

# ST. JOHN LUTHERAN CHURCH MESSENGER

CALLED TO WORSHIP / COMMITTED TO SERVE / CONNECTED IN FAITH

August 2020

A monthly Publication of  
St. John Lutheran Church

## **Worship Schedule**

Wednesday night drive in  
worship starting at 6:30  
located at the Stier bus lot.

Sunday Worship 9:00 a.m.

### Pastors

Pastor Mark Johnson  
Pastor Sarah Timian

### Office Staff

Jillmarie Stich  
Audrey Zellman

### Treasurer

Rae Fimon

### Custodians

Curt & Cheryl Johnson

### Organists

Eileen Hanlon  
Diane West

### Choir Director

Bri Bergstrom

### Accompanist

Sheila Schmidt

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# Join Us IN Worship

## **Worship at St. John**

### **Sunday mornings at 9:00 a.m. starting August 2**

We are open for one service on Sunday on a limited basis and according to current health guidelines. Persons who are sick or have symptoms should remain at home. Use your best judgment and good sense to keep yourself and others safe. We ask everyone to wear a mask (bring your own or we will provide you with one). Ushers will meet and seat you respecting proper distancing. Please arrive no more than fifteen minutes prior to worship for the ushers to seat you.

### **Wednesday evening drive in Worship**

We have a drive in worship on Wednesday evenings at 6:30 p.m. at the Stier bus parking lot. If it's hot, turn on the AC and tune us in on your radio dial at 99.9 FM. If it's not, roll the window down and enjoy our outdoor Summer worship.

### **Watch our Service on Facebook**

We are taping our Wednesday worship and it will be available on Facebook Sunday mornings starting at 8:00 a.m.

### **Activities at St. John**

Baptisms, weddings and funerals are being conducted on a limited basis and according to current health guidelines. Contact our pastors for further information. Other activities are suspended at this time. Stay tuned for further updates. All activities are subject to the State of Minnesota's guidance and directives.

## *From Pastor Mark*

As I gaze out my window today, we have Minnesota at it's finest. It's one of those beautiful, temperate, partly cloudy days when you just want to be outside. Like the old Psalmist put it, "This is the day that the Lord has made, let us rejoice and be glad in it!"

Amid these idyllic days of Summer, we continue to live with uncertainty. Here we are coming into the beginning of August and wondering how things will continue to develop in our State of Minnesota. We have been hosting our outdoor Drive In Service on Wednesday evenings at 6:30 p.m. at the Stier bus parking lot for a number of weeks now, and that's been going well. We've had a few hot days and a few nice ones. Thank you to the crew who helps set up, usher, provide music and record our service.

As I write this, we are about to host our first in-person worship here on the first Sunday of August. It will be different. People who are sick or have symptoms should remain at home. Please use your best judgment to keep yourself and others safe. We are asking everyone to bring a mask or we will provide you with one. Access to the building will be only through the Chestnut St. and North Entrance doors. Ushers will meet and seat everyone at a proper distance and dismiss everyone after the service, as well. We ask that folks exit the building after the service to avoid crowding. Meeting and greeting can be done outside.

A good deal of planning has gone into providing a safe environment for our Sunday worship service. We had a number of people in last evening who are providing help and support for our service so we can all get on the same page. I believe we have planned and organized well for this opportunity and I am looking forward to seeing how it goes. It's been a long time since March and I miss seeing folks.

Of course, we continue to record our weekly worship services and post them on our Facebook and Website. I'm not a big Facebook guy. However, I go to our Website at [www.stjohnbelleplaine.org](http://www.stjohnbelleplaine.org) and scroll down the right hand side of the page and click on "View on Facebook" just below the picture. A screen comes up that says, "Video not available." However, right under those words it says, "View on Facebook." I click on that and, boom, I'm in. So, you can see the service even if you aren't on Facebook.

We, along with many other churches in our Southwest Metro Conference, are still in a holding pattern in regard to Fall programming. We are waiting to see the Governor's pronouncement about schools and also what our local school's plans will be. In the meantime, we are looking at alternatives to provide our programs in different ways through this time. It is good that we live in a day and time when we have a variety of options.

