

St. John's News

December, 2021



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Pastor: Cell 320-336-8149

Church Office:

stjohns@stjohnsaustincms.org

Pastor James Groleau:

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St. John's Webpage:

www.stjohnsaustincms.org

Live Radio Broadcasts of Worship services every Sunday, 9:00 a.m. at KAUS AM 1480

Watch the service live on line by going to www.stjohnsaustincms.org



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.

Message from Pastor James

I want you to know how great a struggle I have for you... I work so that you may be encouraged by all the riches that come from a complete understanding of Christ. He is the mystery of God. God has hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge in Christ. I say this so that no one will mislead you with arguments that merely sound good.

[Colossians 2:1-4]

Life is a tapestry. It is a weaving of many treads and colors woven together to make up a unique experience that each of us calls our life. It is what forms and makes up the gifts and talents we possess. All of it proclaiming the beauty of God's work, and God's blessings on God's people throughout the world. Though each of us is unique we are, when combined together, a glorious and beautiful tapestry displaying the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Of course there are threads that can fail in a tapestry. When those threads fail, the flaws stand out. Those flaws grab our attention and cause us to focus on them, rather than stepping back to see the wonder of the piece as a whole. When you survey all the wonders of Creation, from:

electrons, protons and neutrons that make up the parts of each individual atom in the universe to

super structures which are collections of galaxies swirling through space

when you travel around the countryside, or drive around the country, you see the hand of God weaving His grace into all He has made. The failed threads would tempt us to pull in close; to look at the failed thread and not see the greater masterpiece. It is important to step back from time to time to ponder the wonders of our God.

I would encourage you to take some time to go to our website. In the worship service archives, on 11/14, you will see an entry for the Sundanese Mission Presentation and a Sudanese worship service. Watch them and you will see some of the beautiful tapestry. In that worship service you will see people burdened with life's trials carried by God's love. You will see repentant sinners approach the Table of our Lord and receive the eternal-life giving morsels that well up within, to bring us into intimate proximity with Heaven's glory. More than that, to bring us into physical contact with our forgiving Savior and healing Lord. That Holy Meal binds us with them in the glorious band of:

every nation, from all
tribes and peoples
and languages,
standing before the
throne and before

the Lamb, clothed in
white robes, with
palm branches in
their hands. Singing
out, with loud voices,

“Salvation belongs to
our God who sits on
the throne, and to
the Lamb!”
[Revelation 7:9-10]

Just think for a moment about the idea of being woven together, being entwined with a cacophony of threads. Each one a unique thread, but all of them the work of the Master Weaver. All of them God’s people around the globe. There, in that place, we can realize we depend on one another for the abundant life that God promises to all of us. We are connected by our need for and production of: food, clothing and shelter. We are connected and bound together in our search for: beauty, joy and meaning in life.

That tapestry is vast, and it can only truly be seen properly by looking at another and more glorious tapestry: The Tapestry of Sacred and Holy Scripture. As the Light of the World reflects off the many colors and textures of this tapestry we see and encounter facets of our humanity we may have never before seen. Let’s take a look.

Look at the words here, and hear with your eyes, the very Word of God, showing in a powerful way the foundational relationship between God and all of Creation, including you.

Lord, you have been our refuge from one generation to another.

Before the mountains were brought forth and the land and the earth were born,
from age to age you are God.

Show your servants your works and your splendor to their children.

May the graciousness of the LORD our God be upon us;
prosper the work of our hands; prosper our handiwork.

[Psalm 90 : 1-6, 13-17]

This hymn, from the very mouth of God and scribed on a scroll by the hand of Moses, has been sung by the faithful for nearly 4,000 years. It weaves a beautiful tapestry of God and Creation, of land and earth, sky and sea. It draws, on our mind’s eye, a vision of all the works of Creation for all of God’s Children to see, and finally the strands of human creativity in partnership with God in the stewardship and building of God’s Kingdom.

In and around this strand comes the Master Weaver’s voice. When asked what is the greatest thread in Creation...

“Teacher, which commandment in the law is the greatest?”

Jesus said, “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind.” This is the greatest and First Commandment.

The second is like it: “You shall love your neighbor as yourself. On these two commandments hang all the Law and the prophets.” *[Matthew 22:36-40]*

This strand of thread puts even more emphasis on the two basic relationships of human life. The relationship between human beings and God, and the relationship between each of us and all other people with whom we share this earth.

