



# Vine & Branches Area Faith Community

[www.vineandbranchesafc.org](http://www.vineandbranchesafc.org)

December 31, 2023  
The Holy Family of Jesus, Mary and Joseph

*I am the vine, you are  
the branches.  
Whoever remains in  
me and I in him will  
bear much fruit,  
because without me  
you can do nothing.  
John 15:5*

## Liturgies This Week

Mon Jan 1	(Spfld)	<b>8:30am Mass</b> +Linda Lang <i>Numbers 6:22-27; Galatians 4:4-7; Luke 2:16-21</i>
Tues Jan 2	(Spfld)	<b>8:30am Mass</b> +Sharon Pascher <i>1 John 2:22-28; John 1:19-28</i>
Wed Jan 3	(Lamb)	<b>1:30pm Mass</b> +Marvin & Magdalen Miller <i>1 John 2:29-3:6; John 1:29-34</i>
Thur. Jan 4	(Sanb)	<b>8:00am Mass</b> +Shirley Juenemann <i>1 John 3:7-10; John 1:35-42</i>
Fri. Jan 5	(Spfld)	<b>8:30am Mass</b> +Linus Feirer <i>1 John 3:11-21; John 1:43-51</i>
Sat. Jan 6	(Spfld)	<b>5:30pm Mass</b> +Bob Ferdinandt <i>1 John 5:5-13; Mark 1:7-11</i>
Sun. Jan 7	(Spfld) (Lamb)	<b>8:30am Mass</b> +Ernest Vogel <b>10:30am Mass</b> –For the People <i>Isaiah 60:1-6; Ephesians 3:2-3a, 5-6; Matthew 2:1-12</i>

## Church of St. Raphael & Area Office

20 W Van Dusen Street ~ 507-723-4137  
Springfield MN 56087

Email: [staphael@newulmtel.net](mailto:staphael@newulmtel.net)

### Prayer Chain

Karen Brandl 507-920-6709

## Church of St. Joseph

400 W 2<sup>nd</sup> Ave, PO Box 458

Lamberton MN 56152

& St. Thomas Oratory, Sanborn MN

507-752-7269

Email [stjoseph@centurylink.net](mailto:stjoseph@centurylink.net)

Prayer Chain— Sue Imker 507-829-1846

St. Joseph Secretary—Sue Imker

### Pastor

Fr. Jeremy Kucera Phone: 507-828-5247

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

### Deacon

Dcn. Barry Reindl Phone: 723-5952

[barkmr7@gmail.com](mailto:barkmr7@gmail.com)

### Parish Secretary

Raquel Kieper 723-4137

[staphael@newulmtel.net](mailto:staphael@newulmtel.net)

### Parish Bookkeeper

Connie Vogel 723-4138

[cvogel@newulmtel.net](mailto:cvogel@newulmtel.net)

### Faith Formation/Youth Ministry

Karen Reindl

[mrsreindl@staphaelpk-6.com](mailto:mrsreindl@staphaelpk-6.com)

### School Principal

Beth Steffl 723-4136

[mrssteffl@staphaelpk-6.com](mailto:mrssteffl@staphaelpk-6.com)

### School Secretary

Trisha Ludewig 723-4135

[straysschooloffice@newulmtel.net](mailto:straysschooloffice@newulmtel.net)

### Sacrament of Reconciliation

† Saturday 4:30—5:15pm at St. Raphael

† Wednesday 7:15-7:45am at St. Joseph

### ◆ Prayer Chain

507-920-6709, 507-441-1049, 507-227-6606

◆ Good Neighbor Thrift Store 723-5778

20 E. Central, Springfield, MN

◆ Office of Catholic Charities 866-670-5163

**Baptism:** Pre-baptism classes required - Contact AFC Office

**Suggested Stipend for Sacrament of Baptism—\$25.00**

**Marriage:** All Catholics are to contact the parish and pastor at least 6 months before their wedding.

► Mass Stipend \$10.00

► Bulletin Deadline: Wednesday at 1:00pm

The Mission of the Vine & Branches Area Faith Community empowered by the Holy Spirit is to bear fruit that will last as Jesus commanded: by celebrating and proclaiming our Catholic faith as disciples of Jesus using our God-given gifts; by reaching out to and welcoming all people; and by centering our lives on the Eucharist, sacraments, scripture, service and the teaching of the Church.

