



St. John's Newsletter

February 2021



Up to Jerusalem

“Look, we are going up to Jerusalem. The Son of Man will be handed over to the chief priests and experts in the law, and they will condemn him to death. They will hand him over to the Gentiles to mock, flog, and crucify him. On the third day he will be raised.” (Matthew 20:18-19 – EHV)

It is at this time of year that many people from the northern, cold-weather states, like Wisconsin head south. Who could blame them? They go south in search for a place with less snow, a warmer climate, and to enjoy some fun in the sun. Although the number might not be as high this year as in previous years, we still have a number of members who are able to go down south at least for a week or two—or maybe even several months!

Jesus also headed south. He was up in Galilee and he was determined to head south to Jerusalem (Luke 9:51). But he wasn't headed south to enjoy the weather, he headed south in order to die and rise again. Jesus prophesied about this to his disciples again and again. Our verses above are just another example. When Jesus was speaking these verses, he was east of the Jordan River, probably near Jericho (Jerusalem is about 15 miles west-southwest from Jericho). When the Bible speaks about traveling to Jerusalem it always talks about going up to Jerusalem. One of the reasons for this is that Jerusalem is high up in the mountains. No matter what direction you came from, you had to go up in elevation (Jerusalem is about 4000 feet higher in elevation than Jericho). So, whether you were coming from the desert in the south, Galilee in the North, the Mediterranean Sea in the east, or from across the Jordan River, you had to go up to Jerusalem. But there is another way we go “up to Jerusalem,” that is spiritually. There are many mountains in Israel including the Mount of Olives that are higher than the Temple Mount, but spiritually speaking, the Temple Mount is the highest mountain in the world.

But how many actually believe this—let alone care? We are not immune, we are busy, we have so many things going on in our lives that we barely have time to breath, let alone sit and contemplate Christ's passion for an extra hour a week. In reality, we probably aren't that busy, we just try to convince ourselves that we are to set our consciences at ease. But it is for sins like these that Jesus went up to Jerusalem!

On multiple occasions, the Jewish people or their leaders wanted to kill Jesus and it wasn't time yet for him to die, so he fled (think of when the people of Nazareth tried to throw him off the cliff in Luke 4, or John 11 when the leaders wanted to kill Jesus after he raised Lazarus from the dead). But that time had now arrived. Jesus headed up to Jerusalem so he could suffer and die for us. He knew what would happen—even prophesied about it, but he went willingly so that he could pay for our sins and rise from the dead, three days after his death, so we too can rise from the dead and join him in heaven forever. What a stark contrast from those who travel south today. Jesus wasn't going to go on vacation. He wasn't going to enjoy the weather. He knowingly went up to Jerusalem to suffer and die. And he did this for us. He did this for his enemies, for those who hated him and wanted nothing to do with him.

So, as we begin our Lenten season in a few weeks, join us as remember why Jesus headed south: to suffer and die in our place! As we see him go up to Jerusalem, we go up with him spiritually and through the eyes of faith see his great act of love: his sacrifice on the cross for our salvation.

Pastor Frey

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ALTAR GUILD

Rose Miller 920-716-1379
Diane Schabo 920-733-4337

BAPTISM Josie Rae Henning, daughter of Jason and Stacie (Guyette) Henning was baptized January 16, 2021 during a private service at St. John. ***“Be baptized and wash away your sins.”*** Acts 22:16

WITH THE LORD Our sister in Christ, Doris Scheibe entered eternal life with her Savior on Friday, December 25, 2020. A Christian funeral service was held at St. John on Saturday, January 2, 2021.

Our brother in Christ, Robert Griffiths entered eternal life with his Savior on Saturday, December 26, 2020. A Christian funeral service was held at St. John on Thursday, December 31, 2020.

“I am the resurrection and the life.” John 11:25.

NEW BIC CLASS Pastor Frey is going to start up a new Bible Information Class (BIC), otherwise known as Adult Instruction Class. This class covers the basics of what the Bible teaches. This is not only the class to take if you want to become a new member here at St. John, but it is also a great review for any of our current members. This spring we'll have two opportunities to take this class: Tuesday mornings at 10:00am and Thursday evenings at 6:00pm. If you are interested, or know anyone who is, please speak to Pastor Frey.

BIBLE CLASSES Pastor Gartner began a new Bible Study on Sunday November 29th at 9:15 am entitled: ***“Catholicism Today — A Study of What the Catholic Church Teaches and How It Measures Up to God’s Word.”*** Join us as we look at some of the key teachings of the Catholic Church in light of God’s Word, and we will also look at ways on how we can share the truths of God’s Word with those in the Catholic Church who may be struggling in their faith.

Pastor Frey is leading a Bible Study on Mondays and Tuesdays called, ***“Counterfeit Christianity.”*** The devil is called the Father of Lies (John 8:44); he uses his web of lies to lead Christians away from God’s Word and thus away from the one true faith. This study, based on the book, Broken: 7 “Christian” Rules that Every Christian Ought to Break as Often

as Possible by Jonathan Fisk, will examine these lies of the devil and their antidotes from Holy Scripture.