St. Paul wraps a colorful string around this portion of our tapestry with these beautiful and powerful words.

As God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, meekness and patience. Bear with one another and if anyone has a complaint against another, forgive each other; just as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive.

Above all, clothe yourselves with love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony. Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in the one Body, and be thankful.

[Colossians 3:12-15]

These passages of Holy Scripture, woven together in a luminous tapestry, truly proclaim our faith is not just a list of rules, regulations and lines that put some in and others out. Our faith is, above all else, relationships. It is a relationship with God and relationships with all of God's people on earth as well as in Heaven. It is the angels and the arch-angels and all the company of Heaven, along with the One True Holy Church on earth.

We are many textures, we are many colors, we are many people with many talents and treasures. Each one different from the other. Each one part of the tapestry of God. We are entwined with one another. We are responsible for one another. We hold each other up, because where one thread fails, where one thread frays, the tapestry of marred.

So what of those fraying threads? What is our responsibility to them? If we are not individual threads alone as an island, but woven together, what is our responsibility to each other? Is it not to lift up, rather than look down? Is it not to share the load, rather than increase another's burden? Is it not, as Luther taught:

We should fear and love God so that we do not tell lies about our neighbor, betray him, slander him, or hurt his reputation, but defend him, speak well of him, and explain everything in the kindest way.

[Luther's explanation to the Eighth Commandment.]

So what of those fraying threads? What is our responsibility to them? It is to approach them in Christian love, as Jesus teaches in Matthew 18:15-20. Why would we do that? Why would we point out another's failures? Why would we "judge" our neighbor? Because Jesus taught us too. Because Satan and the world want to pull each thread down. Because sin will get you.

We are responsible to each other, and for each other. Where sin is openly tolerated the tapestry is openly tattered.

If your brother sins against you, go and tell him his fault, between you and him alone. If he listens to you, you have gained your brother. *[Matthew 18:15]*

Why do that? Why walk toward the stress, the discomfort and pain? To gain them back. To help carry their load. To walk with them side by side, shoulder by shoulder, perhaps even hand in hand, to get them Home.

So what of those fraying threads? What is our responsibility to them? When we point the flaws to them privately and they refuse to listen; When we show them their failures and they refuse to see; When we tell

them of their tattered conduct and they will not hear or be mended, the thread must be removed. It is removed carefully, cautiously and patiently, but it must be removed, or it will spoil the work of God. Once removed, prayerfully the thread can be repaired and returned to its rightful place. If not it is cast aside and replaced by one that is new. Failure to do that work will destroy what God had made in beauty.

When Jesus had sent the people away, he went into the house. His disciples came to him and said, "Explain what the parable of the weeds in the field means."

He answered, "The one who plants the good seeds is the Son of Man. The field is the world. The good seeds are those who belong to the Kingdom. The weeds are those who belong to the evil one. The enemy who planted them is the devil. The harvest is the end of the world. The workers are angels. Just as weeds are gathered and burned, so it will be at the end of time.

The Son of Man will send His angels. They will gather everything in His Kingdom that causes people to sin and everyone who does evil. The angels will throw them into a blazing furnace. In that place there will be wailing and gnashing of teeth.

Then the people who have God's approval will shine like the sun in their Father's Kingdom.

Let the person who has ears listen!

[Matthew 13:36-43]

Christian love should generate in us a desire that no one would be condemned. This is in fact God's own desire.

This is good, and it is pleasing in the sight of God our Savior, who desires all people to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth.

[1 Timothy 2:3-4]

There are two ways to view the tapestry. In tolerance, or in love. Which do you find most appealing:

I tolerate you.

or

I love you.

To tolerate someone is to endure their sin. It is to allow them to go happily to Hell. It is wrapped in the words, "At least they died happy and in peace." Yet never to know happiness or peace again.

To love someone is to offer correction. It is to bring some small suffering here. It is wrapped in the Words, "Welcome home good and faithful servant. Enter into your Father's glory. *[Matthew 25:21]*" Never to know suffering again.

