

## **2016 Annual Meeting Address of Fr Kluttermann:**

I am now in my 21<sup>st</sup> year as the rector of St John's.

For perspective, that means:

- we have celebrated over 1000 Sunday Eucharists, which means the word "relationship" has been used about 5000 times in sermons
- there have been 77 funerals
- 76 baptisms
- 39 marriages
- we have moved the pews in the church about 4 times for summer worship
- we have had about 250 outreach luncheons
- we have partnered with other churches to host picnics, offer educational events for children and adults, open our worship spaces for tours in the Christmas season, walked together for the Stations of the Cross
- we have joined with the downtown businesses in welcoming people to the downtown
- we have celebrated our 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary as a parish family, and the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the building of this church

In other words, we have been busy. Ours has been a story of continuity and tradition mixed with singular events. And while some people have remained constant, the majority of our present membership have joined St John's sometime over the past 20 years.

So today we meet as a parish family. We celebrate All Saints. Sort of a celebration of being a family. Thought you could have a private relationship with God? Today is a reminder that our life with God, our relationship with God, is shaped by all the saints, by the family that God has created out of his love, and through the resurrection of Jesus Christ.

We also meet today for our annual meeting. Not your stereotypical annual meeting, but an annual meeting that invites us to reflect on who we are, and what we are becoming, by asking what is our story?

For anyone who wonders if and what the business of the annual meeting is, that is simple. The business of this parish is to live into the story of God's love for us, the same story told in generations past by all the saints, known or forgotten, including those saints who we knew as mom or dad, uncle or aunt, grandpa or grandma. Our business is asking how are we

doing living into that story, and inviting people to live into the story for themselves?

Our story includes the blessings of poverty, of being poor. Don't believe me? Check out the gospel...blessed are the poor! Is that part of the story of St John's? Is it part of our individual stories?

When we tell our story, or stories, do we include that part that includes the blessings we have known from being hungry?

Does our narrative include provision for the blessings that come from weeping? Or learning how to accept hate, or exclusion when people know we are a Church, a family of God with Christ as our head?

As a parish, and as individuals, it is easy to fall into poverty – the poverty that is created when hoard our treasures, when we fail to welcome the stranger, or feed the hungry, or clothe the naked. But that is not the poverty Jesus will bless. Rather, when our story includes becoming poor because we identify with the hungry, or the sick, or the lost, and we share what we have willingly, and even risk becoming poor ourselves. Then we will be blessed.

Do we tell a story that includes hunger? Do we take time to fast? Do

we recognize our lack of understanding, the room in each of us and all of us, to grow in a knowledge and love of God? Do we walk, make soup, fill the pantries, and know the hunger of others is our hunger?

Is the story of this parish family filled with weeping? When tragedy strikes in the form of natural disaster, or the plight of refugees brought on by human strife, do we weep for them, and with them? Does that weeping stir us to reach out and offer ourselves?

We have worked hard over the past years to tell a story that includes being part of the downtown. There is a balance to be kept in telling that story. Are we telling the story of God's love in the community, regardless of the audience? Are there times we back away from the story so people will feel good about us?

Today it is our business to hold up the story of God's love for us as told in the birth, life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. It is our business to celebrate how God has been faithful to that story through the saints and all the faithful of generations past. And it is our business to ask are we faithfully telling that story through the life of

this congregation, and through our own lives?

For example, there is a good chance that when we put together the budget for 2017, we will have less income available than in 2016. I believe that people pledge and give in a way that reflects their relationship with God, and we cannot question that. We will have less to work with, at least on paper. Yet, the vestry and I believe that with this year, we are being called to tell a new chapter in our story, one that includes having a person on staff entrusted with helping us as a congregation develop a ministry in the community. Such a ministry would help us to respond to hunger and poverty of different kinds, and be a people who can weep and respond appropriately. The question before us: will we choose to include this in our story? Can we find a will and a way for it to be our story?

I told the vestry at our last meeting that I want us to finish the organ renovation, and then focus on taking care of ourselves and the larger community. I do not want our story to be identified with building projects. We are in a good place with all that. Now, let's focus on using these buildings and property as a place where we live out our story as God's people, a place we are sent out

from, a place we return to, a place that welcomes our neighbors.

