

St. John Lutheran Church

CONNECTING PEOPLE IN THE HEART OF JESUS



Pastor Letter

Ministry in Transition

Brothers and sisters in Christ,

It has been a joy of the Lord to serve in this congregation's ministry for the last seven and a half years. This congregation has loved our family and has been a blessing. God has called me to serve in a different area of ministry, and so in this month's newsletter article, I am going to help outline some of the transition plans as my time of ministry comes to a close, and the congregation prepares for the process whereby God calls another pastor into ministry in this congregation. I share this with you in hopes of creating complete transparency and preventing as much chaos as possible during the leadership transition. While I present these steps as a general outline, please understand that as a congregation, you may decide on some slightly different paths. Again, this is an outline, not a road map.

1. Farewell

The plan to achieve as smooth of a transition as possible started with the question of "ideals." While we would have loved to finish the school year before any changes were made, that was not realistic. The second suggestion was to continue through Easter, and therefore, Sunday, March 31, is my last Sunday preaching as Senior Pastor of St. John Ministries. Unfortunately, there are a few other time-sensitive requirements between now and then. Jessica and I have been planning a vacation for about a year, and so we will be gone February 5-11. The National Lutheran Outdoor Ministry Conference also takes place in February, and so I will be taking a week of vacation to attend this conference, February 19-23. Then in March, I will be taking two more weeks of vacation to complete training for my new position. While I will be moving to Michigan after Easter, the Trustees of St. John have been gracious to grant permission for my family to stay and finish the school year.

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

Facebook: St. John Lutheran Church

Web Page: stjohnbc.net

Who We Are:

Senior Pastor :

Rev. B.J. Fouts

Associate Pastor:

Rev. Joseph Leech

Director of Music & Worship:

Mr. Steven Whitney

Business & HR Manager:

Katie Schnitzler

Administrative Assistant :

Diane Stoural

2. Vacancy

God has blessed St. John with another pastor, and Associate Pastor Rev. Joseph Leech will continue in service at St. John. We are currently working with our Circuit Visitor, Rev. Barry Williams, and our District President, Rev. Richard Snow to make plans and arrangements for additional pastoral assistance for Pastor Leech to share some of the preaching tasks. The functions of my office that are not reserved specifically for the pastoral ministry, mostly administrative functions at St. John will be transitioned over in the interim to the current Business Manager, Mrs. Katie Schnitzler. My work with St. John Lutheran School will be transitioned over to the school principal, Mr. Nick Onnen, and the Director of Worship and Music, Mr. Steven Whitney.

3. Calling a Pastor

Beginning in April, the President of the Congregation, Mr. Reid Ehrisman, will assemble the Call Committee, consisting of the Board of Elders and other members of St. John. That committee will disseminate a Pre-Call Survey for the members of the congregation to give input on the desired qualities and skills of the next pastor. Meanwhile, the congregation's leaders will complete a self-study of the mission, vision, and functionality of St. John Ministries as a whole. After the self-study is complete and the surveys are collected and tabulated, sometime in late May or June, President Snow will come for a meeting with the congregation to review the survey results and the self-study document and discuss with the congregation members about the call process and the future. After that meeting, members of the congregational community will have the opportunity to submit nomination forms for potential pastors to be considered. After two to four weeks, these forms will be sent to President Snow who will review them and prayerfully consider other potential candidates from around the Synod and send a call list of 10-20 names, along with Pastoral Information Forms and Self-Evaluation Tools from these potential pastoral candidates. The Call Committee will review the call list and information, and possibly conduct interviews and get feedback, before eventually calling for a Voters' Meeting. The Call Committee will present a slate to the voters who will prayerfully discuss and possibly vote to call a new pastor. Once a call is issued the pastor-elect will take anywhere from two to six weeks to deliberate the call. If he accepts the call another one to two months will be likely before he is installed at St. John. If the call is returned, the Call Committee decide whether to continue with the current call list or ask the District President for additional names.

A few things, I urge you to consider during this ministry transition period: 1. The Lord is leading His Church, it is His Ministry, and it is His Call; 2. God provides for the ministry He desires, not only is He raising up the next pastor, but He has raised up the congregational leaders to serve through this transition; 3. I encourage you to figure out the direction God has for St. John and look for the pastor whom God is going to use to lead you there.

Over the next couple of months, as we have the opportunity, I would love to hear from you, whether it is your prayers for our family or if there is a moment from these past years God has used to be a blessing for you, I would love to reminisce with you about it (in the spirit of Galatians 6:6).

**Sanctified to Serve,
Rev. B.J. Fouts**

Funeral

Donna Lou Rodekohr
was taken home to be with
her Lord on December 29.
Her funeral was here at
St. John on January 5.



Be Informed

St. John Ministries
Quarterly Voters' Meeting
Monday, February 26,
7:00 pm in the parish hall.



There will be NO Unified Planning Meeting in February.

Council will meet Monday,
February 12, at 8:00 pm in the
Parish Hall Classroom. Individual
boards will meet as scheduled.