To tolerate someone is to allow their sin to live near you, and most probably affect you; drag you down with them. To love someone is to help them get cleaned up; help them walk the Narrow Road that leads through the Narrow Gate into Heaven's glory. *[Matthew 7:14]*

Heaven's glory comes to us in a cart. That cart is called "repentance." When we bring this cart full of our own sin to God, He empties it. He washes it out in the waters of Holy Baptism. Then He fills it. He fills it with His righteousness, coming to us in His Sacred Body and Precious Blood.

May we love each other enough to correct our falling brother or sister. Repentance in Christ is a stumbling block to those who are not being saved. But to those who are called, Christ is the power of God and the wisdom of God. *[1 Corinthians 1:23-24]* He is our righteousness before the Throne.

Pastor James.

Pastor James Office Hours	
Monday	9-11:30 a.m.
Wednesday	9-11:30 a.m.
Thursday	9-11:30 a.m.

On Tuesday Pastor James is working at home but can be reached by phone: 320-336-8149

Together in the Word



*Weekday
Bible
Studies*

Sunday: Adult Bible class at 10:00 a.m. Pastor James is leading discussion on the Catechism

Tuesday: Women's Bible study meets at 1:00 p.m. at St. John's.

Thursday: Men's Bible Study - join us at 5:00 pm on Thursdays..

Worship Services

Sunday

9:00 a.m. Worship (Traditional)

10:00 a.m. Adult Bible study and Sunday School

11:00 a.m. Worship (Praise) This is a more contemporary service.

Midweek

6:30 p.m. Wednesday service (Traditional)

Men's Bible Study -Men's Bible Study - How do you answer someone when they point out a seeming bible contradiction? We will learn how to answer starting **January 6th** with a study of those apparent contradictions in the Bible. Join us for the answers every Thursday 5:00-6:00 pm in the Council Room.

Men's Breakfast will be Saturday, December 18th at 7:30 a.m., at Barley's Family Restaurant. Come and enjoy the fellowship.

Matthew 12:30, [ESV](#): "Whoever is not with me is against me, and whoever does not gather with me scatters."



Shoe Away Hunger

If you have gently used shoes you no longer need, consider placing them in the box near the office. One pair of shoes can supply a family with seven days of essential groceries. Damaged shoes can no longer be accepted.

Thanksgiving/Christmas/Eve

- Wednesday 11/24 Thanksgiving service will be at Our Savior – Brownsdale at 6:00pm. Continuing the to share Thanksgiving with our two sister congregations. (There will be no worship service at St. John's that evening.)
- Sunday 12/19 Youth Christmas program
- Wednesday 12/1,8,15,(22) Advent Services
The 22nd may possibly be an additional Children's Program)
- Friday 12/24 Christmas Eve services will be at 3:30pm and 6:30pm.
Last year we had four services to accommodate COVID issues. This year we will have two services. The 3:30 service for those who would rather not drive at night and the regular 6:30 service.
- Saturday 12/25 Christmas Day service will be at at 9:00am.
-

Secret Sisters

The Christmas Tea will not be held this year so reveal your secret sister before the end of the year.

Ruby's Pantry in Austin

700 12th Street Southwest, Austin, MN

DAYS AND HOURS

3rd Thursday of the Month Registration begins at 4:00 PM

Food bundles available 4:00-5:30 PM

goodnews@rubyspantry.org www.rubyspantry.org

Bob Rosel, Media Coordinator Ruby's Pantry Austin

FROGs (Faithful Retired Old Guys)

Calling all retired guys! Join us at the church on the first Tuesday of every month (**Dec. 7th**). FROGs offers both a social component and a volunteer component. Come the first Tuesday of each month for coffee and fellowship. We will also be looking for ideas to serve, doing general maintenance or upkeep activities or other creative ways to serve the Lord here at St. John's. Volunteer to serve if you want. If not, just come for the fellowship. All are welcome... just show up!

TAKE IT TO THE LORD IN PRAYER.

DO YOU HAVE A PRAYER CONCERN OR THANKSGIVING? COMMEND IT TO THE LORD THROUGH YOUR OWN PRAYERS, BUT ALSO THROUGH THE LOVING SERVICE OF OUR PRAYER CHAIN. IF YOU HAVE AN ITEM YOU WOULD LIKE INCLUDED ON THE PRAYER CHAIN, PLEASE CONTACT MIRIAM LUEHMANN AT 437-7619 OR Miriam.Luehmann@icloud.com

Script cards are available after each Sunday service. Check out the new list of businesses available. Orders, with payment, must be in by the third Sunday of the month, **Sunday, December 19.** The cards should be here the following Sunday. Place your order and check on the Scrip table or bring it to the office. These cards help the ministries of our congregation so consider purchasing them.



