

ST. JOHN LUTHERAN CHURCH MESSENGER

CALLED TO WORSHIP / COMMITTED TO SERVE / CONNECTED IN FAITH

June 2022

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

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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Sunday Service time change
9:00 am
Starting May 29— September 4

Wednesday Worship Service
6:00 pm
Starting June 1— August 31



Confirmation camp will be held
June 12th through June 17th
this year.



Vacation Bible School
(VBS) will be June 20-23!

From Pastor Mark

I grew up on the old hymns and have come to appreciate them over the years in a deep place in my heart. Those old hymn writers were theologians and poets who set down some beautiful and powerful lyrics that were then set to music so that all worshipers could be united together in voicing praise and adoration to God. What a deep gift those old hymns are. If you just read the words, many of them are beautifully structured meditations and stand on their own as fine devotional reading.

Of course, some of these old hymns have an interesting back story that adds layer and dimension to their meaning. And perhaps the most famous of these is “Amazing Grace” which is, quite possibly, the most popularly known hymn of all time.

John Newton was born in London in 1725 and his mother died two weeks before he turned seven. His father, a stern sea captain, took him to sea when he was eleven and after many voyages and a wild youth he was impressed into the British navy. He tried to desert and received a lashing and was reduced to the rank of a common seaman. In 1745 he was serving on a slave ship and did not get along with the crew so they left him with a slave trader in West Africa where, along with the slaves, he was treated terribly. Newton’s father asked a sea captain to look for his son and, in 1748, he was found and rescued.

On the way home the ship encountered a severe storm off the coast of Ireland. He awoke in the middle of the night as the ship was filling with water and cried out to God. All at once, the cargo shifted and plugged the place where the water was coming in and the ship made it to safety. This was a moment of awakening for Newton. He began to read the Bible and “The Imitation of Christ,” by Thomas a Kempis. Even so, he continued to work in the slave trade, selling his fellow human beings, making three different voyages as the captain of two vessels. In 1754 he suffered a stroke and retired but continued to invest in the business.

But God was working on him. He felt a calling to study for the ministry, encouraged and influenced by John and Charles Wesley and George Whitefield. In 1764, at the age of 39, he became an ordained minister of the Anglican church in the little village of Olney, near Cambridge. When enough hymns could not be found, Newton began to write some of his own, assisted by his friend William Cowper. In 1779, they produced the famous “Olney Hymns” hymnal which contained “Amazing Grace.”

It was not until 1788, thirty four years after he left the slave trade, that he renounced it with a pamphlet entitled, “Thoughts upon the Slave Trade,” describing the horrendous conditions of the slaves on the slave ships. Newton apologized for making a statement so many years later by writing, “It will always be a subject of humiliating reflection to me that I was once an active instrument in a business at which my heart now shudders.”

Newton’s pamphlet was popular and reprinted many times and sent to every member of the British Parliament. He became an ally of abolitionist William Wilberforce in Parliament. The Parliament adopted “The Slave Trade Act” in 1807, abolishing slavery, and John Newton lived to see it’s passage, dying in December of that year.

Until his death at the age of 82, John Newton never ceased to marvel at the grace of God that had transformed him so completely. Shortly before his death he is quoted as proclaiming with a loud voice during one of his messages, “My memory is nearly gone, but I remember two things: That I am a great sinner and that Christ is a great Savior!”

With this as background, the words of this familiar old hymn take on a fresh and powerful meaning. And over the years, they have gone on to touch and transform many hearts. The version we sing today edits out some of the original verses of Newton’s hymn. Here’s the full version with all the verses:

Amazing Grace! How sweet the sound - that saved a wretch like me!

I once was lost, but now am found; was blind, but now I see.

In evil long I took delight, un-awed by shame or fear;

’Til a new object met my sight and stopped my wild career.

I saw One hanging on a tree, in agonies of blood -

Who fixed His languid eyes on me - as near His cross I stood.

Sure, never ’til my latest breath - can I forget that look;

It seemed to charge me with his death - though not a word He spoke.

My conscience owned and felt the guilt - and plunged me in despair

I saw my sins His blood had shed, and helped to nail Him there.

