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www.stjohnsaustinlcms.org

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THE MISSION OF ST. JOHN'S LUTHERAN CHURCH

Through Jesus Christ, we
proclaim God's Word,
encourage one another in faith,
witness to God's love and
serve all people.



St. John's News

August, 2018

Message from Pastor James

The start of Confirmation and Sunday School are not far off. That provides us with a great opportunity to ask, "What is Confirmation?" "What is CASE?" and "Why do we need Sunday School?" "How does the process leading up to Confirmation help us accomplish our mission of connecting people to Jesus?"

Luther's Small Catechism defines Confirmation this way:

"Confirmation is a public rite of the Church preceded by a period of instruction in which Baptized Christians learn about the confession, life, and mission of the Christian Church. The Rite of Confirmation provides an opportunity for the individual Christian, relying on God's promise given in Holy Baptism, to make a personal public confession of the faith and a lifelong pledge of fidelity to Christ." (Luther's Small Catechism, ©2017, page 51)

While the Bible nowhere mentions Confirmation it is a discipleship tool that has been developed over the history of the Church for the purpose of accomplishing some important biblical goals. Consider these Bible passages:

Grow in the good will and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Glory belongs to him now and for that eternal day! Amen. (2 Peter 3:8)

Dedicate your lives to Christ as Lord. Always be ready to defend your confidence in God when anyone asks you to explain it. However, make your defense with gentleness and respect. (1 Peter 3:15)

Make every effort to add integrity to your faith; and to integrity add knowledge; to knowledge add self-control; to self-control add endurance; to endurance add godliness; to godliness add Christian

affection; and to Christian affection add love. (2 Peter 1:5-7)

Christ has brought you back to God by dying in his physical body. He did this so that you could come into God's presence without sin, fault, or blame. This is on the condition that you continue in faith without being moved from the solid foundation of the hope that the Good News contains. (Colossians 1:22-23)

These kinds of statements found thought-out the Bible. It is why we have a time of instruction for our youth. Because God has directed parents to:

... repeat them to your children. Talk about them when you're at home or away, when you lie down or get up. Write them down, and tie them around your wrist, and wear them as headbands as a reminder. Write them on the doorframes of your houses and on your gates. (Deuteronomy 6:7-9)

In our efforts to help you with that, the goal of all of this instruction in the faith isn't just stuffing a bunch of dusty old books and facts into their brains or memorizing some meaningless Bible passages. The process of learning and discussing what the Bible teaches is meant to help them, "grow in the good will and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ."

Knowledge of the Gospel is discussed and applied to real life. When that is done it naturally leads to "growing" in our relationship with our living Lord. The propose of all this instruction, that

ultimately leads to Confirmation, is intended help them learn how to read and apply God's Word to their daily lives so that they are equipped to be held in, and continue in, this saving faith for the rest of their lives. (con't)



(Continued from page 1)

As our youth are preparing to publicly “confirm” their faith in Jesus we all have the opportunity to ask ourselves, “Am I continuing to grow in my relationship with God through regular devotions, Bible study, and worship? God has instructed us all to do such things because He knows what is good for us. As the new school year approaches I would challenge you all to consider how you can continue to grow, or begin to grow, in learning more about God’s Word. May God bless us all as we resolve to make the effort needed to “grow in the good will and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.”

Pastor James.

People of all ages need to be studying God’s Word in addition to worship.

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From the Church Fathers

The proper, simple, and natural meaning of the Words of Institution teach that Christ Himself is present with us in the celebration of the Supper with both His deity and His flesh, and that He comes to us in order to lay hold on us (Phil. 3:12) and join us to Himself as intimately as possible. This brings the sweetest comfort. For Christ, both God and man, must lay hold on us in order that there may be a union between Him and us. But we, weighed down by the burden of sin and pressed under the weight of our infirmity, are not yet able to enter the secret places of heaven (Col. 2:18) and penetrate to Him in glory. He Himself therefore comes to us in order to lay hold upon us with that nature by which He is our Brother. And because our weakness in this life cannot bear the glory of His majesty (Matt. 7:12ff.; Acts 9:3ff.), therefore His body and blood are present, distributed, and received under the bread and wine. Nor does He will that we wander around the gates of heaven uncertain in which area of heaven we ought to look for Christ in His human nature or whether we can find Him; but in the Holy Supper He Himself is present in the external celebration and shows by visible signs where He wills to be present with His body and blood, and there we may safely seek Him and surely find Him, for there He Himself through the ministry distributes His body and blood to the communicants. These most sweet and necessary comforts will be completely snatched away from us if the substantial presence, distribution, and reception of Christ’s body and blood are removed from the Supper. —Martin Chemnitz (Martin Chemnitz was a contemporary of Martin Luther, and is often referred to as the “second Martin.” He was a strong defender of the faith.)