+ Please pray for our Board
Members as they meet to decide the
issues facing St. John Ministries in
2024 and beyond.

Lent begins with Ash Wednesday February 14.



A fellowship meal will be held every Wednesday through Lent beginning at 6:00 pm. This is a time to relax with friends and family before we gather for Worship at 7:00 pm. Thank you to our Ministry Board Members, WINGS, LIGHT Youth & Parents for providing the meals:

Lent Meals -Scheduled to Serve:

Ash Wednesday Feb. 14

Served by Elders, President & Vice
Chili & Chicken Noodle Soup & Cinnamon Rolls

February 21

Served by WINGS- Mexis & Potato Salad

February 28

Served by Stewardship & Trustees
Brat/Hotdogs & Chips

March 6

Served by Parish Ed & Evangelism
Hot Ham & Cheese & Chips

March 13

Served by Parochial Ed & Childcare
TBA

March 20

Served by LIGHT-TBA

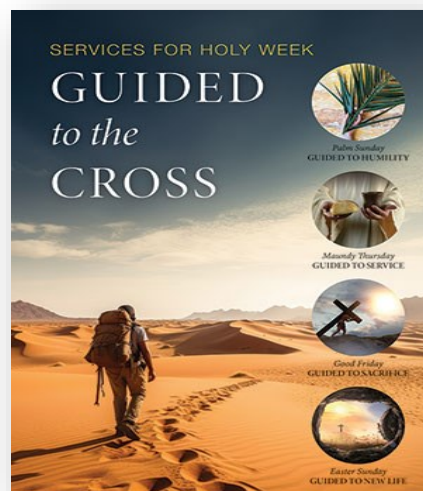
All meals served with a choice of desserts or bars and drinks- Free Will Offering

Free devotionals for **Guided to the Cross** will be available in adult and children's booklets in the church Narthex & by the office door.

Looking for a way to connect a friend or neighbor in the heart of Jesus? Pick up your copy in the Narthex and one to share.

Read the children's copy to your child's playtime friends, and invite them to church and Sunday school.

*Go Make Disciples
Of All Nations*



Guided to the Cross

Lent is a season when we are guided to the cross. Throughout this holy time, we are drawn to Calvary to live in forgiveness, hope, love, peace, trust and perseverance. Each week, the services in this series reveal how Christ and his cross serve as examples for us of how to live our lives for and through our crucified Lord and Savior.

Ash Wednesday • Guided to Forgiveness (Colossians 1:13-14): When we confess our sins, we find forgiveness in the cross of Christ and are empowered to forgive others.

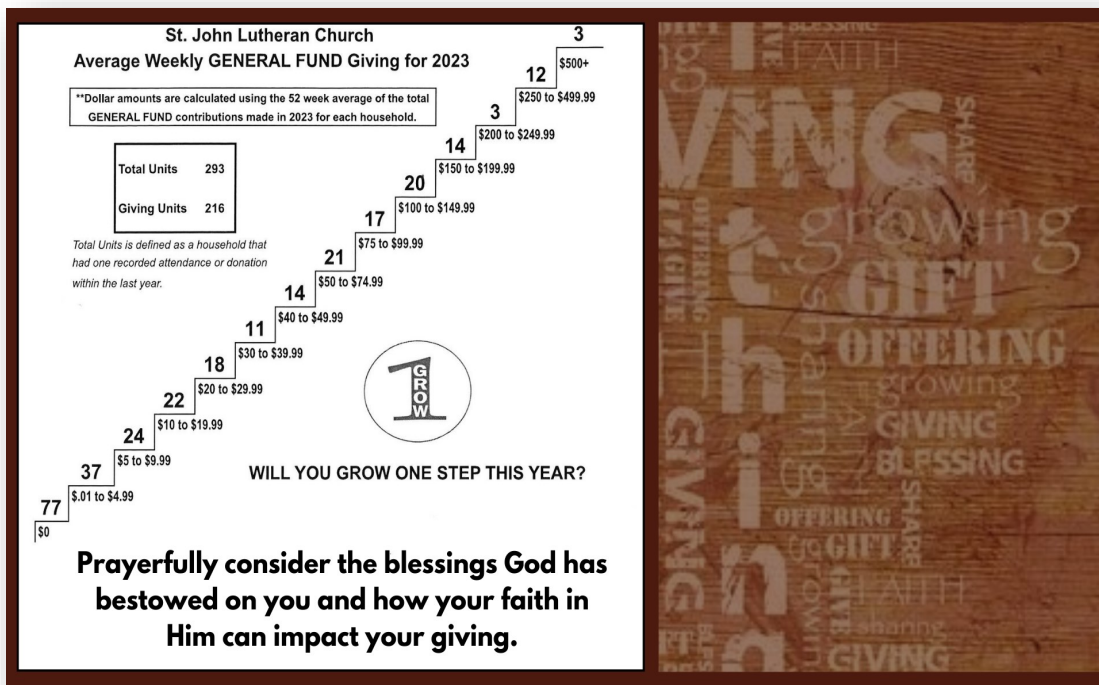
Week 1 • Guided to Hope (2 Corinthians 1:10): When we are uncertain about what the future holds, we discover in the cross the sure hope of heaven.

Week 2 • Guided to Love (1 Timothy 1:13-14): When we are separated from others and from God by our sin, the cross brings us together through its love.

Week 3 • Guided to Peace (Colossians 1:19-20): With wars waging within and without, the cross settles them all with peace to body, mind and soul.

Week 4 • Guided to Trust (1 Timothy 1:15): Plagued by doubt and competing voices, we turn to the cross to put our trust fully in the salvation won for us there.

Week 5 • Guided to Perseverance (Ephesians 6:18): When we are faced with hardship, we look to Christ on the cross who endured to the end so that we might carry on.



Portals of Prayer booklets are cheerfully provided by St. John Ministries. If you have been blessed by these booklets, please consider making a donation to help offset the cost, even just a dollar helps. Your gifts go a long way to help those in need by directing our resources to others. Currently we are providing 104 Portals of Prayer each quarter for a total cost of \$504 annually.



Senior High Scholarship Application

High School Senior Scholarship Application Spring 2024. A scholarship fund has been established for graduating high school seniors who are confirmed and active members of St. John Lutheran Church. St. John Stewardship Board will govern the award. Visit stjohnbc.net/church to apply or call the church office for more information.

St. John Ministries Church Workers Scholarship Opportunities

St. John Ministries has established a scholarship fund for a high school senior or current college students attending any Concordia (Missouri Synod) University. These students must also be in a declared church work major. The application and further details can be found on our website at stjohnbc.net/church.



LHNE Scholarship

Will you be a student at LHNE for the 2024-25 school year? All members of St. John Lutheran Church may apply for scholarship assistance. Use the QR or go to stjohnbc.net/church to apply.



LCMS Scholarships

Nebraska District financial support is available to anyone preparing for full-time service in the church. More information on these scholarship opportunities can be found here:

<https://ndlcms.org/scholarships/>.



St. John Lutheran Church, Battle Creek, NE

Council Meeting Minutes -Monday, January 15, 2024

In Attendance: Reid Ehrisman, Colby Kolm, Pastor Joe Leech, Jessica Fouts, Katie Schnitzler, Christy Schmidt, Steven Whitney, Pastor B.J. Fouts, Todd Roberts, Sara Anderson, Kelsey Schnoor, Brett Freudenburg, Nick Onnen, Tresa Prauner & Mike Anderson

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Reid Ehrisman at 8:08 pm. Reid opened with a devotion and prayer.

Christy Schmidt made a motion to approve the December 18, 2023 council meeting minutes. Second by Todd Roberts. Motion carried.

Treasurer's Report by Katie Schnitzler. The budgeted income continues to increase compared to this same time last year, however, it is not increasing at the same rate as our expenses. All volunteers and staff are diligent about minimizing all costs we can control. The current operating debt total is \$223,509.86. At this time last year total debt was \$233,557.33, which includes the building project debt that was not yet paid off. Please do not hesitate to contact Katie with any questions regarding the financial reports presented. Mike Anderson made a motion to approve the treasurer's report. Colby Kolm seconded. Motion carried.

Trustees' Report by Todd Roberts. The church parking lights will be put off until spring due to installer availability. The Trustees gave approval for the Fouts family to stay in the parsonage until the end of the school year with the intent they would work out a deal to cover any extra utility costs incurred. The last disbursement from the Beryl Finkral fund has been received. Trustees asked to review the process of closures for childcare due to weather conditions. They would like direct communication from the time the early learning center decides to close so that snow removal volunteers are immediately aware when they need to coordinate the clearing of parking lots and sidewalks.

Elders' Report: by Mike Anderson. Transfers In: Nathan Geyer from St. Paul Lutheran Church – Buffalo Creek (Rural Tilden) and Erika and Madison Geyer from Zion Lutheran Church – Plainview. Steven Whitney will be going to a conference in Houston at the end of January. Pastor Fouts will have some days off coming up. The elders discussed having first communion for 8th grade confirmation students on Maundy Thursday of Holy Week and then the students continue with the remainder of confirmation classes to be confirmed on Reformation Sunday in the fall of their freshman year. This separation would allow for each event to be recognized individually. Motion made to accept transfers (pending formal receipt of paperwork) in by Mike. Christy Schmidt seconded. Motion carried.

Evangelism Report by Sara Anderson. There will be a Valentine event in February to make cards for nursing home residents to share God's love. Orphan Grain Train is the recipient of donations for the month of January. The goal is to arrange a volunteering event this summer at Orphan Grain Train.

Parish Ed Report by Jessica Fouts. Parish Ed will be hosting an event for a devotion and meal for the high school youth group. Board members are starting to coordinate VBS details with Kelsey. The dates for VBS 2024 will be July 21-25. Parish Ed is exploring options for the Sunday school curriculum for next year.