*Alas, I knew not what I did - but all my tears were vain;
 Where could my trembling soul be hid - For I, the Lord, had slain.
 A second look he gave which said, "I freely all forgive!
 This blood is for thy ransom paid, I die that thou mayest live."
 'Twas grace that taught my heart to fear - and grace my fears relieved;
 How precious did that grace appear, the hour I first believed.
 Through many dangers, toils and snares - I have already come.
 'Tis grace has brought me safe thus far - and grace will lead me home.
 The Lord has promised good to me - His word my hope secures;
 He will my shield and portion be - as long as life endures.
 Yes, when this flesh and heart shall fail - and mortal life shall cease;
 I shall possess within the veil - a life of joy and peace.
 The earth shall soon dissolve like snow - the sun forbear to shine;
 But God who called me here below - shall be forever mine.
 When we've been there ten thousand years - bright shining as the sun;
 We've no less days to sing God's praise - then when we've first begun!"*

Confirmation Camp



Summer is here, which means it's time for camp! Our Confirmation Students will be traveling to Camp Onomia June 12th through June 17th 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:

Bennet Balk	Erik Hoff	Madison Theis
Josephine Berg	Olivia Jeurissen	Will Steinhagen
Allison Blake	Mallory Kelm	Dominic Veerkamp
Mya Bommelyn	Taylor Menke	Bailey Kes
Mason Bungarden	Kylee Perry	Jackson Nagel
	Kallie Thaemert	Thomas Nagel

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

**Help us to update our Contact information -
Please fill out and place in the Offering Basket or Send to the Church
Office
Thank You!**

Name(s) _____

Preferred E-Mail _____
(Please Print e-mail)

Preferred Phone # _____

Address _____

City, State, Zip _____



**Please help us Reboot the following groups this Fall -
Check the group(s) you would like to Volunteer
Place in the Offering Basket or Send to the Church Office
Thanks for your Help!**

- ___ Altar Guild
- ___ Communion Assistant
- ___ Greeters
- ___ Readers
- ___ Ushers
- ___ Coffee Hour
- ___ Livestream / Record Service
- ___ Do Powerpoint at Service



June Children's Ministry Update

We ended the Sunday School Year with the children performing a few of the songs they learned throughout the year during the church service on May 1st. After the service, ice cream sundaes were enjoyed!

VBS REGISTRATION NOW OPEN!

Vacation Bible School (VBS) will be June 20-23! VBS schedule is as follows: Children in grades Kindergarten through 6th attend from 9am-3pm. They will need one snack and a sack lunch each day. **Please register your child in the same class they were in for the 2021-22 school year.** The cost of VBS is \$50/child for Kdg.-6th grade or a \$150 family cap. Scholarships are available. Registration is now open! Click the link below:

https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSejkUdHr9I5-uQcoWVehes6ZUWBWaMmF5Sf_0teqsgHDIU7mg/viewform

VBS ON THE FARM Information and Registration (August 1-5):

We are excited to announce a wonderful summer camp opportunity: VBS on the Farm!

VBS on the Farm is a partnership between Prairie Oaks Institute (POI) and Cristo Obrero. POI seeks to be a catalyst of rejuvenation for people and the planet, creating space for renewal and fostering education opportunities around environmental sustainability. Cristo Obrero is a mission of the ELCA, accompanying Latino families with support, and building relationships with neighbors across cultures.

Our goal is to create a nature based, bilingual Vacation Bible School opportunity, giving children space to play in the beauty of nature, build relationships across cultures, and learn that God's love is for everyone.

Online registration is now open!

Registration of Participants:

<https://form.jotform.com/220616326455150>

Volunteer Registration:

<https://form.jotform.com/220615862577159>

VBS NEEDS: It takes many people to make the week of VBS successful. Here are a few things we are looking for during the week. We need the following:

**Confirmation/Sr. High/Adult Helpers to help the counselors, lunch and any other needs during the week.
Meals for counselors (lunch and dinner Sunday-Thursday)**

The Children's Ministry team will continue to meet over the summer. If you're interested in joining the team, we welcome anyone to the meetings. We will post our next meeting date on the St. John website and facebook page. We will need more volunteers in the fall to ensure another successful year!

Unapproved St. John Lutheran Church Council Minutes
April 21, 2022

President Ben Aust called the meeting to order at 6:32 p.m.

Present:

X	Pastor Mark	X	Ben Aust		Chris Schultz	X	Albert Koepp
X	Matt Stier	X	Wendy Theis	X	Jen Nagorski		Steve Kelm
X	Robin Fink	X	Jan Effinger	X	Teresa Latzke		Tim Moonen
	Curt Johnson	X	Anne Herrmann				

Opening Devotions:

Pastor Mark and Council Members opened the meeting with a prayer.

