

September
2023

St. John Lutheran Church



Mission Statement

*St. John is a living witness to the **love of God** as shown in Jesus Christ.*

*We **gather** faithfully in God's name to **worship** and praise God; and we go forth in peace to **share the Good News** and to **serve** the world around us.*

St. John Lutheran Church
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Office Hours: MWF 8a-1p

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As I've been packing my belongings for the big move, I've been lingering over my books. I love books. I always have. Some of my favorite books are the ones that I got used. The ones given to me by retiring pastors or the ones that I collected at a used book store. I even have some books that have been passed through multiple sets of hands before reaching my shelves. As I read the books, I look at the way people have highlighted and starred passages and the notes that they have written in the margins. I love the way that these scribbles bring me into connection with people. I love the way that these battered books tell the story of how other people have engaged with the material, poured over the contents, and wrestled with the topic. Books are incredible things. They teach us; they hold history for us; and they can bring us together in mystical and wonderful ways. Thanks be to God for the gift we have in the Scriptures brought together in the book we call the Bible.

On September 17th, we will be giving the Sunday School students brand new Bibles. These Bibles are pristine. There are no wrinkled pages or starred passages. There are no notes in the margins... yet. While these Bibles are brand new from the publisher, they carry with them the story of our faith... the story that we have been living and making notes on for almost two millennia. We will be passing these ancient stories onto the next generation, promising to go through these books with the students, helping them to not only learn the ways that people have connected through these stories, how people have engaged with the material, poured over the contents, and wrestled with the topics for century, but also how they themselves will come to know and wrestle with and love these texts.

I don't know if the kids will write in these specific Bibles, but I hope that as they read them, as they learn them, they will feel a connection with the story of God's goodness as it has been being written for millennia. I hope they will feel a connection with the people of all times and places that have connected with these stories at various points. I hope that they will know that in this book we give them, is a priceless gift of love, of grace, and of community.

Peace,
Pastor Katie

Find Us on Social Media

Like us on **Facebook** (@stjohnchurchmars) or Follow us on **Instagram** (@stjohnchurchmars)

Online Sunday Worship

Join Zoom for service: <https://zoom.us/j/5663185411> Meeting ID: 566 318 5411 PW: Luther
Available on our **YouTube Channel**: <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC35PpgMPeMqDRNmKkYKssxvQ>

Worship Notes

Young Worship Leaders

We love having our young worshippers helping with worship leadership! If you are unable to be present for your scheduled service, please try to find someone to cover and tell the office of the change.

	Acolyte	Offering	Offering	Young Reader
3-September	Anna K	Jules K	Abigail C	
10-September	Nathan K	Ava N	Ella N	
17-September	Ava N	Anna K	Nathan K	Abigail C
24-September	Emma N	Luca K	Eva K	
1-October	Abigail C	Ava N	Emma N	

Adult Worship Leaders

	Greeters	Usher	Assistant Minister	Bread Baker	Counters
3-September	VOLUNTEER	VOLUNTEER	Valerie C	Denise H	Denise H Cindy K
10-September	VOLUNTEER	VOLUNTEER	Valerie C	Denise H	Denise H Cindy K
17-September	VOLUNTEER	VOLUNTEER	Valerie C	Denise H	Sherry D Valerie C
24-September	VOLUNTEER	VOLUNTEER	Valerie C	Denise H	Sherry D Valerie C
1-October	VOLUNTEER	VOLUNTEER	Denise H	Denise H	Tanya N Valerie C

Volunteer Spotlight: Greeters

Whether it is someone's first time or thousandth time coming to St. John for worship, **it is nice to be greeted with a welcoming smile as they enter.** Greeters hand out **bulletins** (at both entrances to the sanctuary), offer **welcome gifts** to visitors, remind people to **wear nametags**, and assist with any **special directions for the day** (e.g., handing out streamers for Pentecost or inviting backpacks to be placed by the altar for the Blessing of the Backpacks.). **Sign up to be a Greeter** in the Greeting Area!

