

ST. JOHN LUTHERAN CHURCH MESSENGER

CALLED TO WORSHIP / COMMITTED TO SERVE / CONNECTED IN FAITH

October 2022

A monthly Publication of
St. John Lutheran Church

Worship Schedule

Saturday Worship

6:00 pm

Sunday Worship

8:00 & 9:15

9:15 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

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



Connect and Confirmation

Have started meeting.

The schedule is:

5:30 pm Pizza

6:00 pm Class starts



October 2

First Communion Instruction

5:00pm

October 9

First Communion Sunday

At Both Services



The 9th Grade
Confirmation Students will be
Confirmed on Sunday, October 30, at the
10:30 worship service

From Pastor Mark

As I write this, I am looking forward to our Mortgage Burning Celebration. I remember arriving here as a new pastor in November of 1998 and, at that time, sitting in on the Facilities Planning Committee's meeting. At that time, as I recall, accessibility was the item on the table. If you were in a wheelchair, you could get in the front door and then, good luck to you! You either had to go up or down stairs to get anywhere. And so there were a number of ideas about where to put an elevator. And from this accessibility question, other questions began to arise. As long as the congregation was going to spend money on an elevator, what other things might we need? How might we enhance our building to accommodate a growing ministry within a growing community?

We began to dream. We had no really adequate place to gather and fellowship. Our offices were small and limited with no room for growth. For awhile, we had another staff person here who we had to put in a storage closet. Our restrooms were small and cramped and unable to accommodate people with special access needs. Our music ministry had no dedicated place. We lacked adequate classrooms for a growing ministry with kids. Our kitchen and serving areas were limited to an outdated basement with no air conditioning (not to mention accessibility).

What began with accessibility began to grow into a larger and more complete picture. We engaged a consultant and did a feasibility study with the congregation. Everything was on the table at that time, including possibly bumping out the front of the Sanctuary to provide room for a choir, bell choir, etc. Through this process, the congregation showed a willingness and a financial capacity to engage in such a project. The top thing that came back from the survey was the comment that we felt we were becoming a more friendly and welcoming congregation. We also learned that if we touched the altar in front of the Sanctuary, we were dead. A lot of members had grown up since they were children looking over the top of the pew at that altar and we learned that we had better not mess with that! Along with that, the cost per square foot for remodeling in a classic space like the Sanctuary was very expensive so it was decided not to do anything in the Sanctuary and to focus our efforts on the other needs outside of the Sanctuary.

The green light was given to pursue an architect and begin to work out a plan to provide for the many areas of improvement that the congregation desired. A model of a proposed plan was set up in the entrance of the church and the congregation voted to proceed. Some issues arose with the architect we were working with and so we interviewed another architect who looked at the planned model we had and, based upon the things we wanted, asked for a week to consider and come back to us. He came back with a completely different layout, the one that we have today. Once we looked at it, we all thought, "Of course! This makes perfect sense!" The new plan was brought forward and the congregation agreed.

The proposed project came in at 2.1 million dollars. We engaged a consultant to facilitate an initial three year Capital Appeal to get commitments and raise money to pay for our new addition. A number of different teams were set up that engaged the congregation in a variety of ways. The result was a solid financial backing that ensured the project would move forward. Ground was broken. A portion of the old addition from 1971 was taken down, along with an old, stone house that stood where the Gathering Area now is, so we could expand northward. The foundations were laid and a new structure began to rise. I must say that I was very impressed with the thoughtful way our architect tied the new addition onto the old classic structure of our Sanctuary. The brick matched, windows and architectural features were made to enhance and complement the graceful, class Sanctuary. The north wall of the Sanctuary was brought inside of the new Gathering Area, creating a unique way of tying the two structures together. It was exciting to see how things were coming together! I remember the architect asking that no one look into the Gathering Area until the lights were put in because they were meant to really complement and enhance the space, and they certainly do!

Finally, the new addition was completed. We began the process of moving in. We held a special service of Dedication in the new Gathering Area on November 2, 2003, including an afternoon open house where the community was invited. Many folks from town came and admired the gracious new space we had built.