Approval of Minutes:

Members of Council reviewed the minutes from April 14, 2022 Council Meeting. Motion was made, seconded and carried to approve the meeting minutes from April. A motion was made, seconded and carried to approve the agenda for May 19, 2022.

Pastor Mark's Report:

The Minneapolis Area Synod Assembly met in person for the first time in two years on Saturday, April 30, at Central Lutheran Church in downtown Minneapolis. I attended the Assembly along with our elected delegates from St. John, Jim and Diane Kerr and Angie Faucette. Participation in the Assembly provides a good opportunity to appreciate that we are part of a larger church. St. John is a local expression of the larger body of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, partnering with other congregations locally and around the world and, through this body, supporting agencies that foster social justice, higher education, mission work, immigration and refugee resettlement, disaster response, world hunger and a host of other concerns.

Connect and Confirmation classes have wrapped up for the current program year. It has been a good year and I am thankful for the great group of adult leaders that we have who have contributed so much of their time and interest and care in walking with our young people on their developing journey of faith formation.

I have met with Linda Schwichtenberg. Pre-covid she was responsible for helping to organize our variety of volunteer groups for worship, fellowship etc. We set up a timeline for rebooting our groups this Fall that will include refining our lists, meeting with leaders (or recruiting new ones), reviewing our duties and job descriptions, filling out volunteer rosters and repopulating a schedule. Some activities, like Holy Communion, will be different post covid and will take additional planning and volunteers to staff both our worship services. We will continue to move ahead with this process over the Summer months.

We continue to gradually emerge from the pandemic. I am seeing some faces at church that I haven't seen for a long time. That said, attendance continues to be a concern. Renewed volunteering in different ways this Fall will increase engagement. A strategic plan that engages the whole congregation about the vitality of it's future would also be an engaging stimulus. And, while our online worship option has been necessary and will continue to be for some people, I would like to see more people for in person worship. I would refer you to my April newsletter article in which I address this issue more fully.

Vacation Bible School is resuming after a two year hiatus with "Day Camp" provided by counselors from Camp Onomia. Pre-Covid we have done Day Camp for many years and it's good to see it return again. The Children's Ministry Team is helping to register and sponsor this event, along with promoting another opportunity for VBS, as well, which will be a multi-church, bi-lingual opportunity by our Synod's local Spanish Ministry, Cristo Obrero, taking place the first week of August at Belle Plaine's "Prairie Oaks Institute." St. John will serve as a back-up location in case of inclement weather.

Ongoing weekly and monthly parish duties will continue apace throughout the Summer and we also will be gearing up and preparing for a busy Fall.

Staff Reports:

Custodial:

No report was presented.

Treasurer:

Robin walked through the monthly reports and answered questions from Council members.

- A. Employer Retention Credit - tabled until funds are received.

Transfers:

- A. Transfer In - none
- B. Out - none

Ongoing Business:

- A. Strategic Planning was tabled at this time.
- B. Foundation Loan Repayment was tabled at this time.
- C. Wendy Theis reported on her action item from last month to reboot the newsletter team. A motion was made, seconded, and approved to begin sending the newsletter by mail as soon as possible. The Council would like to gather updated contact information and apprise the members of volunteer opportunities. There will also be information shared on upcoming events.
- D. Further discussion was had on rebranding the Building Fund envelopes. Since the mortgage has been paid, we can now begin to focus on the ongoing maintenance expenses of the building. A motion was made, seconded, and approved to rename the envelopes to "Building Maintenance Fund".
- E. Proposal from the Building and Grounds Committee was tabled.
- F. The Mortgage Burning Committee has designed a poster to communicate the details of this event. Watch for it in your newsletter! The poster will also be available on the church website and displayed on the monitor above the elevator.

New Business:

- A. A discussion was had on creating a Volunteer Task Force. The task force will be responsible to help get volunteers lined up for the Fall restart.
- B. A discussion was had on a spending allowance for maintenance items for the rental properties. The Building and Grounds Committee lead will connect with the Property Manager to discuss further.

Ministry Team Updates:

- A. Stewardship Committee - nothing new to report.
- B. Buildings and Grounds Committee - nothing new to report.
- C. Personnel Committee - will be meeting.
- D. Children's Ministry Team - has been working on VBS.
- E. Small Group/Faith Formation Committee - nothing new to report.
- F. Worship and Music Committee - nothing new to report.
- G. Technology and Communications Committee - nothing new to report.

