

THE MESSENGER

A MONTHLY PUBLICATION OF ST. JOHN'S LUTHERAN CHURCH, STERLING, IL
703 Third Avenue, Sterling, IL 61081 • 815.625.2634 • office@stjohnsonthird.org • StJohnsSterling.org • 

PASTOR'S POINTS

A season of reconnecting



Spring has quickly begun its transition to summer. Plants are growing with bright green all around, and in the air are the

familiar sounds of birds singing. The natural environment around us has sprung to life. Just as nature grows and reconnects in this new season, so we enter into a new season of reconnection.

For all of us, this past year and its long months have pulled our hearts and minds to previously unknown limits and beyond. To say nurturing relationships has been difficult is truly an understatement. Even the most tightknit family in our community has endured unimaginable struggles.

In this new season, we continue to find ourselves with much still weighing heavily on our hearts and minds as we try to pick up pieces and attempt to make sense of all that has taken place. We also know

full well that humans are made for relationship and friendship. We are social beings that long for interaction and conversation.

As the current chapter of this time in the pandemic comes to a close, more and more opportunities for reconnecting are happening all around us. It is therefore important that we stop and give thanks to God for the doctors, nurses, scientists, and medical researchers that have allowed us to get to this point safely. It is a modern-day miracle that not just one but multiple vaccines are available to nearly anyone, some even for use in children over the age of 12. Lord, we pray for all children and the most vulnerable that soon they, too, may have the blessing of this protection.

It warms my heart to see that we are indeed moving in a positive direction. As such, I would like to extend a personal invitation to the whole of our congregation. Because having opportunities for conversation and reconnecting are so important, beginning in July,

members are invited to a brown bag lunch or dinner date for your household with me, your pastor. Each Thursday beginning July 8th I will have an opportunity to sit down with a household for either a noon lunch or 6pm dinner date. Since these lunch/dinner dates are for only one household at a time, I ask that you call the church office to select your preferred Thursday for lunch or dinner.

Once we have confirmed our lunch/dinner dates, all I ask is that you come with your brown bag meal to the church as we eat and reconnect in fellowship together. I'm looking forward to this time together and for the conversations we'll get to share. And as always, if you'd like to chat or have something on your heart of mind, please feel free to call. In the meantime, I'll continue to be holding you in prayer.

Peace,

JUNE 2021

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Youth & Family Ministries news

Thank you to all of our volunteer Sunday school teachers and faith formation leaders. You all went above and beyond during a very trying year. Thanks for sharing God's Word with our young people and adults.

Thank you, also, to all who purchased Dave's Coffee Cakes from our high school youth. The high schoolers are raising money for the 2022 ELCA Youth Gathering in Minneapolis next July. The fundraiser earned more than \$900 to support our high school students attending the gathering. We still have a few cakes for sale. Call the church office if you are interested.

CHILDREN'S OFFERING

The June Children's offering is for Lutheran Outdoor Ministries Center (LOMC). Please bring or mail (St. John's Lutheran Church, 703 Third Ave., Sterling, IL 61081) offerings to St. John's by June 30th. Thanks for helping support our local Lutheran outdoor ministries for all ages. Thank you for your ministry of giving!

TRI-CHURCH CONFIRMATION CLASS

Our class concluded May 12th with an outdoor, in-person gathering at St. Paul. Students and parents gathered for the final review and some fun. Our plan is to return to in-person Confirmation classes with St. Paul and Immanuel in September. Thank you to parents and guardians for your exceptional support of our students all year!

Summer Get-Togethers!

TRI-CHURCH CONFIRMATION CLASSES

Sunday, June 13th from 1-2pm at Joshua Park (corner of Riverdale Road and A Street) in Rock Falls. Students will need to provide their own transportation. We'll have a snack, play some games and hear a nugget from God's Word. We hope you can make it!

TRI-CHURCH HIGH SCHOOL

Sunday, June 13 from 11:30am-1pm at Joshua Park (corner of Riverdale Road and A Street) in Rock Falls. Students will need to provide their own transportation. We'll be serving sub sandwiches for lunch, with a variety of sandwiches and special food needs available. We'll gather to eat, play and pray. 2020-21 eighth-grade students are encouraged to attend.



COMMUNITY
VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL
FUN FAIR
SATURDAY, JULY 10 FROM 9-11:30AM
FIRST CHRISTIAN CHURCH

This summer's CommUNITY VBS will be a one-day, outdoor event at First Christian Church, 3400 Sixth Ave., Sterling. We'll have tents set up for a variety of learning stations (music, arts and crafts, games). All PreK (age 3) through fifth-grade students are encouraged to attend. Sixth grade and older can volunteer to be leaders. More details will be coming soon!