After taking this big step of faith, over the years we have engaged in five more three year Capital Appeals to secure commitments to keep paying our mortgage. Each time, the congregation faithfully responded. For most of those years we paid \$12,672 a month. Finally, and with the help of a few generous legacy gifts, we were recently able to hit the finish line and pay off our mortgage. Yay!

Over these years, many new members have joined our congregation. For them, the “new addition” has always been there. But for those of us who go back far enough, we remember what it was like before the addition was added on and we know the real blessings and possibilities for continued growth that it provides. There is really no comparison between what was here before and what we have now. I think that our Gathering Area is the nicest public space within the whole community. It certainly provides great space for regular gatherings as well as special occasions like weddings and funerals, showers and anniversaries, to name a few. People in the community think we have a great space too. Pre-Covid the school regularly used our Gathering Area for daylong class retreats and I’m sure they will want to come back again. And this Summer, on a blistering hot day during VBS on the Farm at Prairie Oaks that involved a number of church communities, the whole group of 200 kids and volunteers came to our church and it was a perfect and gracious spot to accommodate them. We are blessed so that we can be a blessing.

Now that we have paid off the mortgage, what does the future hold? It’s time to dream again. How do we want to grow and change and develop as a congregation? What will St. John and our mission field of Belle Plaine look like in five years? In twenty years? What needs are there to be met, both within our congregation and as part of our community? How can we reach out and embrace the future that God would have for us here?

These are the questions that we will want to be engaging in now. In the meantime, we take this opportunity to pause and celebrate together the big step of faith that this congregation took to provide the spacious and gracious space that we have. And we look forward now to continuing to take steps of faith together into the future. Thanks be to God!

Unapproved St. John Lutheran Church Council Minutes
September 19, 2022

President Ben Aust called the meeting to order at 6:35 p.m.

Present:

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

Opening Devotions:

Pastor Mark shared a parable from Matthew Chapter 25 and a prayer.

Approval of Minutes:

Members of Council reviewed the minutes from August 18, 2022 Council Meeting. Motion was made, seconded and carried to approve the meeting minutes from August. A motion was made, seconded and carried to approve the agenda for September 19, 2022.

Pastor Mark's Report:

We are coming off the quieter season of Summer in parish life and the wheels are turning on a busy Fall together. My office is currently stacked with various piles representing various things that we are gearing up for. A sample of these items include such things as:

Coordinating with the Mortgage Burning Committee, the Polka Band and the Office Staff in getting ready for the special service and celebration that we are hosting on September 11th.

Planning, communicating with, and coordinating with office staff, parents, students and leaders for the kick off of our Connect and Confirmation year with an orientation meeting for everyone on Wednesday, September 14. The orientation format begins with a time of registration, payment of fees, gathering of program specific schedules and materials and sign ups for help with pizza service and worship helper activities including acolyting, ushering and reading. The next segment involves a comprehensive orientation for both Connect and Confirmation programs in the Sanctuary. The third component is breaking into separate programs for program specific followup.

Letters are out to prospective members for a new member orientation on September 18 with a new member welcome Sunday for all participants the following week.

Coordination and communication with the Children's team and office staff for Rally Sunday on September 18. During the 9:15 service we will have a Backpack Blessing for children of all ages, distribution of Bible story books to first graders and Lutheran Study Bibles to fifth graders and a recognition and installation of all Sunday School, Connect and Confirmation volunteers.

Postcards are out to all fifth graders and parents for a First Communion session on the evening of October 2, followed by a First Communion Sunday for all participants on October 9 at both services.

Letters are out communicating with all ninth graders and parents for an evening on September 25 when we students will make their sash for Confirmation Sunday, get measured for a gown, have their picture taken and receive a faith statement and Bible verse instruction sheet. I will be meeting individually with all of our ninth graders after the second service for the next three Sundays to review their faith statements before we write them up and publish them in the bulletin. Communication will also be going out in early October to all ninth graders regarding Confirmation weekend, beginning on Saturday morning with time for picture taking, rehearsal, gifts and recognition to our students and leaders and a special brunch for confirmands and their families featuring a special speaker. The Confirmands will be Confirmed the following day (Reformation Sunday) at a special service for them at 10:30 a.m.