We have also resumed, in a limited capacity, providing for baptisms, weddings and funerals. Families have been working with the pastors as we make arrangements for these occasions. Other types of informal gatherings, such as showers etc., are not being hosted in our building at this time.

Of course, all of these things depend upon how circumstances continue to play out in our State. We will continue to follow the Department of Health's guidelines and respect the Governor's proclamations. The bottom line is, we want to love and take care of each other in the best way that we can.

Continue to hold us in your prayers, as we will you.

## *From Pastor Sarah*

### HARVEST

Over the course of the summer, I've written about planting seeds, growing, and waiting. Now, here we are in August. It's time for the harvest.

So, how did it go? Well, some things turned out really well—like lettuce and radishes. Some things didn't work so well—like just about everything else. To be honest, this result was better than I expected, and I've been reflecting on the metaphor of planting, growing, and harvesting as I have watched this literal process take place.

There is excitement when the project you begin becomes what you hope. I've enjoyed some delicious salads that tasted even better for the work that went into them. There is disappointment in watching a project fail. I learned a lot from that, too, and from those lessons I know to try something different next time.

Sometimes projects or ideas fail. I think we've all had some of those—I know I have. The vision you had doesn't materialize, or the resources or people needed don't show up. Sometimes other projects get handed to you and your own end up being put aside. It can be disappointing.

There are projects and ideas that I've watched succeed, though, too, and that's worth remembering as well. Sometimes you get to just run with your inspiration and watch it blossom, or others join in and the project becomes something even better than you had thought it could be.

I mentioned last month that Jesus often used crops and plants to describe the Kingdom of Heaven and to teach the crowds of people he encountered. Since then, one of those parables has appeared in our weekly lectionary—The Parable of the Sower.

“<sup>3</sup>And [Jesus] told them many things in parables, saying: ‘Listen! A sower went out to sow. <sup>4</sup>And as he sowed, some seeds fell on the path, and the birds came and ate them up. <sup>5</sup>Other seeds fell on rocky ground, where they did not have much soil, and they sprang up quickly, since they had no depth of soil. <sup>6</sup>But when the sun rose, they were scorched; and since they had no root, they withered away. <sup>7</sup>Other seeds fell among thorns, and the thorns grew up and choked them. <sup>8</sup>Other seeds fell on good soil and brought forth grain, some a hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty. <sup>9</sup>Let anyone with ears listen!’”

—Matthew 13:3-9

What goes into the success or failure of something? How do we grow into the Kingdom of Heaven and what does that harvest look like? How do we live in the meantime?

These are all questions for us to consider as we begin this next season of the year. Our next big project at St. John will be figuring out what the beginning of the programming year looks like in this new reality. In addition to Worship Services, we're talking about Sunday School, Connect, Confirmation, New Members, and everything else that usually starts in September. We—every one of us—will need to ask ourselves how we do that faithfully and safely. This will be a big project with a lot of parts to it, and we will need everyone on board to ensure our best chance of success.

Unapproved St. John Lutheran Church Council Minutes  
July 16, 2020

President Matt Stier called the meeting to order at 6:36 p.m.

**Present:**

x	Pastor Mark	x	Pastor Sarah	x	Matt Stier	x	Jim Eggers
x	Angie Kahle	x	Rae Fimon	x	Albert Koepp	x	Wendy Theis
X	Mya Holzemer	X	Sue Koenig	x	Chris Zellman		Chris Stier
	Bob Fairbanks	x	Curt Johnson		Jennifer Nagorski		

**Opening Devotions:** Pastor Mark shared a devotional prayer

**Approval of Minutes:** Members of Council reviewed the minutes from the June 18, 2020 Council Meeting. Motion was made, seconded and carried to approve the meeting minutes.

**Pastor Mark's Report:**

**Worship Services** - We have begun our Drive In Worship Services on Wednesday evenings at 6:30 p.m. at the Stier Bus parking lot. So far, we have picked some warm weather days! In fact, on July 8 we cancelled the outdoor service due to a Heat Advisory and with the concern to keep everyone safe. Those coming out on our warm evenings are enjoying them. A big thank you to our staff and crew and musicians and Stier bus who allow us to put these services on.

