

St. John Lutheran Church

CONNECTING PEOPLE IN THE HEART OF JESUS

Worship with Us

Chapel- Wednesday 8:30 am

Traditional Worship:

Saturday 6:00 pm

Blended Worship:

Sunday 9:00 am

What We Believe

God accomplishes this mission in us and through us in weekly worship, Bible Study and other fellowship opportunities. God comes to us in the Word and the Sacraments to show us the love and new life he has for us in Jesus Christ. He gives us the opportunity to serve others and reach out with his love.

Contact Us:

St. John Lutheran Church

308 S. 2nd St.

Battle Creek NE 68715

Church- 402-675-3155

School -402-675-3605

Early Learning Center- 402-675-4039

Email: churchsecretary@stjohnbc.net

Who We Are:

Senior Pastor :

Vacant

Associate Pastor:

Rev. Joseph Leech

Director of Music & Worship:

Mr. Steven Whitney

Interim Church Administrator:

Katie Schnitzler

Administrative Assistant

Diane Stoural

Christ
is
Risen!

He is Risen, He is Risen indeed! Halleluiah! Happy Easter. We are in the season of Easter—the season of the Resurrection and new life.



Pastor Letter~

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

We are rooted in Christ; He is the vine, and we are the branches. If a man remains in me and I in him, he will bear much fruit; apart from me, you can do nothing. If anyone does not remain in me, he is like a branch that is thrown away and withers; such branches are picked up and thrown into the fire and burned. If you remain in me and my words remain in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be given to you. This is to my Father's glory that you bear much fruit, showing yourselves to be my disciples. (John 15:5-8)

Because we are rooted in Christ and connected to Him, He grafted us into Himself; we are His, and He is the head of the body of the church; he is the beginning and the firstborn from among the dead. (Colossians 1:18). Therefore, we are first Christ's body, the church, and at this time, with the pastoral vacancy, this is a great time to return to our roots- Jesus, and ask Him to feed us His church. To connect with Jesus and one another in unity and faith. Recognizing first we are His beloved children and disciples, the church, it's a great time to come together in that unity of faith, to pray for and to lift up one another as fellow members of the body of Christ. It's a great time to focus on our mission of "Connecting people in the Heart of Jesus." To ask His will in building His church and to help us, His stewards, to fix our financial challenges and to fill the pastoral vacancy.

Jesus has blessed St. John Ministries with the privilege and the responsibility of "Training up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old, he will not depart from it." Proverbs 22:6.

As St. John Lutheran Church, School, and Early Learning Center we need to seek Him first above all things and come together united in spirit, truth, and faith and collectively seeking His will be done as we pray each Divine Service, so now we pray.

Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name, Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven; give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us, and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For Thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever and ever. Amen.

Let these prayerful words be written on our hearts and souls. Let them guide us as we face this pastoral vacancy and the challenges of ministry in the twenty-first century. May our Lord and our Head Jesus grant to us His disciples faithfulness and a willingness to be obedient stewards of all He has given us and asked us to do.

Graciously Called to Serve,

Pastor Joe Leech



Men's Retreat

Men of all life stages are invited to participate in this year's Men's Retreat. The St. John Men's Retreat will take place on April 5 & 6 at Camp Luther of Nebraska. Over the course of the retreat, all participating men will engage in opportunities for fellowship and service, while also spending time in God's Word, growing as Men of God in community with one another. For more information visit www.stjohnbc.net/men.



Fellowship

Thank you to all who took the time to work and plan the Lenten Fellowship Meals or donated food. This awesome tradition continues because of your generosity!



UPCOMING events

The National Day of Prayer is Thursday, May 2. Mark your calendars to join St. John Ministries on the annual Prayer Walk for that day.

(More information to follow)

Additionally, be on the lookout for more opportunities to participate beyond the National Day of Prayer Walk.

More information on the St. John Prayer Weekend will be shared in the bulletins in April and the May Newsletter.

Thank you!

We Dreamed Big, Worked Hard, Made it Happen!

Praise God and Thank you for your incredible support, helping us to raise an amazing \$107,980.00 at IGNITE! The raised funds will help maintain affordable tuition and offer crucial financial scholarships, while also reducing the burden on St. John Ministries budget.

Please, mark your calendars for IGNITE IV on March 1, 2025!

Ignite

*Investing Generationally
Now and
Into The Future.*



Help our Ministry grow through E-Giving

Electronic giving is a convenient, easy way to support St. John Ministries.

By giving electronically, you can:

- Give anywhere, anytime from your computer, smartphone or tablet .
- Donate to one of our special project funds.
- Set up recurring payments and never worry about bringing your checkbook or cash again.

Get started today! Visit our donations page to set up your online contribution: stjohnbc.net -church page– Give Now button.



**THRIVENT
FINANCIAL®**

Connecting faith & finances for good.™

Do you have an insurance policy or annuity product with Thrivent?

If so, you may be eligible to direct Thrivent Choice Dollars to benefit St. John Ministries. Each year Thrivent will distribute some of its charitable funds to registered non-profit organizations. You can call 800-847-4836 or log into your Thrivent account and direct your Choice Dollars to St. John Lutheran Church or St. John Lutheran School today!! **The deadline to direct where your Choice Dollars for 2024 should go is March 31.**

St. John has received almost \$115,000 in Thrivent Choice Dollars since the inception of the program in 2010.

You're invited to help to clean up our beautiful church campus

SPRING CAMPUS CLEANUP

St. John Church Campus Clean-up is
Saturday, April 20 at 9:00 am.
Help us get our beautiful grounds ready for
Spring & Summer! See You there!

**BRING GLOVES AND
TOOLS IF YOU HAVE
THEM.**



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Rain Date -May 4

"Connecting People in the Heart of Jesus"

That is the mission statement of St. John Ministries. The mission itself can be challenging, but it would be even more difficult to achieve without staff, volunteers, donations, and beautiful facilities. That is why it is essential for you to support the operational needs of St. John.

Stewardship starts with acknowledging God's role in providing for us. We praise, honor, and worship God, the giver of every good and perfect gift. Financial stewardship is taking what God has given you and giving it back to Him through your financial contributions to the church.

St. John Ministries is grateful for every gift received. Each year giving continues to increase. Praise God! The issue is that giving is not increasing at the same rate as the cost to operate. This past year has been financially challenging. St. John currently owes the bank **\$299,500** in operating debt. If the operational needs of the ministry are not met, it further hinders the work we do for God.

