

THE GOOD NEWSLETTER

September 2020



ST. JOHN EVANGELICAL
LUTHERAN CHURCH

“God’s Love in Action”

St. John Evangelical Lutheran Church
200 South Main Street
Charles City, IA 50616-2751
Phone: 641-228-3397

Website: www.stjohncharlescity.org



Find & like us on Facebook!

Subscribe to the E-Skinny by
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St. John Christian Preschool
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Pastor Russ Leeper:
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Office Secretary: Kathy Hoeft
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Office Hours: 8:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m.
1:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.

Business Manager: Linda Hughes
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Music Director:
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Youth & Family Coordinator:
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Pastor's Note

"Rejoice always, pray continually, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus." 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18

We've all seen the pictures: corn crumpled, trees toppled, bins busted, roofs removed, businesses blighted, and homes left in heaps. The Derecho Disaster has left a terrible mark on the people of Iowa, including many of our own family and friends. 2020 has been a terrible year, to say the least! And yet, the Bible tells us that God wants us to "rejoice always" and to "give thanks in all circumstances." Even after a 100 mph windstorm?! Yes.

Mary is one of my wife's friends. Mary's father's health recently began to fail. He was hospitalized in Ames and eventually entered into hospice care. The decision was made to move him from Ames to a nursing home in Grundy Center. On the way from the hospital to the nursing home, Mary was able to drive her father by the family farm. She said it made him so happy to see it again and to see that everything was OK ... just as he had left it.

The next day the derecho came through, flattening the grove. It completely changed the look of the farm and left a LOT of trees on the ground that needed to be cleaned up. The day after that, Mary's father passed away not knowing what had happened. Mary says she wishes that the storm had never come, but she and her family are so thankful that her dad got to see the farm before the storm and didn't have to die with a broken heart.

In every situation, if we look hard enough, there are reasons to be thankful. Though this pandemic took my father-in-law, we're so thankful for the caring people who were with him and took care of him when we couldn't. And we're so thankful for the outpouring of love and support we received from our congregation as we began our grief journey. That thankfulness continues to sustain us through these very difficult days. God wants us to be thankful, even in the difficult times, because thankfulness helps us get through them.

Once a week, my wife and I sit down and make a list of all the things we're thankful for from the previous week. It's always amazing how many things there are to be thankful for, even in the hardest of weeks. We've found it to be a great protection for our hearts and minds from the fear and negativity that can so easily overwhelm us these days. We offer it to you, too. If you don't already have another thankfulness practice, try making your own weekly thankfulness list. It helps!

Another way you can express your thankfulness is by making a donation. In the aftermath of the Derecho Storm, the ELCA's Southeastern Iowa Synod is collecting relief funds to help the many people affected by the storm. Out of our thankfulness for being spared from the storm, we can share with others who were not as fortunate. If you would like to donate to the fund, please send your gift to St. John Lutheran Church, 200 S. Main St., Charles City, IA 50616 and mark it as Disaster Relief.

This is a tough year, but we'll get through it because we know that we have a God who loves us, who's with us in all circumstances, and who, in the end, gives us eternity together. Now THAT's something to be thankful for!

Peace,
Pastor Russ

Our Generosity in July

Your offerings to St. John were shared beyond our walls in July in the Following ways:

8% of our regular July offering (\$1790.69) went to support the mission of the larger church.

2% of our total offering goes to support our community needs. In July (\$636.40) was given to the Northeastern Iowa Food Bank.

The Finance Board designates the 8% of the total Thank Offering quarterly. \$2093.31 from the second quarter will be given to the Southeastern Synod of the ELCA to go towards disaster relief from the Derecho damage caused to that part of the state.

St. John is in **Phase 1 of our reopening plan.**

HOWEVER,

Below is a message from Council President Greg Buenger:

The St. John Church Council discussed reopening church in the midst of the COVID 19 pandemic. A reopening team of church staff, Deacons, and ushers will begin the planning for a safe return to in-house worship at church tentatively resuming on September 27. The Council will reconsider if it is safe to reopen then at the September Council meeting. There will be safety guidelines to follow, likely including a reservation system to attend, social distancing, and mask wearing by everyone; the specific procedures will be posted when ready.

St. John is in Phase 1 of our reopening plan. This means that we will...