UNITE
JUNE 23 - 26
2021
**BE LOVED
LOVED
BELOVED**

SAUK VALLEY UNITE 2021

UNITE is happening June 23rd-26th! This year will not be an overnight event as it has been in the past. We will be painting three homes in Sterling. We kick off this year's service event on Wednesday, June 23rd at Bethel Reformed Church in Sterling with worship led by Allison Eide. Allison will also be leading worship and a concert on Thursday night, June 24th at Bethel. Painting days will be June 24th-26th. Optional evening activities will be provided. Friday night will be a teen outdoor movie night at St. Paul. Please stay tuned to our weekly announcements for more details. If you'd like to support UNITE but you're not sure how, email saukvalleyunite@gmail.com. The theme for 2021 UNITE is BELOVED, "Live in Love" 1 John 4:7-12.

Sauk Valley UNITE welcomes Allison Eide as our 2021 speaker and musician! We are excited to have Allison leading our worship and sharing her musical gifts with us! For more on Allison and to hear her music visit allisoneide.com.



YOUTH GATHERING 2022

If you are a 7th through 11th grader interested in attending the next ELCA Youth Gathering, please email, text or message Gerad or the church office. Early registration for the gathering begins September 22nd.

More details about the 2022 event, themed “Boundless” — July 24-28, 2022 in Minneapolis — will be gradually unveiled during the next several months. Stay tuned for announcements! Gathering getting-ready materials will be available June 22nd.

For the latest news, visit elca.org/gathering, facebook.com/youthgathering, instagram.com/elcagathering and twitter.com/elcagathering.

YOUTH GATHERING 2022 YOUNG ADULT VOLUNTEERS NEEDED; APPS OPEN THIS MONTH

If you are a senior in high school this year, or older, and will be at least 19 years old by July 22, 2022, you can apply to be a young adult volunteer at the 2022 Youth Gathering. Applications for the gathering volunteer corps are now being accepted, and applications for servant companions open November 22nd. Please contact Gerad if you are interested in sharing a week of your time to help at the Youth Gathering. Your travel, room and board expenses will be covered. This is a great opportunity to serve, and to learn and grow in your faith. Our young adults who have volunteered for the gathering in the past have had life-giving experiences. For full details and to apply go to: <https://elca.org/YouthGathering/Attend/Volunteer>.



Celebrating Graduates

Thanks be to God for our graduates! This month we honor and celebrate eighth grade, high school and post-high school graduates. May God continue to bless you for who you are and in all that you do. On Sunday, June 6th, we'll be holding a special graduate blessing during worship at St. John's. And on June 13th we'll be celebrating all graduates during the online Tri Church worship service.

HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATES

Alec Stewart is the son of Tammy and the late Tim Stewart. Alec is graduating from Sterling High School. One memory Alec has of St. John's is always sneaking up during the church service to sit by Pastor Mark and playing with his cross necklace. Next fall Alec will be working and getting real-life experience before going to college or trade school. He is thankful for his family and for his love of history. Sometime during Alec's life, he would like to travel the world.



Jessica White, daughter of Aaron and Dawn White is graduating from Sterling High School. One of Jessica's memories at St. John's is going to the ELCA Youth Gathering in Houston after the hurricane. Jessica will be attending Aurora University. She is thankful for the community that the church provides and caring members of the congregation that are always encouraging her. During her life she would like to go skydiving, travel around the world, go camping more, watch a live pro soccer game, and learn to play another instrument.



EIGHTH GRADE GRADUATES

Brynna Carl (above left), daughter of Denise Carl, attends Challand Middle School in Sterling. Brynna's favorite subject in school is choir. She gives thanks for her family.

Jersey Rae Michaela Schmidt (above center) is the daughter of April Schmidt (Chris Judd) and Jason Schmidt (Jamie Emmert-Schmidt). Jersey attends Rock Falls Middle School and will be attending Rock Falls High School in the fall. She gives thanks for her friends, family and her pets.

Martin Fisher (above right), son of Jeff and Marci Fisher, attends Challand Middle School and will be attending Sterling High School in the fall. Martin gives thanks for family, friends and food.

If we missed you or your loved one, please contact the church office. We want to include you in our blessings this month.

PADS needs year-round volunteers

The PADS shelter has transitioned to year-round access for clients in need of shelter due to homelessness. In the past, Twin Cities PADS has operated from October through May.

In order to provide daily services in our community, many volunteers will be needed. The hours needed at this time are from 6-11pm seven

days of the week, every day of the year. This timeframe includes client mealtime.