Sunday School Scoop

Sunday school is back in session. We meet on Sunday mornings from 10:10 – 11:00 a.m. We meet as a whole group and have been focusing on the catechism.

On Sunday, November 7th, during our education hour the children and youth of our church help put together shoebox gifts for Operation Christmas Child. These gifts go to children all over the world who are not as fortunate as us to have gifts for Christmas. We packaged 108 gift boxes to be distributed by Operation Christmas Child to children in need.

During November and into December we will be practicing for the upcoming Christmas program. The Christmas program, “Journey to the Christ Child”, will be Sunday, December 19th at 9:00 a.m. This program will include children and youth from preschool through high school.

Any children/youth are welcome to join us at St. John’s on Sunday mornings.

**** Special thanks to Vicki Ramsey for providing all gift items and shoeboxes for Operation Christmas Child as well as organizing this event so our children could have this opportunity to contribute to this valiant effort.**

Stewardship

Philippians 4:5-6 – “The Lord is at hand; do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God.” Wouldn’t you like to be free from worry and anxiety? Isn’t it worry and anxiety that often keep us from living the generous life God has called us to? St. Paul contrasts anxiety with prayer, supplication, and thanksgiving in making our requests known to God. In other words, when you are tempted to anxiety and worry, pray to the Lord with a thankful heart and pour out your supplications before Him.

It is that time of year when we need to get out the winter wear. The tree is up in the west entry with hats, gloves, mittens and scarves. If you need an item or know of someone who is in need please feel free to take the items. Donations are welcome.

Stewardship

At the last voters meeting the 2022 budget for St John's Lutheran was adopted with a projected \$27,000.00 budget deficit . This will be a challenge for everyone at St John's to continue our ministry without continuing to dip into our budget reserves which are needed to keep our beautiful church in tip top shape.

Please consider increasing your giving for the remainder of this year and into 2022. In order to balance our budget for 2022, taking into account the number of people that have given this year, each giving unit would need to increase their giving by approximately \$37.00 per month to meet our budget needs. This is large increase for everyone to ask for but I'm sure God is pleased with a cheerful giver.

From one of the daily devotions in Portals of Prayer for the month of October it reads as follows:

"A Christian worldview holds that God owns everything; we are merely borrowers of all that we might have in this world. When we use His stuff to bless others, we are doing it for Him. It is God's home that we live in; it is God's car that we drive; it is God's money in our wallets; our bodies belong to God; and we exit in God's time and by His will.

God calls us His most treasured possession. Jesus paid for our redemption by His death on the cross so that we can be with Him for eternity. As we take care of our lives and our belongings, we do well to be vigilant and consider that God owns them all!

One way of giving for those of us that are drawing money from our IRA's is to give directly from our IRA to the church. When you contribute directly to St John's from your IRA those dollars are tax free to you."

Prayerfully in Christ



LWML NEWS

As we prepare for the birth of our Lord, we want to share our joy with others. We will be delivering cookies and fruit to our shut-ins. Please bring individually wrapped cookies by December 5. Cash donations for fruit can be left in the office. Service committee #1 will be delivering these gifts of love on December 6.

Before that, we need to prepare our church by decorating trees and putting out nativities. Tuesday, November 30 at 6:00 we hope everyone will come and make short work of this project.

The quilters also will be taking the month of December off. We have been busy making use of the gifts of fabric and enjoying fellowship time. We took quilts and bears to the police department and Parent Resource Center. We will be taking some to Rachel's Hope and on November 29 we will be taking the rest of the blessed ones to the Ronald McDonald House and Gift of Life Transplant House. Remember they are on the rockers for anyone who needs them.

We are planning the church birthday party for January. More on that next month.

