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# Welcome to St. John's!

627 S. Washington St.

507-354-6744

www.stjohnsnewulm.org

Worship Times

Saturdays: 7 pm

Sundays: 8, 9:30 & 11 am

Midweek Lenten Services

Wednesday, February 10, 17 & 24: 4 & 6 pm

Adult Bible Classes

Thursdays: 10:30 & 7 pm

Fridays: Men's Breakfast Bible Study, Perkins: 6:30 am

Fridays: Women's Bible Class: 9:30 am

Sundays: 9:30 & 10:45 am

Children's Sunday School

Sundays: 9:30 am

# Staff

Pastor Wayne A. Laitinen wayne.laitinen@gmail.com

Pastor Jeffrey A. Bovee revbovee @ gmail.com

Staff Minister Kelly Emde kremde@comcast.net

Church Office stjohnsnewulm@gmail.com

Bookkeeper wlambrecht @ newulmtel.net

Administrative Teacher jdretske@splnewulm.org



#### February 2016

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#### In The Year of Our Lord 2015

A Year that calls for humble repentance for our sins...and joy over God's lavish Grace

The Holy Spirit saw fit, at times, to keep attendance: five thousand men, not to mention women and children, were fed miraculously in that Galilean wilderness; three thousand were converted to Christ on that first New Testament Pentecost. The Holy Spirit recorded these numbers to impress us with the might and mercy of Mary's Son, our God and Savior. He wanted to put faces to the fact that "the Word of the Lord grows."

There are also times when precise numbers seem the farthest thing from the thoughts of the Holy Spirit: "Go and make disciples of all nations..." and "preach the Gospel to every creature..." are a couple of examples. The Holy Spirit intends The Great Commission to be both comprehensive and unquantifiable. While God knows the number of His elect, he does not intend that to be our concern.

For the purpose of a fairly large, local congregation like St. John's, our interest in numbers help us meditate on God's grace to us as well as our need for his grace in the year now come to a close.

"How lovely is your dwelling place, O Lord, Almighty!
My soul yearns, even faints for the courts of the LORD." –
Psalm 84:1

St. John's has 1,009 souls of which 803 are confirmed. Our average weekend church attendance is 744. If we subtract approximately 33% of those who are students from Martin Luther College and other visitors, our member attendance per weekends averages just under 500. Of these, about 300 members attend more often than not. The other 200 members are not in worship on most weekends.

On communion weekends, it is estimated that 270 of our members receive the body and blood of our Lord Jesus for the comfort and relief of their conscience and the strengthening of their faith.

We are certainly thankful that God has given us the privilege to serve 250 students and visitors with the Gospel each weekend. We also give thanks that the Holy Spirit has moved the hearts of half our congregation to gather around the life-giving Word and Sacrament on any given weekend. The absence of the other half of the flock on such a regular basis is, however, a source of great concern for your pastors, elders and the entire congregation – not to mention the Savior. You can help our church leaders in their efforts to recall the straying with your prayers and words of encouragement to those who are not here.

Further insight of our congregation's stewardship of the Word will be taken up in the report of the Board of Education. (See the annual report for 2015. Copies will be available soon).

"Now he who supplies seed to the sower and bread by \$50,000. Our operating fund debt is never anything for food will also supply and increase your store of seed and will enlarge the harvest of your righteousness." 2 Corinthians 9:10

For 67 years our Lord has graciously enabled us to proclaim God's grace in New Ulm. It is always amazing to me the number of for-profit corporate giants that have risen and fallen over those decades. Yet, a not-forprofit organization like our church continues to function solely by weekly, free-will offerings – given out of love for the Savior. This past year was no different.

was built a decade ago cost us \$2 million. On December 31, 2015 the Building Fund Debt stood at just over \$410,000.

The occasional glitches not withstanding, our sound system and three-camera video recording system have greatly benefited our ability to effectively proclaim the truths of God's Word. The debt remaining for these systems has been whittled down from the original \$67,000 to just over \$5,000 by year's end. Our milliondollar operating budget has succeeded in covering the expenses of grade school and high school education, 6 called workers, synodical offerings, parachurch ministries (two examples: WELS ministries to the hospitalized in the Cities and Rochester and weekly Lutheran Radio broadcasts) and building upkeep.