No gift to the Lord is too small. That's true whether through monetary giving or volunteering your time. If every giving household gave **\$25 more per month**, there would be almost **\$65,000** added to the annual budget. We are asking you to prayerfully consider how you might contribute to the needs of St. John.

Thank you for blessing St. John Ministries with the gifts God has given you. We are sincerely grateful for your faithful stewardship.

Katie Schnitzler ~ St. John Business Manager



Celebrating April Wedding Anniversaries

APRIL 3 -PAUL & PATTY RENNER

APRIL 9 -ALLEN & KAY KNAPP

APRIL 10 -DON & JOY BAUERMEISTER

APRIL 11 -MATTHEW & LORI UNKEL

APRIL 12 -DEON & RHONDA PRACUNER

APRIL 12 -DENNIS & TONJA HOFMANN

APRIL 14 -ROGER & MARY NICOLAY

APRIL 17 -FRED & DEE TIEDGEN

APRIL 17 -JEFF & SHELLEY BORCHERS

APRIL 23 -JUSTIN & KELSEY SCHNOOR

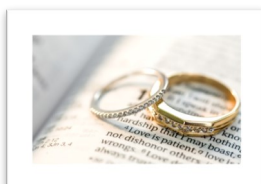
APRIL 23 -MIKE & SANDY GOODWATER

APRIL 25 -BRYAN & ROBIN WHITNEY

APRIL 28 -LUKE & KATEY HUNTLEY

APRIL 28 -DEREK & JOLENE Zohner

APRIL 30 -JERRY & DIANE LULOW



**May God bless you on
your special day!**

Call the church office
to add or check your
wedding anniversary
date. We would love
to pray for you.

Celebrating Baptisms

Axel Ray Freudenburg

Child of Austin & Kylie Freudenburg
was baptized into the Lord's family
on March 16. Sponsors are
Kenie Watts, Colton Pelster,
Barry Freudenburg & Sabrina Koch.

Sophie Rose Beck

Child of Derek & Deanna Beck was
baptized into the Lord's family on
March 17. Sponsors are
Wade Beck, Kelsey Bigelow &
Kelsey Schnoor.

Robert Paul Olsufka

Husband of Shellea Olsufka was
baptized on March 16.
Robert, Shellea & Joce are new
members to St. John.

Celebration *of Life* April Birthdays

1 Virginia Klug	7 Makenzi Eckert	17 Kim Nelson	23 Tyler Unkel
1 Kiarrah Moore-Rath	7 Jean Schmeckpeper	18 Christyan Anderson	23 Derek Beck
2 Nora Volquardsen	8 Laura Loftis	18 Hoss Noble	24 Slate Kraft
2 Mia Volquardsen	8 Tristan Bernhardt	18 Roger Borchers	24 Caitlyn Zohner
2 Rexx Uecker	8 Norma Wiedeman	19 Beckett Uecker	24 Lauren Freudenberg
2 Austin Hurlburt	9 Larry Prauner	19 Marcheta Long	25 Judy Warneke
2 Tiffany Pokorny	9 Madysen Geyer	19 Colin Weber	25 Genny Zohner
3 Don Boyer	10 Barrett Prauner	19 Amos Lewis	26 Joshua Schnitzler
3 Vicki Flanagan	10 Gladys Juhlin	20 Dylan Volk	26 Wila Wurdeman
3 Amy Walz	10 Mary Ellen Swim	20 Lainey Knapp	27 Jamie Abler
4 Calla Wolf	12 Kaleb Baumgartel	20 Curt Wragge	27 Sawyer Schnitzler
4 Kitanna Klug	12 Skye Aldag	20 Krista Snodgrass	27 Branson Uecker
4 Shelley Borchers	13 Andee Klug	21 Renee McNeal	28 McKailey Holecek
4 Righteous Albers	13 Garrett Koopman	21 Kelli Boyer	29 Memphis Parker
5 Allen Korth	13 Hannah Fouts	21 Olivia Eckert	29 Kristen Sindelar
6 Carol Herbert	14 Matthew Henery	21 Pat French	30 Barb Preusker
6 Lyle Hofmann	16 Boden Obst	21 Dave Meyer	
6 Quinley Patefeild	16 Vincent Hoehne	22 Allison Frank	
6 Russell Volk	17 Laura Long	22 Drew Lutt	

WINGS—Women In Gods Service



Mission Statement: WINGS exists to honor and worship God, encourage and support women, grow in our faith together as we share the gospel and use the gifts He has given us to serve Him and others.

WINGS met on February 29, 2024. We had one guest join us, Jane Warneke. Sarah Tillman led a devotion based on Jeremiah 17:7. She talked with the group about the seasons of life and how we sometimes trudge through one season waiting for the next. We are to trust in the faithfulness of our God and in his pace.

Carma Anderson presented information for Orphan Grain Train on hygiene kits along with the list of items to be included. She also demonstrated how cloth diapers can be made using adult large-size t-shirts. WINGS will begin collecting new and gently worn t-shirts during the summer months. This fall we will have a servant day to cut and sew the diapers.

April 9, WINGS members and guests, along with other LWML society members, will take a bus trip together to visit Mission Central.

Please continue to drop off canceled stamps and your Mite offerings in the boxes provided on the LWML table in the Narthex.

Our next meeting date is Thursday, April 25, 1:30 pm, in the Fellowship Hall classroom. All women are welcome and encouraged to join us.



WINGS Recipe of the Month:



Nutty Peach Crisp –

Patty Renner

- 1 can (29 oz.) sliced peaches with syrup
- 1 pkg. Yellow or Butter Pecan cake mix (use dry)
- ½ cup butter or margarine, melted
- 1 cup flaked coconut
- 1 cup chopped nuts

Heat oven to 325 degrees.

Layer ingredients in order listed in 9 x 13 pan.

Bake 55-60 minutes.

Let stand at least 15 minutes before serving.

Serve warm or cool. Top with cool whip if desired.

St. John Lutheran Church, Battle Creek, NE
Voters Meeting -Monday, February 26, 2024

In attendance: Mike Anderson, Carma Anderson, Rex Volk, Dennis Roewert, Pastor B.J. Fouts, Suzanne Buckendahl, Pastor Joseph Leech, Christy Schmidt, Ronald Buckendahl, Bob Buckendahl, Todd Roberts, Helen Baumgartel, Mark Baumgartel, Lisa Ehrisman, Reid Ehrisman, Matt Unkel, Sarah Tillman, Vince Hoehne, Bruce Grant, Karen Grant, Gerry Preusker, Steven Whitney, Dave Praeuner, Caleb Zohner, Derek Zohner, Cherie Werner, Randy Kossmann, Tresa Prauner, Dane Prauner, Allen Knapp, Nick Onnen, Brett Freudenburg, Robin Whitney, Bryan Whitney, Katie Schnitzler, Arlene Zohner, Rod Zohner, Arvid Warneke, and Barb Preusker

Call to Order/Opening Devotion and Prayer: Reid opened the meeting at 7:01 pm with devotion and prayer.

