

ST. JOHN LUTHERAN CHURCH MESSENGER

CALLED TO WORSHIP / COMMITTED TO SERVE / CONNECTED IN FAITH

June 2021

A monthly Publication of
St. John Lutheran Church

Worship Schedule

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

Sunday Worship 9:00 a.m.
In Person Worship or Watch
Live on Facebook

Pastor

Pastor Mark Johnson

Office Staff

Audrey Zellman

Treasurer

Rae Fimon

Custodians

Curt & Cheryl Johnson

Organist

Eileen Hanlon

Choir Director

Bri Bergstrom

Accompanist

Sheila Schmidt

148 S. Chestnut St.
Belle Plaine, MN 56011

952-873-6492
office@stjohnbelleplaine.org
Web: stjohnbelleplaine.org

During the Summer months
Sunday Service time will stay at
9:00 am

Saturday Services will change to
Wednesday Worship Service
6:00 pm

Starting June 2— September 1



Confirmation camp will be held
June 13th through June 18th
this year.



Coffee Hour is Returning on June 6!

Beginning Sunday, June 6, the coffee, tea, hot chocolate, etc. will be available to those who would like to visit after church. No food will be served at this time, but feel free to grab a cup of coffee and visit with each other after church on Sundays this summer. These items will also be available for the Wednesday evening services beginning June 2.

From Pastor Mark

One thing I often find myself doing when I pray is thanking God for the gift of this day. And I suppose it is a way of reminding myself that my life is not a possession that I own or a project to be completed but that it is a fragile and beautiful and fleeting gift to be savored from a God who loves me. It's easy to forget this. It's easy to take it for granted. And so I need to bring myself back into the awareness of the gift of this moment. As I've heard my friends in A.A. say, "Yesterday is history, tomorrow is a mystery, but today is a gift. That's why it's called the present." I like that.

Along these lines, I'm reminded of a brief devotion on mindful living that Thich Nhat Hanh shares in his book, "Peace is Every Step," called "Washing Dishes." He writes: "To my mind, the idea that doing dishes is unpleasant can occur only when you aren't doing them. Once you are standing in front of the sink with your sleeves rolled up and your hands in the warm water, it is really quite pleasant. I enjoy taking my time with each dish, being fully aware of the dish, the water, and each movement of my hands. I know that if I hurry in order to eat dessert sooner, the time of washing dishes will be unpleasant and not worth living. That would be a pity, for each minute, each second of life is a miracle. The dishes themselves and the fact that I am here washing them are miracles. If I am incapable of washing dishes joyfully, if I want to finish them quickly so I can go and have dessert, I will be equally incapable of enjoying my dessert. With the fork in my hand, I will be thinking about what to do next, and the texture and the flavor of the dessert, together with the pleasure of eating it, will be lost. I will always be dragged into the future, never able to live in the present moment. Each thought, each action in the sunlight of awareness, becomes sacred. In this light, no boundary exists between the sacred and the secular. I must confess it takes me a bit longer to do the dishes, but I live fully in every moment, and I am happy. Washing the dishes is at the same time a means and an end - that is, not only do we do the dishes in order to have clean dishes, we also do the dishes just to do the dishes, to live fully in each moment while washing them."

I was the stage manager in the play, "Our Town," when I was at Augsburg college. The stage manager is a character who helps to narrate the action of the play to the audience. In the first act, two young people, George and Emily, are children and neighbors growing up together in the little town of Grover's Corners, New Hampshire, around the turn of the last century. The second act features George and Emily's marriage. In the third act, Emily has died and is brought to the cemetery where a number of actors are sitting on seats. She sits down next to her mother, who died a few years before. Her brother, Wally, is also seated there, along with a number of other townspeople.

Suddenly, Emily is struck by the realization that she can go back and live a day of her life over again. Her mother advises against it but Emily is too excited. "At least choose an unimportant day," her mother says, "It will be important enough." Emily chooses her thirteenth birthday. She is amazed at how young her mother looks. Every little object seems bright and miraculous. But her mother hurries past her, busy with another day. Finally, Emily says, "Oh, Mama, look at me one minute as though you really saw me. Mama, fourteen years have gone by. I'm dead. You're a grandmother, Mama! Wally's dead, too. His appendix burst on a camping trip to North Conway. We felt just terrible about it - don't you remember? But, just for a moment now we're all together. Mama, just for a moment we're happy. Let's really look at one another!....I can't...I can't go on...It goes so fast. We don't have time to look at each other. I didn't realize. So all that was going on and we never noticed. Take me back - up the hill - to my grave. But first: Wait! One more look. Good-bye, Good-bye world. Good-bye, Grover's Corners...Mama and Papa. Good-bye to clocks ticking...and Mama's sunflowers. And food and coffee. And new ironed dresses and hot baths... and sleeping and waking up. Oh earth, you're too wonderful for anybody to realize you." (Speaking to stage manager) - "Do any human beings ever realize life while they're living it - every, every minute?" (Stage manager replies) No. Saints and poets maybe, they do some."