Men's Bible Study is starting Thursday, September 6th, at 5:00 pm, and continues every week thereafter. Get it on the calendar and join in for thoughtful discussions or just listen and learn with us, "For everything that was written in the past was written to teach us, so that through the endurance taught in the Scriptures and the encouragement they provide we might have hope." (Rom 15:4) And that is a sure hope.

ST. JOHN'S CHURCH COUNCIL MEETING

July 10, 2018

The July 10, 2018, meeting was called to order by President Vance Oelkers at 7:02 p.m. **MEMBERS PRESENT:** Pastor James Groleau, Vance Oelkers, Dave Ruhnke, Donna Bailey, Dale Siegfried, Lori Siegfried, Sharry Watkins, Marsha Jensen, Darrel Bahn, Pam Reistad

OPENING DEVOTION: Pastor Groleau

SECRETARY'S REPORT: M/S/P to accept the secretary's report for June 12, 2018, as written.

TREASURER'S REPORT: Net Operating Income: \$1,394.51. Net Increase in Designated Assets: \$2,975.24. M/S/P to accept the Treasurer's report, as written.

ELDERS' REPORT: Dave Ruhnke gave an update on determining the feasibility of a preschool in our building. The Fire Department toured our building and Dave talked with the City Engineer and Department of Human Services. The restrooms on the west side of the building would need to be remodeled to make them handicap accessible. Also some things would need to be done in the kitchen. Dave talked to Joe Fuhrman about doing a valuation of the parsonage for the possible sale to Pastor and Kerri.

TRUSTEES' REPORT: No Trustee meeting in July. Bills are paid up to date. All modifications and repairs are complete on the furnace.

BOARD OF EDUCATION: No Board of Education meeting in July. Donna Bailey gave a thank you to all the volunteers who helped make VBS a success.

STEWARDSHIP BOARD: Nothing new to report.

YOUTH & FAMILY BOARD: No Youth and Family Board meeting in July. The lock-in went very well. About 26 youth 1st through 8th grade attended with 20 of those staying overnight.

SOCIAL MINISTRY: Social Ministry is continuing with its ongoing projects. Pasta and rice will be delivered to the Salvation Army on July 11. The shoes for Shoes Away Hunger will be taken to Minneapolis next week. The Backpack ladies were surprised by the Sumner staff with coffee and rolls at the end of the year. They put all their signatures on a big poster to thank us for helping the kids. And as a bonus they even filled all the bags for us that day. We will start filling them again in September.

EVANGELISM: No report.

PASTOR'S REPORT: *Shut-in calls:* 9 by Pastor Groleau and 17 by Pastor Bailey; *Classes Taught:* Sunday mornings – Stuff They Didn't Teach in Sunday School; Monday mornings – Lectionary Readings; Wednesdays – CASE & Confirmation; Thursday evenings – Grey Matters. *Worship Services:* Each Thursday & Sunday, *Funerals:* One, *Baptisms:* None; *Other:* Meetings continue concerning Holy Cross discussing mission ministry opportunities. Holy Cross voted to stay open. Plans to combine Our Saviors and Holy Cross are progressing; Continue to work on initiatives from Best Practices for Ministry; New website rolled out and continuing to add new material.

OLD BUSINESS: The committee researching folding chairs recommended purchasing the white plastic chairs and rolling carts to put them on. M/S/P to purchase 160 chairs and 3 carts for a cost of \$3,232.94 to be paid from the Memorial Fund. Our church does not have a formal agreement with Rachel's Hope requiring us to make an annual donation. A donation is something that could be put into the church budget in the future if the congregation wanted. The LWML does donate \$50 each year to them and the quilters donate blankets that they make. Deb Thorson emailed Dale Siegfried stating that in prior years the background checks were done for \$10 per person through Protect My Ministry so Pastor will check into using them.

August Birthdays

- 1 Eugene Auringer
- 3 Tony Flerlage
- 3 Kakach Ogilla
- 5 Tori Watkins
- 7 Rod Wenzel
- 10 Kristen Carlson
- 12 Michael Binder
- 14 Robert VanPelt
- 17 Kristi Rupe
- 17 Rosie Seltz
- 17 Larrry Vorpahl
- 18 Eve Kewatt
- 18 Dylan Maas
- 19 Justin Bergemann
- 20 Sandy Auringer
- 21 Diego Bos
- 21 Natalie Flerlage
- 22 David Binder
- 23 Lillian Erickson
- 24 Bill Longergan
- 28 Deb Thorson
- 28 Kristina Vorpahl
- 29 Cheryl Nelson
- 31 Mary Clasby

August Anniversaries

- 1 Dale & Lori Siegfried
- 11 Nathan & Sara Wradislavsky
- 12 Todd & Sherri Wessels
- 13 Michael & Wendy Brandt
- 16 Allen & Barb McAlister
- 16 Ron & Patty Shatek
- 17 Wayne & Francine Strout
- 22 Steve & Deb Thorson
- 26 Parker & Maxine Bracken
- 26 Troy & Tammy Watkins
- 27 Nathan & Jennifer Augustine
- 28 Roger & Karen Jacobs

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Together in the Word

Sunday Adult Bible Class at 10:25 a.m. led by Pastor James "Good News About God". Plan on coming.

