

# ST. JOHN LUTHERAN CHURCH MESSENGER

CALLED TO WORSHIP / COMMITTED TO SERVE / CONNECTED IN FAITH

August 2019

A monthly Publication of  
St. John Lutheran Church

Summer Worship Schedule  
Wednesday Worship  
6:00 PM  
Sunday Worship  
9:00 AM

## Pastors

Pastor Mark Johnson  
Pastor Sarah Timian

## Office Staff

Jillmarie Stich  
Audrey Zellman

## Custodians

Curt & Cheryl Johnson

## Organists

Eileen Hanlon  
Diane West

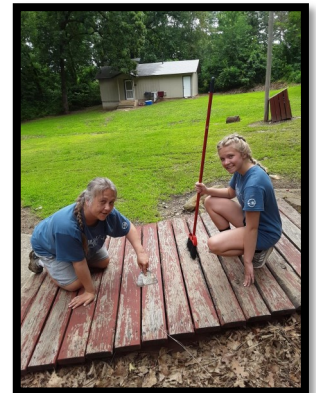
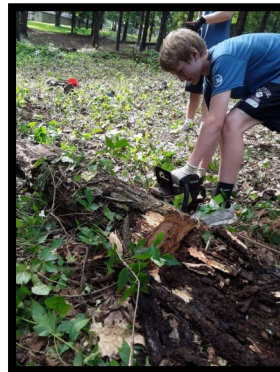
Choir Director  
Bri Bergstrom

Accompanist  
Sheila Schmidt

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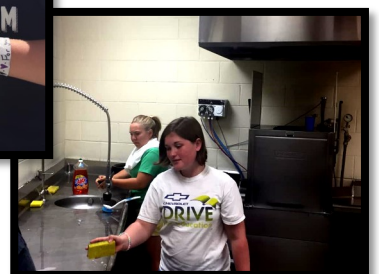
## 2019 Mission Trips



## Eurika Springs, AR



## Wind River, WY



## *From Pastor Mark*

I remember walking out on the new deck that was built onto the parsonage in Rothsay a number of years ago and thinking, “Wow! This morning there was nothing here. And now I’m walking on this freshly built deck and admiring how solid and well put together it is.” And I remember thinking how satisfying it must be for the guys who built it. At the end of the day, they could look back at that deck and say, “Here’s what I did today!” And there it was, solid and tangible, something you could walk on and sit on, a visible and concrete monument to their efforts that would last for a long time.

It’s a different kind of situation when we are interacting with people’s lives and planting seeds into human hearts. Most of the time, the results of such efforts aren’t so immediate and apparent and tangible and concrete. There generally isn’t a time when we say, “Here is the solid evidence of what I did today,” because the activity of such efforts are often silently processing and germinating in quiet ways within the depths of the human soul. Teachers and preachers and counselors know this, but so do friends who listen, volunteers who take time to work with kids, family members who visit the elderly, college-age counselors at Bible Camp and Vacation Bible School, colleagues who take a moment to talk with another about a recent loss, and the other countless and everyday opportunities to reach out and touch the life of another human being. Each day we sow seeds into other’s lives.

And what happens once a seed is sown into another’s heart? Then it is out of our hands. The words have been spoken, the action has been taken, the gesture has been offered. Sometimes the word that we speak or the action that we take has a significant impact, maybe not immediately but as a catalyst within a larger constellation of circumstances within another person’s life. And, at other times, the word or effort we make may have no impact at all. Even so, the gesture is not without its own intrinsic merit. It often times has an impact on us. And, it is simply the right thing to do.

There are versions of a parable of Jesus in Matthew 13, Mark 4 and Luke 8 of “a sower who went out to sow...” The seed was flung generously far and wide. Some seeds landed on hard ground and did not penetrate into the soil. Other seeds landed among the weeds and were choked out. And some landed on soil that was ready and receptive and, over time, produced varying amounts of grain.

