

# ST. JOHN LUTHERAN CHURCH MESSENGER

CALLED TO WORSHIP / COMMITTED TO SERVE / CONNECTED IN FAITH

November 2021

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

10:30 a.m. Worship Service

### Pastor

Pastor Mark Johnson

### Office Staff

Audrey Zellman

### Treasurer

Rae Fimon

### Custodians

Curt & Cheryl Johnson

### Organist

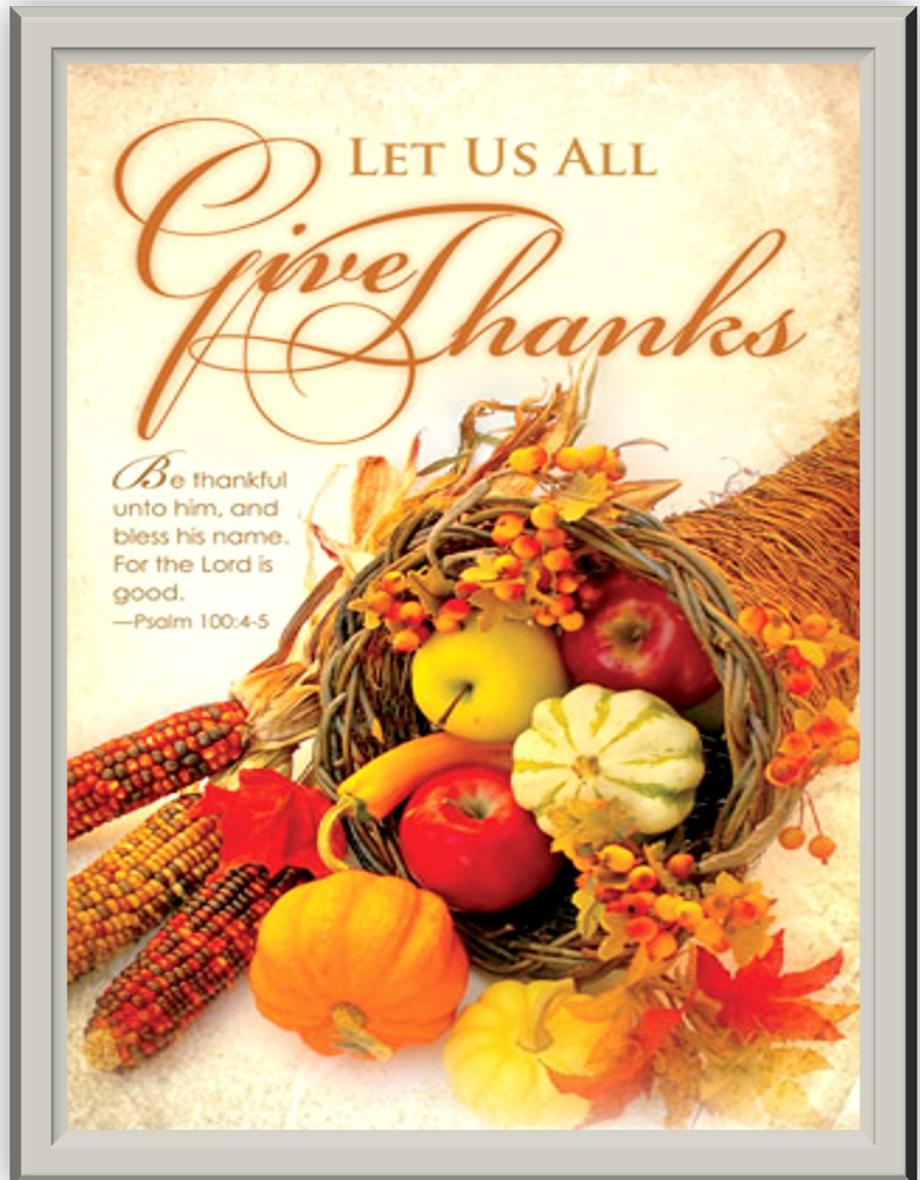
Eileen Hanlon

### Accompanist

Sheila Schmidt

148 S. Chestnut St.  
Belle Plaine, MN 56011

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



## **In This Issue**

- Ecumenical Community Thanksgiving Service
- Congregation Christmas Dinner

Plus more!

## *From Pastor Mark*

November brings thoughts of Thanksgiving...and Thanksgiving brings to my mind that great old hymn, "Now Thank We All Our God." There is an interesting story about this hymn from the book "Amazing Grace," by Kenneth Osbeck that I think you might appreciate:

"From some of the severest human suffering imaginable during the 30 Years War of 1618-48 – a war that was long and extremely devastating in its effects – this great hymn of the church was born.