Have a very blessed and joyous Christmas as we embrace each other with the love and caring that our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ brought to us. Sandy Grant

The Purpose of the Church

(The Church is NOT meant to be a social club)

December Birthdays

03 Randy Graff
 04 Alexis Rickard
 05 Connie Gilsrud
 07 Kaaren Wuertz
 10 Christina Bergstrom
 10 Arianna Pineda
 12 Betty Hinks
 16 Ingrid Meyer
 16 Tammy Pfeifer
 16 Tibisa Thor
 17 Jewell Weeks
 18 Quentin Kewatt
 18 Ethan Wilking
 20 Greta Anderson
 20 Parker Bracken
 21 Andrew Grant
 22 Nick Brandt
 25 Matthew Johnson
 27 Wesley
 Wradislavsky
 29 Jeramy Caron
 29 Nancy Prigge
 30 Richard Kiehne
 30 Anne Schulz
 31 Hannah Wasko

December Anniversaries

07 Eric & Kara Grant
 26 Arnie & Pat Mulso
 26 John & Carol
 Schleicher
 30 Curt & Greta
 Anderson
 30 Beth & Daryl Saurer

- **The local church exists for evangelism.** The churches exist primarily to reach people for Christ. There are passages like Acts 1:8 to reach the conclusion that the purpose of the church is for evangelism. Reaching the lost for Christ is the purpose that drives what the church does — from the design of the building to the implementation of programming, to the structure of the meetings and services.
 Look to Matthew 28:19-20 (Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.) as the mandate to “make disciples.” Churches should put energy into developing and producing mature followers of Christ. Building up the body of Christ is the grand mission that drives the church’s function and structure.
- **Spiritual maturity**
 God designed His church to be a catalyst for spiritual growth. (Pastor or syntactically trained led Bible study.)
- **Community**
 It’s obvious from Scripture that God wants His people to grow and mature within a community of unity and togetherness. It was never God’s intent for His followers to practice their faith in a vacuum away from other believers.
- **Commitment**
 The church is at its best when every believer is devoted to the mission of His church.
- **Service**
 God wants each believer to actively serve Him by ministering to others in and through their local church. Scripture states that every believer is the recipient of God-given spiritual gifts, which are God’s enabling ability to effectively serve Him (1 Corinthians 12 and Romans 12:3-8). It was never God’s intent for the church to be a “spectator sport” where people just show up on Sunday mornings to watch and listen to others. God expects every Christ-follower to use their natural abilities and spiritual gifts to faithfully serve Him.
- **Growth**
 The end result of the local church operating as Christ intended is that the church will grow — both spiritually and numerically.

'There is no more neutrality in the world (or in St. John's). You either have to be part of the solution, or you're going to be part of the problem.' (Eldridge Cleaver)

Sudanese Newsletter, December, 2021



A blessed Advent and Christmas season to you! What a blessing once again to celebrate the birth of our Savior. Jesus' coming into the world as a child focuses our attention on all children during the Christmas season.

Sudanese Christians from across Minnesota gathered on Saturday, November 13, at Trinity Lutheran Church, Faribault for a 12-hour prayer and fasting vigil. The purpose of the vigil was to pray for the children of Sudanese immigrants who are who are dying at an alarming rate.

The gathering at Trinity was part of a nationwide effort to ask the Lord to bring an end the conflict and violence that has taken a huge toll on Sudanese young people both here in the United States and in Africa. Not all the children have died from violence but far

too many have.

I traveled to Omaha, Nebraska recently for the funeral of one of our children. While I was there for the funeral, two more Sudanese children were killed. Lord, have mercy!

As we gathered for the vigil, we took comfort in the words of the Apostle Peter in Acts 2:21: "Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved." We ask you to join us in calling on our merciful Father on behalf of our kids who are dying here in the States and also in our homeland. Because of Christmas and because of Jesus' own ministry to children, we know that children are very precious to the Lord and can be confident that he hears our prayers for them.

The website for my ministry is: sudanese ministries southern mn.com and my phone number is 651-399-3959.

Have a very blessed Christmas.

RADIO MINISTRY

Members of St. Johns and Friends,

Thank you to all who have supported the Radio Broadcast and continue to support it. God is faithful in providing us with sponsors of the radio broadcast as we have needs. **Starting in January we will have several openings needing sponsors.** We are thankful to be able to continue this ministry because of the support of our members, friends, and listeners. If you would like to make a donation to St. Johns Radio Broadcast you can mail your donation to St. Johns or to our home, The Petersen's 2805 5th AVE SW, Austin, MN 55912. The weekly fee is \$150.00 you can donate the total amount or any part of the amount please make checks payable to St. Johns Radio Broadcast.

