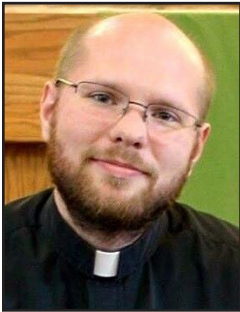


# THE MESSENGER

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

### Embracing a spirit of generosity



When I use the word generous, what comes to mind? What memories do you have that you would say demonstrated generosity?

When I was about 11 or 12 years old my grandmother surprised me with a gift. She knew I was fond of games and puzzles, so out of a spirit of generosity, she surprised me with a massive 3D Mystery Jigsaw Puzzle. This was no ordinary jigsaw puzzle. More than simply trying to re-create the image on the box, once one began the puzzle, they quickly discovered that each puzzle piece was shaped exactly the same. As such, the puzzle could be solved in a multitude of various combinations. However, only a limited number of those combinations would help solve the mystery of the puzzle.

What made this gift so generous was not simply that it was a gift from my grandmother. Rather, my grandmother, knowing my interest in puzzles and games, brought those ideas together with a different kind

of puzzle-solving with the intrigue of mystery.

We find these words in James 1:17: "Every generous act of giving, with every perfect gift, is from above, coming down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow due to change."

When we act in generous ways, we are doing the work of the Lord our God. As the passage states, every gift comes from God our Father. See, we don't just act generously; we embody a spiritual discipline. That is a way by which we literally inspire others. It is by this holy work of inspiration that the Holy Spirit enters into each and every one of us; the peace of the Lord dwells within us and those whom we encounter.

By simple yet thoughtful acts of generosity we engage in a spiritual discipline that amplifies and magnifies the work of the Holy Spirit.

In what ways have you been the recipient of this kind of generosity? How can you offer up this spirit of generosity toward those within our congregation, our community and our world?

*Lord, thank you for the wide*

## LUNCH/DINNER WITH THE PASTOR

If you have not done so yet, I strongly encourage you to call and pick a Thursday you'd like for meal and conversation. In a really neat way, this time is also becoming a bit of a spiritual discipline.

I hope that if you have not yet come out, that you please do call and set up a time. And if you already have, I'd love to eat and chat with you again. Until then, I'll be keeping you in prayer.

*In peace, Pastor Jacob*

*variety of generosity that you pour out onto each of us. By your Holy Spirit, stir our hearts and minds that we may be so inspired to engage in this spiritual discipline of generosity, that in the sharing of what you have first given, we may grow in love and service toward you, our Lord, as well as our neighbors in this world. Amen.*

*In peace,*

*Rev. Jacob M. Dawlik*

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## BRANCHES BRIEFS

# Youth & Family Ministries news

## SUNDAY SCHOOL & YOUTH GROUPS

Welcome to this new year of faith formation and Sunday school with St. John's! For the safety of our families, we begin this new Sunday school year with classes meeting outdoors as the weather allows. When meeting indoors, all students and teachers are required to wear masks.

Preschool through second grade and third through sixth grade Sunday school classes will meet from 10:45am (or after 9:30am worship) until 11:30am. High schoolers will be meeting with St. Paul high schoolers after the 9:30am worship service (usually 11am to noon; however, times and location of high school youth group will vary each Sunday). Please see the Sunday school/youth group calendar for the monthly schedule.

Leaders are taking extra safety precautions and good health practices to create the best possible safe spaces for our young people and volunteers. If you have not already, please join the St. John's Sunday School Facebook group. In addition to a monthly calendar, some information will be included on the Facebook group, including some occasional video messages.

## BIBLE BLESSING SUNDAY

We have new Bibles for third graders and seventh graders this year and for preschool students. We will have a special Bible blessing FOR ALL during worship on Sunday, October 3rd. Please bring your Bibles! We are excited about this new year of faith formation with you all!