Martin Rinkart (1586 – 1649) was called at the age of 31 to pastor the state Lutheran church in his native city of Eilenberg, Germany. He arrived there just as the dreadful bloodshed of the 30 Years War began and it was there that Rinkart spent the remaining 32 years of his life faithfully ministering to these troubled people.

Germany, the battleground of this conflict between warring Catholic and Protestant forces from various countries throughout Europe, was reduced to a state of misery that baffles description. The German population dwindled from 16 million to 6 million. Because Eilenberg was a walled city, it became a frightfully over-crowded refuge for political and military fugitives from far and near. Throughout these war years several waves of deadly diseases and famines swept the city, as the various armies marched through the town, leaving death and destruction in their wake. The plague of 1637 was particularly severe. At its height Rinkart was the only minister remaining to care for the sick and dying.

Martin Rinkart's triumphant, personal expressions of gratitude and confidence in God confirm for each of us this truth taught in Scripture, that as God's children, we too can be, as St. Paul writes in the eighth chapter of Romans, "more than conqueror's through Him who loved us." Infused with this confident hope, amidst all of the harsh brutality of the times in which he was living, Martin Rinkart sat down and put pen to paper and wrote the text of words, later to set to music by Johann Cruger (1598 – 1662), that would become one of our most familiar and beloved hymns of gratitude and thanksgiving for all of the abundant blessings of God:

*"Now thank we all our God – with hearts and hands and voices –  
Who wondrous things has done – in whom his world rejoices;  
Who from our mother's arms – has blest us on our way –  
With countless gifts of love – and still is ours today.  
O may this bounteous God – through all our lives be near us –  
With every joyful hearts – and blessed peace to cheer us –  
And keep us in his grace – and guide us when perplexed –  
And free us from all harm – in this world and the next.  
All praise and thanks to God – the Father now be given –  
The Son and Him who reigns – With them in highest heaven –  
The one eternal God – Whom earth and heaven adore –  
For thus it was, is now – and shall be evermore."*

I think this is a truly remarkable story. It shows that even in the midst of really dire and devastating circumstances the gift of faith can still look out and find the sustaining hand of God through it all. That, in itself, is worthy of thanksgiving. So thanks be to God for people such as Martin Rinkart who embody such a life giving faith. May we all be strengthened and encouraged by it. And may you know the joy and strength, the solace and companionship, the generosity and compassion of Christ and of his abiding presence with you through all that life will bring.



***Ecumenical Community Thanksgiving Service***  
***Monday – November 22 – 7:00 p.m.***  
***St. John Lutheran Church***

You are invited to come to our Ecumenical Community Thanksgiving Service this year at St. John Lutheran on Monday, November 22, at 7:00 p.m. The service is sponsored by the congregations of St. John Lutheran, Our Lady of the Prairie Catholic Church, First Presbyterian Church, Redeemer Lutheran, West Union Lutheran and East Union Lutheran. Following the service, refreshments will be served.

The Thanksgiving Worship Service is also intended as an opportunity to remember the needs of others. The monetary offering taken during the service will go to support the local “Good Samaritan Fund” that provides help for transient people in our area. This fund is supported by our participating churches and our Thanksgiving offering is the main source of it’s annual income (make checks to “Good Samaritan Fund.”)

In addition, worshipers are also encouraged to support the Belle Plaine Food Shelf by bringing donations of nonperishable food items and/or providing monetary donations (make checks to Belle Plaine Food Shelf).

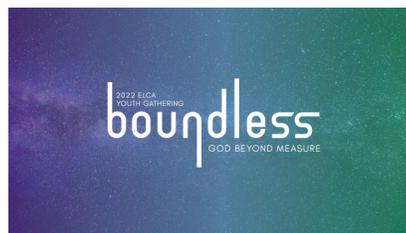
The sponsoring churches of our annual Ecumenical Service thank you for your participation and support and wish for all of you a Happy Thanksgiving!



***The annual W/ELCA Christmas Dinner*** for all Congregation members, family and friends will be held on Tuesday, December 7th in our Gathering area here at St. John. Social hour will begin at 6 with Dinner to follow at 6:30. A Ham and Roast beef dinner will be served by Cindy's Cafe. Ticket prices will be \$15.00. They will be available in the Church office starting November 15th and on Sundays Nov. 21 and 28 after the Church service.

A short program featuring local vocal artist Autumn Santovi will be our entertainment.

***The next meeting for the ELCA Youth Gathering*** is Sunday, November 7, at 5 p.m. The Gathering is next Summer in Minneapolis, July 24-28, for 8-12 graders. Contacts for this event are Kirk Franck and Molly Moonen.