Parochial Ed Report by Brett Freudenburg. Parochial Ed board brainstormed names for possible new school board members. Miss Rave wants to further her education with a master's degree and has put in a request for tuition assistance. The final report on the gym floor should be received in the next two weeks. There has been communication with the investigator asking more questions and needing more information throughout the entire process. There is no clear decision on what the final report will be. The boys' and girls' basketball teams have received their new uniforms (funded by PTL and the athletic fund).

Early Learning Center (ELC) Report by Tresa Prauner. Currently, the number of available staff is improving, but additional staff are needed. Scheduling with the recent weather conditions has been difficult. The ELC is applying for five different grants. The ELC received the step-up to quality bonus in the amount of \$5,000. The board is reviewing the procedures for weather related issues for all involved. The budget is being reviewed. They are working on comparing the ELC childcare rates to those similar in our area.

Stewardship Report by Katie Schnitzler. The stewardship board will be meeting on Wednesday, January 17, so there is nothing new to report at this time.

-Old Business - None. New Business – None.

-Chairman's Report – The Leadership team has been deep into budget discussions, with many hours spent in meetings with difficult conversations to create a necessary end result. Please pray for all involved as they take on the stress of how to maintain St John Ministries as a whole, according to God's will. Currently, they are reviewing and obtaining all information needed to develop a plan for reducing spending, increasing revenue through offerings and tuition/fees, and reducing overall debt. Last year the Voters approved a budget with a deficit. It is concerning that we are not hitting the projected numbers from last year's budget. The Chairman asks for all boards at this time to be faithful stewards and consider any extra costs that could be eliminated or reduced. Budget recommendations for income and expenses will be reviewed by the council in future meetings. Tuition/fee increases will be necessary, but the overall cost of ministries is outpacing the income generated. The congregation, voters, council, wellness committee, etc., will need to consider what level of debt is acceptable and operational for St. John Ministries as a whole. Congregational giving has shown an increase over the past few years but is not meeting the rate of increase for operations.

-Next Meeting February 12 at 8:00 pm.

-Todd Roberts made a motion to adjourn. Second by Brett Freudenburg. Motion carried.

-Closing prayer by Pastor Fouts. Minutes submitted by Mandy Lewis.

St. John Trivia Night 3.0



Trivia Winners: The Kollbaums ~Plus One

On Friday, January 19, St. John held its Third Annual Trivia Night Benefit Fundraiser at St. Patrick's Parish Hall. Thirteen teams were in attendance. Mr. Steven Whitney was the master of ceremonies and compiled all the questions. The categories included musicals, math equations, famous aunts, Newbery award-winning books, bones of the human body, Bible geography, and 2000's pop culture. Pastor B.J. Fouts served as the referee and gave a few penalties throughout the evening. It was a great evening of fun and fundraising for St. John!

St. John's **IGNITE** Auction on March 2, 2024!

Enjoy dinner, entertainment, and thrilling live/silent auctions. Your support helps sustain our Christian school by offsetting tuition costs, making education affordable for families and easing the church's financial burden. Funds raised also go towards scholarships for families in need. Don't miss the fun with a purpose!



Celebrating Marriages

One of the greatest tools for building strong families is to build strong marriages. In 2024 St. John Ministries will be praying for the marriages in our congregation. We will list the wedding anniversaries in the newsletter and pray for these couples in worship each weekend. As we look at our database, we are not sure we have accurate wedding anniversary dates for everyone, please verify with the church office your wedding anniversary so we may include you in our prayers.

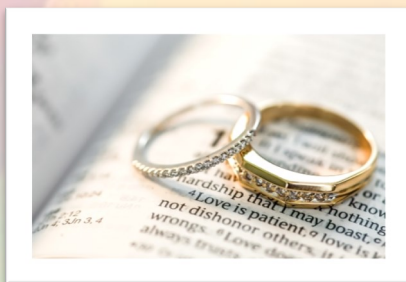
February Wedding Anniversaries

6- TROY & TERESA HITZ

10- ROB & LORI UECKER

12- JIM & PAM HENRICKSON

May God bless you
on your special day!



Valentine's Day Servant Project



Sunday, February 11,
following worship in the
parish hall.

Sponsored by the St. John
Evangelism Committee we
will be making Valentines
Day cards to be shared with
the Community Pride Care
Center Residents. All ages
are invited to help out!