Approval of Minutes: Caleb Zohner would like to be accepted as a voting member. Mark Baumgartel motioned to approve Caleb as a voting member. Mike Anderson seconded. Motion carried. It was noted that voting members remain as such as long as they are active members of the church. The October 16, 2023, minutes were reviewed. Mike Anderson motioned to approve the October minutes. Mark Baumgartel seconded. Motion carried.

Board Reports

Treasurer's Report by Katie Schnitzler. Our income continues to increase in comparison to last year at this time, but the expenses continue to increase faster creating a deficit. The general fund currently has a balance of \$69,693.25 and operating debt remains at \$267,000. Currently our line of credit limit is \$300,000 with a maturity date of March 15, 2024. Katie has talked with Elkhorn Valley Bank about how to restructure our debt. The Stewardship Board agreed to raise the line of credit limit to \$475,000 and extend the maturity date to June 30, 2024. There have been lots of hours of discussion regarding the church's financial situation. The goal is to increase the income and to cut as many expenses as possible for next year. There were different ideas discussed to help encourage giving. The online giving platform remains a strong topic of how to utilize that to increase giving. Many members feel the information for online giving is readily available and evident, but not catching the interest of the congregation. There was also a discussion about sharing more information on other ways to give. For example, most banks are able to mail a check to the church directly from your bank account for a recurring time period. There is also an option to utilize the online giving platform without a processing fee by using your bank account information rather than a credit card. The \$10,000 matching opportunity continues until the end of February. Mike made a motion to accept the treasurer's report. Robin Whitney seconded. Motion carried.

Trustees' Report by Todd Roberts: Snow removal was challenging, but they got through and are thankful for the help. The trustees are very thankful for the volunteers who help with snow removal as that saves the church from having extravagant snow removal costs. The trustees continue to work with the company to get lights installed in the west parking lot. They hope to start soon. The trustees are serving treats after church services this month and the upcoming Lenten meal. The parsonage will need some updates including a new range and dishwasher. Some endowment funds have been reserved for these expenses. The trustees met with Scott Miller to discuss placing gutter guards in problem spots around the ELC to decrease any future clogging issues. They also discussed options for installing an access point to the roof of the school. Zach Westerman is no longer doing lawn services, so the trustees are considering T&T Lawn to replace Zach. There will still be a need for someone to fertilize and treat the grass as needed. The last disbursement from the Beryl Finkral fund has been received with \$100,000 of that going to endowment. The spring clean-up date may need to be changed. TBD.

Elders' Reports by Mike Anderson: The elders hosted the first Lenten meal on February 14. There were 154 people served and \$1,500 donated for the meal. Ads were placed in the Shopper and the Norfolk Daily News for the Lenten meal. There are four confirmands who completed questioning and will be confirmed this weekend. The elders continue to brainstorm names to fill three openings next fiscal year. The pre-call survey will be coming out to get feedback from the congregation regarding the needs of the church and a new pastor. Transfers Out: Greg, Elizabeth, Theodore, Lucy, Hazel, and Augustus Prauner to Grace Lutheran Church in Norfolk and Brent, Twyla, Austin, and Bailey Hurlburt to Our Savior Lutheran Church in Norfolk. Transfers In: Nate Geyer from St. Paul Lutheran Church in Tilden; Erika and Madysen Geyer from Zion Lutheran Church in Plainview and Jacob Nathan from Christ Lutheran Church in Norfolk. Brett Freudenburg made a motion to approve the transfers in and out. Robin Whitney seconded. Motion carried.

Evangelism Report by Pastor Leech: the evangelism collection for the month of February will go to Orphan Grain Train.

Parish Ed Report by Christy Schmidt: There will be no Sunday school with confirmation this weekend (March 3). On March 6, Parish Ed will serve the Lenten meal with donations to go towards T-shirts for VBS. Parish Ed is considering a group curriculum called "Dig In" for Sunday school starting in the fall of 2024. The curriculum can be purchased quarterly and at this time they only plan to purchase two quarters.

Parochial Ed Report by Brett Freudenberg: The basketball season is finished. This weekend, March 2, is IGNITE. March 6 will be Muffins for Moms, the end of the quarter is March 7, and the school musical is March 10. The 2024-2025 school tuition rates have been announced. The 3rd and 4th grade classes will remain combined for the 2024-2025 school year. A question was asked why there is not a member rate and a nonmember rate for school tuition. The board's goal is to make St John Lutheran School a financial possibility for every family. The parochial ed board has spent many hours considering different tuition options. The overall thought was that the school is a mission, and we don't want to exclude anyone from receiving the message of Christ's love. This year nonmember families are encouraged to go to their home church and ask if they would support the growth of their child's faith by attending St John. There is also a referral credit this year to encourage families to invite new students to enroll. The gym floor resolution continues to be very slow. During the dry months, the floor is much better, but it is not fixed. The investigator made a site visit and noted several installation errors, but he is not certain those errors are the cause of the problem. The sub-floor has been cut to prevent the floor from buckling anymore in the future. The issues with the gym floor are not and will not be eligible for an insurance claim. The gym can be used for practice as it is for now until a resolution is reached.

Early Learning Center (ELC) Report by Ann Grant: Kelsey has been busy applying for grants. The ELC board is very mindful of how much money it costs to operate the early learning center. The ELC continues to have a waiting list showing the need in the community.

Stewardship Report by Karen Grant: There was a total of \$13,000 raised for "Giving Tuesday" in November. The Stewardship Board met with Tara from EVB regarding the church's financial structure and suggestions on how to raise awareness for the endowment fund. The endowment fund distribution was approved by the endowment committee in January.

Old Business: None

New Business: Request for Peaceful Release: Pastor Fouts read his letter to the voters about accepting a call to Camp Concordia in Michigan and asking for a peaceful release effective April 1. A motion was made to approve the peaceful release by Mike Anderson. Second from Mark Baumgartel. Motion carried.

Other

Next Council Meeting is Monday, March 18 at 8:00 pm.