December sponsors are as follows:

Dec. 5, 2021 Given by Loraine Andree in memory of Loraine and Edward's parents Mr. & Mrs. Lawrence Hockemeyer and Mr. & Mrs. Rudy Andree

Dec. 12, 2021 Given by Richard and Kaaren Wuertz in memory of their parents Lorenz and Velma Wuertz and Glen and Bernie Hovland.

Dec. 19, 2021 Sponsored by Pastor John and Carol Schleicher in memory of Carol's parents Mel and Marie Precht.

Dec. 26, 2021 Given in memory of Dalvin Augustin and in remembrance of Dalvin and Janet's wedding anniversary by Janet Augustin and family and friends.

You can listen to the radio broadcast live on KAUS Radio Sunday mornings at 9:00 a.m.

God's blessing to all of you, Clayton and Ellen Petersen

Minutes of Annual Fall Voters' Meeting of St. John's Lutheran Church

Austin, Minnesota – Sunday, November 7, 2021

The Annual Fall Voters' Meeting of St. John's Lutheran Church was called to order at 12:50 p.m. by President Dale Siegfried with 36 members present.

OPENING PRAYER: Given by Pastor Groleau before the dinner. (Pizza Ranch & potluck for sides)

SECRETARY'S REPORT: Dave Watkins moved to approve the Annual Spring Voters' Meeting Minutes of July 25, 2021 with the addition of a copy of the church board members & officers attached.
S/P

PASTOR'S REPORT: As printed & distributed. Pastor James encouraged all to keep coming to the Sunday morning Bible study. He is working on Christmas plans.

BOARD REPORTS: As printed & distributed. There were questions about where matters stood with the Ambassadors of Reconciliation & progress made in our congregation. Thad Kusick, elder, referred us to the Pastor & Elders' Report on the Ambassadors of Reconciliation Report as printed & distributed. Thad answered questions during discussion.

OLD BUSINESS: None

NEW BUSINESS: Annual Church Budget for 2022 – Dick Heuton, Treasurer, presented the proposed 2022 budget which was developed by the Finance Committee with input from all the Boards. The printed & distributed proposed budget was presented by categories & discussed by lines as needed. Pastor James & his family were excused when we discussed his salary. Dave Ruhnke moved to accept the 2022 proposed budget with the addition of \$400 more to Organ Service making it a total of \$900 (same as last year to allow two organ tunings/per year). Sue Downey moved to amend the motion to also add that the amount of increase in secretary's salary be split between the secretary & janitor. (Secretary's & janitor's wage per hour would both be raised to \$13.62. Both have always previously received the same increase.) S/P. Amended motion was read to accept the proposed budget to include the Organ Service addition & the change in secretary & janitor salaries for a net loss of \$26,792. S/P by a written ballot vote of 26 to 7. All were encouraged to prayerfully consider their giving for next year as we will be operating with a deficit.

New Chancel Arrangement: Pastor James asked for an information only vote on his proposed chancel arrangement (picture printed & distributed, pulpit moved to left of altar). Written ballot was 18 no, 10 yes.

ADJOURNMENT: Dave Watkins made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 2:35 p.m. S/P

CLOSING PRAYER: The Lord's Prayer

Respectfully submitted by: Doraine Graff, Council Secretary

ST. JOHN'S CHURCH COUNCIL MEETING

November 9, 2021

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Dick Heuton in the absence of President Dale Siegfried.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Dick Heuton, Pastor James, Marsha Jensen, Thad Kusick, Stan Rasmussen, Lori Siegfried, Sharry Watkins, Doraine Graff___

OPENING PRAYER: Pastor James opened with prayer & a devotion.

SECRETARY'S REPORT: Stan Rasmussen moved to accept the Secretary's Report for October 12, 2021. S/P.

TREASURER'S REPORT: Net Operating Loss: (\$19,823.19). Net Designated Funds Increase: \$10,202.04. Net Income Loss: (\$9,621.16). Marsha Jensen moved to accept the Treasurer's Report as written. S/P.

ELDERS' REPORT: Thad Kusick_

Elder Report 11-9-21

Pastor James, Dave Watkins, Richard Kiehne and Thad Kusick were in attendance November 2nd at 6:30.

We started the meeting with a Portal of Prayer Devotion and a then a Bible Study from Lutheran Witness.