If you would like to receive a recording of these Bible Classes, please contact one of the Pastors and we will send you the link for these recordings.

ANNUAL CONGREGATIONAL MEETING On Tuesday, January 19th, our annual congregational meeting was held. The annual report, FVL report, and meeting minutes are available on the counter in the entryway. During the meeting the following people were approved, per recommendation of the council, to the following committee positions: the Board of Trustees—Kevin Rank and Dennis Hoffman. Evangelism Committee—Jay and Monica Minzlaff, Becky Atkinson, and Stephen Sielaff. Assistant Treasurer—Kevin Kempf. Financial Secretary—Nancy Bruhn. We also would like to thank Jason Presteen and Rick Springstroh for serving on the board of Trustees this past year.

Also, due to 2020 expenses being less than income by almost \$60,000, it was decided to allocate \$10,000 each to FVL Operations, FVL Let the Children Come (debt relief), and WELS Congregational Mission Offering (CMO).

In addition, it was announced that the council will be setting up a special Ad Hoc Committee to study and make recommendations to the council concerning the new hymnal which will be published late this fall.

If you would like to watch the recording of the video, please ask one of the pastors who can send you the youtube link.

LENT Please join us for worship at 10:30 am or 6:30 pm each Wednesday during Lent beginning with Ash Wednesday, February 17 as we follow our Savior to the cross.

This year our theme is: The Hands of the Passion

What a blessing it is each year for you and your children in these services to hear the suffering and death of our Lord Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of our sins.

Note: Confirmation classes for grades 6-8 will begin at 5:00 pm each Wednesday during Lent.

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LENT MEALS We are currently trying to figure out the logistics of holding meals before our evening Lenten services. Please keep your eyes open for more information. If you have any questions or concerns, please speak to one of the Pastors or any of the council members.

TEAMS/COMMITTEES A listing of representatives for St. John teams and committees is enclosed.

SCHEDULES The 2021 usher schedule (January-April), cleaning and Altar Guild schedules are available on the counter in the entryway of the church. Please take the schedule that has your name highlighted.

FLOWER CHART A 2021 flower chart has been placed on the bulletin board. If you would like to bring flowers for a special occasion, please sign for that date.

GREETING CARDS Did you know there are individual greeting cards for purchase in the church narthex? They are being sold by our Women of Faith as a service to you.

The cards are self-serve on a spinner rack near the library and are only 50 cents per card. Check the rack often as cards are added for special holidays and occasions.

WELS APPLE VALLEY FOOD PANTRY The pantry thanks everyone for supporting the food pantry. During 2020, the food pantry:

- served 68 families each month.
- distributed 1,800 bags of non-perishable food and 730 bags of sundry (toilet paper, toweling, facial tissue, soap, toothpaste).
- provided families with \$26,000 in scrip so that they could purchase fresh food such as meat, dairy and produce.

For February, the food pantry needs: All crackers (including flavored crackers), cookies, pancake mix and syrup, canned fruit, canned meats like tuna and Spam, chunky soups, hamburger, tuna and chicken helper meals, paper toweling and facial tissue. Please drop items off at church by **Friday, February 12, 2021.**

WOMEN OF FAITH All ladies of the congregation are invited to join us Tuesday, February 9 at 1:00 pm for Bible study and LWMS updates.

MEN'S BIBLE STUDY All men of the congregation are invited to join us on Tuesday, February 16 at 9:00 am for Bible study.

CONTRIBUTION STATEMENTS AND ENVELOPES The 2020 contribution statements are in the entryway on the table by the 2021 offering envelopes. If you have not picked up your contribution statements and/or offering envelopes, please pick them up when you are able to do so.

GIFTS TO OUR LORD DURING DECEMBER:

		<u>Expenses</u>
General Fund	\$50,229.00	\$26,099.00
General Fund YTD	\$392,424.00	\$332,834.00
Building Fund	\$1,360.00	
Land Development Fund	\$210.00	
Missions (WELS)	\$2,492.50	
Christian Family Solutions	\$280.00	
Institutional Ministry	\$210.00	
FVLHS Operational	\$580.00	
FVLHS Let the Children Come	\$705.00	

"On the first day of every week, each one of you should set aside a sum of money in keeping with his income." 1 Corinthians 16:2

AN OPTION FOR GIVING YOUR OFFERING: VANCO, the company we use for online giving through our website, now offers an app that allows you to give directly to St. John through your smart phone, VANCO Give Plus. Simply download the app, login/create a username, and then find St. John. This app will allow you to give to whatever fund you so desire, as well as set a one-time offering, or a recurring offering with a specific frequency. For more information, contact Tim Springstroh or one of the pastors. Below are the links for the app.

Google Play:



Apple App Store:

