

ST. JOHN LUTHERAN CHURCH MESSENGER

CALLED TO WORSHIP / COMMITTED TO SERVE / CONNECTED IN FAITH

January 2022

A monthly Publication of
St. John Lutheran Church

Worship Schedule

Saturday night
worship at 6:00 p.m.
In Gathering Area

Sunday Worship 8:00 a.m.
In Person Worship or Watch
Live on Facebook

9:15 a.m. Worship Service
9:15 a.m. Sunday School

Pastor

Pastor Mark Johnson

Office Staff

Rae Fimon
Audrey Zellman

Treasurer

Robin Fink

Custodians

Curt & Cheryl Johnson

Organist

Eileen Hanlon

Accompanist

Sheila Schmidt

148 S. Chestnut St.
Belle Plaine, MN 56011

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office@stjohnbelleplaine.org
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Service Time Change

January 2nd: One service at 9:00 a.m.

Beginning January 9th: Services will be at 8:00 a.m. as usual. In place of the 10:30 service, a new service at 9:15 will be offered during Sunday School which continues to be held at 9:15 a.m. Coffee will still be served between services. Saturday Services will start again on January 8th at 6:00 p.m.



January 21
Starting at 9:15

There will be one service at 8:00 with the annual meeting starting after.
Sunday School will also be held at 9:15

From Pastor Mark

The beginning of a new year is often a time when people take stock of their life, looking back at the year that has passed and looking forward to the year that lies ahead. And it is not uncommon that as part of this process people seek to change, to resolve to do something new, to develop a new and healthier pattern for living. People will make these resolutions for different reasons. Some try to do it on their own. Others will reach out for help.

I was browsing through some books in my office the other day and came across the daily meditation booklet "Courage to Change" - (One Day At A Time in Al-Anon). Al-Anon is a partner organization of Alcoholics Anonymous for family members who are living with someone who is an alcoholic. I am pleased that we, at St. John, provide a place in our community for alcoholics, addicts and members of their family to reach out to one another for help, support and recovery. The following is an excerpt from "Courage to Change" for January 1:

"We live in a society of instant gratification: instant coffee, instant breakfast, instant money from our local ready bank machine - it's everywhere we look! No wonder so many of us arrive at Al-Anon's doors looking for the instant answer to all the problems that come from living with and loving an alcoholic.

Recovery is a process. It takes time to regain, reclaim, and recoup all that was lost while we tried on our own to cope with active drinking. Building trust takes time, change takes time, healing old wounds takes time; there are no immediate, ready-made solutions....

We all have dark times in our lives, but the journey to better times is often what makes us happier, stronger people. When we stop expecting instant relief, we may come to believe that where we are today is exactly where we ought to be."

A new year, as I was saying, is often a time for "resolutions to change." Most of these resolutions don't last very long. And, perhaps one reason is, as the meditation above states, change takes time and patience. It takes being honest with ourselves and sometimes we might have to make more than one run at it. It may take the humility of saying that we blew it and we need to try again. Time, patience, persistence, these aren't always easy things to practice.

One of the things I admire about Alcoholics Anonymous and Al-Anon is the simple honesty and courage to face life's brokenness, to admit that we are not perfect, and to reach out to others for a fellowship of support and care. There is a lot of power in that.

Sometimes, folks can think of church as a museum for saints. But it isn't. As the old saying goes, "Nobody's perfect." Or, as the Bible puts it, "All have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God." Instead of a museum for saints, I like to think of the church as a hospital for sinners. Because we are all sinners. Each of us struggles with our own brokenness. Each of us has our own issues that we try to deal with. And none of us has it all together.

The beautiful thing is, God loves us, as the old hymn puts it, "Just as I Am." As the Bible puts it, "While we were yet sinners, at the right time, Christ died for us." And so we confess our sins together each Sunday. We turn to God for his mercy and grace. We depend upon the gracious favor of his lovingkindness to understand our hurts and wounds. And we turn to Him for forgiveness and healing.

We gather to hear this assurance in God's Word. We come together to taste and to experience his intimate closeness at the table of his Holy Communion. And we turn to one another as the Body of Christ for fellowship, love and support. Each of us, in Christ, being a wounded healer for others.