We fell short of the million dollar operating fund goal

to take lightly. However, in the grand scheme, that debt is .05% of the cost of the Gospel proclamation we did on all levels for the entire year. Thanks to God for not sparing His Son...nor the resources needed to proclaim his saving love!

#### "Forget not all His benefits!" – Psalm 104:3

Thirteen children were born again by water and the Spirit in the year that just came to a close. Eighteen adults and children made the good confession before the altar to become communicant members of our The beautiful office suite and basement renovation that church. Six were received into the Church Triumphant.

> Recent months have seen an upsurge of adults from other denominations seeking a church which takes God's Word seriously.

In December 2015, Pastor Bovee received a call to Flint Township, Michigan. Together with his challenge of considering how his talents might be used in another parish, we at St. John's received a deeper appreciation of Pastor Bovee's ministry among us.

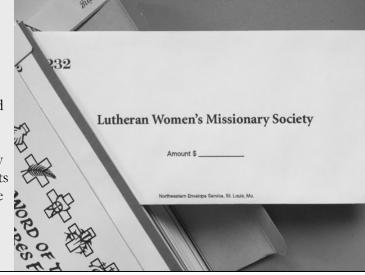
May the God of our fathers, continue to bless us and make us a blessing to many during our short pilgrimage. Then may He receive all of us into the glory of His presence forever!

In Christ's Service and Yours, Pastor Wayne A. Laitinen

# February Offering Envelope

The Lutheran Women's Missionary Society is women dedicated to serving Jesus by increasing awareness of, interest in, and support of the mission outreach of the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod (WELS).

They encourage women (and men) to learn about, pray for, and support with their offerings our mission efforts here in North America and around the world. We have sisters and brothers in the faith in over 24 countries around the world being served by WELS missionaries, going where we cannot go.



- Sandra Borth Karen Grunwald
- Bruce Beatty Neil Schmidt
- Ronald Borth Gerald Horner Kaitlyn Roux
- 4 Gina Meyer Richard Schmidt
- Agron Black Liliana Mohror
- Marlene Marti Gage Stanoch
- Gabriella Smith
- Jesse Brandes
- Gregg Juhnke Norma Sieh
- 10 Matthew Beatty Kenneth Ubel Loren Weisensel
- 11 Angela Lingl Julie Rolloff
- 13 Zachary Dummer Frank Kral
- 14 Howard Wessel

- 15 Keira Beatty Dennis Gustafson Elizabeth Schmidt Grace Stoering Frederick Toltzman
- 16 Randall Gieseke
- 17 Daniel Hartwig
- 18 Kayla Brandes Brandon Savoy Linda Schroeder
- 20 Tyler Fischer Keith Romsdahl
- 21 Charles Hussman Matthew Kopischke Helen Poehler Noreen Ubel Daniel Wenninger
- 22 Rachel Dauer Paul Gunderson Lavonne Lange Philip Fischer
- 23 Christine Baganz Karen Hoffmann Isaak Pehling Devon Thill Zachery Toltzman Mashaye Wilson

- 24 Karrie Borchert Ziva Zahrt
- 25 Silas Dose Tonya Kowalke Steven Schroeder
- 26 Daniel Stoering
- 27 Eunice Anderson Joey Gilman Linda Starke Nathan Wels
- 28 Richard Kuckhahn Maribeth Orth
- 29 Ruth Schultz

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### Your Synod at Work

WELS Investment Funds, Inc.

Although we touched on the WELS Investment Funds program in a previous column, I thought that with all the news regarding the volatility of the stock market and investments since the beginning of 2016 that has a number of people concerned, it would be a good time to review the work of WELS Investment Funds, Inc.

The mission of WELS Investment Funds, Inc. is "to strengthen and enhance the congregations of WELS and the Evangelical Lutheran Synod and their affiliated organizations by providing professional managed investment portfolios: WELS Equity Fund and WELS Income Fund."

The WELS Income Fund seeks to provide current income by "investing primarily in investment quality debt securities." The Income Fund may be appropriate for participating organizations having a desire for current income.

The WELS Equity Fund seeks "long-term capital growth by investing in a portfolio of equity securities that is well diversified by industry and company size." The Equity Fund may be appropriate for participating organizations that have a long investment horizon and are prepared to accept volatility associated with equity securities."