We have formed a Re-Opening Team and are working to finalize details on providing an in-person worship service on Sunday mornings. To give you an idea of the details we have been working on, I am also attaching a Re-Opening notes checklist for your perusal. We are doing our best together to provide a safe worship experience for all those who choose to attend.

We continue to record our weekly services and post them online on Sunday mornings on our Facebook and Website.

We continue to provide weekly Scripture and Devotional readings online. We also mail some of these out to folks who prefer receiving them that way.

We are continuing to work out details with the city on broadcasting our weekly service on the local cable access channel.

We are in touch with Activity Directors at the Lutheran Home and Kingsway to see if we can, perhaps, broadcast a monthly service there, if circumstances and technology allow.

**Baptisms / Weddings / Funerals** - To date, we have had a few, small, family gatherings for baptisms in the church. We have requested masks and respect distance and it has gone well.

We have had one funeral for Bill and Marlene Schultz on July 1. There were three sibling groups that sat in their own space in the sanctuary and wore masks. There was no visitation and no meal afterward. Three other families are waiting and considering what might be best for them.

We had one wedding in June that rescheduled for June of next year. There is one wedding in August which will be held outdoors. There are two scheduled for September and I am in contact with those couples and working on arrangements with them. Of course, it's hard to say what the circumstances will be like in September, but we are trying to do the best we can.

**Strategic Planning** - I have been in contact with the two consultants we were planning on meeting with before the pandemic hit, Jim Weckworth from The Joshua Group and John Clark from the James Company, just to let them know that we are still interested in pursuing a strategic plan. We have some big issues before us: As we conclude our mortgage, being ready with a clear plan for investing in our future mission and ministry and staffing; making wise decisions around our property assets; assessing our vision and needs not only in the short three to five year term but also

asking where we see ourselves twenty or thirty years from now. With such big and important considerations we agreed that it would be important and necessary to engage with our members thoroughly, through such things as surveys and face to face encounters, in order to gather input, make everyone feel included and heard, and use the gathered data to assemble a clear strategy to move us forward together into our best future. It will take some time and input simply to clarify what questions we want to ask and in what ways we want to engage our members. That said, we agreed that we cannot adequately engage our congregation members under our current limitations. We think it best to wait until we can do such an important activity for our congregation's future in the safest and most productive way.

**Personnel** - The Personnel team will be contacting our staff for their annual reviews and will have reports as part of our council's agenda for our August meeting.

**Fall Planning** - It's still difficult to say what circumstances will be like in the Fall, but we are discussing ideas and options for Fall Events. We will need to be in dialogue with our Children's Team, Small Group Leaders and Helpers, etc. to determine the best way(s) to provide appropriate programming.

### **Pastor Sarah's Report:**

**Online Ministry**—Worship services and updates continue to be posted as a way to stay connected to the St. John community.

**Confirmation**—An email has been sent to the incoming 7<sup>th</sup> Grade Confirmation Class regarding the programming for this fall. While we don't know what that will look like yet, we are still hoping to organize the class into Small Groups and are currently seeking leaders.

**Holy Trinity Supply Distribution**—Holy Trinity Lutheran Church in Minneapolis has been serving as a collection and distribution site for supplies to those in their neighborhood affected by the events in May and June. St. John has set up a collection area for supplies for anyone who wishes to donate items but won't be making a trip to Minneapolis themselves (a list of needed supplies is posted on the collection cart). I have begun going there on Mondays and taking any supplies that are dropped off at St. John with me.

**Additional Ministries**—Baptisms and funerals have resumed as well as marriage planning and preparation meetings for weddings this fall. Since baptisms, weddings, and funerals can more easily predict and/or limit attendance, these have been able to be resumed following physical distancing guidelines and recommendations of the ELCA, CDC, and MN Health organizations with the adjustments needed. Worship services will require more planning and organization. The Re-Opening Committee has begun to look at the supplies, procedures, and personnel (e.g. ushers and volunteers) that will be needed for these larger and less predictable in-building services.

**Ongoing Items**—Preparation continues for sermons and worship leadership, newsletter articles, and other communications. Meetings with ministry teams and staff have resumed either on a virtual platform (e.g. Zoom) or in a socially distanced capacity.