Today we celebrate and we reflect. We position ourselves at God's table with all his children from every age, with our brothers and sisters in Christ. And we ask ourselves, how are we doing living God's story? This is our church. This is our family.

The story is our business, for the story is our life and our hope.

## Annual Reports:

### **Don Weinkauf**

In my early years (we came to St John's in 1958) on the vestry I served as Treasurer several years, and then as Jr Warden (all of the Junior Wardens were in charge of the "Every Member Canvass". We even made personal visits to some members at home.) Then I served as Senior Warden and some time after that the Vestry decided we should

remodel the kitchen, bathrooms and Memorial Hall – including closing in the outside “Cloister Walk” to enlarge the interior space. Marv Schuette and I were Building Chairmen. The Bishop met with us and advised us to build a new church in Weston or Rothschild where young families were living, and to leave our downtown church. The Vestry decided we should remodel our beautiful old church downtown. We have always been happy to still have our downtown church, which is one of the most beautiful churches in town.

### **Sue Weinkauf**

I feel a lot of changes in our family are tied to changes at church. We came as a young couple with no children and then raised two daughters here, with baptisms, 2 weddings and now five grandchildren (not here). Now we are in our senior years here and are still active. I have been on Altar Guild since Janet Hudson was Chairman many years ago, and I am still doing Altar Guild. I have also been President of the ECW and St Martha’s and taught Sunday School. I feel two of the best things now are “Outreach Lunches” and working with “Downtown Churches” and “Downtown People”. Fr David has been very good at having many special dinners and events to get

members to know each other and to get new families active.

### **Pamela Glennon**

When I first started attending 12 years ago, I would come to Sunday service as regularly as I could, and attend on other special days, but did not stay afterward or get involved in any groups. As my sons have gotten older we have all become more involved – staying for coffee hour, going to Sunday School, attending special events, participating in adult study group, serving on vestry, and now doing outreach luncheons. It has been a great experience. We have come to know many other parishioners and definitely feel like part of the St John’s family.

### **Mary Roberts**

I also have some concern about allowing homeless people to sleep in our chapel. Some of the homeless have serious mental health issues.

I work at the food pantry at Grace Episcopal church in Madison and they have at least 30 people sleep in their lower level every night. They have iron bars across the windows on the doors, and lock all doors at curfew time.

I'm glad that Wausau is such a generous community, but we already give to the Catholic Warming Shelter, United Way, Neighbor's Place and a number of food pantries (especially at the holidays). I hope we will coordinate with this effort and not duplication.

Would Sheriff Parks or a deputy from the Sheriff's Department be good people to consult on this issue?

### **Chandra Witter**

I guess the most significant change since I left the Catholic Church and became a member of St John's, is the acceptance of the lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender segment of our church, and the rite of marriage given to all people, regardless of gender. Embracing and celebrating love is key in my life and in my church.

I was young when I learned about homosexuality, though I had little knowledge of heterosexuality let alone homosexuality at the time. My father's youngest brother was a gay man and I always knew him to be kind, loving and generous in spirit. He and I spoke often through my teen years, and as a young adult and early in my marriage while he lived in New York City. He and his partner owned a business and were together for many years until his very tragic death in 1988 from AIDS. His

request from me at the end of his life, when I asked what I could do for him, was that I ask family for financial help so that they could stay in their home. At this request, most of the family shunned him for his "choices" and the "Christians" in my family condemned him to hell.

Two of my cousins on the same side of the family were homosexual as well. They were brothers. John committed suicide as a teenager and Jason took his own life as an adult. Because of his homosexuality, Jason's family felt he was not worth having a service, a funeral or any gathering at all celebrating his life – as if he had never existed at all. I believe the social and family pressures they felt because of their homosexuality motivated them to end their lives. Such tragedies befall many families.

I believe the love of God to be for every single one of us and I am so very thankful and joyful for the love and acceptance of all in my Episcopal church. For where can we go with our love, if not the Church?