And so we come to the beginning of a new year together. What will it bring? What lies ahead? One thing we know, life is a journey, a journey that is best lived by faith and trust and loving support. Christ himself has joined us on this journey. Christ himself walks with us through all of the ups and downs that lie ahead. Christ himself will be with us as we seek to change and continue to grow over time with patience and persistence. And that is good to know. Thank you for your love and support. And may God bless you as we journey together into the coming year!

-Pastor Mark



January Children's Ministry Update

Happy New Year! We pray the 2022 year has many blessings in store for you and your family.

We would like to thank all the children who participated in the Christmas program. "The Donkey's Christmas" was a unique and fun way for the Sunday School Children to share the story of Jesus' birth. We hope you enjoyed the program as much as we did! It took many hours of planning and practice for the program to come together. A BIG thank you to all of the children, parent volunteers, Connect leaders, and teachers. Thank you to Rachel Kelm for playing all the songs on piano as well.

Our first story theme of 2022 will be the Banquet with Simon then we'll move into the story about the Woman at the Well.

Important Dates:

- **Sunday, January 2nd:** No Class
- **Sunday, January 9th:** Class resumes
- **Sunday, January 23rd:** Sunday School Children sing during 8am service
- Annual Meeting during Sunday School Hour - movie and snacks in youth room for children

Connect Update

In the last month Connect students have learned about Moses, the Ten Commandments, and Law and Judges. Our January lessons will continue to focus on the Old Testament of the Bible.

Important Dates:

- Wednesday, January 5th:** No class
- Wednesday, January 12th:** Class resumes



Kitchen Help Needed for Funerals

As we again start to have meals after funerals, there now a need for help in the kitchen.

If you can help, please contact one of the following Committee members:

Marlys Koepf– 952-873-4445

Adella Gruetzmacher– 952-873-2918

Carol Schultz– 952-873-0840

Susie Volek– 612-501-2061



We could use your help!

Could you spare 1 hour once a month to help? St. John's deliveries meal for Meals on Wheels once a month and are in need of 5 more people to help.

If you are able to help please call:

Marlys Koepf– 952-873-4445

Unapproved St. John Lutheran Church Council Minutes

December 16, 2021

President Albert Koepp called the meeting to order at 6:35 p.m.

Present:

X	Pastor Mark	X	Matt Stier	X	Albert Koepp	X	Wendy Theis
	Angie Kahle	X	Rae Fimon	X	Jen Nagorski	X	Sue Koenig
X	Chris Zellman	X	Steve Kelm	X	Ben Aust	X	Chris Schultz
X	Curt Johnson	X	Anne Herrmann	X	Robin Fink		

Opening Devotions:

Pastor Mark shared a passage of the Christmas story from Luke chapter 2 and an opening prayer.

Approval of Minutes:

Members of Council reviewed the minutes from the November 18, 2021 Council Meeting. Motion was made, seconded and carried to approve the meeting minutes from November. A discussion was had regarding whether an item listed under New Business should be moved to the Old Business. Motion was made, seconded and carried to approve the agenda as written for December 16, 2021.

Pastor Mark's Report:

We celebrated the annual Community Ecumenical Thanksgiving service this year on Monday, November 22, at 7 p.m. The event was hosted by St. John and participated in by area churches.

Connect and Confirmation Classes have been meeting regularly on Wednesday evenings at the church. We are almost finished going through the story of the Old Testament and will be starting the New Testament soon. Small groups have also met for a Service / Fellowship event. We will be having a Leader meeting at the beginning of the New Year to discuss how the year is going and to make plans for our Lenten Soup and Sandwich suppers which have, traditionally, been hosted by our Confirmation Small groups.

I have met with couples being married in the early part of next year to prepare wedding planning with them. We have also had a number of baptisms as well as funerals recently. I have been meeting with families in preparations for these events.

Regular staff meeting continue weekly with Rae and Audrey to coordinate calendars for the upcoming week and to discuss any needed items of business that we need to be working on. We continue to have our regular monthly all staff meeting which includes Curt and Cheryl. At this meeting we go over the calendar of the upcoming month to make sure that we are all aligned on dates, events and details for upcoming events so we can make sure we are ready for them.