## INTERESTED IN ACOLYTING OR ASSISTING IN WORSHIP?

If you have not been contacted but would like to be trained on acolyting, please contact the church office. Maybe your whole family would like to assist at worship (acolyting, ushering, helping with communion, reading the lessons, helping with altar guild etc.) If you want to give it a try, speak with Pastor Jacob or call the office. Thanks be to God for all worship assistants who help us to worship God.

## YOUTH & FAMILY HIGHLIGHTS

Last month we celebrated the beginning of a new year in faith formation with families and all generations in worship and through our cookout and fun activities. Thank you to all who helped and participated. May God bless all our young people and our adults as we grow in faith together this year at St. John's.

On Sunday, September 26th, Confirmation students attended a one-day retreat at Lutheran Outdoor Ministries Center (LOMC) in Oregon.



## TRI-CHURCH CONFIRMATION

Confirmation for seventh- and eighth-grade students meets from 7 to 8:15pm Wednesdays at St. Paul. This year we are learning about Luther's Small Catechism, Luther and the Reformation, and other faith topics. Ninth-grade students preparing for Affirmation of Baptism are also meeting at St. Paul during this time slot through October 6th.

## AFFIRMATION OF BAPTISM

Affirmation of Baptism (Confirmation) Sunday at St. John's will be Sunday, October 24th during worship. St. Paul's Affirmation of Baptism will be during worship on October 17th.

All Confirmation students and their families are welcomed and encouraged to attend and support the students who are affirming their faith at our Tri-Church partner congregations. The ninth-grade students from St. John's affirming their baptisms this month are Brynna Carl, Martin Fisher and Jersey Schmidt. Thanks be to God for our Confirmands. This month students will be finalizing faith statements and Confirmation stoles, and meeting October 6th for their final class.

## UPDATES COMING FOR VOLUNTEER YOUTH WORKERS

**ATTENTION SUNDAY SCHOOL TEACHERS, VBS VOLUNTEERS, AND ALL CHILDREN AND YOUTH MINISTRY VOLUNTEERS:** Over the course of the next few months we will be updating our volunteer applications for anyone who works closely with children and youth. This also includes updating background checks for volunteers who have not had a background check completed within the past three years. Thank you in advance for your patience as we work through this process together. Thank you to volunteers who have already turned in their updated forms! And thank you for helping us to create and maintain safe spaces for our young people and volunteers!

## TRUNK OR TREAT AT ST. PAUL ON OCTOBER 30TH

Trunk or Treat will be held from 3-5pm Saturday, October 30th at St. Paul. All are welcome to come for the TREATS and FUN! A campfire gathering with hotdogs and smores will be happening after the event for ALL.

Anyone who would like to decorate their trunk and hand out treats is welcome to do that, too! We have treats you can hand out to children. Hope to see you there!



## PRAYER SHAWLS AVAILABLE

Prayer shawls are available in the cabinet in the East Room and next to the elevator on the Sanctuary level. Please sign the form so we can keep track of where they are being used.



## 2022 YOUTH GATHERING NEWS

Current 8th through 12th grade students: You are invited to the next ELCA Youth Gathering, July 24-28, 2022 in Minneapolis. **Please email, text or message Gerad or the church office if you are interested in participating.** We need to know soon who will be attending and how many so we can begin planning.

Early registration for the gathering opened September 22nd and ends November 21st. Based on the early registration rate, we anticipate the gathering will cost around \$1,000 per participant. We will continue to fundraise to offset the cost of this trip. Scholarships applications through the ELCA have been open since July 22nd and will remain open until funding runs out.

**Our next "Getting Ready" meeting is from 11:30am-1pm Sunday, October 17th (location TBA).**

Sign up for the Gathering e-newsletter, G-News, and get the latest updates at [elca.org/gathering](http://elca.org/gathering), [facebook.com/youthgathering](https://facebook.com/youthgathering), [instagram.com/elcagathering](https://instagram.com/elcagathering) and [twitter.com/elcagathering](https://twitter.com/elcagathering).