### **Laura Martens**

In the last year, St John's has focused on understanding and owning our stories. Defining who we are, what we seek and where we want to grow. Today's narrative finds our congregation engaging in

conversations that bring different religious groups together, reach out to the homeless, support young families, connect with the elderly and stand upon a foundation of unity. I feel that speaks to the true power of love to drive both large and small actions necessary for real change, care and kindness towards all of God's children.

### **Doug and Claire Aziz**

The biggest change here has been the friendliness, openness and welcoming. When we attended our first service, during the peace we hugged each other and our daughters while the rest of the congregation barely uttered "And also with you" while looking at the floor. Our daughter's comments when we returned home: "Don't hug us again during the peace, no one else does it."

St John's during the 80's was a little stuffy and more formal than we were used to. There were concerns when Vestry noted to begin the Outreach Luncheons to welcome "outsiders" to our Church.

How things have changed! We are now known as an open and welcoming parish. Parishioners go out of their way to welcome others. Fr David encourages use of the church by outside groups. Parishioners stay for coffee hour to

have time to "catch up" with other parishioners. We now have regular parish gatherings to share a meal. These changes have created a family atmosphere at St John's.

When we travel and attend other churches we always like we have "come home" when we return to St John's.

### **How has St. John's Changed For Me?**

**By Ron Alexander**

By changing focus to reach out to the community. Starting with the inception of the Outreach Luncheons about 20 years ago; continuing with making the Chapel available 24/7; joining with Downtown Churches for mission and events; joining NAOMI; efforts towards inclusion and diversity in our community.

I hope that we continue to be inviting and open to all and that we will experience more diversity in our worship space!

### **Darlene and John Roseth**

Although we are not members, St John's is the one church in Wausau that we feel truly welcome. Father

David sent us a note in the mail an even came to visit with us in our home. This has not happened anywhere else in Wausau since we have been going to various churches for the last 4 1/2 years.

Thank you, St John's, for making us feel truly welcome.

### **Cindy Strampe**

Where has the time gone since my family first walked into St John's? Were in search of a church. The children were unhappy with the church we were attending so our main focus was on church school. YES! CHURCH SCHOOL brought us to St John's. At that time, the younger children held a service (using youth prayer books). They could light the candles, carry a cross and learn of the honor of serving at the altar at an early age. We had many acolytes, as they were anxious to become old enough to serve in the church service. Kids were happy!

My experience was quite different. It was hard to feel accepted by the church. I tried to attend an evening guild meeting but did not feel welcome. I felt like a real outsider (lip service only in welcoming).

As I was working, I made a decision to focus on areas I felt comfortable

with: teacher, vestry, worship, lay leader, chalice, acolyte, even costume designer! I still remember the grins on people's faces as the shepherds walked down the aisle in the robes made from the curtains that had hung in the priest's office.

As time passed, and we were without a Priest, St Martha's needed someone to lead "noon prayers". Since many of the ladies were from a different time and didn't feel comfortable doing this, I found a place where I could serve and felt accepted. I love and love the Episcopal Church service each Sunday. Prayer book and all! Eucharist every Sunday! Yes!

Upon retiring, I attended St Martha's regular meetings. It wasn't for me, so I tried to change the focus from social to study and focus on learning. We chose "Women of the Bible". It was a transformation. Out of this came the present Wednesday book study.

No Bibles around Church??? Prayer books yes! We were always looking for a bible. (No I pads yet). St Martha's had money so it was decided let's buy some Bibles. By now Fr David was the priest. We checked with him and he was very supportive but said let's take it to the congregation. WOW! What support! Next time you are at church, pick up

the Bible in front of you and say a prayer for the family that had that Bible placed in memory.

I'm saddened to see our Sunday morning Adult Church School class declining. I feel that being a part of study groups and studying Christianity and the bible has been a great influence on my spiritual journey. Spiritual growth within the congregation is important for the future at St John's.

In reflection, I am truly thankful for my St John's friends!

### **Marilyn Klutterman**

If has been three years since I became a member of St John's Episcopal Church in Wausau. I have been a member of the Episcopal Church since 1979. First in Wisconsin Rapids and then in Merritt Island, FL, before returning to Wisconsin Rapids a few years ago.