It was wonderful to see the Children's Christmas program return again this year and have so many children and families be a part of the celebration. Many thanks to our Children's team for the excellent job they are doing with our Children's program.

Christmas Eve services are being planned with services at 3:00, 5:00 and 7:00 p.m. The choir will be singing at the 3:00 and 5:00 p.m. services. I look forward to having Christmas Eve back in the Sanctuary again this year as we gather to celebrate the birth of our Savior.

I will be taking the last week of the year off, after Christmas, and have made arrangements for Pr. Diana Hunstad to be on-call for me for any pastoral needs during that time. It is usually a pretty quiet time of the year.

We are transitioning to a new Sunday morning worship schedule through the Christmas and New Year seasons, looking forward to our new 8:00 and 9:15 a.m. schedule beginning on January 9.

Regular and ongoing pastoral and administrative duties continue. There is a lot to communicate and coordinate about in our congregation.

Staff Reports:

Custodial:

Curt reported the furnace needed to be repaired. Parts have been ordered and should be in early January.

The "Keep 'Em Dry" account will be closed out before the end of the year. The gutters have been installed and paid

for at the AA building. Leaf guards will be installed next spring and will be invoiced then.

Treasurer:

Rae presented the monthly financial reports and answered questions from Council members.

A discussion was had regarding the interest rate received on the Foundation fund. A motion was made, seconded, and carried to move \$2,000 every month to the Mutual Fund account to increase earnings.

Transfers:

Transfers In:

2021 Confirmation Class:

Katey Borresen	Violet Holtberg	Joshua Sparby
Vayda Borresen	Hunter Hornaman	Lydia Sparby
Jack Buerkle	Kellen Hornaman	Isabelle Stier
Caleb Eppen	Addison Kahle	Nolan Swenson
Zachary Fahey	Landry Kelm	Niklas Tharaldson
Jacob Fogarty	Ellie Martin	Katelyn Theis
Noah Hanson	Havyn Moonen	Teddy Traxler
Tristan Holbrook	Pierce Nagorski	Carson Unze
Austyn Holm		Wyatt Vossen

Transfers Out - none

Motion was made to approve the transfers in, seconded and carried.

Ongoing Business:

Strategic Planning was tabled at this time.

Loan Repayment – motion made, seconded, approved, to move an additional \$5,000 from the General Fund and apply it against the Foundation loan. Council to revisit again next month.

Rae presented the budget again during this council meeting. She indicated changes were made to Expenditures under Benevolence Expenses, Educational Expenses, and Professional Fees. The council then met separately to discuss staff salaries. The council made a motion to increase salaries this year having discussion around the fact that the Council froze salary increases last year and the rising cost of living this year. Motion seconded and carried. The council then made a motion to submit the budget to the congregation. Seconded and carried.

New Business:

Annual Meeting

In person on January 23, 2022 at 9:15

One service January 23, 2022 at 8:00 a.m.; no service at 9:15

Council Meeting moved to January 13, 2022

Reports will be compiled January 10, 2022 with the assistance of Confirmation groups.

Executive team meeting will be January 9, 2022 at 10:30 a.m. with future meetings being held at 10:30 a.m.

Housing Allowance

For taxation purposes, Pastor Mark declared his housing allowance would remain the same as last year which was \$32,000.

Ministry Team Updates:

Stewardship Committee - nothing new to report.

Buildings and Grounds Committee - A discussion was had to remove the Ash trees from the rental properties due to Emerald Ash Borer. The removal will cost \$4,000 and does not include stump removal. An additional request to trim the maple trees was considered. A motion was made, seconded and carried to move forward with tree removal and trimming if it could be done at the same time.

Personnel Committee - nothing new to report.

Children's Ministry Team - Sunday school will continue to be held at 9:15.

Small Group/Faith Formation Committee - nothing new to report.

Worship and Music Committee - nothing new to report.

Technology and Communications Committee - nothing new to report.

Motion was made, seconded, and carried to adjourn at 8:45 p.m. Meeting was adjourned followed by the Lord's prayer.