### YOUNG ADULT VOLUNTEERS NEEDED; APPS OPEN NOW

If you are a senior in high school this year, or older, and will be at least 19 years old by July 22, 2022, 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: [elca.org/YouthGathering/Attend/Volunteer](http://elca.org/YouthGathering/Attend/Volunteer).

### BUTCHER SHOP FUNDRAISER

Our youth are selling meat bundles to help raise money for the 2022 ELCA Youth Gathering. Students will be selling at church each week through October 17th and on their own at home.

Meat bundles include chicken breasts, brats, pork chops, steaks, burgers and breakfast meats.



Students need to submit all orders to the church office or to Gerad by Sunday, October 17th. Students will pick up their orders from the Butcher Shop in Rock Falls between 2:30 and 5:00pm on Thursday, November 4th and deliver to customers. (We do not have enough freezer space at the church, so it's important to make sure your orders can stay frozen or be delivered on November 4th!)

Thank you in advance for supporting our young people attending the Youth Gathering in Minneapolis next summer. And thank you to The Butcher Shop for providing this fundraising opportunity. **STUDENTS: pick up your sales packet at church.**



## COUNCIL HIGHLIGHTS

### MARKETING IDEAS

Michelle Gawlik shared inspirational marketing ideas to the council about updating the St. John's website with new pictures and a new look to bring us up to date.

Michelle also brought great ideas to help with supplementing finances with fundraising. This will be discussed in the next meeting.

Michelle also brought ideas to get St. John's more into the community and to those searching for a new church congregation, as well as to carry out our mission.

There were a lot of creative and fun ideas in the conversation. More discussion will happen in future council meetings.

### TRUNK OR TREAT

A motion was made by Shawn Wolfe to host a Trunk or Treat event in the parking lot on October 31st. Second was made by John Litchner. Motion carried. More details are on the back page of this newsletter.

### OTHER BUSINESS

Covid-19 guidelines do not need to be updated.

Plans are still in process for a prayer garden. The

exact perimeter of the property to be used needs to be determined.

Background checks will be every three years instead of the five years, as previously listed in the Policy Manual. A motion was made by Shawn Wolfe to accept the update. Dave Geil second the motion. Motion carried.

Portico Benefits.- A motion was made by Dave Geil to keep Portico benefits as they currently are. Second was made by Jan Klocke. Motion carried.

### PASTOR'S REPORT

Pastor Jacob reported on the passing of Denny Fulfs on August 25th. Services were held September 18th.

Rally Day was September 19th. A huge thank-you to Druann Bushman and the Doughty family for their help with making the event happen.

The first Book of Acts is the first focus of Pastor's Bible study this school year.

Pastor requested that each member of the council send him a note about how they feel St. John's has been touched by the congregation.

### TREASURER'S REPORT

Treasurer Teri Holldorf reported that no account transfers were made for the month of August.

## NURSE NOTES

# Staying safe after the Covid-19 vaccine

Getting fully vaccinated to protect against COVID-19 — which involves the full course of doses then waiting two weeks — brings peace of mind. What it doesn't bring is total immunity from getting or spreading the disease, or an ability to completely let your guard down. Mayo Clinic experts recommend:

**Continued masking and social distancing** — The vaccines reduce the risk of severe reactions to COVID-19 infection. But there's uncertainty whether they will prevent infection and virus spread. Wearing a face mask around others — especially indoors at public places — and social distancing are

still important.

**Using restraint around loved ones** — Recent CDC guidelines allow fully vaccinated people to be together indoors, unmasked. Fully vaccinated people may also be indoors, unmasked, with people from one other household, as long as none of those people is at high risk of severe complications from COVID-19. However, still exercise some restraint. The desire to hug family members and friends can be irresistible. But Mayo Clinic experts urge you to wait a little longer, until both hugger and huggee have been vaccinated. It's still safest to visit outdoors when possible, or open

windows and doors to improve ventilation. And wash your hands often.

