



St. John's Lutheran Church, New Ulm, MN
May, 2023 *Fortress*

JESUS WILL LEAD JUSTICE TO VICTORY

Matthew 12:14-21 But the Pharisees went out and plotted how they might kill Jesus. ¹⁵ Aware of this, Jesus withdrew from that place. Many followed him, and he healed all their sick, ¹⁶ warning them not to tell who he was. ¹⁷ This was to fulfill what was spoken through the prophet Isaiah: ¹⁸ "Here is my servant whom I have chosen, the one I love, in whom I delight; I will put my Spirit on him, and he will proclaim justice to the nations. ¹⁹ He will not quarrel or cry out; no one will hear his voice in the streets. ²⁰ A bruised reed he will not break, and a smoldering wick he will not snuff out, till he leads justice to victory. ²¹ In his name the nations will put their hope."

We are now in the Easter season. We have gone beyond Golgotha and the blood stained cross to the empty tomb. We celebrate the Resurrection.

But even as we look to new life and the joys of Easter, we still look back; we have to. We still need to see the three crosses planted on the Place of the Skull. We still gaze with awe on the cross in the center, stained with the blood of our Lord Jesus Christ. We are reminded that our salvation, although a free gift to us, was not something obtained for free by Jesus. He paid for it dearly. He gave his own life for it. Perfect God became a sinner for us to take away our sin. Immortal God died in our place so that by death he might conquer death for us. For so it had to be. Jesus had to satisfy God's perfect justice by becoming a perfect sacrifice for all sinners for all time.

And so, even now, we are reminded by one of our most cherished Lenten hymns: "*Many hands were raised to wound him, none would intervene to save; but the deepest stroke that pierced him was the stroke that Justice gave.*" Justice – the righteousness of God had to be fulfilled by Jesus. Justice, the perfection which Jesus had through the impeccable life he led, had become his most bitter enemy as he was nailed to the cross.

But the glory of the Gospel message is the great truth that Justice did not remain the enemy of Christ. For though Jesus had to become a sinner for us, by taking our sin on himself, in order to take the punishment we deserved, he conquered sin when he died on the cross. After having been separated from God by the damning burden of our sin, which was laid upon him, he was then reconciled to God. He commended into the hands of his Heavenly Father his spirit. And as he did so, Justice became, not only the ally of Christ, but our ally as well. Yes, at one time justice would

have condemned us, because we are sinners. But Jesus has removed our guilt. The innocent Jesus has put his own righteousness to our credit. So that when God looks upon us in Christ, he no longer sees a sinner, but he sees Christ in us.

If God is just, he must damn the sinner. If God is perfect, he must accept those who are perfect. We are saved by perfection. We will go to heaven because of a perfect life. The perfect life is not the one we have lived, however. It is the perfect life of Jesus who leads Justice to victory. Justice, which dealt the deathblow to Jesus on the cross, now, in Christ, proclaims life to you and me. The righteousness of God has been fulfilled in us through Christ our Lord. We are saved by Justice. All is well between our just God and us because of Christ.

That was Jesus' mission, as Isaiah had written: **"Here is my servant whom I have chosen, the one I love, in whom I delight; I will put my Spirit on him, and he will proclaim justice to the nations. He will not quarrel or cry out; no one will hear his voice in the streets. A bruised reed he will not break, and a smoldering wick he will not snuff out, till he leads justice to victory. In his name the nations will put their hope."**

Jesus came here, not to condemn us, but to take the weakest flicker of faith and fan it into a flame of confidence. He came to take the most frail tottering Christian with faith as weak as a cattail hanging by a few fibers, swaying in the wind, and mend it, making him as strong as a granite pillar. He has come to proclaim justice, says Isaiah. He came to lead justice to victory.

Today we have victory in Jesus. It is the victory over sin and its condemnation. It is the victory of knowing that in Jesus we have eternal life forever. It is the victory of the empty tomb which failed to keep our Lord imprisoned. Jesus Christ is risen indeed. Hallelujah! Amen.

PRAYER

We pray: Almighty God, by your justice you condemned the world. But we praise you, that by the atonement of your Son Jesus Christ justice now acquits the world of sin. In Jesus we are now perfect in your sight by grace. Lead us by faith that we may serve Christ. Cause us to move on victoriously, knowing that in Jesus the justice of God has been met for us. Teach us to rely solely, dear Lord, on your righteousness, strength, and forgiveness; for in you alone are we saved. We ask it in Jesus' name. Amen.