As we enter a place of some relief from COVID-19 restrictions, PADS continues to follow all CDC and state guidelines in order to maintain safe practices. Keeping everyone's health safety in mind, volunteers who may have established some

immunity for themselves through vaccination are a priority.

Please consider sharing some of your valued time with PADS.

Please contact Twin Cities PADS Administrative Director Myles Newberry with any questions and to volunteer. The shelter phone number is (815) 626-2210, or email mylesnewberry.PADS@gmail.com.

JUNE BIRTHDAYS & ANNIVERSARIES

2

- Tori Leesman
- Andrew Marsh
- Vicki Merlak

3

- Alissa Marsh

4

- Foster Peterson
- Dwight and Nancy Oltmanns

5

- Dale and Gloria Heuck*

6

- Darci Schmitt

7

- Jody Dirks

8

- Vivian Johnson*

9

- Grant Peterson
- Kaydence Weeks

10

- Lori Adell
- Ruth Martin*
- Sharyl Rogers

11

- Fisher Martin
- Raymond Jamieson
- Robert and Jeanne Kuba*
- William and Jill McFalls

13

- Alice Diehl*
- Victoria Duffin
- Spencer Goss
- Dennis Winebrenner
- Karen Wolfe
- Patrick and Marcie Davis
- Jerry and Brinda Winger

14

- MacKenzie Forristall
- Sandy Lichner
- John and Martha Benson

16

- Kerensa Pink

17

- Vicki Cooper
- Katie Keaschall
- Oliver Murphy

18

- Nickolas Barthel
- Corissa Grim
- William Grim
- Jill Lehman
- Martin and Patricia Breed

19

- Addison Perales
- Chad and Dana Goff
- Kennard and Marlene Green*
- Lance and Brenda Greer

20

- Druann Bushman

21

- Andra Bielema
- Gary Dettman
- Rob Henson

22

- Bryce Johnson
- Jaycie Schmidt

23

- Ryan Reaver

24

- Kaylee Johnson
- Beverly Oller*
- Marilyn Prew*
- Jenna Wolber
- Keith Wolfe
- Mark and Brenda Sisson

26

- Emily Grim
- Rhonda Miller
- David and Linda Geil*
- Aaron and Dawn White

27

- Dalton Goss
- Timothy and Ronda Granzow
- Martin and Olivia Wade

28

- Mason Smith

30

- Russell Francis
- John Hay*
- Kristi Wolfe
- Wayne and Betty Schmitt*

**Indicates 80-plus-year birthdays and 50-plus-year anniversaries.*

URGENT NOTICE

A SPECIAL MEETING OF THE CONGREGATION HAS BEEN REQUESTED BY THE CHURCH COUNCIL FOR SUNDAY, JUNE 6, 2021 IMMEDIATELY FOLLOWING 9:30AM WORSHIP TO DISCUSS THE FINANCIAL SITUATION OF THE CHURCH

A QUORUM WILL NEED TO BE ESTABLISHED

CAN'T ATTEND IN-PERSON? JOIN US ON ZOOM USING MEETING ID 88666189113 AND PASSCODE 790950 OR BY CALLING (312) 626-6799

COUNCIL HIGHLIGHTS

In an effort to provide more transparency, effective immediately, we are expanding this section of the newsletter to include a fuller detail of each church council meeting.

From Pastor Jacob:

- Lunch/Dinner with Pastor will begin in July. The idea centers around gathering in small groups in an effort to reconnect with members of the congregation. More information will be coming.
- YOUTH are invited to Joshua Park in Rock Falls on June 13th for a Tri-Church Gathering of Jr. and Sr. High
- LOMC has two events scheduled for God's Work Our Hands:
 - 5/22-Working on garden projects
 - 6/17- Restaining of the porch/dining hall, trail cleanup

FROM THE TREASURER

Council entered into extensive discussion regarding the current financial state of the church, which has continued to steadily decline, especially since the start of the pandemic. After kicking the can down the road for the last several years, we are entering a period of great concern when it comes to our finances. The council is running out of options when it comes to finding funds to cover everyday expenses, with an added decline in mission support. The council has requested a special congregational meeting for Sunday, June 6th, immediately following worship, to discuss two options:

Kandra Cook motioned to present the option that the church take out a bank loan to suffice the financial deficit for six months, seconded by Teri Holldorf. Motion passed.

Shawn Wolfe motioned to ask the congregation to give authority to the council to take any and all available funds to suffice the financial deficit. Second made by Christine Murphy. Motion carried.