Communion in Your Home

Do you have a hard time physically getting to worship at St. John? We welcome your online participation in worship, but it's hard to offer communion through Zoom! **If you would like to receive communion in your home (either one time or on an ongoing basis), please contact Pastor Katie or one of the Deacons.**

Serving Others

God's Work Our Hands Sunday - Sept. 10

We are going to be observing God's Work Our Hands Sunday again this year! **We will be worshipping in the basement as we incorporate a service project as an integral part of our worship.** This year we will be packing and decorating school bags for Church Wide Services (CWS), MHY Family Services, and VOICe (Butler). We have received an abundance of donations! To help us even out the donations, we could still use more 70-page spiral bound notebooks. **Donations can be dropped off in the bin in the Greeting Area.** If you'd still like to sew a bag together, we will collect more bags still!

"God's work. Our hands." Sunday



September 10, 2023

Third Quarter Mission Emphasis Project: Camp Lutherlyn



On September 17th, we will be welcoming Pastor Ryan Fitch, Assistant Director at Lutherlyn to share with us how our donations help their ministry. **Lutherlyn is a God-given place to be accepted, challenged, and sent out into the world to make a difference.** In keeping with their mission, **Lutherlyn promises to never turn a child away from camp for financial reasons.** To contribute, **please mark your envelopes "Mission Emphasis."**

Lutherlyn Campaign – Building for the Future

This year, Lutherlyn celebrates 75 years of camping and outdoor ministry as it takes on a capital campaign to fund some much-needed maintenance and growth projects in their Building for the Future Campaign **to provide the funding necessary to retain Lutherlyn's capacity for year-round programs and increase the number of youths, adults, and congregations served by this ministry for generations to come.** Through this campaign, Lutherlyn is raising money to cover several key projects. **The well-used Shaulis cabins have deteriorated beyond repair,** so the old cabins will be removed, and new cabins will be built to continue to serve campers year-round. **The beloved amphitheater has also deteriorated over the years, sinking into the dirt below it;** a second project is to secure the structural integrity of the space so that it can be enjoyed for years to come. Other projects to ensure the safe, hospitable, and welcoming atmosphere at camp are also included in this project. **Stay tuned for details about how you can support this campaign!**

St. John Food Pantry

Maintaining the food pantry is a community effort! Help us to keep it stocked with items with a long shelf life, especially **personal hygiene, cleaning, and paper products.** And be sure **to invite people to make use of the food pantry as they need!** Outdoor pantries can be tricky with the fluctuating weather, so we want to be careful of what we keep in it. **Items that will not last in hot summer weather can be kept in the indoor pantry.** Access to the indoor pantry is every Monday and Wednesday 9a-1p with additional times available by calling Pastor Katie or the office.

Sharing the Harvest

Has your garden produced an abundance of fruits and vegetables? **Bring them to worship on Sunday mornings to share your abundance!** Some produce can also be shared with those who make regular use of our Food Pantry as well.

Serving Others (cont'd)

Community Garden



After a delayed start, more of the garden is beginning to produce! As the garden grows, feel free to weed and harvest as you like! If you have any questions about the garden, check out the signs throughout the garden or contact Pastor Katie.

Harvest Street Mission – Nov. 11 and 12

Mark your calendars! We will be heading back to the North Side to **serve a hot meal and distribute necessary items to approximately 100 people with Harvest Street Mission** on November 12. On November 11, we will be preparing and packaging everything. There are still a few items that would be great additions. If you or someone you know would like to sponsor or donate an item, please contact Kim R or the church office. **We are serving a breakfast meal, but we still need a meat. We also provide a meal to go, and we still need fruit and bottled water.**