In his book, “Seeds of Contemplation,” Thomas Merton begins by stating that we are always sowing and receiving seeds. We cannot help it. It is the inevitable process of being in living contact with each other. Some seeds last and some don’t. And there is a mystery about this that is greater than we are. Even Jesus, when he had concluded many of his teachings, would say, “Anyone who has ears to hear, let him hear,” a tacit acknowledgement that the seeds of his words would fall on some receptive hearts and also onto some non-receptive hearts.

I suppose we might say that we are spiritual farmers in the church, working to plant good and encouraging and Christ-like seeds into the soil of human hearts. We are responsible for the effort and God is responsible for the outcome. The efforts that we make in the name of Christ are released into the winds of the Holy Spirit and reach out beyond us.

I received a nice card of thanks this week. It was nice to know that something I had done for someone was received and appreciated. And it is a nice thing to let others know and to thank them when what they have done has encouraged us, or brought us an insight, or simply supported us in a time when we needed it. I suspect there are times in your life when someone spoke a word of encouragement or insight or direction to you that, when you look back on it, made a real difference in your life. And, perhaps at the time, that person didn’t even know it. And they may still not know it. Take some time to thank those who have helped you, who have sown an encouraging seed into your heart that has made a positive impact in your life. Take some time to let them know that they are appreciated. And, in doing so, you will be sowing seeds of life that will continue to grow unto an abundant harvest.

Blessings,

Pastor Mark J.

## From Pastor Sarah

### HOW DOES YOUR GARDEN GROW?

It's not magic, and it doesn't happen on its own.

A good harvest—whether from a garden or field—takes intentionality and work. Before you even select the type of crop you want to plant, the soil itself needs work. You have to clear out any chaff from previous crops and cultivate the field or garden plot. After selecting the seeds, care also needs to be taken in how they are sown. Attention must be given to how deep and how far apart the seeds need to be planted in order to grow properly.

I think there's a reason that our faith lives are often compared to a harvest. There is a lot of work that has to be done just to plant the seeds for that hoped-for yield, and the work doesn't end there.

Very few gardeners and farmers—if any—would say that once the seeds are planted, there's nothing left to do.

Fields need water and sunlight. Crops may need to be irrigated if there isn't enough rain. Weeds and pests need to be checked for and prevented if possible. The ground may need to be fertilized so that there are enough nutrients for the crop to grow well. Some plants may need to be thinned or pruned so that their energy goes into producing the desired fruit for the harvest.

Of course, there are exceptions to the rule. There are plants that will thrive in harsh conditions or in the wild on their own, and even the best-tended garden can fail to produce. These things happen, but they are the exceptions, not the rule.

To give a harvest the best chance it has, a field or garden needs regular engagement. It requires attention and tending to be successful in its growth and yield.

Our faith kind of works the same way. It needs regular engagement, too—tending and nurturing to give it its best chance at growing and thriving. In our baptism, we make promises to engage and to help each other so that we can grow into a mature faith that reflects God's love and works for God's will in our lives and the world around us.

While there can be exceptions, most of us will be part of the rule. We will need to spend time engaged with our faith—studying the Bible, attending worship services, talking with and being around the other members of our congregation and faith community, praying, and acting in ways that reflect God's justice and peace to the world around us. This is how we tend to our faith, giving ourselves the best chance to grow into the mature Christians we hope to be.

As we think about the fields and gardens around us this fall, we are left with a question: How are we growing this season?

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### ***Fall Worship hours start September 8th***

We are in the last month of Summer Worship hours.  
We will be starting our Fall Worship hours September 8th.

Sunday Worship at 8:00 & 10:30

Saturday Worship will start September 7th at 6:00 pm.



## August Children's Ministry Update

As the month of August begins, the Children's Ministry team is looking ahead to the upcoming year. You can register for Sunday School using the following link: <https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSdBl2tQcDIBiAw1B0k9E-hk6ay8dP3iAm9NkRJCU45iIQOq8A/viewform>. The link will also be shared on the church website and the church Facebook page. **Please complete the appropriate form by September 12th for planning purposes.** Here are some important dates to keep in mind as we move into the month of August.