Merry Christmas everyone!

If you watch for the town papers, I should probably have a brief Christmas message in either paper in the coming days or so. In this bulletin article I want to address what I alluded to last week. Some have mentioned their confusion by the Vatican's recent document on blessings. Rather than writing my own commentary, I have found that the following statement on the website of the U.S. Conference of Bishops should clarify what the media has distorted in many instances recently:

The document released this week by the Vatican on the pastoral meaning of blessings insists that marriage is a union of one man and one woman in lifelong fidelity and openness to children, said Bishop Robert Barron of Winona-Rochester. Following the publication of *Fiducia supplicans* by the Vatican's Dicastery for the Doctrine of the Faith, the chairman of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops' (USCCB) Committee on Laity, Marriage, Family Life, and Youth, addressed questions and concerns that have emerged.

"In my capacity as chairman of the USCCB Committee on Laity, Marriage, Family Life, and Youth, I would like to respond to some of the questions and concerns that have emerged in the wake of the publication of the Vatican document, *Fiducia Supplicans*. The statement in no way calls for a change in the Church's teaching regarding marriage and sexuality. In fact, it goes to great lengths to insist that, in accord with unchanging doctrine, marriage is a union of one man and one woman in lifelong fidelity and openness to children.

"The blessings that it allows for those in irregular relationships are not liturgical in nature and hence do not imply any approbation of such relationships. Rather, these benedictions are informal and spontaneous, designed to call upon God's mercy to heal, guide, and strengthen. Despite some misleading coverage in the press, the declaration does not constitute a 'step' toward ratification of same-sex marriage nor a compromising of the Church's teaching regarding those in irregular relationships.

"*Fiducia Supplicans* is very much congruent with Pope Francis's long-held conviction that those who do not live up to the full demand of the Church's moral teaching are nevertheless loved and cherished by God and invited to accept the Lord's offer of forgiveness."

I hope that this helps anyone who may have been confused recently. If you're in need of going even a little bit deeper in the matter, feel free to let me know and we can arrange a time to just sit down with a group of people over a good cup of coffee and see where your questions go.

God's blessings,

Fr. Jeremy



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3. Enter your name and email
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Learn more at [formed.org](https://formed.org)

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# ~Church of St. Joseph~

## Meetings and Activities

Dec 31	10:30am	Mass
Jan 3	1:30pm	Mass—Valley View NH
	6:30-7:30pm	Faith Formation Classes
Jan 4	8:00am	Mass—St. Thomas
Jan 7	10:30am	Mass

This week we remember *these* people in our prayers.  
*Kylee Jenniges and Kevin & Lisa Jenniges*

**Our Shepherd of the field:**

*Father Jeffrey Horejsi*



~Please also pray for those in need ~

Bruce Olson      Mary Arnoldi      Pat Dauer  
 Brett Baumann      Linda Riley      Bob Peterson  
 Marcie Anderson

St. Joseph Contribution Budget July 1, 2023 - June 30, 2024			
	Annual Budget	Budget to Date	Received to Date
<b>Adults</b>	62,000.00	\$31,000.06	<b>\$32,245.76</b>
<b>Student</b>	\$250.00	\$125.06	<b>\$177.00</b>
<b>Loose Plate</b>	\$2,500.00	\$1,250.08	<b>\$1,814.65</b>

## January 7 Ministries

**Lector** Cathy Graff  
**EMC** Jeff Strock  
**Servers** Sydney Vogel & Hadynn Jenniges  
**Sacristan** Diane Arnsdorf  
**Ushers** Gordy Wille & Kevin Zimmermann  
**Gift Bearers** Mark Vogel Family  
**Money Counters** Fred Berg & Kylie Jenniges

## Last Week's Parish Revenue-St. Joseph

Adult Envelope	\$2,690.00
Student Envelope	\$6.00
Loose Plate	\$200.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$2,896.00</b>

## Weekly Faith Formation Schedule

**Wednesday, January 3**

6:30-7:30pm Faith Formation Classes

**We are in need of someone to bring Eucharist** to Valley View Manor on the second, third, and fourth weeks of the month (the first week Father has Mass at VVM). If you could do this, please contact Sue at 507-829-1846.