I have met with our Small Group Faith Formation team who have graciously agreed to serve as a "reboot" team to contact our worship service groups, update our lists, and plan to get things up and running again. Our ushers will begin passing plates again on Rally Sunday, September 18. We will resume people coming forward to be served Communion with the small cups in trays on Sunday, September 25. Readers will also come online on this Sunday, as well. Thanks to our "reboot" team, to Audrey in the church office and, of course, to our various worship service teams

for their help in beginning these groups service again.

The Children's Team is planning on having the first Sunday of some select months as a special kid's Sunday that will have such things as a children's sermon and noisy offering. The first of these is scheduled for October 2.

A morning and evening Bible study on the first Tuesday of each month, beginning on October 11, is in the planning phase. I have had some discussions about this with Melanie Fogarty. More to be forthcoming about this late.

At our regular monthly get together in October, I will be starting to coordinate with our other pastoral colleagues in the area for our Fall Ecumenical Community Thanksgiving Service that will take place this year on Monday, November 21. Location and details will follow.

Of course, regular and continuing duties continue, as well, including weekly and monthly communication and coordination with staff, program leaders, families and the congregation; pastoral activities including baptismal, wedding and funeral meetings and facilitation, visitation at hospitals and homes, formal and informal counseling sessions; preparation, communication and coordination of worship services and sermons, etc.

On a personal note, Sue and I enjoyed a week away in August. We traveled to Door County and the Upper Peninsula of Michigan. I've never been there and discovered some truly lovely and even spectacular scenery. It was a great time away and I would like to go back there again someday!

Staff Reports:

Custodial:

Curt reported the television has been installed in the gathering area. Connection with the office is expected later this fall.

Treasurer:

Robin walked through the monthly report noting the maintenance agreement for the sprinklers was paid.

Transfers:

No Transfers in or out this month.

Ongoing Business:

A discussion was had to delay Strategic Planning until we enter the interim phase of 2023. A motion was made, seconded and approved to postpone Strategic Planning to a future date.

Council member Albert Koepp reported on Fall Restart activities. Pastor Mark advised that confirmation planning has started and students will be integrated with volunteers for reading and ushering.

The Building and Grounds Committee met last week and have prepared a list of needed repairs with park ball estimates. This information will be communicated via the newsletter and television.

The Mortgage Burning Committee reported that it was a beautiful day with wonderful music. The event was well attended. The feedback was good with compliments on the food and burning sticks activity. About 60 hay rides were given. And expenses were less than \$3,000.

New Business:

Pastor's Healthcare

Robin shared that the Silver Plus plan increased slightly from 2021. A motion was made, seconded and approved to continue the 2021 contribution rate of 20%.

Ministry Team Updates:

Stewardship Committee - nothing new to report.

Buildings and Grounds Committee - see update under Ongoing Business.

Personnel Committee - met tonight regarding upcoming reviews.

Children's Ministry Team - Laura Melgren and Chelsea Hutchins will be co-chairs.

Small Group/Faith Formation Committee - see update under Ongoing Business.

Worship and Music Committee - nothing new to report.

Technology and Communications Committee - nothing new to report.

Motion was made, seconded, and carried to adjourn the meeting at 8:03 p.m. Meeting was adjourned followed by the Lord's prayer.