Adjourn: Mike Anderson made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Mark Baumgartel seconded. Motion carried

The meeting was closed with prayer by Pastor Fouts and the Lord's Prayer at 8:17pm.

St. John Lutheran Church, Battle Creek, NE- Council Meeting, Monday, March 18th, 2024

In Attendance: Katie Schnitzler, Reid Ehrisman, Colby Kolm, Pastor Leech, Ann Grant, Deanna Anderson, Kelsey Schnoor, Karen Grant, Mike Anderson, Kevin Wedekind, Tresa Prauner, Dane Prauner, Jessica Fouts, Todd Roberts, Tia Eriksen, Nick Onnen, Brett Freudenburg, Vince Hoehne, Nikki Houlden, and Tiffany Pokorny

Call to Order/Opening Devotion and Prayer by Reid Ehrisman at 8:02 pm

Approval of Minutes from February 12, 2024. Jessica Fouts motioned to approve the minutes as written. Deanna Anderson seconded. Motion carried.

Board Reports

Treasurer's Report by Katie Schnitzler: The final distribution from the Beryl Finkral fund was received in January with \$100,000 of that designated for the Endowment Fund. The current operating debt balance remains at \$267,000 but is likely to increase by the end of this month. Elkhorn Valley Bank approved to increase the line of credit limit to \$475,000 and to extend the maturity date to June 2024. The debt structure will be reassessed in June to better coordinate with the fiscal year. There was over \$107,000 raised from the IGNITE auction with 5% designated for St. John School scholarships and the remainder to offset tuition costs. Each year the funds from IGNITE will be used towards the area of most needs to be determined at that current time. Mike Anderson motioned to accept the treasurer's report. Karen Grant seconded. Motion carried.

Trustees Report by Todd Roberts: The spring clean-up date is set for April 20 from 9:00 am to about noon. The trustees reviewed and approved an updated facility use agreement, by increasing some of the rental fees. The trustees discussed names for nominations and approved their final list. There is a project list that the trustees will work on completing throughout spring and summer.

Elders Report by Mike Anderson: Transfers out are Levi, Jaime, Miles, and Sterling Stueve to Our Savior Lutheran Church – Norfolk and Aaron, Jenny, Alexis, Parker, and Dylan Anderson to Our Savior Lutheran Church - Norfolk. No transfers in. Brett Freudenberg motioned to approve the transfers. Deanna Anderson seconded. Motion carried.

Evangelism Report by Tia Eriksen: Evangelism will be serving a meal for the LIGHT group on April 10. The evangelism board will be writing encouraging notes for the St. John Lutheran Church college students. The donations from coffee and treats this month will be used to purchase gift cards to go alongside the notes of encouragement. These care packages will be sent to the college students during finals week. Evangelism will also encourage the college students to join us for worship while at home during summer break. Evangelism is also considering partnering with Pastor Leech to develop some kind of gift for new church members.

Parish Ed Report by Jessica Fouts: Parish Ed continues to plan for VBS and is working on putting together the t-shirt designs. There was \$301 collected from the Lenten meal that will be used to offset the cost of the VBS t-shirts. Parish Ed is currently applying for another grant to help cover the remaining cost of t-shirts. Parish Ed is considering setting up another prayer vigil and they continue to partner with other groups as support for upcoming events.

Parochial Ed Report by Brett Freudenburg: Kindergarten round-up was successful with 14 kindergarten students signed up for the 2024-2025 school year so far. The board reviewed and approved the school calendar for the next school year. The current athletic director, Kelsey Bigelow, will be moving out of state leaving the positions of St. John Lutheran School Athletic Director and Early Learning Center Preschool Lead Teacher open. She will tentatively be staying through the end of summer.

Early Learning Center (ELC) Report by Deanna Anderson: The Early Learning Center has some new hires coming in, one of which will potentially fill Kelsey Bigelow's position. A food audit was completed by the State of Nebraska with some minor adjustments that need to be completed by April 10. The ELC will be switching software programs back to ProCare to save on costs. The ELC board will be hosting a spring carnival on Sunday, April 28 after education hour until 1:00 pm. The board is still working on finalizing the center's handbook. A budget gap has been created due to the enrollment numbers at the beginning of last summer being low and having some families that are delinquent in payment. The ELC board continues to discuss the issue of families with delinquent bills and the best approach to a resolution and prevention of future issues. Currently, all delinquent parties have been addressed and there are plans in place for catching up on payments. Due to these circumstances, handbook policies have been updated and automatic withdrawal payments will be required starting in July. These are just a couple of the adjustments that have been made to aid in the prevention of future delinquent payments.

Stewardship Report by Karen Grant: The Stewardship Board reviewed the applicants for the High School Senior, Church Worker, and Lutheran High Northeast scholarship. Overall, there were 11 different scholarship recipients. The Stewardship Board continued discussions regarding the current debt situation, concluding with no clear solutions at this time. To decrease operating debt, the current giving units of the church would have to substantially increase to a level that would not be feasible. The number of giving units needs to increase to lessen the burden on the small percentage of regular giving units that are supporting the church.

Old Business: None.

New Business

-2024-2025 ELC Proposed Budgeted Income by Deanna Anderson: The ELC would like to propose budgeted income of \$991,795 in tuition and \$30,000 in food program reimbursements for a total proposed income of \$1,021,795 for the 2024-2025 fiscal year. There are multiple factors that have increased the budget for the ELC. First, payroll is the biggest expense, mostly due to increases in minimum wage and benefit costs for the staff. This current fiscal year-to-date the congregation is supporting 28% of the ELC budget, but the budget reviewed at the June voters meeting approved supporting 14% of the ELC budget. This difference is due to the budget gap discussed earlier with the budgeted income number being lower than proposed but the expenses are occurring as budgeted. The ELC board is proposing to increase the childcare rates and lower the percentage decrease for additional children. Kelsey has been diligent about limiting or eliminating overtime hours for her staff. The ELC currently has each family pay a deposit to hold their child's place. Currently, every classroom is full. There is a waitlist for the infant room only. In comparison to the beginning of last summer when the enrollment numbers were low, there are consistently fuller classrooms, which should help to decrease the budget gap for the proposed ELC income number. Employee benefits are the largest area of concern and have the biggest impact on the ELC budget. There were several options discussed with no present solution. Katie will communicate with Concordia Plans regarding any changes that could be made to employee benefits Karen Grant motioned to table the decision to approve the ELC proposed budgeted income until more information is received. Second by Mike Anderson. Motion carried.