More than 190 WELS organizations invest in the WELS funds. They have welcomed six new participant members during the first half of fiscal year 2015. WELS ministries have invested approximately \$4.8 million within the first six months of the last fiscal year. \$1.5 million of the investments received came from congregations, \$0.5 million came from synodical schools, and \$2.8 million came from WELS Foundations, Inc. At the end of 2014, the assets under management totaled around \$165.4 million.

WELS Investment Funds along with the WELS Foundation conducted a self-study and reviewed the organizational structures and operations of its peers within other church bodies. The conclusion of the self-study was that combining the operations of WELS Investment Funds with WELS Foundation would best serve WELS and its members and ministries. A joint discussion has taken place with the key items being lower costs, new funding options, and streamlined communications. They were asked to report their findings to the Synodical Council by this last October. Unfortunately, I don't have updated information regarding the report of the findings.

Gerald Woodley



## From Your Staff Minister

The Board of Stewardship is looking for an adult male to serve a term on it. Their area of ministry has to encourage members to how best to use their time, gifts and talent. They meet once a month on Tuesday evenings for an hour. If you are interested in serving on this Board please contact Josiah Stoering at 359-2612 or myself at KREMDE@comcast.net.

"We have different gifts, according to the grace given us. If a man's gift so prophesying, let him use it in proportion to his faith. If it is serving, let him serve; if it is teaching, let him teach; if it is encouraging, let him encourage; if it is contributing to the needs of others, let him give generously; if it is leadership, let him govern diligentlt; if it is showing mercy, let him do it cheerfully." (Ro 12:6-8)

Kelly Emde

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#### St. Paul's Lutheran School

#### **BOCD** Information

- 1. PreK open house took place in January 20 St. Paul's will be celebrating the gift of Christian registered for 2016-7 school year.
- 2) an amount to increase fundamental instruction; always invited. See LSW info in bulletin. Monday: be presented to the St. Paul's Council for 9:45. preparation of a budget. Once all ministries submit prioritization needs, a request will be made to Kindergarten Round-Up match projections of need at the school verses year are invited to attend our annual kindergarten affect St. John's according to the school formula.
- 3. Enrollment of K-8 has increased to 286 students pm. Parents with children that may be ready for at 41 students.
- achieving at scores generally higher than the 354-2326. WELS percentile averages in all subject areas tested (reading, math, language, science, and social Calendar studies), scoring consistently around the 70-75 national percentile level (NP).
- 5. The first half of a math curriculum in-service took place at MLC on Monday, January 18th. Fourteen schools of southwest Minnesota will meet again on February 15th to discuss the math curriculum.

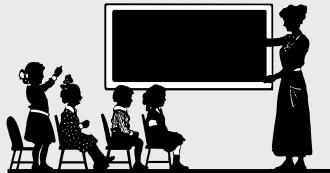
We are thankful for the many and varied gifts our heavenly Father provides for our school and its School's website: www.splnewulm.org/school children, staff and faculty. May he continue to bless the efforts of those who provide for the school in many Respectfully submitted, ways. Many people give of their time, talents, and James L. Dretske, treasures to keep the school running efficiently and Administrative Teacher: jdretske@splnewulm.org effectively.

#### Lutheran Schools Week

education in our Lutheran elementary school during 2.Board preliminary prioritization for budget areas to Lutheran Schools Week, the week of February 6-11 include 1) an amount to budget for Kindergarten (Sat.-Thurs.): Saturday: family fun night at Vogel 5-7 paraprofessional-with anticipating the numbers pm; Sunday: K-8 singing "We Are at Peace" during the continuing to be high (previous amounts came out 11:00 service on **Sunday**, February 7th. Each school of special funds, Thrivent Choice, or estate funds); day will contain a special chapel. Parents and others are 3) an amount toward Technology funding; and 4) family lunch: 11-12:20 Cost \$3.80. Tuesday: VIP Day a wellness initiative amount to provide employee (Formerly Grandparent's Day) Open House until 8:25; use of Vogel Recreation Center. These items will Devotion 8:30; Entertainment- Mr. Peter Bloedel 8:50-

finalize prioritizations according to numbers that Children entering Kindergarten during the next school final budget numbers expected at the church. round-up scheduled during February. Two times are Items added to the school expense budget will available for visiting. Parents and their child may attend either Monday or Tuesday, Feb. 15/16, at 6:00 - 7:30 with four new students starting in January. PreK is kindergarten in the next school year should receive information about the round-up. If you don't get 4. Terra Nova test results show St. Paul's School information by Feb. 10th, you should call the school:

Feb. 6-11	Lutheran Schools Week
Feb. 12-15	NO School: Mid-winter Break
Feb. 15-16	Kindergarten Round-Up
Feb. 19-21	MLC Basketball Tournament
Feb. 24	Jr. Choir sings: 6 pm Lenten Service
Feb 28	Gr K-4 sing: 8 am



### **OWLS February Meeting**

The Owls will meet at an unusual place, time and date, on Sunday, February 21, at about 1:30-1:45 pm for a 2 pm play at the MLC Auditorium. The play is entitled "You Can't Take it with You." A section of seats will be reserved for OWLS members and friends until 1:45 pm. The cost of the play is \$6. Please pay the ticket seller at the door.

A hamburger meal will follow the play for all who wish to join us. The cost of the meal is \$5.50 payable in advance so that the MLC dining hall staff will be able to prepare for the proper number. The advance payment date is February 16 or earlier. Please make payment to one of the following: Myron or TJ Fluegge who attend St. Paul's; Paul Fritze, John Paulsen, or Dar Raddatz who attend at St. John's. Highland Regency residents may prefer to pay Dar Raddatz at MLC. Checks should be written out to OWLS, please. You might consider paying an even dollar amount like \$6 or \$10, with the overage going to the European Civilian Chaplaincy, our OWLS special mission activity. And remember that the OWLS annual \$15 dues for 2016 were due in January!

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February Sermon Texts								
Feb. 7	Exodus 34:29-35	Reflecting the Glory of the Lord						
Feb. 10	Luke 18:9-14	This Man Went Home Justified: John Boeder						
Feb. 14	Luke 4:1-13	Let Us Approach the Throne of Grace						
Feb. 17	John 11:45-53 Die	It is Better that One Man for the People: John Schmidt						
Feb. 21	Jeremiah 26:8-15	God's Word: Tell It Like It Is						
Feb. 24	Matthew 26:1-5	Not During the Festival: Bob Krueger						
Feb. 28	Luke 13:1-9	Read the Headlines Under the Sign of the Cross						

# **MLC Ladies Auxiliary**

The students of MLC greatly appreciate your support. The Food Bank is an opportunity for you to help out the second career students and their families. You may place your non perishable donations in the designated box in our narthex. On the box is a list of needed items.

If you would like to give cash, or gift cards for local businesses, please give those directly to Judy Gosdeck, Jeneane Thiesfeldt or the receptionist at MLC.

As of this time, a date for our New Ulm North/South Conference spring meeting has not been publicized. Please watch for this information in the near future.

Jeneane Thiesfeldt, contact person, 507-359-7018.

# Women of St. John's

The January meeting of Women of St. John's was held on Tuesday, January 5, at 7 pm. Pastor Bovee began his devotion with an explanation of how the date for Christ's birth was determined. The reading from Numbers chapter 23 showed how God changed the curses of Balaam, meant for God's people, into blessings. God made Himself known to the Wise Men through a star which lead them to the Christ-child. It was followed by the singing of Hymn 92.

Karen Grunwald spoke about her activities as a New Teacher Mentor and Student Teacher Supervisor. MLC provides an experienced teacher to mentor each new teacher. The program is supervised by Prof. John Schaeffer. The purpose of this program is to support the new teacher and make them successful in their early teaching experiences. This is done through emails and personal visits. The student teacher supervisor is a state licensed teacher that oversees the teaching activities and classroom management strategies of the student teacher.

Pres. Kuckhan called the meeting to order. The secretaries minutes from the November and December meetings were read. A thank you note from Daniel Dobberstein, principal of East Fork Lutheran School, was read. The Treasurer provided us with a printed report which showed a balance of \$390.99 which included the \$100 donation which will be given to the Teens Mission Trip. Pres. Kuckhahn informed the group that information about a chartered bus trip to the LWMS Convention in St. Charles, IL, can be found on the shelf in the old narthex. The Women of St. John's booklet was approved after several changes were made. It was suggested that the officers choose the 4 projects our group will sponsor in the coming year.

Since there were no January birthdays, the meeting closed with the singing of the Table prayer.

Eleanor Runke Secretary

# Library News

A recent donation to the theological section of the library is titled "Who Is Jesus Christ?" by Wilbert R. Gawrisch. It contains 5 lectures given by Prof. Gawrisch for a pastor's institute at the seminary. Using Scripture to answer that question, he focused on the person and work of Christ.