Motion was made, seconded, and carried to adjourn the meeting at 8:00 p.m. Meeting was adjourned followed by the Lord's prayer.

Respectfully Submitted,
Anne Herrmann, Secretary



The office hours will be as follows for the Summer

- Monday– 8-12, closed in the afternoon
- Tuesday– Thursday- 8-12, and 1-5
- Friday– morning closed, 1-5 in the afternoon



Would you like to re-connect or meet new friends? Come join the group for coffee and conversation starting June 14th at 10:00 in the Gathering area.

This group will meet on the second Tuesday of each month at 10:00. No treats or agenda just a time for conversation.



St. John Lutheran Church

MORTGAGE BURNING CELEBRATION!

**Come Celebrate on
Sunday, September 11th
after 9:30 church service**

**Polka Service by Bob Pexa
Bonfire (burning the Mortgage!)
Hayrides
Pork Sandwich lunch
Dessert Food trucks**

Your Help Wanted

Did you take pictures during the addition building process?
We would like to display them at the Mortgage Burning Celebration
Bring them to the church office by the end of July.

June 2022

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1 6:00 pm Worship Service	2	3	4
5 9:00 Worship Service 11:00 Private Party in Gathering Area	6 6:30 pm Boy Scout meeting	7 11:00 Lutheran Home Service 1:30 pm Kingsway Service	8 6:00 pm Worship Service	9	10	11
12 9:00 Worship Service 9:50 Council Executive meeting	13 6:30 pm Boy Scout meeting 7:00 pm Coffee in the Kitchen	14 10:00 Coffee and Conversations	15 6:00 pm Worship Service	16 6:30 pm Church Council	17	18 9:00 Bridal Shower in Gathering Area
19 9:00 Worship Service	20 6:30 pm Boy Scout meeting	21	22 6:00 pm Worship Service	23	24	25
26 9:00 Worship Service	27 6:30 pm Boy Scout meeting	28	29 6:00 pm Worship Service	30		

June 2022



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1	2	3	4	5	6
Janet Hanson Colin Thaves	Evelyn Boeckman Daxon Herrmann	Michael Cope Annie Leonard Brooke Moylan Kaylee Shackle	Brooke Borresen Jacob Petersen Taylor Tesch	Lauren Koepp Nathaniel Rosario Quinn Streich	Colton Adelmann Sally Hilgers Joanne McConnell Parker Trost	Greysen Hiles Corinne Mercado
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
Janet Hanson Colin Thaves	Evelyn Boeckman Daxon Herrmann	Michael Cope Annie Leonard Brooke Moylan Kaylee Shackle	Brooke Borresen Jacob Petersen Taylor Tesch	Lauren Koepp Nathaniel Rosario Quinn Streich	Colton Adelmann Sally Hilgers Joanne McConnell Parker Trost	Greysen Hiles Corinne Mercado
Molly Holm Larry Koniarski Elsie Leonard Isabella Lindahl Aria Tindall	Jase Schroeder	Aiden Fogarty	Julie Tesch	Leann Fahey James Fogarty Cassie Gerres Aiden Winterfeldt John Winterfeldt	Georgia Carlson Katie Maier Sharon Sirek	Heather Kes Kensi Petty
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
Molly Holm Larry Koniarski Elsie Leonard Isabella Lindahl Aria Tindall	Jase Schroeder	Aiden Fogarty	Julie Tesch	Leann Fahey James Fogarty Cassie Gerres Aiden Winterfeldt John Winterfeldt	Georgia Carlson Katie Maier Sharon Sirek	Heather Kes Kensi Petty
Matthew Nicholas	Alexander Adelmann Ervin Koepp Don Meisterbachtol	Austin Heinz Alec Koepp Catherine Otto Aneesa Smith	Jim Steffen	Arvin Bessel Jennifer Meyer Diane West	Allison Koepp Jamie Petersen Marci Schroeder Leah Theis	Raya Buddenhagen Collins Crosby Reese Potter
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
Matthew Nicholas	Alexander Adelmann Ervin Koepp Don Meisterbachtol	Austin Heinz Alec Koepp Catherine Otto Aneesa Smith	Jim Steffen	Arvin Bessel Jennifer Meyer Diane West	Allison Koepp Jamie Petersen Marci Schroeder Leah Theis	Raya Buddenhagen Collins Crosby Reese Potter
Wesley Koepp Peggy Longhenry Kallie Thamernt Annalee Tupy	Heather Creighton Brian Paulson	Isabelle Stier	Chris Moore Matthew Olson	Sarita Albringer Kyah Bauer Taylor Johnson Mike Smith		
26	27	28	29	30		
Wesley Koepp Peggy Longhenry Kallie Thamernt Annalee Tupy	Heather Creighton Brian Paulson	Isabelle Stier	Chris Moore Matthew Olson	Sarita Albringer Kyah Bauer Taylor Johnson Mike Smith		