-Interim Church Administrator Policy by Reid Ehrisman: The interim church administrator policy was reviewed. The purpose of the policy is to allow Pastor Leech to continue the important work of spiritual care and not be burdened by administrative tasks. The policy transitions parish administrative responsibilities and authority to the Business Manager, Katie Schnitzler, including compensation of an additional 5% of the base salary. The full policy will be attached with the official copy of the council minutes. Pastor Leech will be preaching an additional 2-3 weekends per month with hopes of having a visiting pastor to come help when available. A discussion was had on whether a pay increase for Pastor Leech would be necessary due to him taking on extra preaching responsibilities. The Elders board will review this topic and recommend if there will be any changes in salary for Pastor Leech. Brett motioned to approve the interim policy as it reads. Tia seconded. With further discussion, Karen Grant suggested amending the policy to increase the business manager's compensation to 10% of the base salary instead of 5%. Brett amended his motion to approve the policy adjusting the compensation to 10% of base salary. Tia seconded. Motion carried as Amended.

Other

-The next Council Meeting is Monday, April 15, 2024, at 8:00 pm

-Adjournment: Brett Freudenburg motions to adjourn the meeting. Deanna Anderson seconded. The meeting adjourned at 9:50 pm.

-Closing Prayer led by Pastor Leech

Evangelism Collection for April is for the Lion's Club Community Food Bank. Drop your donations off in the boxes provided in the church parish hall entryway.



Personal Care Items -
shampoo, conditioner,
body wash, bar soap,
toothbrushes, toothpaste,
deodorant, lotion, razors

Soups/cans/bags/boxes:

Canned Spaghetti, Spaghetti O's, etc
Spaghetti noodles and sauce
Pasta noodles
Hamburger Helper: Tuna, and Chicken
Ramen Noodles
Mac N Cheese
Canned Fruit: pears, Pineapple, mixed
fruit, peaches, applesauce etc.
Jello and Pudding
Crackers

Foods:

Instant potatoes
Canned Tuna, Chicken or Meat
Mayo, Ketchup, Salad Dressings, BBQ
sauce
Peanut Butter chunky and creamy
Jelly & Jams
Cereals and Oatmeal
Pancake Syrup and Pancake Mix
Cooking Oil
Mixes for: cake, brownie, muffin, cookie,
pie filling

April Evangelism Collection: *Lions Club of Battle Creek*



Battle Creek
**BOY SCOUT
TROOP 198**

Scrap Metal Clean-up Drive

Saturday, April 27
8:00 am - 2:00 pm

Parking Lot East of the Water Tower
in Battle Creek

Assistance Available
402-750-1563
402-640-0057

Appliances, Scrap Metal of any kind.
Please no Computers or Televisions



Battle Creek Lions Club Pancake Feed

**Saturday, April 27
8:00 am-12:00 pm**

Battle Creek Park Building

Proceeds from this free-will
donation meal will benefit the
Battle Creek Food Pantry



Support our
Local Food Bank...
Eat Pancakes!



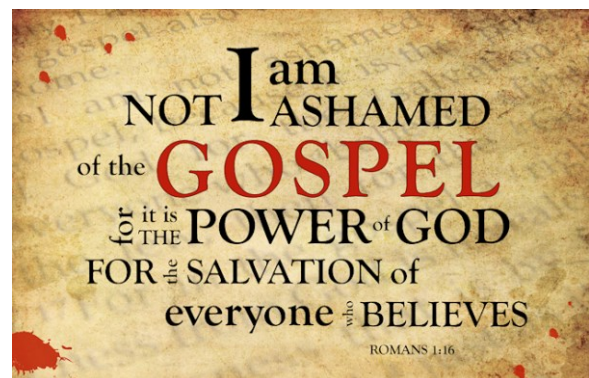
Reading / Prayer Calendar - April 2024

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
April 1, 2024	April 2, 2024	April 3, 2024	April 4, 2024	April 5, 2024
Psalm 97	Psalm 98	Psalm 99	Psalm 100	Psalm 101
Pray for Schools	Pray for the Armed Forces	Pray for your children or nieces/nephews	Pray for your Pastor	Pray for blessings in worship
April 8, 2024	April 9, 2024	April 10, 2024	April 11, 2024	April 12, 2024
Psalm 102	Psalm 103	Psalm 104	Psalm 105	Psalm 106
Pray for Teachers	Pray for the Government	Pray for your friends	Pray for Church staff	Pray for outreach in our community
April 15, 2024	April 16, 2024	April 17, 2024	April 18, 2024	April 19, 2024
Psalm 107	Psalm 108	Psalm 109	Psalm 110	Psalm 111
Pray for School Administrators	Pray for the President	Pray for the Family	Pray for the lay leaders of the church	Pray for missionaries
April 22, 2024	April 23, 2024	April 24, 2024	April 25, 2024	April 26, 2024
Psalm 112	Psalm 113	Psalm 114	Psalm 115	Psalm 116
Pray for Students	Pray for Congress	Pray for your spouse or parent	Pray for the Church	Pray for the lost

You are invited!

Zone 11 Lutheran Laymen's League will hold a spring rally on April 7 at 3:00 pm at Christ Lutheran Church in Norfolk. Our speaker will be Pastor Steve Weispfennig from St. John's Lutheran Church in Yankton, SD. He will be speaking on the resurrection of Christ. Registration will begin at 2:30 pm.

A meal will follow the rally at a cost of \$13 per plate. Please register for the meal by contacting Deb Kirsch at dkirsch508@gmail.com, or text or call 402-860-1194. Everyone is welcome to attend. Registration deadline for the meal is April 3.





Unequipped

"Pardon me, my lord," Gideon replied, "but how can I save Israel? My clan is the weakest in Manasseh, and I am the least in my family." Judges 6:15

When Gideon saw the task before him, and how unequipped he was to accomplish the task, he questioned The Angel of the Lord's command. What Gideon neglected to recognize was that it was not Gideon himself who was called to save Israel. God the Father, Yahweh, ensured he wouldn't forget.

"The Lord said to Gideon, 'You have too many men. I cannot deliver Midian into their hands, or Israel would boast against me, 'My own strength has saved me.' Now announce to the army, 'Anyone who trembles with fear may turn back and leave Mount Gilead.'" (Judges 7:2-3a) After this command, 22,000 left Gideon's army and 10,000 remained. "But the Lord said to Gideon, 'There are still too many men. Take them down to the water, and I will thin them out for you there. If I say, 'This one shall go with you,' he shall go; but if I say, 'This one shall not go with you,' he shall not go.' So Gideon took the men down to the water." (Judges 7:4-5)

Upon the thinning at the water, Gideon's initial "weakest clan" of 32,000 warriors was reduced to 300 to take on the Midianites! Why? So that the Lord's power could be seen! Throughout our reading of The Story, and throughout the Bible, God chooses not to call the equipped but rather to equip the called.