Respectfully Submitted,
Anne Herrmann, Secretary

January 2022

January Happenings at St. John

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
9:00 Worship Service	6:30pm Boy Scouts meeting	11 Lutheran Home Service 1:30pm Kingsway Service	6pm Connect/Confirmation Leader Meeting 6:30pm Adult Choir			6pm Worship Service
					4pm Audit Committee	
8:00 & 9:15 Worship Service 9:15 Sunday School 10:30 Council Executive meeting	6:30pm Boy Scouts meeting		5:30pm Pizza 6pm Connect/Confirmation 6:30pm Adult Choir	6:30pm Church Council		6pm Worship Service
8:00 & 9:15 Worship Service 9:15 Sunday School 2pm Girl Scout meeting	6:30pm Boy Scouts meeting		5:30pm Pizza 6pm Connect/Confirmation 6:30pm Adult Choir			6pm Worship Service
8:00 Worship Service 9:15 Sunday School 9:15 Annual Meeting 1pm Cub Scout meeting	6:30pm Boy Scouts meeting		6pm Bus leaves for Feed My Starving Children 6:30pm Adult Choir			6pm Worship Service
8:00 & 9:15 Worship Service 9:15 Sunday School	6:30pm Boy Scouts meeting					

January 2022

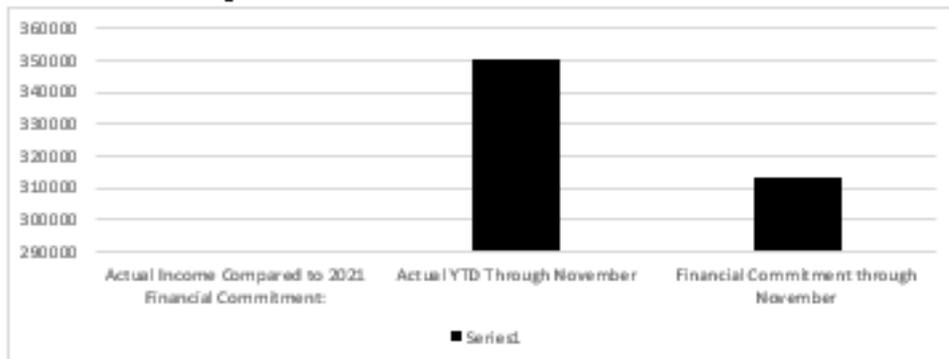


Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
						1
Jonathan Schulz Diane Stier	3 Melissa Arola Todd Kruggel Brad Latzke	4	5 Matthew Fink Steve Latzke Megan Schmidt	6	7 Rhett Traxler	8 Minnie Aust Donna Cooper Violet Holtberg Olivia Jeurissen
9 Jason Grubn	10 Joyce Chaves Owen Herrmann Jeff Petersen Jodi Savage McKinley Schwartz	11	12 Troy Armstrong Shannon Hansen Moutana Meyer Ron Rasmussen Nolan Swenson	13 Kevin Bauleke	14 Sharon Adelmann Dale Schmidt Cindy Schoenbauer	15 Arlene Latzke
16 Tanya Edwards Amanda Schultz	17 Faith Adelmann	18 Raelynn Connelly	19 Earl Gransee Kylard Johnson Dick Peterson Pamela Shackle	20	21 Tara Henke Isla Sinnamon	22 Brian Hillstrom
23 Scott Hagen Grant Johnson Aaron Leonard Alyssa Meierbachtol	24 Blake Andert Tony Theis Andre Westerfield	25 Jason Hagen Maxum Meyer Carol Schultz Joshua Wolf Terry Zellman	26 Thomas Chaves Jim Kerr Jennifer Korbel Michael Kritzman	27 Elijah Hoff Noelle Hoff Pierce Nagorski Piper VanZummeren	28 Trevor Grubn Mark Johnson Teresa Latzke Emily Nagel	29 Robin Burkman Cole Hanek Stella Hansen
30 Bryan Holzemer Carter Johnson Garrett Korbel Renee Meuleners	31 Larry Hanson Charlie Schwartz Ken Wilson					

Financial Corner

St. John Financial Results Eleven Months Ended November 30, 2021 and November 30, 2020