*Education hour will be held
that day. We will make the
cards during fellowship time.*

*Connecting People in the Heart
of Jesus*

Celebration of Life

February Birthdays

1 Brooks Onnen	6 Ethan Koopman	11 Diane Pratt	20 Rod Nicolay
1 Myles Schurman	6 Chelsea Zohner	11 Jason Freudenburg	20 Karen Ritterbush
2 Richard Frank	6 Jonas Weber	12 Robert Praeuner	21 John Hrabanek
2 Hunter Harbottle	7 Miles Loftis	13 Kooper Uecker	23 Heather Whitney
2 Seth Kossmann	7 Kelly Griffith	13 Dave Rodekohr	23 Scott Carlson
2 Nicole Kuchar	7 Alexandria Noble	13 Bonnie Schulz	23 Adam Roker
2 Dan Schott	8 Kelsey Tiedtke	13 Arvid Warneke	23 Val Sovereign
2 Barry Stueve	8 Jane Warneke	14 Amy Klug	23 Troy Koopman
3 Ayden Freudenburg	8 Marrisa Hitz	14 Makayla Ruge	23 Joy Pack
3 William Houlden	9 Brenda Borchers	15 Owen Roth	25 Teresa Hitz
3 Jena French	9 Cathie Praeuner	16 Doug Trowbridge	25 Lenyx Jessen
4 Josh Rakowsky	9 Seth Kossmann	17 Caleb Zohner	26 Ryan Miller
4 Angie Weber	10 Tanner Krueger	18 Pete Smith	26 Nikki Prauner
5 Wylie Trowbridge	10 Randy Ritterbush	18 Walker Unkel	26 Jim Werner
6 Scott Henery	10 Barrett Belina	19 Tracy Stoural	27 Sarah Tillman
6 Colby Kerber	11 Wolter Klein	20 Ella Anderson	28 Alice Smith
			28 Oliver Spulak



Cinnamon Rolls with Heavy Cream



This cinnamon roll uses heavy cream to make the buns light, fluffy, and moist.

INGREDIENTS

2 tubes store bought cinnamon rolls (Pillsbury or any other brand)
1 cup heavy cream & baking spray

Optional Additions

½ stick butter thinly sliced
½ cup [brown sugar](#)
½ teaspoon [cinnamon](#)
½ cup homemade cream cheese icing

INSTRUCTIONS

- Preheat oven to 350F degrees. Spray large baking dish with nonstick baking spray and place cinnamon rolls in.
- Pour the heavy cream over the top of the cinnamon rolls and place in the oven for 25-30 minutes. If you're adding in the additional ingredients (which I highly recommend!) then evenly distribute the brown sugar over the top of each bun, followed by the butter and a sprinkle of cinnamon.
- Remove from heat and add icing (that it comes with or that you make by hand) on top. Serve immediately.

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 welcomes all women. Our next meeting is on February 29, at 1:30 pm in the Fellowship Hall Classroom. January began a new year for WINGS.

Current officers: President Patty Renner, Treasurer Becky Ridder. New officers: Vice President Sarah Tillman, and Secretary Deborah Sunderman. WINGS is looking forward to continuing to serve the Lord through missions and within our community. If you would like to be involved or would like additional information about WINGS, please contact any officer or member. We would love to tell you all about it!

WINGS will serve the Lenten meal on February 21. Mexi-burgers, potato salad, and desserts.

Does LWML (Lutheran Women's Missionary League) still collect used postage stamps? The answer is YES! LWML is exceedingly blessed by the generosity of the women and men in our congregations!

LWML members share and give in so many different ways. Did you know that some of our members and groups are collecting canceled stamps? Stamps that have their perforations intact, are not too heavily canceled, and are not torn, cut, or stained can be saved for charity.

Nonprofit and not-for-profit organizations take donated used stamps – also known as recycled stamps – and sell them individually or in bulk through auctions directly to stamp dealers or collectors to raise funds for various charitable programs.

Deposit your stamps in the wooden box on the LWML table in the church Narthex (by the BIG Mite Box).



Shining a Spotlight on the Caring Ministries of St. John Ministries

Did you know St. John Ministries has several facets of prayer and caring ministry?

Pastor Joseph Leech is a certified Stephen Minister and an Ambassador of Reconciliation, these are Recognized Service Organizations of the LCMS. Providing Spiritual Care to a person in need can be an effective tool for evangelism, and is not limited to active St. John members. If you or someone you know needs one-on-one spiritual care for depression, grief, divorce, marital concerns, hospice care, or other life adjustment concerns contact Pastor Leech at 402-675-3155 or email pastorleech@stjohnbc.net. Ginger Howser has completed her training as a Stephen Minister -Leader and will be available as an option for the women of our congregation. We are looking to recruit individuals to become trained Stephen Ministers. Prayerfully consider being a part of this ministry. For more information, contact Pastor Leech.

Prayer Ministry: Cherie Werner facilitates a prayer team meeting at 5:00 pm in the parish hall classroom on the third Saturday of each month. This team prays for special requests, our ministry, and our community. Ms. Werner is also available for one-on-one prayer at 402-675-1265 or cwerner@stjohnbc.net.

Our Prayer Chain is a group of dedicated members who pray for special requests made by members. All requests are confidential unless specified otherwise. All members are welcome to pray with us. If you have a prayer request or for more information on joining our prayer team call 402-675-3155 or email the office at churchsecretary@stjohnbc.net.

Warneke Benefit Pancake Feed



**Sunday February 4
9:00 am-1:00 pm
St John Parish Hall**

Proceeds from this free-will
donation meal will be used for
medical expenses for Arvid & Jane.