- Esther was an orphan in exile, yet through her, the Jews were saved from annihilation. (Esther 1-10)
- Paul, formerly Saul, persecuted Christians and was zealous against their work, yet God used him to write 13 books of the New Testament. (Acts 9:1-22)
- David was a young shepherd, not a warrior, yet God used David to win over Goliath and the Philistines. (1 Samuel 17)
- Mary Magdalene was possessed with demons, but the first to bear news of the resurrection. (Mark 16:9, Luke 8:2)
- Peter was impulsive, was quick to fight, and denied Jesus, but it was his words and sentiment that Jesus referred to as "the rock" on which he would build his church. (Matthew 16:18, John 21:15-19)
- Moses was not eloquent, slow of speech and tongue, (Exodus 4:10) yet he was a spokesman for the Lord who led God's people out of Egypt.

As we enter a time of vacancy, I urge you to not look at Goliath. Don't be discouraged with the size of the Midianite army. Don't ask why God would put us in a challenging place. Rather, fix your eyes on Jesus.

As we look at the challenges before us, let's not forget the God we serve. His work is not about us, but about him. I pray that we would open our hearts and minds to how we, too, might be used in this time and place. As our ministry begins a new chapter, let us find confidence in the God who equips.

Growing Together in Christ,

Mr. Onnen

GIVE KIDS HOPE. TAKE THE CREDIT!

What if you had a say in how your tax liability helps Nebraskans?
You do, through the Opportunity Scholarships Act!

Nebraska taxpayers can now claim a **dollar-for-dollar tax credit** for contributions made to Opportunity Scholarships of Nebraska (OSN).



www.nebraskaopportunity.org/giving



WHAT IS A STATE INCOME TAX CREDIT?

A tax credit is a dollar-for-dollar amount taxpayers claim on their tax return to reduce the state income tax they owe. A taxpayer will subtract the credit amount from their state income tax liability. This can lower a tax payment or increase a tax refund. For example, if your total tax liability on your return is \$1,000 but you claim a \$500 tax credit, your net liability drops to \$500.

WHO CAN CLAIM THE OPPORTUNITY SCHOLARSHIPS TAX CREDIT?

These entities with state income tax liability can claim a nonrefundable tax credit for a contribution made to Opportunity Scholarships of Nebraska (OSN):

- Individuals
- Corporations
- S corps
- LLCs
- Estates and trusts

Direct your state tax liability to fund scholarships through OSN and change lives by helping more kids access the education they need to thrive. Your contribution can even benefit kids who choose the school you care about the most.

VISIT OUR WEBSITE FOR MORE INFO:
**[WWW.NEBRASKAOPPORTUNITY.ORG/
GIVING](http://WWW.NEBRASKAOPPORTUNITY.ORG/GIVING)**



FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

Opportunity Scholarships of Nebraska

Awarded to incoming Kindergarten students, and transfer students from public schools

Brand new scholarship for
2024-25

Children Scholarship Fund of Omaha

Income-based scholarships

\$27,100 awarded to St. John
families since 2022-23.

St. John / Lawson Walz Memorial Scholarship

Income-based scholarships
from St. John's own
scholarship fund.

\$33,650 awarded to St. John
families since 2022-23.



Access all scholarships and apply @
StJohnBC.net/Scholarship

Referral Incentive

Open to all K-8 students.

Refer a new family to St. John. If the referred family enrolls their child in grades K-8, you will receive a \$500 deduction from your overall tuition fees for each new enrolled child.

I think a young family, that is like, "can we really make this work financially?"
It pays for itself in many ways, and then some!
-Travis Humphrey, Former St. John Parent

SCHOLASTIC BOOK FAIR



APRIL 8 - 12



PTL MEETING

(Parent, Teacher League)

Thursday, April 11

at 6:30 pm

St. John Early Learning
Center

If you have a child enrolled in
St. John School or ELC you
are a member of PTL.
We look forward to seeing
you at the meeting.

Through May 1

St. John School &
Early Learning Center
Plant Card Sale

\$25.00 to Johansen & Shamrock
Greenhouse.

\$5.00 per card to school &
childcare



St. John PTL Invites You To

Book Bingo

Friday, April 12
Games begin at
6:30 pm



Come in your pajamas, bring a blanket and a gently
used book that is looking for a new home.

Pretzels & popcorn provided.

-St. John School Gym-
Children must be accompanied by a parent.

EARLY LEARNING CONNECTION



PARTNERSHIPS & LANGUAGE MATTERS

In the complex world of early childhood care and education, every detail matters. From our interactions with children to the words we select, each element influences their educational journey. One crucial but often overlooked factor is the language we use, not only when engaging with children but also in how we label their surroundings.

Consider this: what do you call the place where your child spends their day while you're at work? While "daycare" may roll off the tongue easily for many, a subtle yet significant shift in perspective occurs when we refer to it as "early childhood education" or "childcare."

Why does this matter? Words have the power to shape perceptions. Using terms like "early childhood education" or "childcare" acknowledges the essential role these environments play in nurturing young minds. It emphasizes the educational aspect, highlighting that it's more than just a place to pass time but a setting where children engage in meaningful learning experiences.

Furthermore, it underscores the professionalism and expertise of the educators who tirelessly create enriching environments for our children. It recognizes the teachers who dedicate their days to fostering growth, curiosity, and development in the little ones under their care.

At St. John Early Learning Center (ELC), dedicated teachers create engaging and educational environments for children. They cater to individual needs, sparking curiosity, creativity, and social interaction. Continuous professional development ensures they stay updated on teaching strategies and child development. This commitment reflects their care for students' well-being and educational growth.

However, the responsibility doesn't solely lie with educators. Parents also play a crucial role in shaping their children's attitudes and perceptions towards learning. By using appropriate language and reframing our mindset about childcare, we can instill in our children a sense of value and appreciation for their early educational experiences.

The true magic happens when parents and educators collaborate. By working together, they create a seamless transition for children, fostering continuity and consistency in their learning journey. Active parental involvement, whether through communication with teachers, participation in school activities, or engagement in learning at home, leads to children thriving.

This partnership goes beyond mere involvement; it's about establishing a supportive community around our children. It's about recognizing each child's uniqueness and tailoring approaches to meet their individual needs. By working together, parents and teachers can ensure that every child receives the necessary support to flourish.