Monday morning Bible class at 9:30 a.m., led by Pastor James is studying the lessons that will be read in the services the following weekend. Come and join us! Bring a friend.

Tuesday - Women's Bible study at 1:00 p.m We will be studying a different woman in the Bible each week through the summer.

Thursday - 7:30 p.m. Gray Matters meets at Perkins Restaurant. Join us in a free-flowing discussion.



***Thank you
to all of our
volunteers
who make
our worship
special.***

Volunteer Schedule

August Ushers

Head Usher: Randy Graff

Saturday evening:

Sunday morning:

August Lectors

05 Carol Schleicher

12 Dick Heuton

19 Larry Waters

26 Gloria Dirksen

August Acolytes

Kylea Rupe, Randi Lynn Strouf

Please join St. John's scrapbookers in donating new school supplies. We will collect school supplies from now until the end of August. We will donate the supplies to the Salvation Army to be given to those in need. You can purchase your school supplies and put them in the yellow totes in either entry-way. Thank you for your donations to this needy cause.

TOM

Thought of the Month

When it comes to stewardship, a favorite Bible verse is the account of the widow's mite (Luke 21:1–4). It's a moving account. Our Lord praises the seemingly small gift of two copper coins given by a poor widow above the abundance of gifts given by the rich, saying, "Truly, I tell you, this poor widow has put in more than all of them" (Luke 21:3).

And that is usually where we stop. But the text goes on. "For they all contributed out of their abundance, but she out of her poverty put in all she had to live on" (Luke 21:4).

"She ... put in all she had to live on." She gave everything. She held nothing back. She trusted that the Lord who made her and all creatures, who gave her everything she had, who redeemed her from her own sin, from death, and the power of the devil, who called her by the Gospel and enlightened her with His gifts of Word and Sacrament, would continue to do this. He would provide her with all that she needed for this body and life because that is the character of the God she had.

But this is not why we give small gifts. Her gift, though it appeared small, was actually large. When we are tempted to give small gifts it is precisely because we want them to be small! We don't trust the Lord to provide for us.

We give small gifts because we lack faith in the One who created us, redeemed us, sanctifies and keeps us in the one true faith. We give small gifts because we doubt that God will really give us what we need and desire. We give small gifts because we are not content with what God has already given.

We are not slaves, children of the slave woman, under the Old Covenant (Gal. 4). We are adopted sons of the free woman. And since we are sons, we are also heirs. And heirs receive the inheritance. For everything is already ours in Christ. And thus, moved by the willing spirit of adoption, we do the will of God in financial matters far beyond all that done by those under the Old Covenant who were forced by legal demands.

So what have you decided to give? How do I decide what to give? Let the Scriptures be your guide.

We are to give proportionally to what we have received from God's giving to us (Luke 12:48; 1 Cor. 16:1-2, 2 Cor. 8:12). But you have not been set free to give nothing. See that you excel in the grace of giving (2 Cor. 8:7).

We are not free to live selfishly outside the Gospel, without regard for God who gives us all good gifts, without generosity for our neighbor who needs us and our gifts, without supporting the community of faith in which we live, without care for our spiritual fathers and those who teach and help raise our children in the faith, without resources for the poor and needy – in short, we are not free to live unto ourselves, hoarding what God has given us only for us.

For love is the fulfillment of the law (Romans 13:10). And the sum of the law is this: Love God and love your neighbor (Matt. 22:34-40). We love because He first loved us. We give because He has given to us.

Luther once said, "Possessions belong in your hands, not in your heart" (LW 14:240). There is a reason your 10 fingers spread apart. With your hands you catch God's gifts for what you need and let the rest fall through your fingers to your neighbors – your family, your friends, your community, your church.

LIKE MUSIC? Use your talents to God's glory. Handbell Choir has openings for 3 more ringers. Some music experience/knowledge is necessary; we can teach you the rest. We play about every 4 weeks for worship services. Weekly rehearsals begin early September. Have questions, or curious and want to just give it a try before deciding? Talk to David Ruhnke (507-219-0932) or Gale Siegfried (507-993-3535).