Around the Church

Bible Distribution – Sept. 17



Having a personal Bible is an important part of our faith journey. **To help our children on their faith journeys, we give students Bibles that match the Bible used during Sunday School. We will be presenting new students to each class a Bible during worship on September 17th.** Our youngest class will receive a copy of the Frolic Preschool Bible, our middle class the Whirl Story Bible, and our oldest class the Collaborate Study Bible. **If you would like to financially contribute to this faith formation milestone, donations can be designated “Bible.”**

Blessing of the Quilts – Sept. 24

You have probably noticed that the Sanctuary is adorned with quilts again! **These quilts were lovingly stitched together to provide warmth and comfort and care to people around the world served by Lutheran World Relief.** Before the quilts make their journey, we will be praying over these quilts and for all who will receive them in our **annual Blessing of the Quilts September 24th during worship.** **Contact the office to find out how you can participate in this crafty ministry!**

Reformation Choir

Calling all singing enthusiasts! We are excited to have our choir back in action for Reformation Sunday! Reformation Sunday is October 29 and **rehearsals (typically Sunday mornings after Sunday School) will begin at the end of September.** Contact Maizy or the church office to join the choir!

Applefest – October 7

Applefest is a great opportunity to be an active presence in our community. It takes a lot of hands to get ready for the event as well as to sit at the booth and talk with people. We will have activities for kids, things to sell, and lots of information to share about happenings at St. John. **Mark your calendars now** and talk to one of the Elders or Pastor Katie if you'd like to help with Applefest!



Stay tuned for more information and sign-up sheets in the Greeting Area.

Around the Church (cont'd) **Blessing of the Animals – Oct. 15**

Pets are beloved members of our homes. **To honor the special place our pets have in our lives, we will be holding a special service on October 15th at 3:00pm** on the lawn. Bring your furry and feathered family members - on a leash or in a carrier please - to this **outdoor service which includes Holy Communion, readings, and prayers.** This service is in October to recognize St. Francis of Assisi (feast day Oct 4). Francis was a 13th century saint who taught people about the goodness and holiness of all of God's creation, including the animals.

From the Deacon's

At the last Deacons meeting several upcoming events were discussed:

- On Sept. 9th, board members will be attending a **stewardship workshop** at Hope Lutheran.
- A **soup sale** will be held this fall! More info will be coming soon, but some of the soups on offer will be chili, creamy tomato basil, vegetable beef, chicken tortilla, stuffed pepper, chicken noodle, and wedding soup. The cost will be \$10 a quart.
 - Mark your calendars for a **pancake breakfast** on Dec. 2nd.

Birthday and Anniversary Celebrations

On the last Sunday of each month, we have a **coffee hour after worship to celebrate the birthdays and the anniversaries** in the congregation for that month. **If you would like to host a coffee hour** (generally includes getting a cake, making sure there are enough plates/forks/napkins/etc., making the coffee, and cleaning up afterward), please contact the office.

Faith Formation for All Ages

Adult Education Forum – The Influences of Luther

After a summer break, we are back to our regular forum meetings! On August 23 we began our new **series on the influences of Luther.** Who was Luther reading? Who were his theological and academic mentors and guides? How did Luther become the face of the Reformations? **Join us for this series at 7:00pm on Wednesdays August 23-September 27.** Material will build week to week, but **drop-ins are always welcome to any class! No prior knowledge of the Reformations is required.** **Contact the office if you'd like to receive the weekly information sheets and Zoom links.**

Rally Day – Sept. 10

On **September 10**, we will have our service worship day and while we are in the basement, we will **bleed the space that will be used by students and teachers to explore their faith** during our Sunday School classes for all ages. After worship, we will **kick off the academic year with ice cream sundaes and a visiting ambulance from Quality EMS!**



Adult Sunday Morning Learning and Fellowship

All adults are welcome to join us during the Faith Formation hour (Sundays, 10:10am-11:10am) to discuss the scripture read during worship and to discuss how it applies to our daily lives beginning September 17th. **Questions to guide and prompt discussion will be available as well as time to bring your own questions. Grab a cup of coffee and join us in the basement.**