IMPORTANT DATES:

- March 29 - ELC closed for Good Friday
- April 8-12 - Week of the Young Child
- April 11 - PTL at 6:30 pm
- April 12 - St. John ELC art show
- April 12 - ELC closes at 3:30 pm for staff development

PARTNERSHIPS & LANGUAGE (CONT.)

Furthermore, when parents and educators collaborate, they serve as powerful role models, demonstrating the value of teamwork, respect, and lifelong learning. Children learn not only from words but also from actions, and observing adults working together toward a common goal sends a powerful message about the importance of cooperation and community.

Teachers at St. John ELC create engaging environments, prioritize professional development, and emphasize collaboration and support. They work closely with parents, fostering a strong community dedicated to nurturing students' potential. The teachers serve as mentors, supporters, and lifelong learners, contributing significantly to the growth of young minds.

In summary, the language we use and the partnerships we form in childcare are not just about words or logistics; they lay the groundwork for a lifetime of learning and development. Let's choose our words mindfully, build connections between home and school, and create a nurturing environment where every child can thrive.



Quality early childhood education for all families helps Nebraska thrive.

[NebraskaCaresForKids.org](https://nebraskacaresforkids.org)



WE CARE FOR KIDS

"Child care is an essential community service." Hear from leaders around Nebraska about the importance of early childhood education to the future of our state.

<https://vimeo.com/user169943683>.

To learn more about how to be a partner and advocate for early childhood education, visit <https://nebraskacaresforkids.org/>

Join us in the fun April 8-12 with these fun dress up days!

Music Monday – Dress like a Rockstar

Tasty Tuesday – Tacky Tourist

Work Together Wednesday – Trucker Day

Artsy Thursday – Bob Ross Look-A-Likes

Family Friday – Fancy Dress-Up Day

naeyc
WEEK OF THE
YOUNG
CHILD

MINISTRY CORNER

- Church Services:
 - Saturday, 6:00 pm
 - Sunday, 9:00 am
 - Education Hour, 10:30 am
- Men's Retreat – April 5-6

SUMMER DAY CAMP

Summer camp alert! Calling all future scientists, artists, and adventurers entering kindergarten through 7th grade! Head over to stjohnbc.net/elc to sign up for the coolest summer fun ever!

TEACHER SPOTLIGHT

Kelsey Bigelow, Preschool Lead Teacher



Kelsey joined STJ ELC in January 2023. Originally graduating with a bachelor's in journalism, Kelsey found her love of children and is pursuing her associate's in early childhood education. Kelsey served as the St. John School athletic director, and she can frequently be found umpiring softball games.



Youth and Family Ministry



July 19-23, 2025; New Orleans, LA



National Youth Gathering 2025

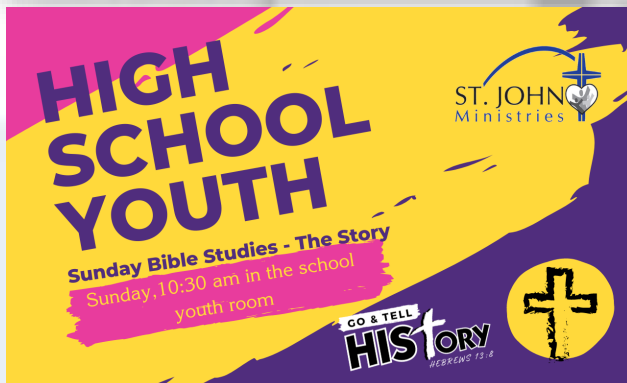
Will soon be upon us!

Current 7th graders will be eligible to attend.

The Gathering is more than the five days of the event. The preparation process for the Gathering brings together young people and supportive adults to encourage each other in their baptismal identity.

The Gathering provides young people a vision for the vastness of Christ's Church and equips them for vocational service as they continue their walk with Jesus.

Youth Gatherings proclaim the Lordship of Jesus Christ and God's saving grace to His people through Christ. In this setting, young people grow in their personal relationship with God and grow in their fellowship of Word and Sacrament in Christ's Church.



Serving the Lord through serving others at the Lenten Meal.

LIGHT Night— April 10 & 24 at 6:30 pm in the school youth room. You need not be a member of St. John to join in. Invite a friend to Come and See.



Connecting people in the heart of Jesus. Serving the Lord's House in April 2024

If you are unable to serve, please find a substitute and call the church office (675-3155) to correct the bulletin

Date	Time	Elders	Ushers	Sound Booth	Acolytes
Sat April 6 Sun April 7	6:00 pm 9:00 am	M Baumgartel/Wedekind Zohner/Prauner	Volk/Schwede Wolf/Zohner	Volk Borchers	Knull Onnen/Wysocki
Sat April 13 Sun April 14	6:30 am 9:00 am	Kossmann/Borgelt Sunderman/ Howser	Acklie/Schwede J Borchers/Fleer	Anderson Wragges	Kuchar Onnen/Wolf
Sat April 20 Sun April 21	6:00 pm 9:00 am	M. Baumgartel/Kossmann J Baumgartel/Wedekind	Schwede/Volk Ridder/Tillman	Volk Brauer/Wysocki	Onnen /Wysocki
Sat April 27 Sun April 28	6:00 pm 9:00 am	Anderson /Borgelt J. Baumgartel/ Zohner	Schwede/Volk Tillman/J. Werner	Volk Kuchar/Huntley	Wolf

We love our volunteers!
Sign up to bring treats for
Sunday morning
Fellowship! Use the code or
Contact Erin Wragge
402-841-9394

**SignUp
Genius** 




**April coffee and fellowship hour
donations this week:**

**FINALS WEEK
CARE PACKAGES
FOR OUR ST. JOHN
COLLEGE KIDS!**



April is National Volunteer Month.

To all those who volunteer at St. John Ministries, we are very grateful for your dedication to fulfilling the call to serve and being an amazing example of Christ to others across the world. Your willingness to serve Christ, and serve others with the talents and time He has given you, is a vital component in how our Church furthers its mission. We

thank you all because

Volunteers make a difference.



LHNE NEWS

APRIL 2024



2010 N. 37TH STREET
NORFOLK, NE 68701
(402) 379-3040
www.LHNE.org



@LHNEagles



lhne eagles

LHNE GRADE SCHOOL SPORTS

Lutheran High has grade school sports leagues! We have a boys' and girls' 3-on-3 basketball league and a girls' volleyball league. For league information and registration forms, visit our website lhne.org and click on the LHNE sports leagues banner. All registrations are due by May 1st. If you have any questions please contact Elizabeth Osten at elizabeth.osten.vb@gmail.com or text her at 402-750-7464.