When I came to Wausau I knew three people at St John's, one of whom was my husband. The other I met when I went to Cursillo a few years earlier. The third was a friend from grade school and high school in Wisconsin Rapids. I must admit to being nervous about how I would be accepted by the rest of the congregation. I was the "priest's new wife".

My concerns were futile. I have gone from knowing three to knowing a wonderful congregation. I have been lucky to reconnect with my former school chum. I have had dinners, shopping trips, games, concerts, plays, Mahjong, weddings, funerals, outreach, conventions, committees, shared pews, and much more with all of you.

So for me it is not what has changed at St John's – it is what St John's has always been, and is now:

A place where a newcomer can feel the arms of God, through the arms of a loving congregation, no matter the circumstance they find themselves in.

### **Joe and Kristin Thompson**

#### **How has St. John's changed in our time?**

We have been attending St. John's regularly for a little over four years. We have always felt welcomed and at home at St. John's. When we first attended, Kristin and I quickly recognized St. John's as the sort of church where our children would feel loved and supported and we would feel challenged to grow in our faith. This has not changed.

In some ways, not much else has changed either. There have been few changes within St. John's programs or ministries, nor have there been many dramatic moments of enlightenment for us. But our relationship to church has matured and gained depth here. I suppose you could say that the honeymoon is over—but it is a good thing! Now, St. John's is more than a welcoming place to go on Sunday mornings, and more than a place of good preaching and pleasant conversations. St. John's is a community where we expect to be in conversations that challenge us, where we expect to come together with others to serve the larger community, and where we can be honest about our deepest fears, troubles, and questions and know that we will be truly supported by others along the way. As such, St. John's is a bigger part of our everyday lives. Whether we can make Sunday morning worship or not, we are connected to the community beyond worship and genuinely feel that connection in our lives.

So although the changes we have experienced over the last few years at St. John's have been more subtle, inward changes, they have been an important part of our spiritual journey.

**Shelley and Steve Miller**

## Annual Meeting Report November 2016

Change is constant, but stability can be a constant too. Since becoming members in 1980, the “constant part” and the stability of St. John's is what is meaningful to us. Every time we think about church and the church family there is a sense that the needs of the church family are being met.

Father David and the parishioners are the constant and stable force at church. Whenever there is a need to be filled, Father is the leader, the stability, the shepherd, and the person with whom we trust to provide pastoral care. St. John's has leadership that is stable, mature, and has integrity. Father David has the respect of his flock through his spiritual lifestyle and the ability to lead people. The members of our church provide strength to one another and support the work of St. John's.

The church family changes from time to time, but there is a constant in that we find ways of bringing people together to interact and fellowship with each other. Our church is a source of constant strength, stability, and is our spiritual home.



## Discernment Process 2016: Erik Evenson

Good Morning and God Bless to all of you! I am truly blessed to be a part of this parish and diocese. Thank you!!

As you are aware I am in the Circles of Light program; put on by the Commission on Ministry to help members of the diocese discern their calling. I have wanted to be a priest since I was a young boy of 7. Sitting here at St John's watching Father Gregory perform the Eucharist, and soaking in all of God's grace and glory. Several years ago I was finally in a place in my life where I was ready to take the next step. I entered the Circles of Light program.

The first circle was held in Stevens Point and I was a part of a small group that focused on the basics of discernment in the Episcopal Church. Researching the Book of Common Prayer and the Bible we looked at creating our Spiritual Autobiography. This autobiography is a snapshot of how we came to the faith we have. It is a living document, and I have updated mine now about three times.

The second circle involved members of the parish and the diocese that would make up my discernment

committee. This group was headed by Vickie Richmond-Hawkins. This circle I went more in-depth into my prayer life, leadership skills and desire to spread the Gospel. We had several meetings throughout the summer of 2015 and culminated with the group sending their recommendation to the Bishop that I be moved along in the process. I would like to publicly thank Vickie and all the members of my discernment committee. I have taking so much from our meetings and applied it to my life.