In Christ,
Pastor Jeffrey A. Bovee

May Sermon Texts

May 7	John 14:1-11	You Have GPS - GOD PROVIDES SALVATION
May 14	1 Peter 3:13-22	Confident in Christ
May 18	Luke 24:44-53	Where is Jesus?
May 21	John 17:1-12	To God be the Glory
May 28	1 Corinthians 12:3-11	Be a Regifter

Bible Classes meet in the Church Basement
The class can also be found online at bit.ly/SJBibleClass

Sundays at 11 am	BEGINS MAY 21ST	Pastor Jeff Bovee
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Council Digest

The Church Council met on April 18, 2023. A summary of reports and actions from the meeting not reported elsewhere in the Fortress follows:

Ministrations.

Transfers In

Martin and Nichole LaGrow; Taylor from St. Mark Lutheran, DePere/Green Bay, WI

Transfer Out

Rachel Feld to St. Paul's Lutheran, New Ulm, MN

Pastoral Acts.

Youth Confirmations – 30 April 2023

Tyler David Fischer
 Joey Ray Gilman
 Ethan Michael Hanevik
 Jonah Philip Hermanson
 Aiden Seth Horner
 Timothy Reed Johnson
 Madisyn Nicole Meyer

Miriam Phyllis Schaefer
 Malachi Jacob Schwark
 Simon Peter Torsten Schwark
 Solomon Josiah Stoering
 Emily Lynn Ulicky
 Aiden Loren Weisensel
 Carter Christian Wels
 Ziva Elizabeth Zahrt

Board for Youth and Education. Chairman Hermanson brought a proposal for St. John's to provide additional assistance for applicant families to cover some of the member tuition rate increase for the 2023-2024 school year. The BYOE will send a letter to families soon. We are thankful for the years of work that Josiah Steering has put in as our Sunday school superintendent. He will be wrapping up at the end of this year.

Elders. Releases approved at Voters' Meeting:

David Bhaalid	Sarah Schroeder
Emily Decker	Taylor Jo Teske
Matt & Tina Fischer	Lana Thoms
Michael Gibbons	Trevor Toltzman
Aaron Grunwald	Grant Wilson
Jason Schroeder	Mashaye Wilson

Excommunication approved:
Hannah Wilson

Board of Evangelism. Chairman Zahrt reported the Easter activities and the remaining upcoming Marriage retreat sessions. Next Steps have been set to update the St. John's website. The BoE is applying attendance and value to its annual events to make adjustments.

Stewardship. The Stewardship Board is making plans to survey all contributing units before ordering envelopes. The survey would seek to get the preference of means of contributing and whether the members would like contribution envelopes. The board is looking at contribution data to summarize trends. St. Paul's Lutheran School support and St John's future finances continued to be reviewed.

Trustees. Chairman Scott Deters provided an update on the kitchen progress that is nearly complete. Some initial plans are being looked at for an Accession dinner. Final details and plans will be formalized once the kitchen is completed.

Campus Facility Planning. The Campus Facilities Task Force is looking for feedback on an initial plan to renovate the sanctuary. The facilities task force has identified a plan to renovate the sanctuary by beginning with renovating the pews and floor. They are working on a plan to share and get feedback from the voters.

Future meetings:

Next joint council meeting - May 16, 2023, @ 6 pm

Next regular council meeting - May 16, 2023, @ 7 pm

Next regular voters' meeting - April 25, 2023, @ 7 pm

Jonathan M. Schaefer
Congregational Chairman

Women of St. John's

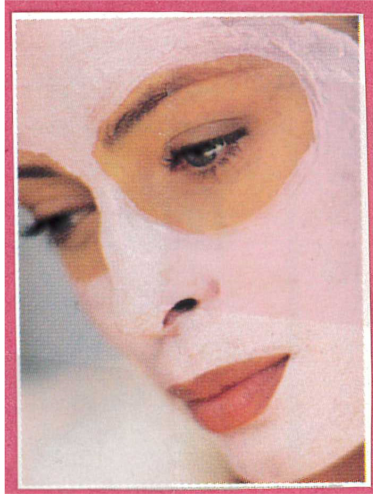
Our May activity will be held on Tuesday, May 2nd at 7 pm in the church basement.

Please join us for a Pampering Party.