REGISTRATION

2024-2025 registration is open! Go to the LHNE website (lhne.org) to find our registration form and financial aid instructions. If you have any questions, feel free to reach out to the office at 402-379-3040 or dsievert@lhne.org. Join now to get a free Class of 2028 t-shirt! We can't wait for you to join the Eagle family!

LHNE GIFT MATCHING

Lutheran High Northeast is pleased to announce a \$25,000 matching grant from the Rupert Dunklau Foundation to support financial aid for Lutheran High students. This a dollar-for-dollar match! Lutheran High Northeast has until August 31, 2024, to meet this match. Currently, we have raised just over \$14,000 to meet the match. This is a wonderful opportunity for you to have your gift matched dollar-for-dollar to benefit families who, without financial aid, would not be able to attend a Christian school. You can mail your gift to LHNE, 2010 N 37th St., Norfolk NE 68701-3108; you can go online to www.lhne.org, go to Giving Online and click on Dunklau Matching gift. You can also, call Fred Aufdembrink to speak with him about making a gift to give to this matching gift.

UPCOMING EVENTS

April 1 - No School/Easter Break
April 1 - Soccer @ Lakeview
April 2 - Soccer @ Ralston
April 2 - Track @ Battle Creek
April 3-5 - State FFA Convention
April 4 - Soccer vs. Scotus
April 6 - Prom
April 6 - Trapshooting
April 8 - Eagle Launch Night
April 9 - Girls Soccer Home
April 9 -Track @ Wayne
April 10 - Golf @ Clarkson-Leigh
April 10 - Boys Soccer Away
April 11-13 - State FBLA Conference
April 13 - Girls Soccer Away
April 13 - Track @ Wisner
April 13 - Trapshooting
April 15 - Golf @ Crofton
April 15 - Boys Soccer Away
April 16 - Soccer @ Elkhorn North
April 16 - Track @ LCC
April 17 - FFA Mtg
April 18 - LHNE Golf Invite
April 18 - Track @ Twin River
April 19 - District Music
April 20 - Trapshooting
April 21 - Booster Club Mtg
April 21 - FFA Banquet
April 22-26 - MAP Testing
April 22 - Girl Soccer vs. Concordia/DC West
April 23 - Boys Soccer Away
April 23 - Track @ Wisner
April 25 - Girls/Boys Soccer Away
April 25 - Track Classic
April 26 - State Trapshooting
April 29 - Golf @ Lutheran Invite



April 2024



Join us!

Weekly Service times:

Saturday 6:00 pm
Sunday 9:00am

School Chapel

Wednesday 8:30 am

Education Hour/ Sunday School

Sunday 10:30 am

Bible Studies:

Tuesday 7:00 pm
Wednesday
Men—9:00 am
Women—9:30 am
Parish Hall

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1	2 1:00 Sr Fun Day	3	4	5 10:00 Orphan Grain Train Volunteer Day Men's Retreat Camp	6 Men's Retreat
7	8	9	10 6:30 LIGHT Night 7:00 Leadership Team Meeting	11 6:30 PTL at ELC	12 6:00 Book Bingo St John School Gym	13
14	15 8: 00 Council Meeting	16 1:00 Sr. Fun Day	17	18	19	20 9:00 Spring Church Campus Cleanup Food for the Poor Guest Speaker
21 J Food for the Poor Guest Speaker James Stolenburg	22	23	24 12:15 Leadership Staff Meeting 6:30 LIGHT Night	25 1:30 WINGS Meeting	26	27 8:00 Scrap Metal Drive 8:00 Lions Club Pan- cake Feed-Park City Wide Garage
28 12:00 ELC Spring Carnival	29	30				

308 S. 2nd Street
P.O. Box 87
Battle Creek, NE 68715

Phone: 402-675-3155
churchsecretary@gmail.com
Web: stjohNBC.net
Facebook: St. John Lutheran Church



Connecting People in the Heart of Jesus



Connecting people in the
heart of Jesus

April 2024

St. John
Lutheran School
102 W Martin St
P.O. Box 67
Battle Creek, NE 68715
Phone: 402-675-3605
Fax: 402-675-1303
Principal@stjohnbc.net



Jesus Christ is the same
yesterday and today and
forever (Hebrews 13:8)

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1 No School Easter Break	2 Grilled Cheese	3 1st Grade leads chapel 8:30 AM KFC Bowl	4 7/8 Track @ Stanton 10:00 AM Pulled Pork Nachos	5 St. John Men's Retreat Mexi Burger	6 Worship 6:00 PM
7 Worship 9:00 AM Education Hour 10:30 AM Adult Sports Fellowship 6:00 PM	8 7/8 Track @ Boone Central 1:00 PM Sausage Gravy with Biscuits	9 MAP's Testing	10 2nd Grade leads chapel 8:30 AM Scholastic Book Fair	11 PTL 6:30 PM	12 6th Grade Field Trip to Omaha Book Bingo 6:00 PM	13 Worship 6:00 PM
14 Worship 9:00 AM Education Hour 10:30 AM Adult Sports Fellowship 6:00 PM	15 8th Grade to S.M.I.L.E	16 7/8 Track (Home) 11:00 AM Salisbury Steak	17 3rd and 4th Grade lead chapel 8:30 AM K-8 Sing @ CPCC 2:00 PM Chicken Pot Pie	18 Pepperoni Sub	19 Project-Based Learning Education Fair 2:00 PM Walking Taco	20 St. John CLS Track Invite TBA 7/8 Conference Track @ NC 10:00 AM Worship 6:00 PM
21 Worship 9:00 AM Education Hour 10:30 AM Adult Sports Fellowship 6:00 PM	22 Chicken	23 Cheeseburger	24 Chicken Fried Steak	25 Cook's Choice	26 Taco Tater Tot Casserole	27 Worship 6:00 PM
			Camp Luther leads chapel 8:30 AM	8th Grade Field Trip	No School Staff Development 7/8 Track @ Yankton 12:00 PM	Worship 6:00 PM
	Hot Dog	Chicken Alfredo	Baked Potato Bar	Chicken Strips		
28 Worship 9:00 AM Education Hour 10:30 AM Adult Sports Fellowship 6:00 PM	29 End of Year Preschool Celebration 6:00 PM Cheeseburger	30 Pizza	Plant Sale cards and money are due Wednesday, May 1			