- Maintain worshiping through radio and internet services.
- Funerals and weddings may occur in the sanctuary should they be permitted by law (but will be encouraged to occur outdoors). These gatherings are limited to ten people or less in the entire facility.
 - Persons participating in a funeral or wedding are required to certify verbally they are not experiencing any symptoms of COVID-19 as outlined by the CDC. They are required to verbally certify they have not been with anyone who is sick or experiencing symptoms of COVID-19 as outlined by the CDC.
 - Do not attend or visit the church if you are feeling ill, have been exposed to COVID-19, have a compromised immune system, or are at high risk of exposing others. You are responsible for your own health and also that of your neighbor.
 - A record of the people attending the funeral or wedding will be kept to help with contact tracing should one of the attendees become ill.
 - Participants are to maintain proper social distancing of six feet or more.
 - **Participants are to wear a face mask at all times when in the building.**
 - Participants are to practice proper hand hygiene (soap and water or 60%+ alcohol hand sanitizer) immediately upon entry into the building.
 - The church will be cleaned and sanitized after the event.
- **The church office will continue to operate; however, the church building will remain locked to visitors.** If a visitor is invited into the building, any people present must adhere to the guidelines above in relation to a funeral or wedding.
- If any visitor to the church becomes ill, they must inform the church so others who may have had contact with the visitor may monitor their own health.
- Church council and board meetings must occur electronically.

As of now...

Worship services are being recorded for you to listen to and watch. The Sunday service will be available on Sunday mornings at 9:00 a.m. or a few minutes later on KCHA FM 95.9. You can also go to www.stjohncharlescity.org, click on the Worship & Sermon tab & then on YouTube. From there just click on the service you would like to watch!

Though the St. John building is closed to the public, you can call the office with any questions or concerns. Kathy is in the office from 8:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. & 1:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m. You can also reach her by emailing khoeft@stjohncharlescity.com.

**Your offering can be mailed to St. John Lutheran, 200 S Main St, Charles City, IA 50616
OR...**

If you would like to sign up for Simply Giving, the program that allows you to give to the church through electronic transfer, call Linda at 228-3397. The Simply Giving form is on the following page and can be filled out & sent to Linda at St. John.

Parish Ed News

Online Sunday School will begin September 20th. Registration materials will be sent to current families. New to Sunday School? Contact the office at 641-228-3397 to receive registration information.

Confirmation is scheduled to begin October 7th depending on schools & the church building being open.

Confirmation Sunday is postponed & will be scheduled for a later date.

In the aftermath of the Derecho Storm that caused damage to a large part of Iowa, Monday August 10th, the ELCA's Southeast Iowa Synod is collecting relief funds to help the many people effected by the storm. If you would like to donate to the fund send your donation to St. John Lutheran church, 200 S Main St., Charles City IA, 50616, & on the memo line write Disaster Relief.



Want to watch the Sunday worship service video?

Go to www.stjohncharlescity.org, click on the Worship & Sermon tab & then on YouTube. From there just click on the service you would like to watch!

Simply Giving Form

The St. John Stewardship Board would like to take this opportunity to tell you about a simple way you can guarantee your offering to God. **It's called Simply Giving.**

Simply Giving is a stewardship program that allows anyone from St. John the chance to give their offering through electronic funds transfer (EFT) directly from their checking or savings account.

You determine the amount you want to give and the frequency of your giving. Want to give \$50 every week? Perfect! Wish to donate \$125 every other week? You got it! Perhaps you'd like to give \$200 once a month? Absolutely!

It's easy to set up. Fill out this form, attach a voided check or savings deposit slip, put it in the offering plate or return it to the church office.

Simply Giving assures your offering to God is given as you see fit. It's easy, convenient and helps assure that St. John can meet its financial obligations.

For more information, please contact Linda at 641-228-3397.

St. John Lutheran's Simply Giving "God's Love In Action"

Your Name _____
Address _____
City, State, Zip _____
Email Address _____
Telephone _____

Contributions:

- ___ 1. **Enroll in Simply Giving with my giving going to:**
- | | |
|--------------------------------|-----------------|
| St. John Ministry Support Plan | \$ _____ |
| Other | \$ _____ |
| Total Contribution | \$ _____ |
- ___ 2. **I would like to *change my contribution**
to the following amount \$ _____

**Changes can be done by a phone call, a voided check or deposit slip is not required*

Effective Date of First or Changed Contribution _____ / _____ / _____

Frequency of Contribution (Total Contribution divided as indicated)

- \$ _____ Per Week on Mondays
\$ _____ Semi-monthly - 1st & 15th
\$ _____ Monthly on the 1st
\$ _____ Monthly on the 15th

Checking/Savings Account Authorization *Please Debit my...*

- ___ Checking account (Attach voided check)
___ Savings account (Attach voided deposit slip)

Routing # _____

Valid routing # must start with 0, 1, 2, or 3

Account # _____

I authorize the above organization to process debit entries to the above account. I understand that this authority will remain in effect until I provide reasonable notification to terminate the authorization.