**Connect Orientation Night/Rally Night: Wednesday, September 11th @ 6:00pm.** This night is for parents and students of 5th and 6th graders. We will be going over the schedule for the year, sharing about the Connect curriculum, meeting your student's teachers, and answering any questions. **The first Connect class will be Wednesday, Sept. 18th at 6pm.**

**Sunday, September 15th** will kick off our programming year. There is a lot going on!

**Backpack Blessing:** All school aged children from Pre-K to High School are encouraged to bring their backpacks to the 8:00 or 10:30 church service to receive a blessing for the school year.

**Bible Sunday:** Children (3 year olds, 1st grade, and 5th grade) will receive Bibles during the 8:00 or 10:30 service.

**Rally Sunday** will be an orientation for PreK-4th grade students and parents in the church basement. **Please plan to stay with your child on this morning. You will meet their teacher then separate for a short overview of the school year.** Our first Sunday School class will be Sunday, September 22nd from 9:15-10:15am.

**First Communion Instruction:** This evening class (time to be announced) is for 5th grade students and older who have not yet received the sacrament of communion. First Communion Sunday will be September 22nd at both services.

**\*\*IMPORTANT\*\* We are in need of Sunday School teachers!**

-Each Sunday school classroom needs a minimum of two teachers. Teachers can rotate weeks and work with each other's schedule to allow flexibility and convenience in this commitment

-One parent helper and one student helper in each room (or more depending on class size), each week. Commit to every other week, one Sunday a month, or every week if you can!

These classes do not teach themselves and it can not be expected that the same parents teach the class each year, it takes ALL of us. PLEASE consider how you can give your time and talents this year to our youth. Email [youthsjlc@gmail.com](mailto:youthsjlc@gmail.com) and let us know where you can help!

If you're interested in attending the next Children's Ministry meeting, please join us on Tuesday, August 13th @ 7:00pm in the conference room. Email [youthsjlc@gmail.com](mailto:youthsjlc@gmail.com) if you'd like more information.

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***We were notified by the city of Belle Plaine***, that they will be changing the way they broadcast the worship services on cable TV. After August 1 they will no longer use or accept CD's but ask that we use flash drives for our recordings. With council's approval we are looking into upgrading our video capabilities. We **will not** be able to have our worship services viewed over local cable TV till we have completed the upgrade. This could take a couple of months to complete. We will keep you updated on the progress as we upgrade.

The Women of the Church are again collecting school supplies for the school kits. They will be filling about 125 bags and are in need for the following supplies:

Notebooks                      Pencil sharpeners

Safety scissors                2" Erasers

They are collecting items until Sept. 1



## SAVE THE DATES



The St. John picture directory is due for an update.  
The following dates have been set aside for pictures to be taken:

October 8th— 12th

November 5th— 9th

Starting **August 4th** you can sign up through our website. Just click on the picture link and it will take you to the scheduling site. Then just pick the date and time you would like and fill in the information required.

We will also be scheduling following services starting **August 11th**.

If you have question, please call the church office from **1:00— 5:00** Monday through Friday.

## Stewardship Spotlight

### Volunteer Focus On: Dave Bungarden



Dave Bungarden grew up in Madison, MN as the youngest in a family of 8 children. His family owned and operated the local foundry; which taught him a strong work ethic and gave him a drive to help others. One of his family's core values was: "If you see a need, fill it." A Catholic upbringing, with family as the focus really helped to shape Dave's approach to all aspects of his life.