To ensure there are enough supplies, please add your name to the sign-up sheet on the table in the new narthex or contact Sarah Logston at logstonsarah@gmail.com by April 30th.

We will not be having a business meeting that evening.

Sarah Logston
WSJ President



Church Library

How do you rate this school year? It was much better with classes in the classrooms. And now we are pretty sure that spring is here. The snow finally melted after we set records for snow, and then heat. May is a busy month with Mother's Day, graduations, confirmations, and Memorial Day. The beginning of summer.

This month we have 2 books to introduce. The first one is "God Loves Nobodies" by Matthew Doebler. Pastor Doebler was a parish pastor before becoming a missionary in East Asia, and now lives in Thailand. He uses humor, current events, literature, and media to make points. We all are nobodies trying to be somebodies. The author explains that we are already somebodies because of our faith in the Great Somebody, just like Rahab, Hannah, Cleopas, and John Mark in the Bible. They had learned that God is love, and the Creator of the world.

The second book is named "The Shack" by William P. Young. 3 years earlier, Mac's 6 year old daughter Missy had been kidnapped and killed by a serial killer. They had found her blood in the old shack, but not her body. Now Mac receives a note from "Papa" which is what Mac's wife calls God. "Come to the shack" says the note. So Mac goes back to the shack which looks much better. He meets God there in 3 persons, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. But God the Father is an African American woman. Why not? Says Mac. Then over the next three days He and the three persons discuss death and heaven and other issues. How will this affect Mac? And his family?

I felt these two books were so good that I read each one twice. Happy reading!

LeiLani Rahn, church librarian

St. Paul's School

Capital Campaign Phase III It's Time

Thanks to everyone for your prayers and gifts. The new addition to St. Paul's Lutheran Elementary School has been a tremendous blessing! With the extra space provided, we have extra classrooms for more preschool students being served, and the fully renovated elementary school continues to be a blessing to over 300 students. The new addition is equipped with safety features that could not have been possible previously. The addition of an elevator allows students and adults to access both floors of the school with ease. Our facilities and staff are the largest and best equipped WELS elementary school in the area. Give thanks to the Lord, who has provided so many blessings since 1885.

God has greatly blessed our church, school, and our ongoing campaign to retire the remaining school project debt. Moved the Lord's love, donors have given \$4,834,454 toward this project! We are in Phase III of our campaign, which began on 9-1-2021. Gifts of \$596,625 have been received during Phase III. Our goal for this phase is to collect \$1,750,000 over this 3 year period which ends 8-31-2024. This goal challenges us to generate another \$1,153,375 by the end of August 2024. We will have cut the remaining loan balance by approximately half by reaching this goal!

Reducing the loan balance soon will also greatly benefit St. Paul's. Through the Church Extension Fund, our loan will come due for interest rate repricing in April 2024. With the higher interest rates, it would be a huge blessing to have the remaining balance as low as possible before the repricing.

St. Paul's Lutheran Church's Capital Campaign Committee wants you to know where we stand in our Phase III campaign and how much we have been blessed! However, we have a long way to go. Our loan balance currently stands at \$3,366,326. Please consider the rich blessings our school has provided for generations and more generations to come. Are you in a position to support the continuation of St. Paul's ministry with a gift of money and prayers?

We want to thank all who have pledged and donated to this project! All gifts are great! The 'collective power of small gifts' and the 'impact of large gifts' will make our campaign successful. Whether you are able to support the school capital campaign or not, we ask you to pray for God to bless our school's ministry and the capital campaign.

On behalf of the entire St. Paul's Lutheran Church family, we deeply appreciate your support. Your gifts will make a significant difference now and in the lives of future generations.

Capital Committee Chairman, Tim Hoscheit
Principal Pete Markgraf

MN Valley Lutheran Camp formerly “Camp Shetek”

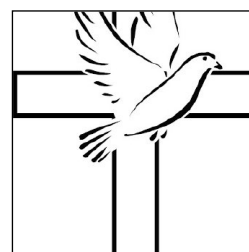
MN Valley Lutheran Camp exists to provide elementary age children to the opportunity to worship the Lord and grow in their Christian faith as they participate in outdoor activities under the direction of Christian Counselors.

The camp will be held from Sunday, June 18 - Friday, June 23 at Sibley State Park in New London.

To register and find more information go to www.campshetek.org.