~Sponsored by the Battle Creek
Volunteer Fire Department~

Battle Creek Volunteer Fire and Rescue Department and friends of Arvid & Jane Warneke cordially invite you and your guests to attend the fundraiser to benefit the Warneke family February 4, 2024 from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m at the St. John Fellowship Hall, 306 S. 2nd St. Battle Creek.

Please come out to show your support for Arvid and his amazing family. There will be a free will donation with proceeds going towards medical expenses.

Other Ways to **GET INVOLVED**

Lutheran Bible Institute
Saturday, February 10, 2024-
1:00-4:00pm
416 W Park Ave, Grace Lutheran
Church, Norfolk
Guest Speaker: Rev. Nabil S. Nour

Rev. Nabil S. Nour, 4th Vice-President of the Lutheran Church Missouri Synod, who was born in Nazareth, will present a detailed Bible study about the root of the conflict in the Holy Land.

Congregations and individuals are all invited to attend this event.



VOLUNTEERS NEEDED



St John Ministry OGT Volunteer Day
 Friday, February 2, 10:00 am -2:00 pm

Prayerfully consider →

Come as your time allows



Connecting people in the heart of Jesus. Serving the Lord's House in February 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. Feb 3 Sun. Feb 4	6:00 9:00	Anderson/Wedekind Prauner/Zohner	Acklie/Volk Wolf/Zohner	Volk Borchers/Kirby	Aria Hoehne & Janelle Ehrisman
Sat. Feb 10 Sun. Feb 11	6:00 9:00	Kossmann/Borgelt Sunderman/Howser	Acklie/Volk J Borchers/J Werner	Volk Wragges	Nixon Otjen Wedekind
Wed. Feb 14 Ash Wednesday	7:00	Borgelt/Zohner	J Borchers/Zohner	Borchers	Kolm
Sat. Feb 17 Sun. Feb 18	6:00 9:00	Kossmann/Anderson J Baumgartel/Wedekind	Acklie/Volk Fleer/ Tillman	Volk Brauers	Sophie Kuchar Wedekinds
Wed Feb 21	7:00	Buckendahl	Zohner		Kolm
Sat. Feb 24 Sun. Feb 25	6:00 9:00	Borgelt/Anderson J Baumgartel/Prauner	Acklie/Volk Fleer/Tillman	Volk Fouts/Kuchar	_____ Wedekinds
Wed Feb 28	7:00	Buckendahl	Ridder		Kolm

Reading / Prayer Calendar - February 2024

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
January 29, 2024	January 30, 2024	January 31, 2024	February 1, 2024	February 2, 2024
Psalm 57	Psalm 58	Psalm 59	Psalm 60	Psalm 61
Pray for Schools	Pray for the Armed Forces	Pray for your children or nieces/nephews	Pray for your Pastor	Pray for blessings in worship

February 5, 2024	February 6, 2024	February 7, 2024	February 8, 2024	February 9, 2024
Psalm 62	Psalm 63	Psalm 64	Psalm 65	Psalm 66
Pray for Teachers	Pray for the Govern- ment	Pray for your friends	Pray for Church staff	Pray for outreach in our community

February 12, 2024	February 13, 2024	February 14, 2024	February 15, 2024	February 16, 2024
Psalm 67	Psalm 68	Psalm 69	Psalm 70	Psalm 71
Pray for School Ad- ministrators	Pray for the President	Pray for the Family	Pray for the lay lead- ers of the church	Pray for missionaries

February 19, 2024	February 20, 2024	February 21, 2024	February 22, 2024	February 23, 2024
Psalm 72	Psalm 73	Psalm 74	Psalm 75	Psalm 76
Pray for Students	Pray for Congress	Pray for your spouse or parent	Pray for the Church	Pray for the lost

From the Principal;~ St. John Lutheran School

Faith 5: 2024

Share: Blessings of the 1st Semester:

- **Student Leadership / 8th Grade Camp Luther Field Trip:** Our 8th-grade class is full of quiet leaders who get things done the right way and steer clear of drama. Actions speak louder than words, and in that regard, this class's leadership speaks. Kicking off the year setting the tone at Camp Luther, again, was truly an awesome experience.
- **Staff Showcasing Skills:** During the Great Plains Educational Leadership Conference in October, our staff had an opportunity to grow and bond. We also had 4 of our staff members present to other educators. Mrs. Kollbaum shared insightful content from her MA classes on teaching writing. Mrs. Eriksen, Mrs. Onnen, and Mrs. Wragge presented on school climate and culture. A highlight was hearing so many of our other staff members chime in during this presentation!
- **Volleyball Reloading:** Mrs. Tietz & company had our girls rolling again this season. St. John's volleyball team only saw defeat at the hands of two teams all season, Lincoln Lutheran, and Trinity Fremont.
- **LHNE Gym Cooperation:** Praise God for a smooth partnership with LHNE for gym arrangements. We were able to practice and host "home" contests in their facility throughout volleyball season. We're also slated to host home basketball contests there as well.
- **Mission Central:** God's Creation Museum, amazing artifacts from around the world, and Missionary Gary's urgency and first-hand accounts make this biennial 5th-8th grade field trip a blessing for our students.
- **Our First Grandparents Day:** St. John has some amazing traditions. In November, we began a new one as we hosted our first Grandparents' Day! It was inspiring to have the multiple generations attend chapel together and then peek at the blessings we enjoy in our school.
- **The Coffee Cart:** It's a small thing but having a weekly connection to parents at drop-off has been enjoyable. We get to share coffee, a quick conversation, and follow up with the previous week's prayer requests.