My wife Amy and I have met with the Bishop to discuss next steps. I have also met with the Commission on Ministry in a "get to know you" meeting. I am now set to meet with the Commission on Ministry officially on Saturday October 29<sup>th</sup>. I have answered a couple of theological questions and my updated Spiritual Autobiography. I am at this moment still considered an Aspirant. If this weekend goes the way I hope then I will be officially a postulant for the priesthood in the Diocese of Fond du Lac.

Once that occurs Amy and I can officially start visiting Seminaries. We are really focused on three Seminaries. They are Virginia Theological Seminary, Swanee Seminary University of the South, and Nashotah House. The main

things I am looking for in a seminary are culture how they promote the gospel and of course money. This will be a large cost, and unfortunately that has to play a roll in my decision. Between our mortgage and my current student loans Amy and I are trying to pay down as much as we can. I ask for your prays in this matter. As this has become our main focus.

Thank you all very much for your support! I could not do this without your love and support. God is awesome and I will praise his name forever!

## Junior Warden Report October 2016

Good Morning and God Bless! The lord is wonderful and alive in the people buildings and grounds of St John's. As your Junior Warden my report to you offers a snap shot of what we have been doing to tend to the buildings and grounds of our beloved parish.

First let's focus on the organ restoration. As you all know our organ has been in need of repair and updating. During the winter of this year the Vestry voted to start this process. The first step was repairing the leathers (releathering). This

initial piece was completed with a cost of approximately \$20,000.00. We have been and are currently fund raising \$50,000.00 to go towards the repair costs. This fundraising will continue through Pentecost 2017. As a vestry we agreed that we (the parish) love our organ and want to see this beautiful instrument continue and lend a wonderful sound to our worship of Jesus Christ. We all want to help with this and be able to say "I helped". The remaining amount not met through our fund raising will be covered by the endowment fund.

The next large task on our buildings and grounds was the wheel chair lift. As you may or may not have known the lift had been hit and miss on whether it worked or not. And when it did work we needed to use kitchen utensils to run it. This was not a safe or convenient way to ferry handicap individuals into the parish hall. We looked at a couple of options concerning this matter. We looked at replacing the lift with a ramp. While this seemed like a good option, when we looked at the plan it would be a ramp that would take up a runway about half of the parish hall. And we received feedback from wheel chair bound individuals who said this would be a lot of extra work for them. Because of these two issues and the cost (which would be roughly a wash) we decided on replacing the

lift. We took bids and accepted the Arrow Lift companies bid. They installed the new lift and we have not had issues with it as of the creation of this report.

The final piece that we have turned our focus to is the slate roof. The roof is in need of repair. Tiles have been falling off intermittently and our roof has reached it's expected life time. We have received one quote from Kulp's and we are entertaining others. This will be a large expense but the benefit of taking care of this is the length of time we will have this new roof. The tile and technology that now goes into repairing slate roofs will ensure we will have a beautiful strong roof for an extended time. There will be more to come on this in the coming months.

We also have had several smaller projects including the lighting and removal of the large overgrown bushes in the courtyard. All of these projects created a safer eye appealing building and grounds.

The last item I would like to touch on is the bible study and prayer group I would like to start. I would like to plan on having an Advent meditations study to start on Sunday Evenings (during Advent). I will be using a meditations guide from the Forward Movement and the Sunday Readings. Please consider joining me as we

focus on Advent and the season of waiting.

Thank you all for taking the time to review this report. I am honored to be your Junior Warden and I am blessed to have you all in my life.

Gods Peace

Erik Evenson

## NAOMI:

St. John's continues to be an active member and to provide office space, use of the copier, and storage space; which is very much appreciated! We had a very busy year implementing the provisions of the Episcopal United Thank Offering Grant that we received. Our charge was to "Organize for Justice" in an expanded area of operation outside of the Wausau area into surrounding communities, including Wisconsin Rapids, Stevens Point, Marshfield, Merrill, Tomahawk, Rhinelander, Minocqua, and Eagle River. We hired Kate Gains for this task and she has been very busy...we have a new member congregation in Minocqua, St. Mathias Episcopal; also the UU Church in Wausau has joined us and we are active in Tomahawk and Stevens Point with task force meetings. Kate continues in an

expanded staff role with WISDOM, including being our part time Organizer. We have added a new task force on Poverty to reflect grass roots interest, while continuing with Criminal Justice Reform, Transit, and Immigration Reform efforts. We are also active in community diversity priorities...Ron Alexander