A foreman for Bolander, Dave has worked in the construction industry for over 16 years. He and his wife Sara, who is a 6<sup>th</sup> grade teacher, met in 2005, and became members of St. John 11 years ago. New to town, they attended a service at St. John where Dave remembers the beauty of the building, and the warm welcome of the congregation as things that made a strong positive first impression. Being "mugged" by Bill and Marlene Schultz shortly after that visit sealed the deal, and they have been happily attending St. John ever since. Now you will find them in the pews with their 3 children: Lila – 12, Mason – 10, and Harrison – 5 months.

Currently you might find Dave teaching Sunday school, ushering, reading during service, helping with communion, or picking up offering. Behind the scenes he also serves on the Buildings and Grounds Committee, and as chair of the Communications Committee. In the past Dave also worked in other roles, including terms as both Vice President, and President of the church council. When asked about the wide variety of activities he has been involved with, he chuckled and said, "10 years ago I would have laughed if you had told me I would have been brave enough to try so many new things!"

In his free time Dave enjoys spending time with friends and family, fishing, woodworking, and watching movies. He is a gourmet popcorn maker, and makes a mean rack of ribs (ask Bryan Holzemer)!

Thank you for sharing your time and talents with all at St. John, Dave!

**Your Gifts Make a Difference**  
**Thank You**

## Worship Assistants Schedule

<b>August 4 Worship Assistants</b>	
<b>Audio Visual:</b>	<b>Coffee Hour:</b> Michael & Lois Gustafson
<b>Altar Guild:</b> Sharon Adelman & Dorothy Koepp	
<b>9:00</b>	
<b>Greeters:</b> Lavonne Behnke <b>Lay Readers:</b> Lois Gustafson <b>Communion Assistants:</b> Albert Koepp & Dorothy Koepp <b>Ushers:</b> <b>Brian Schmidt</b> , Jason Schmidt, Katelyn Bauer, Doug Hillstrom, Jerold Stauffacher, Dave Latzke, Matt Mellgren <b>Arvin &amp; Midge Bessel</b> , Lee Sauter, Bob Fairbanks, Greg Rosario, Daron Anderson	

<b>August 11 Worship Assistants</b>	
<b>Audio Visual:</b>	<b>Coffee Hour:</b> Coffee with the Council
<b>Altar Guild:</b> Sharon Adelman & Dorothy Koepp	
<b>9:00</b>	
<b>Greeters:</b> Ron & Cheryl Nagel <b>Lay Readers:</b> Sherri Simcox <b>Communion Assistants:</b> Marv & Rhonda Doeden <b>Ushers:</b> <b>Brian Schmidt</b> , Jason Schmidt, Katelyn Bauer, Doug Hillstrom, Jerold Stauffacher, Dave Latzke, Matt Mellgren, <b>Arvin &amp; Midge Bessel</b> , Lee Sauter, Bob Fairbanks, Greg Rosario, Daron Anderson	

<b>August 18 Worship Assistants</b>	
<b>Audio Visual:</b>	<b>Coffee Hour:</b>
<b>Altar Guild:</b> Sharon Adelman & Dorothy Koepp	
<b>9:00</b>	
<b>Greeters:</b> Ken & Wendy Theis <b>Lay Readers:</b> Renee Meuleners <b>Communion Assistants:</b> Sherrie Simcox & Connie Bergs <b>Ushers:</b> <b>Andy Steinhagen</b> , David Einertson, Kade Skelley, Bruce Koepp, Tammy Koepp, Michael Gustafson, <b>Earl Gransee</b> , Louis Longhenry, Allen LaTour, David & Sara Bungarden	

<b>August 25 Worship Assistants</b>	
<b>Audio Visual:</b>	<b>Coffee Hour:</b>
<b>Altar Guild:</b> Sharon Adelman & Dorothy Koepp	
<b>9:00</b>	
<b>Greeters:</b> Wes Koepp <b>Lay Readers:</b> Zoe Otting <b>Communion Assistants:</b> Greg & Linda Schwichtenberg <b>Ushers:</b> <b>Andy Steinhagen</b> , David Einertson, Kade Skelley, Bruce Koepp, Tammy Koepp, Michael Gustafson, <b>Earl Gransee</b> , Louis Longhenry, Allen LaTour, David & Sara Bungarden	