I've never forgotten the import of that play and it sticks with me to this day. So all this is going on and how often do we stop to be present and notice? How often do we live for the weekend? Thank God it's Friday! But what about the rest of the week? What about the days and moments and breaths and times that slip by? How easy it is to turn around and go, "Where have the last ten years gone?" But how present and mindful have we been to the moments of those passing years? It's too easy to take the days of our life here for granted, as if we had an unlimited supply.

Now I'm starting to get preachy. I guess that's an occupational hazard. And I can't say that I certainly have learned how to fully appreciate the gift that life is, to savor the experience of this moment of life while I am living it, to be thankful to God for the miracle of life, to fully inhabit this moment of experience. Still, I try to be mindful of it. I try to remind myself that during this brief and fragile and beautiful gift of life I want to be awake to embracing and experiencing it while it is happening.

People say, "If I could just win the lottery, then I'd be happy." But, if you consider the fact that in order for you to be here, and not someone else, the right people of your ancestors had to get together at just the right time all the way back through the generations, you have already won something much better than the lottery. You get

to be here. You get to see the light and breath the air and smell the fragrance and taste the texture and live and love and learn and reach out and embrace this wonderful gift. Wow! That's pretty amazing.

Thanks be to God, who gives us this gift, who has given us himself, and who gives us to each other to share this precious journey. Sit up, look around, feel this breath of air filling your lungs, this beat of your heart nourishing your body with blood, hear the sounds of life around you, and allow yourself the simple gratitude of being here and inhabiting this moment in time. Life is a gift. Enjoy it. Share it. Savor it. Give it away.

Pastor Mark



2021 St. John Youth Mission Trip

South Dakota

Are you interested in participating in this years Mission Trip?

We are taking registrations for the 2021 Youth Mission Trip to Rapid City, South Dakota.

The trip will be leaving Sunday, June 20th and returning Friday, June 25th.

The cost is \$364.

If you are interested, please contact:

Kirk Franck

Text him at 952-994-3018 or email him at kirkamy@frontiernet.net.

For trip information go to: Youthworks.com

Invite your friends and family to come, they do not need to be a St. John member.

Confirmation Camp

Summer is here, which means it's time for camp! Our Confirmation Students will be traveling to Camp Onomia June 13th through June 18th for a week of learning about God's Word and World. The bus will leave from St. John Lutheran Church at 1:00 p.m. on Sunday, and return around 3:00 p.m. on Friday.

The following youth will be attend Confirmation Camp this Summer:

Makenna Gerres	Jackson Schroeder	Maxum Meyer
Isaac Hanson	Abigail Lawler	Evan Muehlenhardt
Treyden Hiles	Isabella Lindahl	Ruby Schultz
McKenzie Koepf	Ethan Martin	Téa Smith
Hannah Konopacki	Tessa Menke	Caden Vycital
		Jaydn Williamson

Please pray for our students and their counselors during their week at camp.

Unapproved St. John Lutheran Church Council Minutes May 20, 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		Steve Kelm	X	Ben Aust	X	Chris Schultz
X	Curt Johnson	X	Anne Herrmann	X	Sue Steinhagen		

Opening Devotions:

Pastor Mark shared opening devotions from John 3:16.

Approval of Minutes:

Members of Council reviewed the minutes from the April 15, 2021 Council Meeting. Motion was made, seconded and carried to approve the meeting minutes from March. Motion was made, seconded and carried to approve the agenda for May 20, 2021.

Pastor Mark's Report:

According to our council policy of following MDH guidelines, we have made some modifications to our worship services and people are beginning to come back. Our Saturday evening services are transitioning for the Summer to Wednesday evenings, beginning on June 2 at 6 p.m. We are also conducting personal and group service and communion opportunities at the Lutheran Home and Kingsway.

The wheel of life keeps turning and we have had a significant number of baptisms and funerals lately. Weddings are in the offing, as well, and are being planned and prepared for. We also added some new members recently per our orientation and welcome Sundays.

A High School Graduation Recognition Sunday is planned for May 23. Invites have been sent out to Grads and their families. Grads will receive a card of congratulations from the church, as well as a quilt from our quilting group. God's blessings to them as they celebrate this milestone and make plans for their future.

The Minneapolis Area Synod Assembly was held virtually by Zoom this year on April 23-24. Delegates from St. John this year included Sue Steinhagen, Brent Koepp and Amy Franck.