### **Staff Report: Custodial Updates:**

**Hayden House:** Updates to interior painting, changed some light bulbs, renter put AC unit in window, moved utilities to her name and will mow the grass herself. Moved in on the 10th of July.

**Electrical:** Entry lights are now LED, Glass window now has LED lights, and other lights have been repaired.

**Flower Bed:** Needs to be weeded and fixed up, adding wood chips or rock, changing flowers in the cross to perennials, will check to see if local boy or girl scouts would like to do it for a project.

**Glass:** Stain glass windows will be replaced with tempered glass. Bid came in at \$16,000. Window sills will need repair as well. Council moved to approve the bid to repair the stained glass windows, seconded, and carries.

**Lift Pump:** Has been repaired

**Sprinkler System:** Annual inspection has been completed and maintenance done as needed.

**Air Conditioning:** Of the 7 AC units, 2 are not working, looking to repair soon

**Doors:** all 3 doors that needed repair are now working

**Church Reopening:** Work has been done with marking, measuring, signage and taping and labeling for prep to re-open.

**FM Transmitter:** Is in, but will work on getting it to work. The Cologne Fire Department had borrowed their to St. Johns. St. Johns will make a donation of \$100 to the Cologne Fire relief association for allowing us to borrow theirs. Motion made, seconded, and carries.

**Camera System:** Will be ready to go soon. Looking at how we can use it to live stream services.

**Treasurer:** Rae presented the June financial reports for the General fund and Building fund. Building Fund is down

# August 2020



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
						1 Sherni Dandurand
2 Andi Otting Adam Schmidt Todd Theis	3 Emmaleah Cecka Ethan Hoffman Diane Konarski Emmett Stoutland Travis Zellman	4 Melissa Hagen Lainey Schwartz Tyler Stolee	5 Jim Koonst Samuel Schmidt	6 Julian Koepp	7 Brody Bessel Jack Buerkle	8
9 Michael Altringer	10 Lynn Johnson Irene Koepp	11 Lila Bungarden Mindy Chevalier Jeanette Fries Emma Koepp Justin Overline	12 Lucas Dandurand Tea Smith	13 Linda Jeurissen Karla Koepp Ken Theis	14 Rachel Kelm Journey Whetzel	15 Dale Tesch
16 Heather Hornaman Katelynn Swenson Susan Volek	17 Hailey Oestreich	18 Zachary Fogarty Becky Luskey Anna Muehlenhardt Dan Sybrant	19 Dave Laabs	20 Angela Faucette Trevor Hutchison Scarlette Nagorski Brenna Veerkamp	21 LaVonne Belnke Mason Bungarden Rae Fimon Davina Stavnes Troy Weiland	22 Michael Schoenbauer Jean Soller
23 Willard Laabs	24 Cheryl Nagel	25 Teagan Dolly Abigail Meier Jerold Stauffacher	26 Josephine Berg Carter Fairbanks Margaret Lawson Sarah Vycital David Zellman	27 Nathan Korbel	28 Shauna Anderson Kellen Hornaman Rylan Williamson Warren Wolf	29 Rosalie Creighton
30 Serena Davis Walter Koepp Remington Korbel Theodore Korbel Leo Siekmann Colton Traxler	31 Diane Skelley Leif Tharaldson					

***There are now two new ways to give to St. John***

You can now give to St. John through a text or through an App. To learn how to use the App or text go to our website, [www.stjohnbelleplaine.org](http://www.stjohnbelleplaine.org), click on "Serve" and then "Giving" and click on the instructions for the App or Text.