In Loving Memory

<i>Marlene Rolleff</i>	Undesignated Kitchen Fund	\$95 \$10
<i>Edgar Poehler</i>	Audio/Visual	\$100



Our Synod at Work

WELS Annual Report to Members: Called to Proclaim

Our review of the 2023 WELS Annual Report to their members continues this month with a look at the section entitled Called to Proclaim. That section deals primarily with world missions and Home Missions.

World Missions

WELS World Missions conducts gospel outreach in 44 countries and is exploring outreach opportunities in 18 prospective new mission fields. There are six major areas of mission fields:

1. Native American Reservations. The gospel has been shared on the Apache reservations in Arizona for more than 125 years. At the same time exploratory mission work is beginning on other reservations throughout the United States.
2. Africa. Missionaries partner with national church bodies in six countries (Cameroon, Malawi, Nigeria, Zambia, Ethiopia, and Kenya). In addition, missionaries are exploring outreach in other countries, such as Liberia, Mozambique, South Sudan, Tanzania, Uganda, and Zimbabwe.
3. Asia. Two missionary teams have joined together to equip, encourage, and empower others to bring the good news of Jesus Christ to 1.8 billion unreached souls.
4. Latin America. Academia Cristo online courses are reaching hundreds of thousands of people. More than 40 individuals are being trained to plant churches.

5. Europe. Missionaries are partnering with national churches to train the next generation of church leaders to bring the true gospel to countries without a strong Lutheran presence.
6. Multi-Language Productions. Materials in more than 56 languages have been produced to reach tens of thousands of English-speakers in more than 30 different countries.

Home Missions

The Board approved in 2022 new home mission opens:

1. Windsor, Colorado. WELS congregations in Ft. Collins, Loveland, and Greeley are supporting this new home mission start in a rapidly growing area in northern Colorado.
2. Wichita, Kansas. Messiah is looking to start a second site on the east side of the city. There are 650,000 people in the greater metropolitan area.
3. Canton, Georgia. Members and leadership from Beautiful Savior in Marietta have identified Canton, a quickly growing suburb of Metro-Atlanta, as a prime location to plant a new mission church.
4. Conroe, Texas. Abiding Word in Houston is helping a new mission church get off the ground in Conroe, the northernmost suburb of Houston.
5. Lodi, Wisconsin. Although unsubsidized, Zion in Leeds, Wisconsin, is establishing a second site in Lodi.

There are also enhancements occurring in St John of St. Paul, Minnesota; Cross of Glory in Baton Rouge, Louisiana; Divine Savior in Delray Beach, Florida; Abiding Savior in Killeen, Texas, and Our Savior in Burlington, Iowa.

Home Missions also provides assistance to unsubsidized mission congregations through its district mission boards, mission counselors, synodical support staff, and special project funds without providing direct financial support. There are two unsubsidized mission status congregations, which are in Redding/Anderson, California, and Midlothian, Texas.

Next month we will summarize the information contained in the section “Called to Serve.”

Gerald Woodley

St. John’s congregation will observe its 75th Anniversary in 2023!



The planning committee has chosen Sunday, August 6 as the special day of celebration.

Two services with communion will be held at 8 and 10 am. We will not have a Saturday evening service that weekend.

Former St. John’s pastor David Kolander will be the guest preacher.

A fellowship meal will be held at MLC at noon.

Watch for more details in upcoming church bulletins and newsletters.

Staff Minister

Kitchen Project Volunteers – Thank you to all who helped in various ways to complete the Kitchen Project. It is almost finished and as I am writing this the cabinets are being installed. There was some plumbing that needed to be completed after the cabinets were in, and there was some electrical work still finishing up some last-minute changes. The only thing that has not been finalized was the installation of the trim. The trim includes baseboard, some ceiling trim (Not sure if this is being installed by volunteers or in the contract), and the replacing of the door trim that had been removed for painting. If you are able to help with these things, email me at sm.dretske@stjohnsnewulm.com I will send you a link for an online sign-up sheet. This is the best way to make sure that people see an up-to-date list for those helping.

The kitchen will be used for many years and be a blessing to those serving meals as well as to those eating. Thanks to all who supported St. John's financially to get the project done. There are still some kitchen costs that are not covered if you still want to contribute to this project, otherwise funding was approved to come directly out of the building fund. If more than enough comes in, extras will be added to the building fund.