- **Getting into Community Pride:** Since the onset of COVID-19, our school has not been able to visit residents at CPCC. It was a highlight to be able to sing and see some familiar faces.
- **Partnership and support of parents:** The trust, teamwork, and partnership of our parents make our jobs easier and allow us to be more effective.
- **The Christmas Program:** Our students sang like they meant it! Mr. Whitney & the staff had students energized in sharing the account of Jesus's birth. Hosting 500+ in one venue still seems extra special with Covid gathering restrictions in the not-so-distant past.

Lows of the 1st Semester:

- Semester 1 had some unique challenges with Mrs. Heller on maternity leave, Mrs. Philpot at her seasonal job at Poppy's Pumpkin Patch, and a temporarily open Athletic Director position. Altogether, the transitory vacancies provided an opportunity for our amazing staff to shine filling in the gaps! We were also grateful the gaps were temporary!
- Our gym floor has been an ongoing challenge since June. There is no surface water or trace of subsurface water, yet the floor expanded and buckled. In the dry months, it has relaxed nearly back into place. However, future challenges are uncertain, and we're yet to get a verdict from our contracted construction forensic company.
- With a 29.4%, \$500 tuition increase last year, and the need for more revenue, finances are always looming. The ministry debt of >\$200,000 is hard.

Read: "I know how to be brought low, and I know how to abound. In any and every circumstance, I have learned the secret of facing plenty and hunger, abundance and need. I can do all things through him who strengthens me." (Philippians 4:12-13, ESV)

Talk: "I was working on my pickup tonight and wasn't having a good day. My son came home from school and told me all about God and Jesus. It was reassuring why I sent my kids to St. John. Keep doing what you're doing. You're great at it."

The note above came in the form of a text message from a student's parent a few weeks back. I swell up with pride for so much of what St. John does. Last year we were proud when 3 individuals took home the valedictorian, student of the year, and the highest ACT score in their school. Knowing we had a little part in their development is encouraging. I love tuning into games and watching our students contributing to their teams, hearing former students sing solos or duets at high school concerts, learning that our former students are creating a buzz in mock trials, or taking the lead in 1-Acts. A few weeks ago, a dad caught me in the parking lot and talked to me about his child who labored to get B's and C's at St. John but had become accustomed to the high expectations and is now getting straight A's in high school. It's awesome to see and hear about the successes. However, that text message is why we exist.

Our students aren't just here to learn about math, reading, and science. They aren't just here to develop music or acting skills or grow as athletes. While all those ventures are commendable, we're here to connect our students and families in the heart of Jesus.

The mountaintop experiences and the proud moments are great, but the valleys will come. The same is true in our lives. In fact, Jesus tells us "In this world, you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world." (John 16:33). When those days come, I pray that our students are armed with God's word to guide them. I pray that when our students move on from here, they also connect with others in the heart of Jesus.

I thank each one of you for being a part of our ministry, for committing to the work the Lord has here, and giving us the opportunity to connect our students and families in the heart of Jesus!

Pray: Father, thank you for our successes and challenges, alike. Help us to grow closer to you through all circumstance, to be equipped to serve you, and connect others to you and your word. Amen.

Bless: The Lord bless us by drawing us closer to Him. May He keep us steadfast in His word to guide our path. May He give us peace knowing that our salvation has been won.

Mr. Onnen



*THANK YOU to all who helped
with the snow removal on our
Ministry Campus!
You are appreciated!*



Youth and Family Ministry

LIGHT- Grades 9-12

Learn, Invite, Gather, and Honor (God) Together

LIGHT Activity Update

January the youth heard from two of our church boards the Stewardship board shared words of wisdom with the youth on how to be good stewards of their time and talents. Later we were given a great opportunity to share some of our talents with the Parish Ed board who led our devotion and we helped Miss Werner prepare for the 100th day of school celebration for the kindergarten class. Both boards served these hungry teens a delicious meal while sharing their messages.

We even had time for a little fun.

Next meeting is February 28.
Bible Study ~ Sunday at 10:45



Don't forget to check out the scholarship opportunities offered by St. John Ministries & the LCMS.



arise and
shine forth

Education hour has something for every age. We begin by meeting on Sunday following worship in the parish hall for refreshments and fellowship at 10:30 am.

My Child & Me

0-3 years

Sunday School

3 years -Grade 4

Confirmation

Grade 5 -8

High School Youth

Grade 9-12

Adult Bible Study

Women's Group

with Mrs. Onnen

Men's Group

with Mr. Onnen

PTL MEETING

(Parent, Teacher League)

Thursday, February

8 at 6:30 pm

St. John Early Learning

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.