Respectfully Submitted,
Anne Herrmann, Secretary

October 2022



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
						1 Jim Eggers Brenda Schultz
2 Ethel Beuch David Latzke Wyatt Schort	3 Jeffrey Hanson Wanda Overline Kelsey Schroeder Caden Vycital	4 Genise Aretz Ron Gerres Jay Schmit Marie Stier Hanna Tharaldson	5 Cameron Hanek Kennedy Koch Jeremy Nagorski	6 Austin Eyrich Carson Herrmann Brenda Nyblom	7 Justin Doebbeling Chelsea Hutchison Lillianne Kahle Adhanna Sammons	8 Jaelyn Borresen Charles Davidson Tessa Menke
9 Shane Theas	10 Hallie Creighton Kolin Stier	11 Mike Herrmann Greg Schwichtenberg	12 Ezden Henning Austyn Holm	13 Brandon Legg Lois Schmidt	14 Brendan Eyrich Tyler Grieves	15 Alecia Meuleners Jonathan Schmidt
16 Marc Chevalier Zackary Costello Derrick Graff Jessianna Kluver Hailee Sammons Mikkel Schmidt Lori Wolff	17 Melissa Davidson McKenzie Koepp Richard Rickaby Scott Ruud	18 Holden Kelm Andrew Winterfeldt	19 Khloe Hager Laura Schaefer	20 Sara Fahey Everly Maier Michael Nagel Carol Rodriguez Emma Stringer	21 Joel Hansen Josselyn Lopez Dale Meierbachtol	22 Hunter Olson
23 Aria Johnson Lamoyne Mattick Mark Swenson	24 Jeff Eppen Elizabeth Nagel	25 Hanna Fairbanks Elizabeth Jackels Scott Koepp Tianna Sammons Trena Williamson Audrey Zellman	26 Tori Schroeder	27 Elie Oldenburg	28 Bruce Arola Ashely Olson	29 Ethan Bessel Easton Cecka Mandy Posthumus Desmond Tupy
30 Wayne Koepp Jeremy Schwartz	31 Karilyn Hanson Tristan Holbrook Michelle Melheim					

October 2022

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
						1
2 8:00 & 9:15 Worship Services 9:15 Sunday School 5:00pm 1 st Communion Class	3 6:30pm Boy Scout meeting	4 11:00 Lutheran Home Service 1:30pm Kingsway Service	5 5:30pm Pizza 6:00pm Connect/Confirmation 6:30pm Adult Choir	6	7	8 6:00pm Worship Service
9 1 st Communion Sunday 8:00 & 9:15 Worship Services 9:15 Sunday School	10 6:30pm Boy Scout meeting	11 5:30 pm WELCA meeting 7:00pm Book Club	12 5:30pm Pizza 6:00pm Connect/Confirmation 6:30pm Adult Choir	13	14	15 6:00pm Worship Service
16 8:00 & 9:15 Worship Services 9:15 Sunday School 10:30 Council Executive Meeting 1:00pm Girl Scout meeting 2:30pm Eagle Scout Ceremony	17 6:30pm Boy Scout meeting	18	19	20 6:30pm Church Council	21	22 6:00pm Worship Service
23 8:00 & 9:15 Worship Services	24 6:30pm Boy Scout meeting	25	26 5:30pm Pizza 6:00pm Confirmation No Connect 6:30pm Adult Choir	27	28	29 9:00 Confirmation pictures and brunch 6:00pm Worship Service
30 Confirmation Sunday 8:00 Worship Services 9:15 Sunday School 10:30 Confirmation Service	31 6:30pm Boy Scout meeting					



Congratulations to all of our 9th Grade Confirmation Students who will be Confirmed on Sunday, October 30, at the 10:30 worship service

The 2022 Confirmands are:

<i>Brody Lee Bessel</i>	<i>McKenzie Kay Koepf</i>	<i>Tessa Marie Menke</i>	<i>Driana Jean Schultz</i>
<i>Makenna Shaughnessy Gerres</i>	<i>Hannah Maye Konopacki</i>	<i>Maxum G. Meyer</i>	<i>Ruby Catherine Schultz</i>
<i>Isaac Matthew Hanson</i>	<i>Abigail Rose Lawler</i>	<i>Evan Lyle Muehlenhardt</i>	<i>Henrik J. Shutes</i>
<i>Treyden Christian Hiles</i>	<i>Isabella Elizabeth</i>	<i>Joseph David Petersen</i>	<i>Téa Marie Smith</i>
<i>Abigail Lynn Johnson</i>	<i>Ethan Thomas Martin</i>	<i>Jackson Curtis Schroeder</i>	<i>Caden Lee Vycital</i>
			<i>Jaydn Nicole Williamson</i>

CALLED TO SERVE THROUGH OUR GIVING	
Offering Received the week of	
August 25– August 31 General Fund—\$4,893 Building Fund—\$555	September 1– September 7 General Fund—\$10,810 Building Fund—\$1,630
September 8– September 14 General Fund—\$4,542 Building Fund—\$1,520	September 15– September 21 General Fund— \$6,160 Building Fund- \$1,745
September 22– September 28 General Fund—\$3,279 Building Fund—\$1,195	



October Children's Ministry Update

We have about 90 children registered for Sunday School!