# SUNDAY SCHOOL

## November Children's Ministry Update

In October, we finished up the lesson on the four friends helping a paralyzed man get to Jesus and started the parable Jesus tells about building your house on a rock. They discussed why it's important to build a solid foundation with our faith and how this will help us get through tougher times in our lives. This month, we will begin planning our Christmas Program.

Sunday School Students, Pre-K through 4th grade, will perform the Christmas program on **Sunday, December 12th** at 9:30am. If you would like to volunteer with our youth at St. John, but can't commit to teaching every Sunday, then the Christmas Season is an ideal time to sign up as a short term volunteer! By volunteering, you can help make this Christmas program one to remember for yourself, our children, and our congregation. If you are able to help with our Children's Christmas Program, please contact [youthsjlc@gmail.com](mailto:youthsjlc@gmail.com). We are in need of help with the following areas:

1. Costumes (inventory current costumes and order or make those that are needed)
2. Set / Props (build, set up and take down)
3. Music Assistant - play piano so Rachel can direct music
4. Classroom helpers - Assist teachers in any way to help direct the children (5 weeks commitment!)
5. Serve Jesus' birthday cake at coffee hour

### Important Dates:

**Nov. 7th: Christmas Program Casting** (roles will be sent home during Sunday School)

**Nov. 14th & 21st: Christmas Program Practice**

**Nov. 28th - NO CLASS - Thanksgiving break**

### Connect Update



This is by far the largest Connect class that we have had at St. John! We have changed the format a bit and are starting by meeting as a large group in the youth room, where we then break off into smaller groups to talk about our highs and lows of the week and read our bible story. So far we have covered, Creation and Noah's Arc. We are having a lot of great discussions and diving deeper into the gospel.

### Important Dates:

**Nov. 6th: NO CLASS - Service Project at Feed My Starving Children**

**Nov. 10th: Pizza 5:30 / Class 6:00**

**Nov. 17th: Pizza 5:30 / Class 6:00**

**Nov. 24th: NO CLASS - Thanksgiving Break**

# November 2021

## November Happenings at St. John

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1	2	3	4	5	6
	6:30p Boy Scout Meeting	11 Lutheran Home Service 1:30p Kingsway Service	6p Bus leaves for Feed My Starving Children 6:30p Adult Choir			6p Worship Service
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
8 & 10:30 Worship Services 9-15 Sunday School 5p National Youth Gathering meeting	6:30p Boy Scout Meeting		5:30p Pizza 6p Connect/Confirmation 6:30p Adult Choir			6p Worship Service
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
8 & 10:30 Worship Services 9-15 Sunday School 9:30 Council Executive meeting	6:30p Boy Scout Meeting	6:30p Cub Scout meeting	5:30p Pizza 6p Connect/Confirmation 6:30p Adult Choir	6:30p Church Council		12p Private Party in Gathering Area 6p Worship Service
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
8 & 10:30 Worship Services 9-15 Sunday School	7p Community Thanksgiving Service			Office Closed Thanksgiving	Office Closed	6p Worship Service
28	29	30				
8 & 10:30 Worship Services	6:30p Boy Scout Meeting					

# November 2021



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1	2	3	4	5	6
	Dana Baker Brett Holtbrook Andrea Jeurissen Josh Koepp Harlan Laabs Colt Oldenburg	Delana Eckblad John Hilgers Logan Schultz Elisa Theis	Maverick Borresen Gilbert Bristlin Albert Koepp Anita Lambrecht	Alyssa Baker Robert Schultz	Nicole Bauleke Angela Hoff Marcy Ritsch Samuel Schultz	
	8	9	10	11	12	13
Lincoln Kelm Annette Moylan Tom Stolee	Elise Davidson Thaine Maier	Carter Brink John Koepp Ellie Martin Olivia Petersen Val Peterson Michael Sirek	Elliot Lutterman Austin Mohlin Troy Shackle Raymond Stier	Darrel Schultz Shannon Swenson Gavin Theis	Arianna Hiles Bradley Pederson	
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
Josalyn Henning Shelly Trost	Hazel Husfeldt Chris Potter	Corwin Schroeder Carol Stoppelmann Elsie Wolff	Richard Koepp	Logan Anderson David Bungarden Katie Graff Skyler Jonason Justin Kruger Janene Meyer	Larry Behnke Susan Koenig	Paul Trandler
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
	Kristine Konarski Chris Ruppert Neal Williamson	Mallory Benner Karmen Grubn Jim Lange Jackson Nagel Thomas Nagel		Amy Rettig Kelly Shaughnessy	Shara Hiles Sawyer Kelm Marcy Leonard	Marv Dooden David Otto
28	29	30				
Blakely Buszmann Caleb Eppen April Westerfield	Virginia Bessel Cole Eggers Wendy Erhardt	Koben Hutchison Amy Stolee				