Authorized Signature: _____ Date: ____ / ____ / ____



Youth & Family

“For surely I know the plans I have for you, says the Lord, plans for good and not for harm, to give you a future with hope.” Jeremiah 29:11
Blessings, Laurie Heidebrink

PARISH ED NEWS: ONLINE SUNDAY SCHOOL BEGINS on **September 20, 2020.**

Sunday School families – please be watching for the registration email

The plan is to start the program year online and then switch to in-person Sunday School when the church has re-opened and it is safe to gather.

CONFIRMATION:

CONFIRMATION CLASSES begin on **October 7, 2020** if schools are open and the church building has opened.

CONFIRMATION SUNDAY has been postponed. We will publicize the new date once it has been rescheduled.

AFTER SCHOOL PROGRAM

Due to the social distancing restrictions and the fact that the church building is closed, we will not be having our After-School Program at St. John this schoolyear.

People Page...

September birthdays of our members who are 80 & older!

6th Bob Tommingo
10th Bill Berns
11th Peg Poppen
11th David Ripley
12th Vera Hinz
13th Norma Kamm
13th Jim Reysack
17th Larry Brewer
18th Larry Coen
21st Lyneen Brunsting
22nd Harold Begemann
22nd Wendell Patten
28th Donna Stewart



September anniversaries of our members who have been married 50 or more years!

September 4, 1965 Bill & Sharon Bledsoe
September 8, 1956 Glenn & Diann Jacobson
September 8, 1968 Gary & Sandy Marth
September 19, 1959 David & Helen Hagen
September 22, 1964 Jim & Bev Jensen

A Thank You...

Holly Connor of Stitches Fabrics & Yarns, would like to thank St. John for the benevolence donation given to Stitches for various provisions for Covid-19 masks, etc. We continue to look for ways we can help the community. We are in this together and know “this too shall pass”.

Memorials were given in memory of...

Margaret “Meg” Louise Haugland Tjaden: Jeff & Robyn Edgbert, Karen Richards

Leon Isakson: Tilleen Litterer

Harold, Irma & Lorraine Meyers: Eldon & Lynne Meyers



Even amidst the pandemic, it's back to school time at St. John Christian Preschool, and we teachers couldn't be more excited! We began our first day on Monday, August 31st. We are excited to have many new and returning little ones with us this year. The year started with a little apprehension and even some tears, but as time went on, we quickly moved on to many more smiles and giggles! 😊 We will be starting off the school year with an "All About Me" theme.

Although August 31st was the first day of school for our little ones, we already held two successful parent meetings back on August 17th. We offered these meetings for each class to give parents an opportunity to network with one another, to get to know the preschool staff and to learn about the preschool's policies.

We also welcomed all of our families to St. John Christian Preschool at our *Get Acquainted Open Houses* on August 25th and 27th. It was exciting to have all of our little ones stop by the preschool with their families and friends to drop off school supplies and to get his/her school picture taken.

New this year, is our online-learning option for families who are not quite comfortable sending their little one in-person. We are utilizing the online platform Seesaw. We also have quite an extensive Return-to-Learn plan and COVID-19 Health Policy. If you'd like to learn more, you can find both on our website: sjcpreschool.org. There are many changes happening this year, but we know with the help of all our amazing families, our year will go on seamlessly!

Preschool is a big step for our 3, 4, and 5 year olds, but it is also a big step for parents. As a preschool staff, we consider our job one of utmost importance. Not only are we helping our little ones expand their academic, social, and developmental skills that will guide their paths in life, but also for some of them, we are teaching them about God's love for the very first time. We ask you for your prayers to help us along the way and we thank you for your continuing support of our ministry!!

In closing, we currently have spots available in our program. If you know of someone still in need of a preschool for his or her little one, please give us a call at 228-7274 and we will try to help out!