NEW BUSINESS: Dale has been informing board members that installation will be during the church service on July 29. Two board members are needed for the Stewardship Board because the Nelson's are moving away. Vance gave a thank you to all the board members who served during the past year.

ADJOURNMENT: M/S/P to adjourn @ 7:53 p.m.

CLOSING PRAYER: The Lord's Prayer

Respectfully submitted: Pamela Reistad, Council Secretary

Time and Talents

Have you looked at the updated St Johns website? One of the many new features is an online time and talents survey.

We have all been blessed with talents and skills entrusted to us by God. God asks us to use these spiritual gifts to His service for our church home and to help our neighbors.

Because many hands make light work and because we are a congregation actively serving our members and the greater community, we are asking each member to complete a Time and Talent Survey.

This survey covers a number of topics. Please note that you can volunteer as much or as little as you like for any area in which you are interested.

Please consider completing the survey. *You can get to it by clicking on the About Us link at stjohnsaustinlcms.org. It is also available in paper form.* Any questions, please contact a member of the evangelism committee.

Thank you!

Dear Christian friends at St. Johns,
Five years ago we visited St. John's and were welcomed with open arms.
We want to thank all of you for your kindness and the lifetime friendships that were made while we were in your midst.

God's blessings to all of you!

Dave and Cheryl Nelson

PS, come and see us on Swan Lake!

August Birthdays for Shut-ins

7	Rod Wenzel	Our House, #207, 1313 15th Avenue NW, Austin 55912
23	Lillian Erickson	Good Samaritan-Comfort Care, #409, 1201 17th St. NE, Austin, MN 55912

Our shut-ins would truly appreciate a card, phone call or visit during the month. A list of all the shut-ins is on the bulletin boards.



St. John's Lutheran Church Financial Recap
January 1, 2018 through June 30, 2018

<u>Undesignated Assets</u>	<u>Balance 1/1/18</u>	<u>Activity</u>	<u>Balance 6/30/18</u>	<u>Notes</u>
Cash	\$215,476.91	\$13,999.35	\$229,476.26	Undesignated Assets represent the funds available for general operating purposes.
Prepays/Other Assets	15,487.93	-5,992.25	9,495.68	
Buildings & Land	3,015,781.00	0.00	3,015,781.00	
Liabilities	-4,640.42	<u>-6,612.59</u>	-11,253.01	
Net Operating Income		<u>\$1,394.51</u>		
<u>Designated Assets</u>				
Building Fund	\$101,059.30	\$4,002.14	\$105,061.44	Designated Assets represent all of the various funds that can be contributed to for the designated purpose.
Needy Family Fund	2,067.08	100.00	2,167.08	
Women's Ministry Fund	2,060.87	0.00	2,060.87	
Rachel's Hope Fund	0.00	0.00	0.00	
Musical Equipment Fund	283.68	0.00	283.68	
Library Books Fund	513.38	-200.49	312.89	
Choir Robes Fund	3,111.00	0.00	3,111.00	
Sunday School Fund	70.00	-20.00	50.00	
Memorial Fund	15,303.80	490.00	15,793.80	
Praise Band Fund	3,135.40	0.00	3,135.40	
Youth Fund	11,225.81	-688.13	10,537.68	
Multimedia Fund	700.00	0.00	700.00	
Scrip Fund	10,298.06	540.81	10,838.87	
Sumner School Fund	12,173.92	-1,249.09	10,924.83	
Endowment Fund	43,883.12	<u>0.00</u>	43,883.12	
Increase in Designated Assets		<u>\$2,975.24</u>		

From Our Library

A double wedding takes place at the beginning of the book of Young Wil and True and Marty and Midgie. They leave on the train for Portland, Oregon for their honeymoons. The next morning at breakfast they receive a telegram to come home for a business proposition. Home they go at once. Once home they receive a notice to see O'Higgins. He reads a will with many conditions to a property on the east side of Oregon. Both couples are surprised and not at all delighted. But they make up their minds to at least try to meet the conditions for the first year. The first year is not smooth sailing with many trials and yearnings, but Young Wil and True put their trust in the Lord for His guidance. Marty doesn't like to kow tow to rules, but does learn it's not the worse thing in the world. Midgie grows in spirit and determination.

As I started this book it seemed familiar. I had read it before, but still found myself wondering how all the problems turn out. It's still a good reading adventure even the second time around! You will find ***Love Follows the Heart*** by June Masters Bacher in our church library.

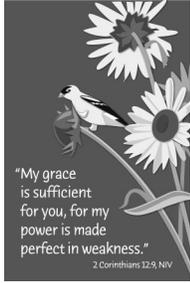
Annette Kiehne



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ST. JOHN'S NEWS



August NEWSLETTER

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