WEDNESDAY EVENING SERVICES

It was the unanimous consensus of the council that mid-week services need to restart and continue. Some ideas presented in order to enhance the service included making it more family friendly, bringing in food, etc. A motion was made by Shawn Wolfe to resume the Wednesday evening service at 6pm at St. John's. Teri Holldorf seconded. The motion passed. The service resumes June 2nd.

PRAYER GARDEN UPDATE

Our grant application for a prayer garden located in the green space along Third Avenue has been submitted, and we are awaiting approval (sometime in mid-June). Walk of Faith was the name chosen for the prayer garden.

COVID-19 GUIDELINES UPDATE

Andrew Stutzke presented the latest data regarding infections, CDC and state guidance, and recommended that the church fully reopen. Masking will be a personal choice, not required. Singing will return, and the building will be open with the exception of the kitchen in the basement. A motion was made by Shawn Wolfe and seconded by Teri Holldorf to accept these changes. Motion passed and will be effective Sunday, May 23rd. See the new guidance protocol on the back page of this newsletter.

MEMORIAL REQUESTS APPROVED

- \$222.50 from McCormick Memorial for Messenger and bulletin mailing
- \$100 from Beverly Marsh Memorial for Feed the Children Summer Program
- \$315 from Beverly Vandermoon Memorial to re-plate the baptismal font

Shawn Wolfe motioned to approve with a second by Kandra Cook. Motion passed.

PURPOSE STATEMENT

The purpose of St. John's Evangelical Lutheran Church is to continue discovering God's will for us in His kingdom through prayer, Bible study and building relationships.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

1. Jesus is our Lord and Savior.
2. We make prayer, Bible study and dialog the center of our decision making.
3. We are willing to change as we discover God's mission for us.
4. We invite everyone. Jesus said, "Go therefore and make disciples of all nations." ~ Matthew 28: 19a
5. We recognize and give thanks for our blessings.
6. We act for the discovery and fulfillment of God's mission.

COUNCIL AFFIRMATION STATEMENT

The Council affirms that ministry is a core tenant of our Mission and that established ministries will continue and the opportunity for expanding into additional ministries will be evaluated when presented. The Council fully understands the complex nature of ministry, but as long as God's people are willing to engage in good works, we will do everything in our power to support those ministries.

WHO'S WHO AT ST. JOHN'S

PERSONNEL

- Rev. Jacob Gawlik, Senior Pastor
- Rev. Leo Patterson, On Call/Visitation Pastor
- Gerad Von Holten, Director of Youth & Family Ministries
- Rev. Mark & Rev. Cynthia Rich, Missionaries to Tanzania
- Dawn Zeigler, Minister of Music & Bell Choir Director
- Julie McCord, Praise Sunday Director
- Nina Peters, Office Manager
- Andrew Stutzke, Systems Administrator
- Kyle Morgan, Technical Director
- Mont Cessna, Facility Maintenance
- Stahr Media, Newsletter & Website
- Nancy Rasmussen, Parish Nurse
- Jan Klocke, council rep to Tri-Church

CONG. COUNCIL

- Andrew Stutzke, president*
 - Dave Geil, vice president*
 - Kandra Cook, secretary*
 - Teri Holldorf, treasurer*
 - Andrew Doughty
 - Jan Klocke
 - John Lichner
 - Chrissy Murphy
 - Shawn Wolfe
- *Exec Committee member*

CHRISTIAN ED

- Tammy Doughty
- Brian Luebke
- Chrissy Murphy

CONG. LIFE

- Denise Norman, chair
- Lois Anderson-Rowzee
- Michelle Gawlik
- Nancy Rasmussen
- Pat Redfield
- Jannet Taylor

ENDOWMENT

- Mike Doughty, chair
- Art Frey

- John Lichner
- Rhonda Stutzke
- Shawn Wolfe

FINANCE

- Teri Holldorf, chair
- Nancy Breed
- Druann Bushman
- Mike Doughty
- John Lichner

MEMORIAL

- Dave Geil, chair
- Brian Luebke
- Nancy Rasmussen
- Jannet Taylor

PERSONNEL TEAM

- Denise Norman, chair
- Lois Anderson-Rowzee
- Dave Geil
- Doug Zientara

PROPERTY

- Dave Geil, chair
- Art Frey
- Tom Leesman
- Ken Smith
- Doug Zientara

PARISH REGISTER

DEATHS

- None

WEDDINGS

- None

BAPTISMS

- None

MEMBERS RECEIVED

- None

MEMBERS REMOVED/ TRANSFERRED

- None

CHANGE OF ADDRESS

- None

STAFF BIRTHDAYS

- Dawn Zeigler 6/15

SOCIAL MINISTRY

- Karen Goss
- Barbara Johnson
- Vivian Johnson
- Jill Leesman
- Sandy Lichner
- Joyce Preston
- Sandy Wolfe