Faith Formation for All Ages (cont'd)

Sunday School for Children and Youth News

Sunday School for our children and youth will kick off with Rally Day on September 10th, and on **September 17th the students will have their first day of classes!** We are shifting a few things this year. **The students will begin their time in the basement**, practicing their song and the Lord's Prayer or Apostles Creed. The youngest class will continue with an interactive, play-based curriculum. The middle class will continue diving into the lectionary lessons, and the oldest class will meet to discuss how their faith fits in with their lives through Bible stories and conversation. At the end of each lesson, all students will go up to the sanctuary for closing. **Parents and Guardians are invited to join us for the closing to hear about what the kids learned and other announcements for the Sunday School classes and collect any handouts for the day. Closing will begin around 11:10 am.** We ask that guardians fill out a Sunday School **registration form** so that we can have **up-to-date information** regarding school grade, allergies, and contact information. The Sunday School's 2023-2024 offering will be supporting Quality EMS.

Messy Church – Third Fridays beginning Oct 20



Beginning Friday, October 20th (5:30-7:30p), we will be starting a new ministry opportunity that will give people of all ages a different way to gather, explore, and worship. **Following the model of Messy Church, our time together will include craft and game activities, eating together, and worship that is designed to be accessible to people of all ages and of all levels of connection to church.** We will start this



ministry in October, meeting on the third Friday of each month from 5:30-7:30p for a few months as we gauge interest and response. All are welcome, so be sure to invite neighbors and friends! **If you would like to help dream or plan or prepare for this ministry, contact Pastor Katie.**

Grades 6-12 Youth Group



The Mars Area Youth Group (a joint venture between St. John and Mars United Presbyterian for youth in grades 6-12) will be **starting again October 8 (1-2:30p)!** Meetings are at Mars United Presbyterian (232 Crowe Ave). To sign up **to receive updates and the group's schedule, please fill out the form at** <https://forms.gle/eQEjU43wXju4Agsk9> or scan the QR code.

Grades 2-5 Kids' Club

Our joint Kids' Club with Mars United Presbyterian (grades 2-5) will have its **first meeting October 8, 1-2:30p at St. John.** We will talk about how **God's message is relevant to their lives**, work together to **serve the community**, and of course play plenty of **games!** **To sign up to receive the group's schedule and updates**, fill out the form at <https://forms.gle/YXESKSj6jc9XiqA5A> or scan the QR code.



Did You Know?

The church website has an ongoing calendar! There is only so much room in the newsletter for upcoming events, but the website has all of them, including several months out!

September 2023

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
					1	2
3 Worship 9:00 am Trustee's Meeting 10:15 am	4	5 Elder's Meeting 7 pm Deacon's Meeting 7 pm	6 Adult Forum 7 pm	7	8	9
10 GWOH Worship 9:00 am Rally Day 10:15 am	11	12	13 Adult Forum 7 pm	14	15	16
17 Worship 9:00 am Bible Distribution Sunday School 10:15 am	18	19 Council Meeting 7 pm	20 Adult Forum 7 pm Newsletter Articles Due	21	22	23
24 Worship 9:00 am Sunday School 10:15 am Birthday/Anniversary Coffee Hour 10:15 am	25	26 Pastor Katie Penn Mar 1:45 pm	27 Adult Forum 7 pm	28	29	30



- 9/02 Nicholas Claus Jr.
- 9/04 Larry Werner
- 9/06 Nicholas Claus
- 9/09 Sally Foster
- 9/10 Winnie Stefko
- 9/15 Jamie Weaver
- 9/17 Kelly Greb
- 9/27 Susan Fritz
- 9/27 Roy Werner
- 9/30 Matthew Claus



9/29– William & Kelly Greb – 22 yrs.

September Newsletter

Address service requested

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