrew-ic.org](mailto:rmartin@saintandrew-ic.org)

**Rev. Kyle Otterbein**, Associate Pastor

[kotterbein@saintandrew-ic.org](mailto:kotterbein@saintandrew-ic.org)

**Rev. Mark Wilson Martin**, Pastor Emeritus

[pastormwm@gmail.com](mailto:pastormwm@gmail.com)

### Office, Finance & Communications

**John Benson**, Finance Administrator

[finance@saintandrew-ic.org](mailto:finance@saintandrew-ic.org)

**Jeff Charis-Carlson**, Director of Communications  
and Media Ministries

[jcharisc@saintandrew-ic.org](mailto:jcharisc@saintandrew-ic.org)

**Amy Schmidt-Rundell**, Mission Outreach Coordinator

[amysr@saintandrew-ic.org](mailto:amysr@saintandrew-ic.org)

**Tim Patrick**, Building & Grounds Coordinator

[building@saintandrew-ic.org](mailto:building@saintandrew-ic.org)

### Children, Family & Student Ministries

**Matt Moore**, Director of Student Ministries

[mmoore@saintandrew-ic.org](mailto:mmoore@saintandrew-ic.org)

**Thomas Hartley**, Director of Children's and Family  
Ministries

[thartley@saintandrew-ic.org](mailto:thartley@saintandrew-ic.org)

**Nichole Hoffman**, Children's Ministries Outreach  
Coordinator

[nhoffman@saintandrew-ic.org](mailto:nhoffman@saintandrew-ic.org)

**Sara Penn**, Children's Ministries Activities Coordinator

[spenn@saintandrew-ic.org](mailto:spenn@saintandrew-ic.org)

### Music Ministries

**Austen Wilson**, Director of Music Ministries

[awilson@saintandrew-ic.org](mailto:awilson@saintandrew-ic.org)

**Laura Kastens**, Assistant Director of  
Handbell Ministries

[lkastens@saintandrew-ic.org](mailto:lkastens@saintandrew-ic.org)

**Abby Chen**, Organist & Accompanist

[achen@saintandrew-ic.org](mailto:achen@saintandrew-ic.org)

**Wes Habley**, Interim Director, Reed Ensembles

[hableyw@gmail.com](mailto:hableyw@gmail.com)

**Pat Penn**, Interim Director, Flute Ensemble

[pat\\_penn@hotmail.com](mailto:pat_penn@hotmail.com)