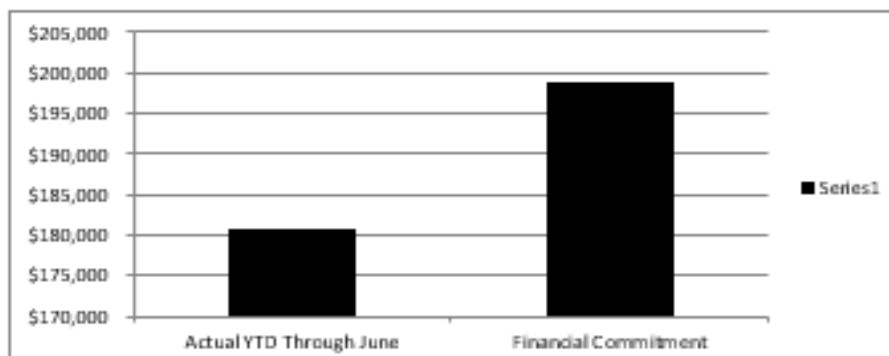
**St. John Financial Results**  
**Six Months Ending June 30, 2019 and June 30, 2018**

<b>General Operating Fund</b>			<b>Year Over Year</b>
	<b>June 30, 2019</b>	<b>June 30, 2018</b>	<b>Increase</b>
Income	\$ 180,815	\$ 172,166	5%
Expenses:			
Personnel	(153,310)	(148,919)	
Office	(9,802)	(10,844)	
Property & Maintenance	(21,632)	(21,415)	
Ministry Teams	(10,822)	(15,888)	
Other	(2,552)	(2,213)	
Benevolence:			
Minneapolis Area Synod	(6,000)	(6,000)	
Camp Onomia	(1,500)	(1,500)	
Lutheran Social Services	(500)	(1,000)	
Net Receipts / (Expenditures)	\$ (25,303)	\$ (35,613)	
Cash Balance at January 1 (excl. all loans)	\$ (64,346)	\$ (35,163)	
Net Income / (Expenditures)	(25,303)	(35,613)	
Misc. cash not affecting income	(100)	(149)	
Loan from Building Fund (from 2018 & 2019)	39,500	19,000	
Loan from St. John Foundation (from 2014-	53,397	52,910	
Cash Balance at June 30	\$ 3,193	\$ 985	

<b>Building Fund</b>			
Receipts	\$ 69,284	\$ 72,732	-5%
Capital Appeal Expenses	-	(2,205)	
Miscellaneous Expenses	(124)	(10)	
Principal	(54,564)	(52,102)	
Interest	(8,796)	(11,258)	
Loaned to General Fund	(4,500)	(19,000)	
Net Receipts / (Disbursements)	\$ 1,300	\$ (11,843)	
Loan Balance at January 1	\$ 435,544	\$ 551,424	
Principal Payments	(54,564)	(52,102)	
Loan Balance at June 30	\$ 380,980	\$ 499,322	

**Actual Income Compared to 2019 Financial Commitment:**

Actual YTD Through June	\$ 180,815
Financial Commitment	\$ 198,834



St. John Lutheran Church  
148 S. Chestnut St.  
Belle Plaine 56011

Non-Profit Organization  
U.S. Postage Paid  
Permit No. 16  
Belle Plaine, MN 56011

Change Service Requested

**Weekly Events**

Every Monday– Men's Bible Study 8:00 am at Kingsway

Every Wednesday– Worship 6:00 pm

Gathering Area

Every Sunday-

Worship 9:00 am

**Monthly Events**

First Monday– Quilting at 1:00 pm

First Tuesday-

10:00 Cardinal Ridge Service

11:00 Lutheran Home Service

1:00 Kingsway Service

Second Tuesday– Women's Bible Study 9:30 am

Kitchen Area