## Cursillo:

St. John's was well represented on Team on Team for Monarch Cursillo #72, with Claire Aziz in the Conference Room and giving a Rollo; Ron Alexander on the Coordination Team; and Marilyn Klutterman training for the Palanca Team (she had to drop out for the actual weekend because of a family emergency). We have an active group that meets every Wednesday morning at 9:00 with Ron, Claire, Marilyn and Joe Thompson being regulars. We invite anybody interested to join us; you don't have to have been through Cursillo. This is a good place to start to learn about the Cursillo method. Monarch Cursillo #73 will be held May 4-7, 2017 at Spencer Lake Christian Center near Waupaca. If interested please see any of us involved or Father David.

## Diocesan Convention 2016

Saturday October 22 marked the 142<sup>nd</sup> annual convention of the Episcopal Diocese of Fond du Lac. The first blessing of the convention occurred immediately after the convention was called to order when St. Francis of Eagle River entered into Union with the convention. For the first year, St Francis has reached average weekly attendance which allowed for a delegate from St. Francis to have seat, voice and vote at the convention.

We got right to the business of the Diocese by electing Committee and Commission members. This year we also elected our deputies to the General Convention. Four laity and four clergy were elected. 2 of the deputies elected were from our own deanery; Mother Jane Johnson from Stevens Pont and Amy Heimerl from Ascension, Merrill.

Five resolutions were brought before the convention. Three of the resolutions sought amendments to the canons. One resolution sought to allow seat and voice to non-members of the convention who may have business before the convention. This group may include officers of the convention as well as clergy who are serving in an interim capacity within

a congregation. Two other resolutions sought changes in the canons which govern the annual budget. One resolution proposed an extension of the time for submitting the budget to review; the other recommended removing the amount of the Diocesan aid from the operating income of a parish so that the Diocesan aid is not considered income for the purpose of determining a congregations pledge to the diocese. The fourth resolution was seeking a change to a parliamentary rule to allow additional time for submitting resolutions for consideration. The rule has required resolutions to be submitted 45 days prior to convention. The resolution sought to change the rule to 30 days prior to convention. The final resolution was submitted by Ron Alexander on behalf of the Deacon Council of which he is a member. This resolution sought the ability to establish a companion relationship between the Diocese of Fond du Lac and the Diocese of Masvingo, Province of Central Africa. The purpose of a companion relationship is to help strengthen the Anglican Communion through a direct experience of interdependence across cultural and geographic boundaries within the Body of Christ. It also serves to strengthen one another for mission by building a relationship in which each partner is

both a giver and receiver. All five of the resolutions passed.

We receive a booklet of advanced reports prior to convention. The reports are provided by the various committees and commissions of the Diocese. In addition to the written reports we hear additional reports from a few of the committees. Mother Jane Johnson shared news from Intercession, Stevens Point. After a year of prayerful consideration and a great deal of research and planning Intercession has determined that they can no longer support the mission of the church while being burdened with the costs of maintaining the building. The church building will be sold and Intercession will share space with a Lutheran church in Stevens Point. It was not an easy decision to make, but they are excited about what the future will bring as they continue to fulfill their mission.

Convention is a time to worship together, celebrate the successes within the Diocese, and plan for our future. Bishop Matt's address is available on-line at the Diocesan website.

## Altar Guild

It's time to organize next years Altar Guild calendar!

What seems to work is for each person to sign on for one month. You may pair work, or may need to switch as the year develops. The sign up sheet is in the sacristy.

Joining us in our Guild are Vickie Richmond-Hawkins and Pamela Glennon. Many thanks to them!

THANKS also, to all of you – it's "Martha" time that enables "Mary" time for the congregation. I hope you find it spiritually rewarding.

Blessings,  
Ruth Schuette