# Financial Corner

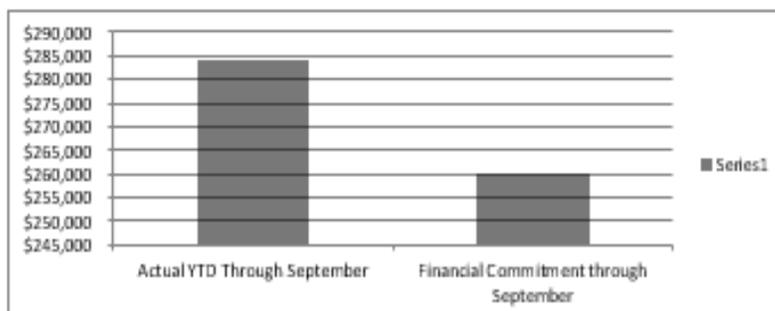
## St. John Financial Results Nine Months Ended September 30, 2021 and September 30, 2020

General Operating Fund				Year Over Year
	September 30, 2021	September 30, 2020		Increase (Decrease)
Income	\$ 284,188	\$ 251,687		13%
Expenses:				
Personnel	(153,119)	(224,420)		
Office	(13,179)	(14,638)		
Property & Maintenance	(30,672)	(29,740)		
Ministry	(8,737)	(14,784)		
Other	(3,662)	(2,782)		
Benevolence:				
Minneapolis Area Synod	(9,000)	(9,000)		
Camp Onomia	(2,250)	(2,000)		
Belle Plaine Fire Dept	(300)	-		
Lutheran Social Services	(1,500)	(1,000)		
World Hunger (2019)	-	(250)		
Net Receipts / (Expenditures)	\$ 61,769	\$ (46,927)		
Cash Balance at January 1 (excl. all loans)	\$ (82,735)	\$ (84,836)		
Net Income / (Expenditures)	61,769	(46,927)		
Misc. cash not affecting income	376	(222)		
Paycheck Protection Loan (2020)	-	54,839		
Loan from Building Fund (from 2018 & 2019)	-	45,500		
Loan from St. John Foundation (from 2014-2016)	54,656	54,114		
Cash Balance at September 30	\$ 34,066	\$ 22,468		

Building Fund			
Receipts	77,459	\$ 72,917	
Principal	(90,287)	(86,831)	
Interest	(4,753)	(9,209)	
(Loaned to)/Received from General Fund	44,500	10,000	
Net Receipts / (Disbursements)	\$ 26,919	\$ (13,123)	
Loan Balance at January 1	\$ 208,857	\$ 325,224	
Principal Payments	(90,287)	(86,831)	
Loan Balance at September 30	\$ 118,570	\$ 238,393	

### Actual Income Compared to 2021 Financial Commitment:

Actual YTD Through September	\$ 284,188
Financial Commitment through September	\$ 260,176





November 7 and 14, 2021 Ushers	
8:00 Service	10:30 Service
<b>Brent Schwichtenberg</b> Greg Schwichtenberg Katie Wermerskirchen Juls Robbins	<b>Chris &amp; Annette Moylan</b> Mike & Zach Olson Jason & Trevor Gruhn Steve Schroeder

November 21 and 28 2021 Ushers	
8:00 Service	10:30 Service
<b>Chris Schultz</b> Rob Schultz Mark Schultz Wayne Koepf	<b>Arvin &amp; Midge Bessel</b> Lee Sauter Bob Fairbanks Greg Rosario Daron Anderson

Acolytes for October 8:00 Service		
November 7	Téa Smith	Kenzie Koepf
November 14	Mason Bungarden	Austin Overline
November 21	Treyden Hiles	
November 28	Ethan Martin	Jackson Schroeder

Wednesday Night Kitchen Helpers		
November 3	<b>Feed My Starving Children Eat before you arrive</b>	
November 11	Ashley Schultz	Hope Lawler
November 17	David Bungarden	Rachel Kelm
November 24	<b>No Class— Thanksgiving Break</b>	

Wednesday Night Gathering Area Helpers		
November 3	<b>Feed My Starving Children</b>	
November 11		
November 17		
November 24	<b>No Class— Thanksgiving Break</b>	

CALLED TO SERVE THROUGH OUR GIVING	
<b>Offering Received the week of</b>	
<b>September 30– October 6</b>	<b>October 7-13</b>
General Fund—\$9,807	General Fund—\$6,473
Building Fund—\$3,270	Building Fund—\$1,760
<b>October 14-20</b>	<b>October 21-27</b>
General Fund—\$7,655	General Fund— \$5,241
Building Fund—\$2,029	Building Fund- \$1,035