OUR GOD IS AN AWESOME GOD!

Whittney Franke

Fall Activities for Families:

Fall color hike – Make the most out of the gorgeous fall colors by taking the kids on a fall color hike! Give them a printout of the colors of the rainbow (or use paint sample cards) and have them find leaves and other items that match each color. Red, orange, green, yellow and brown will be easy. But can they find something purple? What about black and white? This is a great way to entertain and occupy kids while hiking through the woods or local park. Don't have time for a long hike? This can be done nearly anywhere – even in your own backyard.



Make bird feeders – Feed the birds – tuppence a bag! There are so many fun and simple ways to make bird feeders with your kids, which is a really great nature craft for kids this fall. One of our favorites is made by slathering a pinecone in peanut butter and rolling it in birdseed. Then simply place the pinecone in a bush or hang on a tree branch. Have an extra pumpkin or gourd? Chop off the top and fill the base with birdseed for an all-natural bird feeder

Easy Apple Crisp!

Preheat oven to 350°F. In a medium size bowl mix $\frac{1}{2}$ C all purpose flour, 1 C old fashioned rolled oats, $\frac{3}{4}$ C packed brown sugar, 1 tsp ground cinnamon, $\frac{1}{4}$ tsp nutmeg, $\frac{1}{4}$ tsp salt. Add $\frac{1}{2}$ C cold butter cut into cubes using a pastry cutter or fork to cut the butter into the dry ingredients until the mixture is crumbly & comes together. Set aside.

Combine 5 C thinly sliced apples (about 4 large apples such as Granny Smith), $\frac{1}{4}$ C packed brown sugar, 2 tbsp melted butter, 2 tbsp all purpose flour, 2tsp lemon juice, $\frac{3}{4}$ tsp ground cinnamon, $\frac{1}{4}$ tsp nutmeg, & pinch of salt so that apples are well coated. Pour mixture into an 8- or 9-inch square dish.

Sprinkle topping evenly over the apples and bake about 40 minutes, until the topping is golden around the edges and the apples are tender. Allow to cool about 15 minutes prior to serving.



SEPTEMBER 2020 CALENDAR

MONTHLY:

Sunday: Worship services cancelled at this time

September 23rd: Newsletter Deadline

BOARD MEETINGS:

Building & Grounds: Sep 1, 5:30 p.m. (Zoom)

Council: Sep 8, 6:00 p.m. (Zoom)

Communication: TBD

Deacons: Sep 13, 10:30 a.m. (Zoom)

Family Board Sep 13, 10:30 a.m. (Email)

Finance Sep 8, 4:30 p.m. (Zoom)

Parish Ed Sep 9, 5:15 p.m. (Email)

Stewardship Sep 13, 11:00 a.m. (at Quade's)

Youth Sep 13, 10:30 a.m. (Email)

EVENTS OF NOTE:

September 7th: Labor Day Office Closed

September 20th: Online Sunday School begins

September 27th: In-person Worship



SEPTEMBER BIRTHDAY CALENDAR

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		1	2	3	4	5
		Sondra Coen Aaron Garden	Samantha Heyer	Hallie Kubik	Kari Klemesrud Yolanda Van Ausdall	Rory Streich
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Mackenzey Bilharz Seth Nordmeyer Bob Tommingo Emersyn Ungs	Gloria Carr Lauren Connell Kylie Parson	Ravyn Knecht Norma McLean Linda Reit	Lynn Brown Dax Johnson Stanley Mehmen	Bill Berns	Marcia Grimm Peg Poppen David Ripley	Kendra Buenger Vera Hinz Brandon Holthaus Brad McKenzie
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
Norma Kamm Jim Reysack	Ethan Voelker		Brenda Stone Matt Wolf	Dennis Brahn Larry Brewer Jenisha Garden Leland Lumley	Larry Coen JoAnn Hervert Becky Meyer	Frank Anderson Alex Litterer Malayne Meyer Jadyn Van Horn
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
	Lyneen Brunsting Tom Heddens	Harold Begemann Wendell Patten	Bob Brede Cindy Davidson	Justin Heyer Kent Hoeft Kurt Hoeft		Jack Murray Jean Rima
27	28	29	30			
Sarah George	Kristin George Carleen Laue Jolene Patterson Donna Stewart	Isaac Gassman				