Help with Raking – There were some requests from some of our older members who are still at home to get help with raking this spring. If you would be interested in raking, send me an email with your name and willingness to help. If there is still a need, I will let you know where to help out. There is not a scheduled Youth Group event being planned.

Online Church Directory – The online app continues to update as members are added or if members update pictures or information. All changes are verified by me as part of the security nature of the program. If you make changes, those changes will not appear until after I have verified them. This may take up to a day to see changes. If you haven't downloaded the Directory App to your phone or computer, Download the computer or phone app in Apple Store or Google Play (Android) by entering Instant Church Directory. Downloads are also available at www.instantchurchdirectory.com 1) **Download** the app for your type of device; 2) **Open** the app; 3) **Select St. John's New Ulm** for our directory; 4) **Enter** the email address that has been used for your account; 5) **Create a Password** for security; 6) **Verify** your account by going to your email and clicking on the link; and 7) **Sign in** again with email and password. A green Church Directory Icon will appear on your phone. One Click is all it takes to see the latest updates to our directory. Click on mobile phone numbers to text or call, click on addresses to bring up Google Maps and the location destination. These are just some of the features of this app – Really neat! If you accidentally grab a pew directory when you dismiss and find it when you get home, please bring it back and give to one of the ushers. They will find the right spot for it. Thanks!

Church Board Brochures – Please Take! These are located to the right of the door going out from church to the new narthex. I will keep a supply of these information brochures in the racks. Take each of five board brochures to find out more about the work done in various areas of ministry at St. John's. Charts on the back show the range and extent of ministry done by each board, as well as show connected committees that strive to help each board. Brochures can be a source of information to those who may be interested in serving God in various ways at St. John's. Each fall there are vacancies in each board and committee. Consider serving when asked. Prayerfully consider how you can use the talents God has given you to serve him.

Visiting the Homebound - I again have the privilege of joining the pastors in visits to members who are homebound—sharing the Gospel in Word and Sacrament. If you are not on our list to be

visited but would like to be included, please call me at **507-217-7604** to get on the list.

Streamed/Recorded Services – Our online services have been increasing in attendance—many from outside the New Ulm area – Praise the Lord! It is a nice way to stay connected to Jesus when you physically can't get to church. Hit the Subscribe button to be notified whenever we have posted a new service. Please fill out a **Quick Response Survey** online to let us know how we are doing and leave a comment. Go to: <https://bit.ly/SJRecord-Stream> We are always striving to improve our streaming services.

Respectfully submitted,
Jim Dretske

Archives

May 2023 Archive Article “Building for His Habitation”

By February 1963 Pastor and Grace Nitz's family moved from the 517 S. Washington parsonage to the more suitable parsonage at 800 S. State Street. At that point, St. John's Congregation had finished the first of its twin building goals.

Between February and October of 1963, the 517 South Washington parsonage was sold for \$12,487.25 and the second lot that was donated to the church for building the new parsonage (at the time, a vacant lot between 7th and 8th South Washington) was sold for \$1,200. Those sales, combined with aggressive congregational offerings placed the flock in the position of being debt-free for the second time in four years. In fact, by the end of 1963, there was a Building Fund balance of \$6,000. This gave St. John's the opportunity to launch into the second goal: building of the church superstructure.

The first serious step to build our sanctuary was taken at the October 1963 voters meeting. The motion was passed to form both the Building Committee and the Building Finance Committee. By November they included:

The Building Committee

Chairman: Mr. Hugo Bilitz
Secretary: Professor George Heckmann
Mr. C. Steinhauer, Mr. Elmer Rolloff, Jr.,
Mr. Henry Wacker

The Building Finance Committee

Chairman: Mr. Alvin Rolloff
Secretary: Mr. Paul Vorwerk
Mr. Robert Grebe, Professor Theodore Hartwig,
Professor Roland Hoenecke

A third committee was formed shortly thereafter:

Stewardship Study Committee

Chairman: Professor Delmar Brick
Mr. Henry Baumann, Mr. Sigurd Tjernagel

The Building Committee was in charge of bringing bids from architects and contractors to the voters of the congregation for the final decision. The Building Finance Committee was to determine how best to inform the congregation of the cost of the project and encourage a focused plan of meeting the financial needs. The Stewardship Study Committee was to provide the Building Committee a profile of the congregation's offering performance and habits from its inception in 1949 to the present, so that reasonable offering goals could be set and met.