"A Year of Prayer" was published by Northwestern Publishing House. God, our heavenly Father, knows our needs, wants, worries, and frustrations and desires that we come to him in prayer at all times and in all situations. He has promised to hear all our prayers and answer them in the way that is best for our eternal good. The prayers were gathered from several volumes of Meditations Daily Devotional.

A fictional novel by Melody Carlson is titled "Trading Secrets." The main character, Micah, is a senior in high school. She has been a pen pal to a young Amish boy for several years who because of her name things she is a boy. When she finally ash the chance to meet him face to face and experience life on an amish farm, she worries that revealing her long-kept secret will make him angry and end their friendship. It was a recent donation to the library.

Eleanor Runke Church Librarian











# Funds Still Needed

As of January 31, 2016, the funds needed are: \$4,995 to cover the cost of our audio/video equipment

## Stewardship

#### Stewardship of the Word:

We live in an area that is rich in Lutheran education— St. Paul's School, Minnesota Valley Lutheran High School, and Martin Luther College and its Early Childhood Learning Center right here in New Ulm. Why do we send our youth to Lutheran schools? Do our Lutheran schools do a better job at instructing in the core subjects than the public schools? Perhaps. But that isn't what sets our Christian schools apart. There, our youth learn that the earth and everything in it are the Lord's. All subjects can be taught in the light of God's Word. Our teachers reflect and model Christ's love to their students. When enforcing discipline, our teachers need not motivate through fear of punishment. Rather, their goal is to encourage and spur their students to show Christian love to one another. We thank the Lord for our blessing of Christian schools. We encourage our members to support these schools through prayer, through offerings, and by sending their children to be educated through our schools. May God bless these institutions that serve to help parents in raising their children as disciples of Christ.

Josiah Stoering, Chairman

The purpose of the Board of Stewardship is to assist St. John's members with the God-pleasing management of all the resources God has entrusted to us for the purposes of bringing him glory and carrying out the work of the church.

# Church Service on T.V.

Mondays: 6 pm
Tuesdays: 1 pm
Thursdays: 10 am
on
Comcast Channel 14
NUTelecom Channel 3

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#### **Archives**

#### **Annual Reports**

By the time you receive this issue of the Fortress our annual meeting (Jan. 26) will have already taken place, and you should have received or picked up the 2015 Annual Report. It's not just dollars and numbers but an indication of the work and mission of St. John's over the years. Variances in attendance figures are due to differences in the way they were reported and calculated and may make exact comparison difficult. The statistics reflect not only growth and inflation but the blessing of the Holy Spirit. Over the years a lot was spent but a lot of people (adults and children) were served with the Word of God and the sacraments.

1955 (8th year): Pastor, Rollin Reim. Membership: 475 baptized; 63 new members. Average attendance for weekend and special services was 270. Total disbursements totaled \$19,729; \$487 less than received. Services were still being held in the basement church at 8:30 and 10 am on Sundays with Sunday school at 9 throughout the year. The report makes reference to future building hopes.

1965: Pastor, Frederick Nitz. Membership: 534 baptized, 357 communicants, 86 voting. Average attendance was reported at 337 per service. There were two Sunday services at 8:30 and 10:00; Sunday school at 8:30; a single 9 am service during summer months. Total receipts for the year were \$36,663; including

\$6,931 for missions and \$13,070 for the Building Fund. The congregation was looking forward to the construction of the superstructure to begin in April (1966).

1990: Pastor, Norval Kock; David Zabel, Director of Christian Education. Membership: 906 baptized, 678 communicants. Average attendance was 480 for weekend services: 7:00 Saturday, 8:30 and 10:30 Sunday with a single Sunday service at 9:00 during the summer. Receipts totaled \$294,183, including \$23,316 for MVL general and capital and \$32,189 for Synod.

2005: Pastors, Jeffrey Bovee and Wayne Laitinen; Administrative Teacher, James Dretske. Membership: 1,047 baptized, 861 communicants. Average weekend attendance was 683. Services were held at 7 pm on Saturday; at 8, 9:30 and 11 am on Sundays except in summer—no 11 am service. Receipts for all purposes totaled \$1,194,568: \$544,215 for home operations, \$54,532 for MVL, \$67,076, for WELS Missions, and \$412,097 for the Building fund were the major part of that total. Total disbursements totaled \$1,142,083.