We continued conversations around the AoR report.

Finalized thoughts on a summary of the AoR report and action items for responsibly groups.

TRUSTEES' REPORT: Marsha Jensen. The Cub Scouts planted a red maple tree on the west side of church for one of their projects. A new seal has been ordered for the dishwasher. Dave & Vance will put it in.

BOARD OF EDUCATION and YOUTH & FAMILY BOARD: Lori Siegfried

Education/Youth and Family Board

Wednesday, October 13th, 2021 7:30 p.m.

Present: Alisha Meyer, Patty Shatek, Jodi VanPelt, Lori Siegfried

We opened our meeting with a short devotion from Woman of God Moments of Grace.

Recap of Rally Day – We had approximately 20 adults and youth stay for lunch and games.

Budget – we went over the budget for 2021/2022 and submitted it for the finance committee.

Goals and Objectives for 21/22 – Reviewed goals from the previous year and included more details as to how those goals will be met.

AOR report – All board members are encouraged to do the following after reading the AOR suggestions. 1) Attend regular worship, 2) attend a weekly bible study, 3) pray on a daily basis, 4) brief devotion will be included at our monthly meetings.

VBS – the dates for having Camp Omega come to St. John's in 2022 were discussed and July 24-29 th was chosen as the preferred date. There is approximately \$5,699 set aside in a restricted fund for Camp Omega.

Christmas Program – Kerri has volunteered to lead the Christmas Program this year. We are very thankful and appreciative for Kerri stepping up to do this. The Christmas Program will be on Sunday, December 19 th at 9:00 a.m.

Trunk or Treat – it was decided that we would have a vehicle participate at the Trunk or Treat sponsored by Bethlehem Free on October 31st. Lori will provide a vehicle.

Operation Christmas Child – The Sunday school classes will be packing shoeboxes on Sunday, November 7 th at 10:00 for Operation Christmas Child. Vicki Ramsey is the contact person and will be bringing supplies for this on Saturday, November 6 th to set up for Sunday.

Reminder – Voters meeting on Sunday, November 7 th . Meal at noon and voters meeting to follow the meal. This will be a meeting for the congregation to accept the 21/22 budget.

Live Nativity Scene – this was mentioned at the end of our meeting and will be discussed at our next meeting.

Next meeting – Wednesday, November 3 rd , 7:30 p.m.

Education/Youth and Family Board

Wednesday, November 3 rd , 2021 at 7:30 p.m.

Present: Patty Shatek and Lori Siegfried

Recap of Trunk or Treat – Lori and Sue Downey had vehicles at Bethlehem Free to represent St. John's. It was a well attended event and all 150 bags that were prepared by the youth were distributed. When the bags were gone we had more candy that was donated on Sunday, October 31st that was also distributed. Thank you to those members of the congregation that donated and supported this cause.

Christmas Program – Sunday, December 19 th at 9:00 a.m.

Items for the next meeting – Treat bags to be put together for December 19 th .

Jesus Birthday Party – do we want to get a cake?

Christmas gift for Sunday school kids.

Live Nativity Scene?

Next meeting – Wednesday, December 1 st at 7:30 p.m.

STEWARDSHIP: Stan Rasmussen. Stewardship will be working on a plea in the next monthly newsletter for additional giving for 2022 with the projected \$27,000.00 shortfall in the 2022 budget. Will continue to have Script sales. 2022 envelopes will be available the first part of December.

SOCIAL MINISTRY: Sharry Watkins. The Social Ministry Board met Nov. 2 with 4 members present. We opened with a Social Ministry Prayer which led to discussion on our spiritual growth as Christians. This discussion helped us to state the goals for our Board to be presented at the voters' meeting.

We discussed updating the Veteran's bulletin board in Schleicher Hall & wrote cards for the Veterans to thank them for their service. The Salvation Army Food Drive is ongoing in November, & the sign is now posted **by** the choir chairs to remind everyone to donate.

We talked about sending Christmas cards to the college students & shut-ins. We will be helping to deliver poinsettias to the shut-ins in December. We will be asking if others would be willing to donate an extra one for that. More information will be in the upcoming bulletins. We addressed the November birthday cards for the Elders to sign & then closed with the Lord's Prayer.