Thank you



Please pray for the following students as they prepare for their upcoming Sacraments:

First Reconciliation/Communion – Scarlett Frasher  
 Confirmation – Maia Scheffler, Mercedes Myers, Reese Berg & Sydney Vogel

**St Joseph's CCW is again taking donations** for the Revere Home residents. We will start collecting now and give these as Valentine's gifts. You will find a box at the church entry to deposit them in - marked Revere Home. Do not wrap them, so the employees there can pick out and give each resident what they need the most. They enjoy treats; personal care products; socks, stocking hats, sweatpants, sweatshirts; etc. or even small gift card to Maynards where they get taken to buy their own treats. Thank you in advance for helping take care of our neighbors in need.



# ~Church of St. Raphael~

Contribution Budget July 1, 2023 - June 30, 2024			
	Annual Budget	Budget to Date	Received to Date
Adults	\$335,000.00	\$167,500.06	<b>\$178,742.14</b>
Gr. 7-12	\$1,100.00	\$550.16	<b>\$0.00</b>
Pre K-6	\$1,100.00	\$550.16	<b>\$0.00</b>

Last week's Parish Revenue	
Adult Envelopes	\$14,273.00
Loose Plate	\$1,118.30
Christmas	\$16,275.00
School Gift	\$3,873.31
Youth/Teen Outreach Collection	\$328.35
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>\$35,867.96</b>



The end of the year is not far away, and it is time to start thinking of strategies to maximize the tax benefits of year-end giving. Federal tax laws and many state laws make it possible to reduce or eliminate taxes on gifts to charities like your parish, diocese, schools and other ministries. Remember

that only gifts made by December 31st can help reduce the amount of taxes you owe next April. Please consult **your professional tax advisor for tax strategies for your personal situation.**

### Life Insurance

If you own life insurance policies that you no longer need, the cash value of these policies may be another source from which to make gifts to your parish, and they may result in significant state and/or federal estate tax savings. You can also name your parish as beneficiary of your life insurance or annuity. For more information about charitable giving through life insurance, please contact the parish office at 507-723-4137.

**A Charitable Remainder Trust** is designed for individuals with highly appreciated assets like farm land or stock. Charitable Remainder Trusts (CRTs) offer donors extra tax advantages while allowing the donor to set the life income rate they would like to receive (generally 5% to 7%). As a donor, you can designate your parish to benefit from your gift after your lifetime. There are many variations of these trusts, and we work with Catholic charitable foundations that can walk you through various alternatives. These foundations also offer the expertise of attorneys who work with every day to insure competent investment advice.

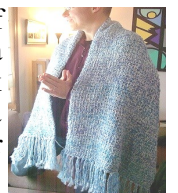
The 400 Club Winners this Week		
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#275	Cathy Ochs	\$65.00
#345	Duane Feser	\$65.00

~ Serving next Funeral will be Group C~

January 6 & 7, 2024		
	5:30pm	8:30am
<b>Servers</b>	Kallen Riederer	Riley Arnsdorf
	Zoie Riederer	Blake Wilhelmi
<b>Lector</b>	Denise Reiner	Katie Wilhelmi
<b>EMHC</b>	<b>VOLUNTEER</b>	Dcn Barry Reindl
<b>Accompanist</b>	Praise & Worship	Children's Choir
<b>Song Leader</b>	Praise & Worship	Children's Choir
<b>Rosary</b>	<b>VOLUNTEER</b>	TMIY Group
<b>Head Usher</b>	Justin Roiger	Gerard Landkammer
	Mike Reiner	Bracey Lerner
	<b>VOLUNTEER</b>	Carson Arnsdorf
	<b>VOLUNTEER</b>	<b>VOLUNTEER</b>
<b>Videographer</b>	Christina Reindl	

If you know someone who needs a bit of comfort and blessing in their life, grab a prayer shawl from the chair near the back of church. Shawls are blessed and have a miraculous metal attached to foster spiritual well-being.



Prayer shawls are crafted by the prayer shawl group, which also makes blankets for baptismal gifts. Supplies for this ministry are donated by Council of Catholic Women (CCW).

### Update

Many people no longer have a land line phone number and we do not have a cell phone number to contact parishioners.

Please share your cell phone number with us so we can keep communication up to date.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Cell Phone # \_\_\_\_\_

Turn in at the Parish Office or Sunday collection.  
Thank You.