For 2015, refer to the Annual Report.

In following months we'll look at some specific events for selected years of St. John's history that will review other indications of the Holy Spirit's work and blessing.

Bob Krueger

# Cards of Caring

The Cards of Caring group will meet February 6, 2016 and March 12, 2016, from 9 am to noon at 308 S. Washington St. This school year nine women have participated. This is an opportunity for fellowship and service to the church. We will be making Valentine cards, Easter, Confirmation and birthday cards.

Won't you join us for an hour or two? Contact Lois Willems with questions at 359-7403.



#### ST. JOHN'S EV. LUTHERAN CHURCH NEW ULM, MN 56073

# FEBRUARY 2016 354-6744

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY		IESDAY	THURS	DAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
	1	6:30 pm Education 7 pm Women of St. John's	7 pm	m Catechism Sr. Choir	4 10:30 at 6 pm 7 pm	Bible Class  Worship Committee Meeting Adult	5 6:30 am Men's Breakfast Bible Study, Perkins 9:30 am Women's Bible Class	6 9 am Cards Caring, 30 S. Washington S  WORSHIP 7 PM W/ COMMUNION
7 Transfiguration/ Lutheran Schools Week WORSHIP W/ COMMUNION 8, 9:30 & 11 AM 9:30 am Bible Classes and Sunday School 10:45 am Bible Class 11 am K-8 sing	8 6:30 pm Elders 7 pm Trustees	9 6 pm Sunday School Teachers' Meeting	S 4 Fellor 4:	WEDNESDAY ERVICES & 6 PM wship Supper 45 - 6 pm n Catechism Sr. Choir	11 10:30 ar 7 pm	m Adult Bible Class  Adult Bible Class	12 6:30 am Men's Breakfast Bible Study, Perkins NO Women's Bible Class	13 Worship 7 PM
WORSHIP 8, 9:30 & 11 AM 9:30 am Bible Classes and Sunday School 10:45 am Bible Class	St. Paul's School Kind 4 pm Ridgeway on 23rd Service	4 pm Oak Hills	S 4 Fellow 4:	EEK LENTEN ERVICES & 6 PM wship Supper 45 - 6 pm n Catechism Sr. Choir	18 10:30 ar 7 pm	m Adult Bible Class Adult Bible Class	6:30 am Men's Breakfast Bible Study, Perkins 9:30 am Women's Bible Class	Worship 7 pm W/ Communion
WORSHIP W/ COMMUNION 8, 9:30 & 11 AM 9:30 am Bible Classes and Sunday School 10:45 am Bible Class 1:30 pm OWLS Meeting at MLC Play 2 pm MVL Delegate Meeting	22	23 4 pm Oak Hills Living Center Service	S 4 Fellor 4: 6 pm	VEEK LENTEN ERVICES & 6 PM wship Supper 45 - 6 pm Gr. 5-8 sing Catechism Sr. Choir	25 10:30 ar 7 pm	m Adult Bible Class Adult Bible Class	26 6:30 am Men's Breakfast Bible Study, Perkins 9:30 am Women's Bible Class	27 Worship 7 pm
28 Pentecost 16 WORSHIP 8, 9:30 & 11 AM 8 am Gr. K-4 sing 9:30 am Bible Classes and Sunday School 10:45 am Bible Class	29	Corresp Pastor Jet Pastor W Staff Min Church C Wendy L Jim Drets	ffrey Bo 'ayne La ister Ke Office ambrec	ovee nitinen v elly Emde s	wayne.la krei tjohnsne lambrech	bovee@gmai itinen@gmai mde@comca wulm@gmai nt@newulmt e@splnewuln	l.com st.net l.com el.net	
	T.V. Service:			Looki	ng Ahe	ad		

T.V. Service:
Mondays: 6 pm
Tuesdays: 1 pm
Thursdays: 10 am
on Comcast Channel 14
NU Telecom Channel 3

Mar. 2, 9, 16 Lenten Midweek Services: 4 & 6 pm
Mar. 24 Maundy Thursday Services: 4 & 6 pm
Mar. 25 Tre Ore Service at St. Paul's Church: 12-3 pm

Tenebrae Service: 7 pm

Mar. 26 NO Saturday Service Mar. 27 Easter Sunday Services: 7, 9:30 & 11 am

Easter Brunch: 8 - 9 am