The first part of the year giving statements are being mailed out to all members, along with a cover letter from Sue Steinhagen, the chair of our last capital appeal, encouraging members to continue to support both our Building and General Funds.

The Personnel Committee has forwarded two policies to the council for consideration. They are an "Employee Grievance Policy and Sheets" and a "Discipline Policy." The Team is also recommending a candidate for the council's consideration.

Connect and Confirmation have come to the end of a challenging year. Much thanks to leader, volunteers, students and families. Camp weeks will be beginning for 7 and 8 graders in June and July. A Mission Trip is scheduled for June.

The Children's Team is looking to recruit new members as they will begin planning for what hopes to be a normal return to Sunday School in the Fall.

We have interviewed two consulting candidates to lead us through a process of Strategic Planning in the congregation. Proposals, timelines and pricing have also been forwarded to the council for consideration.

Regular staff meetings for communication and coordination are scheduled for Tuesdays at 12:30 p.m. Weekly and monthly items continue on a regular basis.

I have just returned from a few days away with friends. This is a busy church and self care and time away are important. I'd like to continue the "Solo Sunday" policy we had when Pr. Sarah was here. I will have to line up Sunday and On-Call people.

Staff Reports:

Custodial:

Curt reported the following activities:

- The road in the front of the church has been repaired by the city.
 - The 17 year old water softener is leaking. Curt will obtain quotes for replacement.
 - Internet issue was found and repaired.
 - Performed an energy audit with the Senate. St John's scored well with the use of several energy savers such as LED lights and timers.
- Curt is also getting quotes on LED signage.

Rae reported Fiber Optics will be installed this Tuesday, the 25th or Wednesday, the 26th.

Treasurer:

Rae presented the monthly financial reports and answered questions from Council members. She also noted Year-to-Date Giving Statements will be going in the mail along with a from Sue Hagen regarding the Building fund.

Transfers:

Transfers In

James and Diane Kerr by affirmation of faith.

Justin and Kacie Reinsma and daughter Addison Jean by affirmation of faith.

Transfers out - none

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

Ongoing Business:

A. A motion was made, seconded and carried to approve the Employee Grievance Policy & Sheets.

B. A motion was made, seconded and carried to approve the Discipline Policy.

C. Strategic Planning

Guest Speaker - Sue Steinhagen shared her knowledge and experience leading the 2014-2016 Planning Committee.

Consultant Decision - Tabled pending formation of planning committee.

D. Reopening

Funeral/Coffee Hour - Funeral lunches to be catered and served. Coffee Hour discussion pending.

Revisit Policy on Building Use by Outside Groups - no changes at this time.

New Business:

Staffing Church Accountant/Office Support Position - Personnel Committee recommends Rae Fimon for the position. A motion was made, seconded and carried to approve the candidate.

Rae will be stepping down as Treasurer.

Ministry Team Updates:

Stewardship Committee - nothing new.

Buildings and Grounds Committee - The north parking lot repairs are scheduled to begin the week of the 24th. Seal coating and striping will follow a week or two later.

Personnel Committee - updating the Job Description for Treasurer .

Children's Ministry Team - will be in need of new members and teachers.

Small Group/Faith Formation Committee - nothing new.

Worship and Music Committee - nothing new.

Technology and Communications Committee - nothing new.

Motion was made, seconded, and carried to adjourn at 9:26 p.m. Meeting was adjourned followed by the Lord's prayer.

Respectfully Submitted,
Anne Herrmann, Secretary

June 2021



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		Robert Holtberg Adam Jeurissen Curtis Johnson Adrik Pederson	Lauren Koepp Nathaniel Rosario Quinn Streich	Colton Adelmann Sally Hilgers Parker Trost	Greysen Hiles Corinne Mercado	Janet Hanson Colin Thaves
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Evelyn Boeckman Daxon Herrmann	Annie Leonard Brooke Moylan Kaylee Shackle	Brooke Borresen Jacob Petersen Taylor Tesch	Andrea Adelmann Wilma Jean Bartels Mary Sue Meger Evan Nasby Lacy Schultz Carson Unze	Georgia Carlson Katie Maier Sharon Sirek	Heather Kes Kensi Petty	Molly Holm Larry Koniariski Elsie Leonard Isabella Lindahl Aria Tindall
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
Jase Schroeder	Aiden Fogarty	Julie Tesch	Leann Fahey James Fogarty Cassie Gerres Aiden Winterfeldt John Winterfeldt	Kamryn Stier	Courtney Fogarty Larry Kiewel Addison Reinsma	Matthew Nicholas Manley Winterfeldt
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
Alexander Adelmann Ervin Koepp	Austin Heinz Alec Koepp Catherine Otto Aneesa Smith	Jim Steffen	Arvin Bessel Jennifer Meyer Diane West	Allison Koepp Jamie Petersen Marci Schroeder Leah Theis	Riaya Buddenhagen Collins Crosby Reese Potter	Wesley Koepp Peggy Longhenry Kallie Thamerit Annalee Tupy
27	28	29	30			
Heather Creighton Brian Paulson	Isabelle Stier	Chris Moore Matthew Olson	Sarita Altringer Kyah Bauer Taylor Johnson Mike Smith			