# ~Church of St. Raphael~

## Meetings & Activities

Dec 31	8:30am	Mass
Jan 1	8:30am	Mass
		<b>Parish Office Closed</b>
Jan 2	8:00am	Classes Resume
	8:30am	Mass
Jan 3	5:00-6:00pm	Children's Choir Practice
	6:00-7:00pm	Faith Formation Classes grades 1-6
	6:00-7:00pm	Praise & Worship Choir Practice
	7:15-8:15pm	Faith Formation Classes grades 7-10
Jan 5	6:30-7:30am	That Man is You
	8:30am	Mass
	9:30am-4:00pm	Adoration
Jan 6	5:30pm	Mass
Jan 7	8:30am	Mass
		Coffee Connection

*Please remember in your prayers:*


✠ Our Shepherd of the Field:  
*Father Steven Verhelst*

*Please pray for our parishioners this week~*

Sun: Jerold & Rebecca Peters  
 Mon: Dan & Corrine Petersen  
 Tues: Edna Petersen  
 Wed: Tim & Kahla Petersen  
 Thur: Collin & Katie Pierson Family  
 Fri: Jodi Pieschel  
 Sat: Paul & Sharon Pieschel

*Weekly Candle Intentions (\$5.00 offering)*  
 Special Intentions Special Intention DGF


✠Small Votive Candles are now \$1.00 each  
 ✠Large Intention Candles are now \$5.00 each




**Check out Channel 8—Cablecast**

**\* St. Raphael Sunday Mass**  
 Every Tuesday at 5:00 pm & Friday at 5:00 pm  
**\*The Future Depends of Love—Episode 14**  
 Every Tuesday at 11:00am & Thursday at 7:00pm


**To view the Mass videos online,** visit our YouTube channel and subscribe.

 **YouTube**


<https://www.youtube.com> and search for St. Raphael Catholic Church. You will see a picture of our church.



**The Parish Office will be CLOSED**  
 Friday, December 29 and Monday, January 1, 2023.




**Congratulations to Patrick Howard Hauth,** son of Kevin & Amy Hauth, as he recently received the Sacrament of Baptism and was welcomed into the Holy Catholic Church and the St. Raphael Parish. Community!



**Congratulations to Bennett Levi Milbrath,** son of Cody & Addyson Milbrath, as he recently received the Sacrament of Baptism and was welcomed into the Holy Catholic Church and the St. Raphael Parish Community!

**~Good Neighbor Thrift ~**

Monday 9:00-3:00  
 Tuesday-Friday 9:00am-4:00pm  
**NEW WINTER HOURS**  
**January 2-5**  
**50% off Shoes & Purses**  
 Now accepting Fall/Winter Clothing Donations



**St. Raphael Parish is looking for both youth (grade 9 and up) and adults** to usher at our weekend masses. If this is something that you would be interested in, please contact the Parish Office at 507-723-4137. Students, this is a great way to earn some community service hours and it looks great on scholarship applications!

USHERS

## ~St. Raphael School~

*It is the mission of St. Raphael Catholic School to bring students to a deeper relationship with Jesus while providing excellent education.*

Greetings!

**Happy New Year!** Happy New Year! Know of my prayers for all of you! Thank you so much for your tremendous support of St. Raphael Catholic School. I am so blessed!

**Advent Service Project:** Thanks to everyone who brought food in to the food drive, and thanks to Catholic United Financial for the grant to help us with this project! We were able to donate quite a lot of food to the food shelf due to the generous donations and Grant 4 Good from CUF.

**Upcoming School Masses:** Please join us for school Masses at 8:30a.m.

Friday January 5: Grade 4 leads

No Mass January 12th or 19th (Father is away)

Friday January 26: Staff Mass

Catholic Schools Week Mass Sunday January 28 @ 10:30 a.m. followed by our Build your Own Burger meal

**Christmas Break:** Students and staff will be on Christmas Break through Monday, January 1st. Classes resume on Tuesday, January 2nd with the beginning of quarter three of school. Report cards will be sent home on Friday, January 5th.

**Thank you, Mrs. Jacobs:** Mrs. Shawna Jacobs, who has served St. Raphael Catholic School as our Little Panthers teaching assistant and our physical education teacher for K-6 has resigned her position in order to accept another job opportunity. We thank her for the love, care, teaching, passion, and heart, that she has poured into our students and staff over the past seven years. She is dearly loved and will be truly missed.