All official communication (for example: bulletin and newsletter) was to be passed through the building committee for review prior to release. Pastor Nitz was asked to attend as many Building Committee and Finance Committee meetings as possible.

Since these giant steps were being taken in November 1963, we should include an article from the Sunday bulletin of November 24, 1963, to help set our the Church's history in God's rule over nations: *"In view of the tragic death of our president, J. F. K. on Friday, a special joint service will be held in St. Paul's Church at 10:00 tomorrow morning (Mon. November 25)."* The same bulletin announced that there was no school on Monday because of the funeral of J.F.K.

The preparation for building was impressive. The members were keenly aware that "unless the LORD builds the house, the builders labor in vain." At the recommendation of the Building Committee, the voters adapted a line from the third stanza of the hymn **Built On the Rock** for the theme "Building for His Habitation."

Secretary Paul Vorwerk wrote in the minutes of February 19, 1964, Building Finance Committee meeting: *"After a discussion on how we should proceed, we decided not to have pledges or a house to house canvass to ask for donations. It was pointed out that when we started out as a congregation we had neither and managed to pay off our approximate debt of 85 thousand dollars in 13 years. We believe that we can accomplish our goal by a steady increase in donations and not an all out push. This would be by careful planning and at all time keep (sic!) our people well informed as to the progress towards our goal."*

The Finance Committee proposed dividing the congregation into five groups of families, each with leaders which would present the latest information on the project and seek feedback through discussion. The bulletins emphasized that these groups were not a fund raising drive. This was done with the confidence that, information given and input sought, each family would respond in proportion to its appreciation for the Gospel. The church would *"rely on spontaneous, free-will offerings of all members."*

Nevertheless, the wisdom of setting congregational goals for these offerings was necessary to stay on track with building progress. After all, the congregation's first major purchase was the foundation of this superstructure. Even though it took 13 years to pay it off, they wouldn't move to the next level until they had done so.

The first proposed "Plateau" was to increase the existing Building Fund surplus from \$8,400 to \$10,000 by July. They fell short by only \$600. The voters responded with the gutsy move of setting the second plateau at \$13,000 during the summer months. The deadline was September 30th. With a little help from the interest earned, they gathered \$12,533. The third plateau was to reach \$16,000 by

December 31, 1964. The response was \$14,716.45. Again, they may have fallen short, but the Lord had moved hearts to assure a house “for His habitation” would be erected. In response to this latest shortfall, the voters adjusted the March 3rd plateau to \$17,000

During November 1964, Pastor Nitz was also called to cover the vacancy left at St. John’s, Sleepy Eye, when Pastor Waldemar Hoyer took a call to Sioux City, Iowa. Because of this, the Building Committees would have to forgo Pastor Nitz’s presence at some of their meetings.

The prospect of losing Pastor Nitz during this crucial time struck closer to home on February 14, 1965, when he received a call as Guidance Director for Fox Valley Lutheran High School in Appleton, WI. He returned that call on March 7th.

In the initial planning, one cannot help but be struck by the care used in letting the Gospel have preeminence; the long hours of consideration; the patience taken to listen to the saints, the transparency in detail and flexibility in planning. While there were the usual problems one might expect in such a large undertaking, St. John’s preparations to build serve as a worthy template.

Respectfully submitted,

Pastor Wayne A. Laitinen
Archivist, St. John’s Lutheran

Treasure Haus

April 2023

Dear members of St. John’s,

The Treasure Haus is excited to announce that we were able to gift \$105,396.14 to MVL for the year 2022. This total includes our regular quarterly contributions as well as extra grants the school was awarded. We have been blessed with 35 plus years of volunteer support from MVL association churches. They are the heart of Treasure Haus. Please give thanks with us for the time and talents of these volunteers from your own congregation:

Arlyce Lueck
Carolyn Nachreiner
Geri Steffen
Helen Black
Jan Halvorson
Jan Lammers
Jan McClellan
Jan Spoon
Jessie Berdan
Karen Ladner



Kristin Dinse
LeiLani Rahn
Marley Kuckhahn
Melanie Mohror
Roger Klockziem
Ruth Koelpin
Sandy Sorheim
Sue Vogel
Sylvia Harper

We ask you to continue to support our ministry with your prayers.

We are always ready to welcome new volunteers with a wide variety of opportunities to serve. If you would be interested in serving alongside us please contact us at: manager@treasurehaus.org or call 354-6108 to speak with a manager.