**Financial Corner**

**St. John Financial Results  
Six Months Ending June 30, 2020 and June 30, 2019**

**General Operating Fund**

	<b>June 30, 2020</b>	<b>June 30, 2019</b>
Income	\$ 172,057	\$ 180,815
Expenses:		
Personnel	(152,513)	(153,310)
Office	(10,709)	(9,802)
Property & Maintenance	(20,531)	(21,632)
Ministry Teams	(13,901)	(10,822)
Other	(1,897)	(2,552)
Benevolence:		
Minneapolis Area Synod	(6,000)	(6,000)
Camp Onomia	(1,500)	(1,500)
World Hunger (2019)	(250)	-
Lutheran Social Services	(1,000)	(500)
Net Receipts / (Expenditures)	<u>\$ (36,244)</u>	<u>\$ (25,303)</u>
Cash Balance at January 1 (excl. all loans)	\$ (84,836)	\$ (64,346)
Net Income / (Expenditures)	(36,244)	(25,303)
Misc. cash not affecting income	(236)	(55)
Loan from Building Fund (from 2018 - 2020)	61,500	39,500
Loan from St. John Foundation (from 2014-2016)	53,977	53,397
Cash Balance at June 30	<u>\$ (5,840)</u>	<u>\$ 3,193</u>

**Year Over Year  
Increase (Decrease)**  
-5%

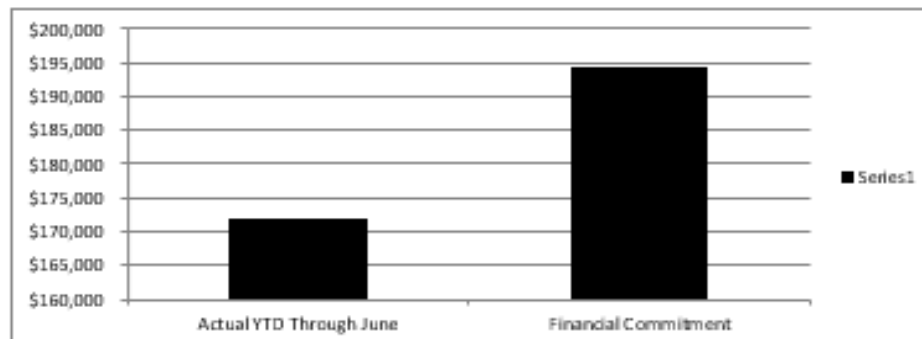
**Building Fund**

Receipts	\$ 48,742	\$ 69,284
Miscellaneous Expenses	-	(124)
Principal	(57,568)	(54,564)
Interest	(5,792)	(8,796)
Loaned to General Fund	(7,000)	(4,500)
Net Receipts / (Disbursements)	<u>\$ (21,618)</u>	<u>\$ 1,300</u>
Loan Balance at January 1	\$ 325,224	\$ 435,544
Principal Payments	(57,568)	(54,564)
Loan Balance at June 30	<u>\$ 267,656</u>	<u>\$ 380,980</u>

-30%

**Actual Income Compared to 2020 Financial Commitment:**

Actual YTD Through June	\$ 172,057
Financial Commitment	\$ 194,419



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Belle Plaine 56011

30%. Will ask the congregation to remember their commitments.

**Transfers:**

No Transfers in or out this month.

**Ongoing Business**

Reopening - Formal (Weddings, funerals, baptisms) and informal (showers, etc.) events

Formal events are happening with guidelines from the Synod and the State.

Informal events are still going to be on hold as the guidelines state anything indoors that would be an informal gathering can only be 10 people or less.

The re-opening committee will continue to meet to discuss Sunday School, Connect and Confirmation along with the Children's ministry team.

Discussion about what we could do to connect with students over the summer. Pastor Sarah has information around the curriculum she will share with the Children's ministry team.

A congregational letter will be going out to inform all about the procedures for Reopening on August 2nd

**New Business**

**A.** The Exec team will meet following the Church Service on August 2nd. The Church Council will move their August meeting up to the 6th of August to discuss potential information from the Governor's announcement on July 27th for going into the Fall. Staff reports will be moved to the September agenda to allow for more time to complete.

**Ministry Team Updates**

Stewardship Committee - nothing new

Buildings and Grounds Committee - will be meeting soon

Personnel Committee - will be meeting soon

Children's Ministry Committee - will meet soon to discuss the Fall

Small Group/Faith Formation Committee - nothing new

Worship and Music Committee - nothing new

Technology and Communications Committee - nothing new

Festivals Committee - nothing new

Motion was made, seconded, and carried to adjourn at 8:05pm. Meeting was adjourned followed by the Lord's prayer.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Angie Kahle, Secretary