**Welcome, Mrs. Dauer:** Mrs. Crystal Dauer has accepted a position as our part time K-6 physical education teacher. She will begin with our students after Christmas break! Crystal has a physical education degree and has a great deal of experience coaching! We are thrilled that she will be part of our St. Raphael Catholic School teaching team! Welcome, Crystal!

**Mrs. Steffl on Vacation:** I will be out of the office on vacation with my family until January 3rd.

**Catholic Schools Week:** Catholic Schools Week kicks off with a special Mass on Sunday January 28th at 10:30 followed by our Build Your Own Burger dinner. Please join us for this special event! Catholic Schools Weeks goes from January 28th- February 3rd. Throughout the week, we will celebrate what it is to be a Catholic School, participate in field trips, do service projects, have dress up days, and show appreciation for our School community.

Blessings,

*Mrs. Beth Steffl*

### School Office Hours

Monday-Friday 7:30am—3:30pm

Hours may vary if school is closed. Please watch bulletin for notices.



There will be **NO school at St. Raphael** December 22, 2023—January 1, 2024 for Christmas Break. Classes will resume on Tuesday, January 2, 2024.

## ~Youth & Adult Faith Formation ~

Merry Christmas! Classes resume this Wednesday with a new hope in the new year. Elementary update: for the month of January first graders will have a lesson on the Magi and their gifts and then begin a study on the parts of the Mass. Second graders will make final preparations for the sacrament of Reconciliation on Thursday, January 25. Third graders will begin a unit on the seven Sacraments of the Catholic Church. Fourth graders will continue with the GPS timeline finishing the divided Kingdom and beginning the Exile. Fifth graders will study the Luminous Mysteries of the Rosary, precepts and marks of the Church and then finish with the Loaves and fish (one of my favorites!). Sixth graders will finish the prophets and begin the New Testament with John the Baptist.

Teens, this Wednesday is the last night for you to sign up to attend NET Lifeline on Saturday, January 6. This is at the retreat center – lets fill the bus with teens from Springfield and Lambertton!

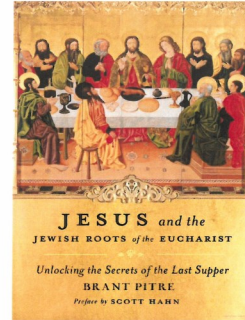
~Mrs. Karen Reindl

### Weekly Faith Formation Schedule

#### Wednesday, January 3

6:00-7:00pm Faith Formation Classes grades 1-6

7:15-8:15pm Faith Formation Classes grades 1-10



Join us for this 8-part BOOK discussion

Books are free thanks to a generous donor!

Register and receive your free book by contacting Karen Reindl at [mrsreindl@straphaelpk-6.com](mailto:mrsreindl@straphaelpk-6.com)

We will discuss the introduction and Chapter 1

Sunday, January 7, 2024

at 6:30pm

in the Holy Family Room

The next gathering will be decided upon January 7.

### Youth Choir Schedule

#### Wednesday, January 3

5:00-6:00pm Children's Choir Practice

6:00-7:00pm Praise & Worship Choir Practice



NATIONAL  
Eucharistic  
Revival

### Week 6 MARY, MOTHER OF THE EUCHARIST

**REFLECTION:** The Bible tells of a great love story between God and His people. We have been loved into existence, created by love and for love – eternal love in heaven. Even despite our sins. But this great love story hung upon a “yes” of a young teenager named Mary.

In giving God her humble “yes” Mary became the Mother of God. Thirty-three years later, Jesus would give her to us, so that she became the Mother of the Church.

In our Blessed Mother, we find more than an advocate; we find an example of how to relish God’s presence. One of the new Gospel passages that describe Mary’s actions is Luke 2:19, “And Mary kept all these things, reflecting on them in her heart.” Here we catch a glimpse of her life of fruitful prayer, meditating upon all that Jesus has said and done.

God chose Mary to bring forth Christ into the world. For nine months, Mary was a living tabernacle. Christ physically dwelled within her. As we go into the world, we too can be living tabernacles as Christ dwells within us through our participation in the Sacred Liturgy and the Eucharist.

As disciples of Christ, we must allow Mary to draw us close to her Son. Mary’s mindfulness, faithfulness, and devotion drew her close to Jesus, and following her example can help us to do the same.