General Operating Fund			Year Over Year Increase (Decrease)
	November 30, 2021	November 30, 2020	
Income	\$ 350,307	\$ 301,337	16%
Paycheck Protection Loan Forgiveness	-	54,839	
Expenses:			
Personnel	(189,720)	(271,853)	
Office	(15,716)	(17,008)	
Property & Maintenance	(42,407)	(34,742)	
Ministry	(12,490)	(17,797)	
Other	(4,656)	(3,295)	
Benevolence:			
Minneapolis Area Synod	(11,000)	(10,000)	
Camp Onomia	(2,750)	(2,500)	
World Hunger (2019)	-	(250)	
Belle Plaine Fire Dept	(300)	-	
Lutheran Social Services	(1,500)	(2,000)	
Net Receipts / (Expenditures)	\$ 69,768	\$ (3,269)	
Cash Balance at January 1 (excl. all loans)	\$ (82,735)	\$ (84,836)	
Net Income / (Expenditures)	69,768	(3,269)	
Misc. cash not affecting income	378	(1,237)	
Loan from Building Fund (2018 - 2019)	-	45,500	
Loan from St. John Foundation (2014 -2016)	44,744	54,204	
Cash Balance at November 30	\$ 32,155	\$ 10,362	
Building Fund			
Receipts	\$ 101,545	\$ 98,163	3%
Loan Repayment by General Fund	44,500	10,000	
Principal	(110,698)	(106,491)	
Interest	(5,462)	(9,669)	
Net Receipts / (Disbursements)	\$ 29,885	\$ (7,997)	
Loan Balance at January 1	\$ 208,857	\$ 325,224	
Principal Payments	(110,698)	(106,491)	
Loan Balance at November 30	\$ 98,159	\$ 218,733	
Building Fund Cash in the Bank at Nov 30	\$ 80,936	\$ 45,279	
Actual Income Compared to 2021 Financial Commitment:			
Actual YTD Through November	\$ 350,307		
Financial Commitment through November	\$ 313,563		



January 2 and 9, 2022 Ushers	
8:00 Service	9:15 Service
Terry Siemon James & John Karl Dan & Wyatt Herrmann Tim Bristlin	Scott Ruud Alex Ruud Griffin Ruud Dale Mercado Jake Mercado Jerry Meger Alex Meger



January 16 and 23 2022 Ushers	
8:00 Service	9:15 Service
Brian Schmidt Jonathan Schmidt Jason Schmidt Doug Hillstrom Jerold Stauffacher Dave Latzke	Brent Koepf Mitchell Koepf Jackson Stauffacher Justin Stauffacher Todd Kruggel

January 30 and February 6, 2022 Ushers	
8:00 Service	9:15 Service
Marc & Mindy Chevalier Andy Steinhagen Bruce Koepf Tammy Koepf	Chris & Annette Moylan Mike & Zach Olson Jason & Trevor Gruhn Steve Schroeder

Acolytes for January 8:00 Service		
January 2	Driana Schultz	Maxum Meyer
January 9	Abby Lawler	Maxum Meyer
January 16	Tessa Menke	Taylor Menke
January 23	Will Steinhagen	Dominic Veerkamp
January 30	Treyden Hiles	Caden Vycital

Wednesday Night Kitchen Helpers		
January 5	No Class Leader Meeting	
January 12	Linda Jeurissen	Elisa Theis
January 19	Kim Thaemert	Kristin Stier
January 26	Feed My Starving Children - No Pizza	

Wednesday Night Gathering Area Helpers		
January 5	No Class Leader Meeting	
January 12	A. Schultz	
January 19	Trevor Carstens	
January 26	Feed My Starving Children— No Pizza	

CALLED TO SERVE THROUGH OUR GIVING	
Offering Received the week of	
November 25– December 1	December 2-8
General Fund—\$3,865	General Fund—\$6,640
Building Fund—\$4,060	Building Fund—\$1,662
December 9-15	December 16-22
General Fund—\$5,155	General Fund— \$6,302
Building Fund—\$1,760	Building Fund- \$2,320
December 23-29	
General Fund—\$25,039	
Building Fund —\$2,600	