**Resuming medical appointments** — Having the vaccine can increase confidence in proceeding with medical appointments. Your provider is also likely to be vaccinated, further reducing the risk of transmission.

**Avoiding unnecessary travel** — An airplane flight carries a lower risk once you're vaccinated, but still should be done only after careful consideration.

*From the Mayo Clinic Health Letter. Submitted by Nancy Rasmussen, Parish Nurse.*

## OCTOBER BIRTHDAYS & ANNIVERSARIES

**1**

•Tom Breed

**2**

•Jessica Allen

**3**

•Marcia Keime\*

**4**

•Jeff Fisher  
•Isabella Gaffey  
•Shawna & Steven Kester

**5**

•Julie McCord  
•Dianne Sands

**6**

•James Eshleman\*

**7**

•Eugene & Sarah LeFevre  
•Gary & Amanda Smith

**8**

•Lois Anderson-Rowzee\*  
•William & Erica Grim

**9**

•Brenda Sisson

**10**

•Stanley Rasmussen  
•Virgle & Karen Onnen

**11**

•Randal Davis  
•Linda Geil

**12**

•Treaven Barron

**14**

•Timothy Baer  
•Edwin Schmitt

**15**

•Jennifer Vasquez  
•Michael & Kathleen Schmidt  
•Leonard & Brenda Turner

**16**

•Paul & Kristi Wolfe

**17**

•Kennedie Vilmont  
•Marilyn & Leonard Prew

**18**

•Jill Leesman  
•Matt Miller

**19**

•Ruth Ramirez\*

**20**

•Jerry Baker  
•Ruth Dietz\*  
•Aislinn O'Connell  
•Joe Perales

**21**

•Julie Johnson  
•Corey Judd

**22**

•Karsyn Goss  
•Patrice Redfield  
•Emily Taylor

**23**

•Joyce Preston\*  
•Jill Workman

**24**

•Shari Baker

**25**

•Gloria Heuck  
•Leo Patterson\*

**27**

•Kelly Granzow  
•Noah Rucker

**28**

•Melissa Goodwin

**29**

•Alyssa Henson

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

## Tri-Church Updates

The July God's Work, Our Hands Event went well and there have been a lot of positive comments on all the work that was accomplished. We are considering doing work for LOMC again next year.

Pastors expressed a desire to continue online Tri-Church services. Now that in-person service has returned, some parishioners feel that individuals should return to the church and online services should stop. However, the online services fill a need and reach a larger audience, including the homebound, nursing home residents and families, especially those with small children who are unable to make it to the services in person.

It was suggested to streamline the production process, and a question was raised regarding how to mesh the in-person and online groups. Continuation of online services was on the agenda for the September Tri-Church meeting.

Pastor Jacob informed everyone of recent meetings held with Pastor Gary Erickson to assist St. John's as it works through its financial challenges and planning for the future. St. John's recently contracted with GSP Fundraising to assist in developing a giving strategy for the church.

## SAYING THANKS

Dear St. John's,

Thank you for your donation of \$40 to the YWCA of the Sauk Valley's Domestic Violence Program. We appreciate the willingness to contribute and that you recognize our dedication to providing quality services to victims/survivors of domestic violence and their children.

Your assistance is essential in the work we do, and we are grateful for your generosity and continued support of the Domestic Violence Program.