**PRAYER:** Mother, Mary, you are the perfect example of discipleship and devotion to Jesus. We thank you for your motherly compassion and intercession. We pray that we may become more like you, living tabernacles filled with the presence of Christ. As we follow after your Son, we pray that you wrap us in your loving mantle of protection. Lead us ever closer to Jesus. Amen

**CHALLENGE:** Pray a decade of the Luminous Mysteries, The Institution of the Eucharist. In praying this decade of the Rosary, reflect and contemplate Mary’s love and devotion to her Son, Jesus. Ask her to bring you closer to her Son and to receive the gift of the Eucharist anew.

~Upcoming Area Events~



Join a small group for discussion on the Eucharist in this seven-part series from FORMED. The same discussion will take place each week but on the two different dates/times.

**Tuesday Evenings**

January 30, February 6, 13, 20, 27, March 5, 12 starting at 6:30pm

**Thursday mornings**

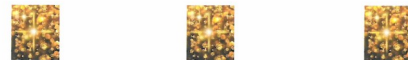
February 1, 8, 15, 22, 29, March 7, 14 starting at 9:00am

Register by contacting Karen Reindl at [mrsreindl@straphaelpk-6.com](mailto:mrsreindl@straphaelpk-6.com)



Enjoy Beautiful Theme Tables, a Catered Meal & Fellowship with other Women!  
*You will Be Inspired by our Speaker Amanda DeYoung from Nisswa, MN*  
We are looking for women that will volunteer to host and decorate a table for 8.

Invite your friends.  
Use your imagination and creativity to decorate a table...  
..God gave us lots of talent!



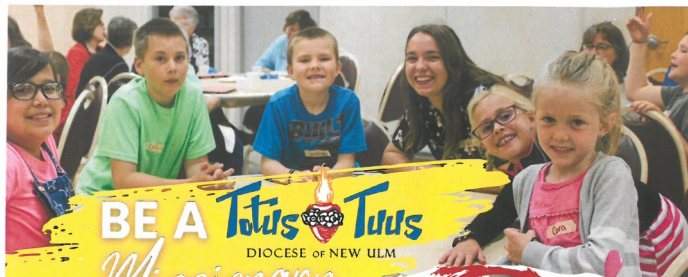
Proceeds will go towards the NUMAS Haus, a women's shelter dedicated to helping women and their families get back to independent living. They provide housing, classes and other support to aide in long-term stability.



**Interested in hosting? Contact:**

Crystal Dauer 612-910-4931  
Alice Johnson 763-645-2873  
Vicki Roiger 507-822-1504

**Deadline: January 22nd, 2024**



**EXPERIENCE A LIFE-GIVING SUMMER!**

- Evangelization!**  
Spread the Faith to hundreds of people all summer long. From adolescents, to teens, to adults, you will have the opportunity (and be given the skills) to tell the world about the good news of Jesus Christ!
- Formation!**  
Formation doesn't end after training week. Every Friday, teams gather together to hear talks, share a meal, meet with the director, and to share stories from the mission field. Adoration, Confession, and spiritual direction are offered as well.
- Community!**  
Travel around the beautiful Diocese of New Ulm with three other zealous young adults and meet up with the other teams every Friday. Spend the last two weeks of the summer with all of the missionaries serving as counselors at our diocesan camps.



[dnu.org/totus-tuus-missionary](http://dnu.org/totus-tuus-missionary) **APPLY NOW!**

**SAY "YES" TO RECYCLING CHRISTMAS LIGHTS!** The Sleepy Eye Youth Eco Solutions (YES!) Team is sponsoring a recycled holiday lights collection from November 27 to January 22. The drop off sites include Sleepy Eye Ace Hardware, Schutz Family Foods, St. Mary's Church and School, Sleepy Eye Public School, Trinity Lutheran Church, Faith United Methodist Church, and Brown County REA. Pre-boxed lights are greatly appreciated. Our community collection will be given to Jobs Plus, Inc. in Waseca. This organization supplies jobs for adults with special needs. The lights are dismantled and the materials are then recycled by a facility in the Twin Cities.

**Springfield Area Food Shelf** is open Tuesday evenings 5:00-7:00 PM and Thursday mornings 9:30-11:30 AM. We are looking for volunteers to help with various jobs - call Shari Koll at 507-227-0386 to volunteer. Please consider making a donation to the food shelf this Christmas season. Springfield Area Food Shelf, PO Box 15, Springfield, MN 56087.