Wow! There are no words to say, but thank you. Thank you for your support and trust in us for providing your child with the great news of our loving God. We're so excited to see what this year holds for our youth and their faith. Thank you to all of our volunteers for your time and dedication to help children learn the story in a variety of ways--we couldn't do this without you!

Sunday School Update:

In the first lesson in September, the Sunday School kids learned about the story of Abraham and Sarah from the book of Genesis. They learned that God gives us directions and we must listen carefully. In October, they will continue to learn about how God surprises us and makes good things happen, and He can also bring miracles through unexpected people.

Important Dates:

October 2nd: Children's Sermon & Noisy Offering during the 9:15am service

October 16th: Sunday School Children Sing 8am Service

October 23rd: No Sunday School due to MEA weekend

Connect Update:

Upcoming dates to remember!

October 2nd: First Communion Instruction at 5pm

October 9th: First Communion Sunday

October 19th: NO CLASS for 5th and 6th graders due to MEA.

Parents: we now have a single point of contact for all 5th & 6th grade Connect related questions!!

Please email us at: connect@stjohnbelleplaine.org

Parents Update:

We are always looking for volunteers to help with youth ministry. Whether you can help in a classroom, sign up as a Christmas program volunteer, or help us organize other fun family events, we appreciate you sharing your time and talents with us. It is so rewarding to help your children in their faith journey. Please see a youth ministry team member for more info on how you can help.

Please email youthsjlc@gmail.com if you need to reach out to the Children's Ministry team.

Book Club



The book club will be holding an organizational meeting on Tuesday, October 11 at 7:00 pm.

If you have questions or are interested in joining, please contact Peg Longhenry. Email peglonghenry@gmail.com or call her at 952-873-6778.

October 2 Worship Assistants	
Coffee Hour: Anne & Dan Herrmann	Pizza Helpers: Cassie Gerres & Holly Stier
Altar Guild: Lana Hanson & Sue Stier	Pizza Patrol: Bree Weckman & Ann Carstens

8:00	9:15
Acolytes: Austin Overline & Meredith Carstens	Acolytes: Adriane Nelson & Mariel Hilgers
Greeters:	Greeters:
Lay Readers:	Lay Readers:
Communion Assistants:	Communion Assistants:
Ushers: Albert Koepp, Dorothy Koepp, Kevin Koepp, Matt Stier, Bruce Volek, Tim Carlson, Josh Koepp, Kolin Stier, William Posthumus	Ushers: Brent Koepp, Mitchell Koepp, Jackson Stauffacher, Justin Stauffacher, Emma martin, Ellie Schultz

October 9 Worship Assistants	
Coffee Hour: Teresa Latzke	Pizza Helpers: Nicole Koepp & Ashley Schultz
Altar Guild: Renee Meuleners & Wendy Theis	Pizza Patrol: Ben Aust & Bryn Davis

8:00	9:15
Acolytes: Caleb Smith & Connor Vycital	Acolytes: Emma Martin & Adriane Nelson
Greeters:	Greeters:
Lay Readers:	Lay Readers:
Communion Assistants:	Communion Assistants:
Ushers: Brent Schwichtenberg, Greg Schwichtenberg, Juls Robbins, Austin Overline, Hunter Olson	Ushers: Chris & Annette Moylan, Mike & Zach Olson, Jason & Trevor Gruhn, Steve Schroeder

October 16 Worship Assistants	
Coffee Hour: Angela Faucette	Pizza Helpers: No Pizza– MEA
Altar Guild: Renee Meuleners & Wendy Theis	Pizza Patrol: No Pizza

8:00	9:15
Acolytes: Luke Schultz & Mason Bungarden	Acolytes: Will Posthumus & Emma Martin
Greeters:	Greeters:
Lay Readers:	Lay Readers:
Communion Assistants:	Communion Assistants:
Ushers: Brent Schwichtenberg, Greg Schwichtenberg, Juls Robbins, Adriane Nelson	Ushers: Chris & Annette Moylan, Mike & Zach Olson, Jason & Trevor Gruhn, Steve Schroeder