STEWARDSHIP

- Jan Klocke, chair
- Nancy Rasmussen

WORSHIP ARTS

- Dawn Zeigler, chair
- Denise Carl
- Shawn Wolfe

WORSHIP TECH

- Anita Carl
- Dan Eads
- Charlene O'Connell

SJLC Activities ~ June 2021

June Open/Close:
Dave Geil

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
		1	2 6:00-Worship	3	4	5
6 <i>FISH collection</i> 9:30-Worship & Graduate Blessing 10:45-Congregational meeting	7	8	9 6:00-Worship	10 4:15-Exec mtg (Zoom) 7:00-Al-Anon	11	12
13 9:30-Tri-Church Worship & Graduate Blessing 11:30-HS Get- Together (Joshua Park, Rock Falls) 1:00-Confirmation Get- Together (Joshua Park, Rock Falls)	14	15 6:00-Council mtg (Zoom)	16 6:00-Worship	17 7:00-Al-Anon	18 <i>Newsletter due</i> <i>Synod Assembly</i>	19 <i>Synod Assembly</i>
20 9:30-Worship	21	22	23 <i>UNITE Camp</i> 6:00-Worship	24 <i>UNITE Camp</i> 7:00-Al-Anon	25 <i>UNITE Camp</i>	26 <i>UNITE Camp</i>
27 9:00-Outdoor Worship (Grandon Civic Center)	28 9:00-Newsletter assembly	29	30 6:00-Worship			

June 27th we will be having worship at Grandon Civic Center in Sterling at 9am. The community-wide worship service caps off the week of our participation in the Sauk Valley UNITE Youth Service Camp. We will also have our online Tri-Church worship service available on Facebook and YouTube. Come celebrate God and our communities!

God's Work Our Hands Saturday

Lutheran Outdoor Ministries Center (LOMC), near Oregon will be the location for the July 17th God's Work Our Hands Saturday. Project work includes staining the dining hall deck/benches and 22 picnic tables. Also, a 12-foot-round garden that was planted by a small Tri-Church group on May 22nd will need weeding. In addition, there is always a need to clear trails. Project work will begin at 9am, followed by lunch (which will be provided) and closing worship, with the day concluding around 1pm.

In additional to the many hands needed to complete these projects, monetary donations and/or Thrivent gift cards are needed, as well. Along with plants and compost for the May gardening project, we anticipate needing \$700 for stain and brushes. Watch for further details on how to donate to God's Work Our Hands

projects in your Sunday bulletin or via online worship.

Two years ago, Tri-Church members rolled up their sleeves to build and stain picnic tables and plant flowers at LOMC. Because of this positive experience, we're rolling up our sleeves again to continue God's work. Please consider joining us on July 17th. To sign up, contact Jill in the Immanuel church office: (815) 625-3575.

Tennis shoes and Clorox wipes being collected

Denise Carl will be collecting new children and teen size tennis shoes and containers of Clorox wipes for Another Child Foundation during June and July. There will be a bin for donations next to the door leading into the sanctuary. Thank you for supporting this organization.



UPDATED COVID-19 POLICY EFFECTIVE 5/23/21

At Tuesday night's Church Council meeting, the following COVID-19 policy* changes were approved to align with the latest state and CDC guidance:



Temperature checks are no longer required, and all entry doors are open.



We will continue to use an offering drop off point and practice communion in place.



Masks are not required but encouraged for those who are not yet vaccinated or under the age of 12.



Please enjoy fellowship with each other before and after worship.



We will resume singing and full worship music performances.



We will continue to offer at least one outdoor worship opportunity per month, weather permitting.



All areas of the church, except for the kitchen, are open & available for use.



As always, members of your church council are available and welcome your ideas and concerns. Please reach out should you have any. Thank you!



The use of worship assistants and volunteers will resume.

*We may need to adjust this policy in the future dependent upon state and CDC guidance.

NOT COMFORTABLE WORSHIPPING INSIDE JUST YET? Online worship continues via our website and Facebook page, OR listen to the service by calling (888) 975-5536. Call in ANY TIME from Sunday morning through noon Friday.

The Messenger is a monthly publication of St. John's Lutheran Church, a church of the Northern Illinois Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. Join us for worship at 9:30am Sundays and 4:30pm Wednesdays. If you would prefer to receive The Messenger via email, contact the church office at office@stjohnsonthird.org.

return service requested

St. John's Lutheran Church
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