EVANGELISM: Sue Downey sent report. October Meeting – We met together by phone as Dave is helping in the field. We are going to go ahead with the bulletin board by Sterling & will be running an ad December 20-24 showing Christmas dates & times.

PASTOR'S REPORT: Pastor James

The “Year with the Catechism” (YwtC) series continues. Our average weekly church attendance remains at about 60 across the three services, but Sunday morning Bible study has dropped to about 15. This is disappointing. I would like to see this increase. We still have much work to do in healing St. John’s and that work must start and remain founded on the Word of God.

Youth

CASE came back stronger than I had anticipated. This is a ministry that continues to grow, and we are exploring possibilities to duplicate it in other congregations. The primary principle of CASE is to teach Lutheran Doctrine and biblical life application to the youth that attend. We are averaging about 20-25 youth. Here is another place where we can do the work of reaching families for Christ. About half of the youth that come are not members of our church. Feel free to come in anytime to spend some time with the youth. Those links and relationships are what connects people to the Church. We are working with some other local LCMS congregations and the MNS District to add to the effort to connect these families to a church. We are planning a few major events throughout the year.

Seniors

This month I would like to meet with a few people to explore any improvements or additions we can make to service those members who cannot come to church. Many of our shut-ins are still experiencing some loneliness. It is imperative our congregation strive to remind each of them of their precious place as a child of God and a member of this congregation. I would also like to encourage people to begin sending cards and letters again. The holiday season can be an excellent time to remind them of that.

Thanksgiving/Christmas/Eve

🕒 Wednesday 11/24 Thanksgiving service will be at Our Savior – Brownsdale at 6:00pm.

Continuing to share Thanksgiving with our two sister congregations.

(There will be no worship service at St. John’s that evening.)

🕒 Sunday 12/19 Youth Christmas program

🕒 Wednesday 12/1,8,15,(22) Advent Services

The 22nd may possibly be an additional Children’s Program)

🕒 Friday 12/24 Christmas Eve services will be at 3:30pm and 6:30pm.

Last year we had four services to accommodate COVID issues. This year we will have two services.

The 3:30 service for those who would rather not drive at night and the regular 6:30 service.

🕒 Saturday 12/25 Christmas Day service will be at 9:00am.

OLD BUSINESS: None

NEW BUSINESS: None

ADJOURNMENT: Thad Kusick moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:15 p.m. S/P.

CLOSING PRAYER: Sharry Watkins prayed a prayer from the Social Ministry Manual.

Respectfully submitted: Doraine Graff, Council Secretary

St. John's Lutheran Church Financial Recap
January 1, 2021 through October 31, 2021

<u>Undesignated</u>			<u>Balance</u>	
<u>Assets</u>	<u>Balance 1/1/21</u>	<u>Activity</u>	<u>10/31/2021</u>	<u>Notes</u>
Cash	\$432,709.04	(\$16,578.72)	\$416,130.32	Undesignated Assets represent the funds available for general operating purposes.
Prepays/Other Assets	16,179.66	(516.64)	15,663.02	
Buildings & Land	2,827,692.00	0.00	2,827,692.00	
Liabilities	(2,143.91)	(2,637.83)	(4,781.74)	
Net Operating Income (Loss)		(\$19,733.19)		
<u>Designated</u>				
<u>Assets</u>				
Building Fund	108,942.05	9,905.66	118,847.71	Designated Assets represent all of the various funds that for the designated purpose.
Needy Family Fund	1,167.08	0.00	1,167.08	
Women's Ministry Fund	1,923.46	0.00	1,923.46	
Musical Equipment Fund	283.68	0.00	283.68	
Library Books Fund	444.17	(35.00)	409.17	
Choir Robes Fund	3,111.00	0.00	3,111.00	
Memorial Fund	20,427.21	(1,438.00)	18,989.21	
Praise Band Fund	3,135.40	0.00	3,135.40	
Youth Fund	8,846.87	(188.57)	8,658.30	
Sumner School Fund	6,589.61	(2,301.28)	4,288.33	
undesignated	0.00	0.00	0.00	
Endowment Fund	40,989.08	4,169.23	45,158.31	
	195,859.61		205,971.65	
Increase (Decrease) in Designated Assets		\$10,112.04		
Net Income (Loss)		(\$9,621.15)		

December, 2021

**December, 2021
NEWSLETTER**

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