Financial Corner

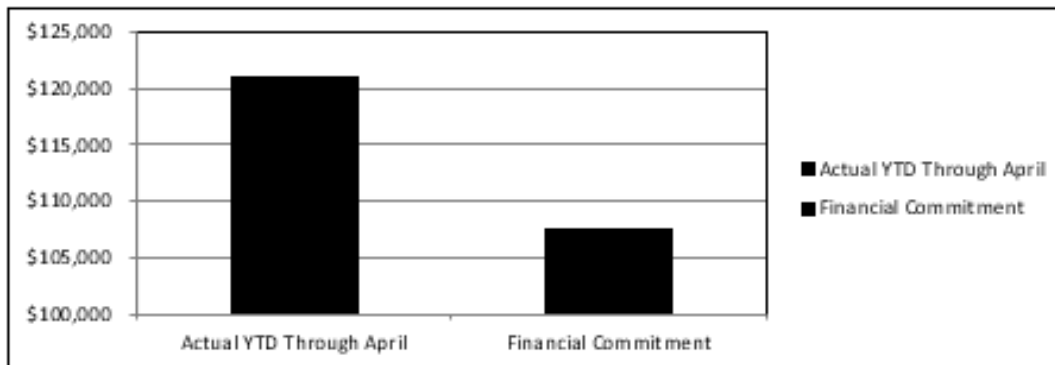
St. John Financial Results Four Months Ending April 30, 2022 and April 30, 2021

General Operating Fund			Year Over Year
	April 30, 2022	April 30, 2021	Increase (Decrease)
Income *	\$ 120,986	\$ 106,709	13%
Expenses:			
Personnel	(73,676)	(68,647)	
Office	(7,067)	(6,289)	
Property & Maintenance	(18,386)	(14,212)	
Ministry	(11,143)	(6,369)	
Other	(3,190)	(1,613)	
Benevolence:			
Minneapolis Area Synod	(5,400)	(4,000)	
Camp Onomia	(1,250)	(1,000)	
Lutheran Social Services	(500)	(500)	
Net Receipts / (Expenditures)	\$ 374	\$ 4,079	
Cash Balance at January 1 (excl. all loans)	\$ 7,829	\$ (82,735)	
Net Income / (Expenditures)	374	4,079	
Misc. cash not affecting income	201	543	
Loan from Building Fund (from 2018 - 2019)	-	44,500	
Loan from St. John Foundation (from 2014-2016)	39,782	54,429	
Cash Balance at April 30	\$ 48,186	\$ 20,816	

* 41% of Contributions were received electronically in 2022 - thank you!

Actual Income Compared to 2022 Financial Commitment:

Actual YTD Through April	\$ 120,986
Financial Commitment	\$ 107,582





June 5 & 12, 2022 Ushers	
9:00 Service	
Albert Koepf Dorothy Koepf Kevin Koepf Matt Stier Bruce Volek Tim Carlson Josh Koepf	Tim Moonen Dale Schmidt Samuel Schmidt Dick Bristow

June 19 & 26, 2022 Ushers	
9:00 Service	
Brent Schwichtenberg Greg Schwichtenberg Juls Robbins	Scott Ruud Alex Ruud Griffin Ruud Dale Mercado Jake Mercado Jerry Meger Alex Meger

In Memory

Memorials were given to the Flower Fund, Building Fund and Technology Fund in memory of David Zellman by Family and Friends.

CALLED TO SERVE THROUGH OUR GIVING	
Offering Received the week of	
April 28– May 4 General Fund—\$10,331 Building Fund—\$2,165	May 5-11 General Fund—\$5,961 Building Fund—\$1,060
May 12-18 General Fund—\$3,650 Building Fund—\$795	May 19-25 General Fund— \$4,086 Building Fund- \$410