October 23 Worship Assistants	
Coffee Hour: Randy & Debbie Kruger	Pizza Helpers: Susie Steinhagen & Heather Kes
Altar Guild: Renee Meuleners & Wendy Theis	Pizza Patrol: Julie Oldenburg & Mandy Posthumus

8:00	9:15
Acolytes:	Acolytes:
Greeters:	Greeters:
Lay Readers: Luke Schultz	Lay Readers:
Communion Assistants:	Communion Assistants:
Ushers: Chris Schultz, Luke Schultz, Logan Schultz, Rob Schultz, Mark Schultz, Wayne Schultz, Aaron Leonard, Domico Veerkamp	Ushers: Lee Sauter, Bob Fairbanks, Greg Rosario, Daron Anderson

October 30 Worship Assistants	
Coffee Hour: Randy & Debbie Kruger	Pizza Helpers: No Pizza– Feed My Starving Children
Altar Guild: Renee Meuleners & Wendy Theis	Pizza Patrol:

8:00	10:30– Confirmation Service
Acolytes:	Acolytes:
Greeters:	Greeters:
Lay Readers:	Lay Readers:
Communion Assistants:	Communion Assistants:
Ushers: Chris Schultz, Luke Schultz, Logan Schultz, Rob Schultz, Mark Schultz, Wayne Schultz, Aaron Leonard, Tom Nagel, Jack Nagel	Ushers: Lee Sauter, Bob Fairbanks, Greg Rosario, Daron Anderson

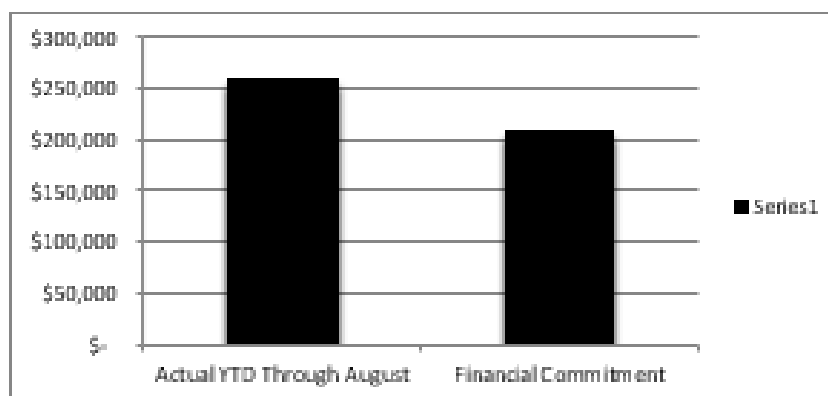
Financial Corner

St. John Financial Results Eight Months Ending August 31, 2022 and August 31, 2021

	General Operating Fund		Year Over Year Increase (Decrease)
	August 31, 2022	August 31, 2021	
Income	\$ 261,360	\$ 260,042	1%
Expenses:			
Personnel	(143,605)	(135,843)	
Office	(11,412)	(12,027)	
Property & Maintenance	(29,928)	(27,064)	
Ministry	(16,895)	(9,146)	
Other	(4,963)	(3,352)	
Benevolence:			
Minneapolis Area Synod	(9,800)	(8,000)	
Camp Onomia	(2,250)	(2,000)	
Belle Plaine Fire Dept	(300)	(300)	
Lutheran Social Services	(1,000)	(1,000)	
Net Receipts / (Expenditures)	\$ 41,217	\$ 61,310	
Cash Balance at January 1 (excl. all loans)	\$ 7,829	\$ (82,735)	
Net Income / (Expenditures)	41,217	61,310	
Misc. cash not affecting income	202	377	
Loan from Building Fund (from 2018 & 2019)	-	44,500	
Loan from St. John Foundation (from 2014-2016)	-	54,611	
Cash Balance at August 31	\$ 49,248	\$ 78,063	

Actual Income Compared to 2022 Financial Commitment:

Actual YTD Through August	\$ 261,360
Financial Commitment	\$ 210,493



**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