Sincerely,  
YWCA of the Sauk Valley

## 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.

## PARISH REGISTER

### DEATHS

- None

### WEDDINGS

- None

### BAPTISMS

- None

### MEMBERS RECEIVED

- None

### MEMBERS REMOVED/TRANSFERRED

- Beverly Oller

### CHANGE OF ADDRESS

- None

### STAFF BIRTHDAYS

- Julie McCord 10/5
- Pastor Leo 10/25

## 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

### PROPERTY

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

### SOCIAL MINISTRY

- Vacant

### 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 ~ Oct. 2021

SJLC Activities ~ Oct. 2021					October Open/Close: Chrissy Murphy	
SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
<b>SAVE THE DATES!</b> • <b>OCTOBER 10TH: Flu Clinic</b> from 8:30-10:30am in Luther Chapel. Gaffey's will be providing the flu shots. Please bring your insurance or Medicare card. • <b>NOVEMBER 7TH: All Saints Breakfast</b> immediately following worship, hosted by Adam's Rib. Proceeds benefit the Riverview Haven Self Help ladies.					1	2
3 <i>FISH collection</i> <i>Rev. Erickson here</i> 9:30-Worship (Bible Blessing Sunday) <i>Acolyte: Sarah D.</i> 10:45-Pastor's Bible Study 10:45-Sunday School 11:00-HS Group	4	5	6 6:00-Worship 7:00-Confirmation (St. Paul)	7 <i>Lunch/Dinner with Pastor Jacob</i> 7:00-Al-Anon	8 9:30-World Hunger meeting	9 9:30-Prayer Shawl Coffee Hour
10 8:30-10:30-Flu Clinic (Luther Chapel) 9:30-Worship <i>Acolyte: Jocelyn P.</i> 10:45-Pastor's Bible Study 10:45-Sunday School 11:00-HS Group	11 <i>Office closed</i>	12	13 6:00-Worship 7:00-Confirmation (St. Paul)	14 <i>Lunch/Dinner with Pastor Jacob</i> 4:15-Exec mtg 7:00-Al-Anon	15	16
17 <i>Butcher Shop fundraiser order forms due</i> 9:30-Worship <i>Acolyte: Olivia B.</i> 10:45-Pastor's Bible Study 10:45-Sunday School 11:00-HS Group 11:30-Youth Gathering Getting Ready Meeting (location TBA)	18	19 6:00-Council mtg	20 <i>Newsletter due</i> 1:30-Parkway communion 2:30-Heritage Woods communion 3:30-Morningside communion 6:00-Worship 7:00-Confirmation (St. Paul)	21 <i>Lunch/Dinner with Pastor Jacob</i> 2:30-Regency communion 3:30-Citadel communion 7:00-Al-Anon	22	23
24 <i>Affirmation of Baptism</i> 9:30-Worship <i>Acolyte: Landon M.</i> 10:45-Pastor's Bible Study 10:45-Sunday School 11:00-HS Group	25	26	27 6:00-Worship 7:00-Confirmation (St. Paul)	28 <i>Lunch/Dinner with Pastor Jacob</i> 9:00-Newsletter assembly 7:00-Al-Anon	29	30 3:00-Trunk or Treat (St. Paul) 5:00-Cookout (St. Paul)
31 9:30-Worship <i>Acolyte: Noah R.</i> 10:45-Pastor's Bible Study 10:45-Sunday School 11:00-HS Group 4:30-Trunk or Treat	<b>VOLUNTEERS &amp; DONATIONS NEEDED</b> • <b>The Loaves &amp; Fishes Breakfast Program</b> at First United Methodist Church, Sterling, is in need of donations and volunteers. Checks can be made out to Loaves & Fishes and mailed to First United Methodist Church, 501 Broadway Ave., Sterling, IL 61081. Sign up to serve meals by calling Lois Heerdt at (815) 626-4773 or Paul Gould at (815) 499-2041. • <b>The PADS shelter</b> has transitioned to year-round access and volunteers are needed. Contact Administrative Director Myles Newberry at (815) 626-2210 or mylesnewberry.PADS@gmail.com.					



**ST. JOHN'S LUTHERAN CHURCH**  
703 3RD AVE, STERLING



**TRUNK OR TREAT**  
**OCT 31<sup>ST</sup>**  
**4:30 - 7PM**



**EVERYONE WELCOME**  
(IN THE REAR PARKING LOT OF E8TH ST)



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 6:00pm Wednesdays. If you would prefer to receive The Messenger via email, contact the church office at [office@stjohnsonthird.org](mailto:office@stjohnsonthird.org).

St. John's Lutheran Church  
703 Third Avenue  
Sterling, IL 61081  
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