Financial Corner

St. John Financial Results Four Months Ending April 30, 2021 and April 30, 2020

General Operating Fund			Year Over Year Increase (Decrease)
	April 30, 2021	April 30, 2020	
Income *	\$ 106,709	\$ 124,763	-14%
Expenses:			
Personnel	(68,647)	(103,547)	
Office	(6,289)	(7,741)	
Property & Maintenance	(14,212)	(14,933)	
Ministry	(6,369)	(13,242)	
Other	(1,613)	(1,251)	
Benevolence:			
Minneapolis Area Synod	(4,000)	(4,000)	
Camp Onomia	(1,000)	(750)	
World Hunger (2019)	-	(250)	
Lutheran Social Services	(500)	-	
Net Receipts / (Expenditures)	\$ 4,079	\$ (20,951)	
Cash Balance at January 1 (excl. all loans)	\$ (82,735)	\$ (84,836)	
Net Income / (Expenditures)	4,079	(20,951)	
Misc. cash not affecting income	543	(236)	
Paycheck Protection Loan (2020)	-	57,600	
Loan from Building Fund (from 2018 - 2020)	44,500	61,500	
Loan from St. John Foundation (from 2014-2016)	54,429	53,888	
Cash Balance at April 30	\$ 20,816	\$ 66,965	

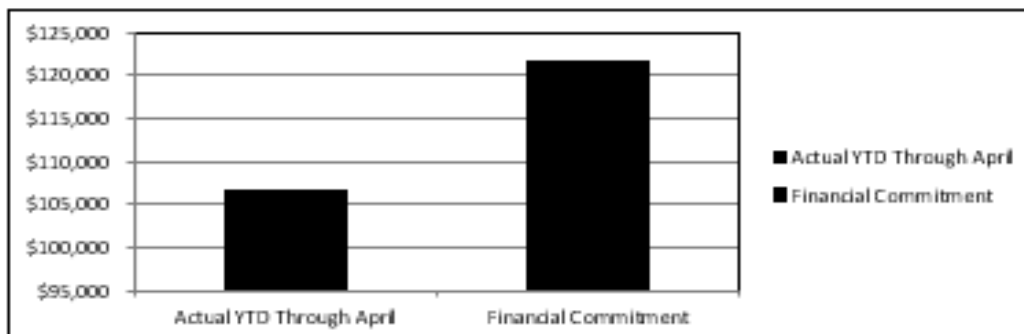
* 40% of Contributions were received electronically in 2021 - thank you!

Building Fund			
Receipts **	31,578	\$ 35,420	6%
Loaned to General Fund	-	(7,000)	
Principal	(39,815)	(38,211)	
Interest	(2,425)	(4,029)	
Net Receipts / (Disbursements)	\$ (4,662)	\$ (13,820)	
Loan Balance at January 1	\$ 208,857	\$ 325,224	
Principal Payments	(39,815)	(38,211)	
Loan Balance at April 30	\$ 169,042	\$ 287,013	

** 34% of Contributions were received electronically in 2021 - thank you!

Actual Income Compared to 2021 Financial Commitment:

Actual YTD Through April	\$ 106,709
Financial Commitment	\$ 121,655



June 6 and 13, 2021 Ushers		June 20 and 27, 2021 Ushers	
Brian Schmidt	Arvin & Midge Bessel	Marc & Mindy Chevalier	David & Sara Bungarden
Jonathan Schmidt	Lee Sauter	Andy Steinhagen	Louis Longhenry
Jason Schmidt	Bob Fairbanks	Kade Skelley	Ron & Dianne Rasmussen
Doug Hillstrom	Greg Rosario	Bruce Koepf	
Jerold Stauffacher	Daron Anderson	Tammy Koepf	
Dave Latzke		Michael Gustafson	

In Memory

A Memorial was given to the Building Fund in memory of Darrell Stier by Mary Koepf.

Memorials were given to the General and Building Fund in memory of Jeanette Fries by Family and Friends.

CALLED TO SERVE THROUGH OUR GIVING

Offering Received the week of

April 29– May 5

General Fund—\$5,237
Building Fund—\$1,115

May 6-12

General Fund—\$3,802
Building Fund—\$2,265

May 13-19

General Fund—\$3,632
Building Fund—\$905

May 20-26

General Fund— \$3,890
Building Fund- \$470