EARLY LEARNING CONNECTION



IMPORTANT DATES:

- February 8 – PTL at 6:30 pm at ELC
- February 9 – 3:30 pm early closure for staff development
- February 15: Briggs and Barrett Servant Event, 5:30–7:30 pm (details to come!)

VISION FOR QUALITY CHILDCARE BY NORFOLK AREA CHILDCARE COLLABORATIVE

In a world where the demand for quality childcare continues to rise, the Norfolk Area Childcare Collaborative (NACC) emerges as a beacon of hope. This 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization is on a mission to close the gap in available, high-quality childcare, paving the way for regional growth by retaining and attracting talent. NACC's vision is not just about providing a service; it's about creating a sustainable solution that benefits the community and its businesses.

NACC's primary objectives are clear and ambitious:

1. Closing the Gap in Available, Quality Childcare: Recognizing the shortage of accessible and high-quality childcare, NACC is committed to bridging this gap to meet the needs of families in the Norfolk area.
2. Creating a Sustainable Childcare Cooperative Framework: Operating under a cooperative governance model, NACC ensures that decisions are made collaboratively, with a focus on achieving economic, social, and cultural success. This framework aims to create a sustainable and community-driven childcare solution.
3. Adopting and Implementing High-Quality Childcare Standards: NACC is dedicated to maintaining the highest standards in childcare. By adopting and implementing rigorous quality standards, the organization seeks to provide children with a safe and enriching environment for their early development.
4. Developing a Highly Trained Early Childhood Development Professional Staff: The success of any childcare initiative lies in the expertise of its staff. NACC places a strong emphasis on developing a highly trained team of early childhood development professionals, ensuring that children receive the best care and education.
5. Opening and Operating Ongoing Host Site(s): To expand its reach and impact, NACC plans to establish host sites that serve as centers for quality childcare. These sites will be strategically located to address the diverse needs of the community.

As a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization, NACC operates with transparency and accountability. All funds invested in the collaborative go towards the operating expenses of childcare facilities. Any profits generated are reinvested back into the collaborative to either open additional host sites or reduce childcare rates, ensuring that the benefits are passed on to the community.

What sets NACC apart is its innovative and business-focused collaborative model. Companies contributing to NACC go beyond reserving childcare slots; they invest in a community need for affordable childcare. This model not only addresses a critical issue but also aligns with the broader goals of businesses aiming for social responsibility.



VISION (CONT.)

Recognizing the dynamic nature of community needs, NACC acknowledges that its model is a pilot program. This flexibility allows for adjustments along the way to solve unforeseen problems and improve processes, ensuring that NACC remains responsive to the evolving needs of the Norfolk area.

St. John Early Learning Center (ELC) is a proud participant in NACC, serving as a host site. Kelsey, the director of St. John ELC, has been actively engaged in NACC as a member of the steering committee and the chair of the early childhood education subcommittee. Their commitment exemplifies the collaborative spirit and dedication that drive NACC toward success.

The Norfolk Area Childcare Collaborative's vision is not just about providing childcare; it's about shaping the future by investing in the early development of children. As businesses and communities come together under this innovative model, NACC stands poised to make a lasting impact, not only in closing the childcare gap but also in fostering a thriving and socially responsible community for generations to come.

WE CARE FOR KIDS

Nebraska's child care crisis is gaining recognition in the state's legislature, with a record number of bills expected to be introduced. Governor Jim Pillen has identified early education as a priority for his administration. Quality child care and early education support healthy development, enable families to work, and keep businesses running. However, there is a shortage of such services in the state. 88% of Nebraskans support investing in affordable, quality child care and early learning. First Five Nebraska is keeping track of legislation and providing updates throughout the legislative session.

Check out First Five Nebraska at <https://www.firstfivenebraska.org>.

To read more about the We Care for Kids campaign, visit: <https://nebraskacaresforkids.org>.

January WCFK newsletter: <https://gobuffettinstitute.nebraska.edu/webmail/937913/449770597/45225cdb08db5f938889d7369d66e6f7b2e483a2bd8eae0e87eb601319c3da26>



MINISTRY CORNER

- Church Services:
 - Saturday, 6:00 pm
 - Sunday, 9:00 am
 - Education Hour, 10:30 am
- February 14 – Ash Wednesday, 7:00 pm
- Meals will be held at 6:00 pm before all Lent Services
 - Feb. 14 – Chili Soup & Rolls
 - Feb. 21 – Mexis and Potato Salad
 - Feb. 28 – Brats/Hot Dogs & Chips
 - Mar. 6 – Hot Ham & Cheese & Chips
 - Mar. 13 – TBD
 - Mar. 20 – TBD

TEACHER SPOTLIGHT

Shellea Olsufka, Pre-K Lead Teacher

Mrs. O. joined the STJ ELC family in October 2023. She lives on a homestead with her husband, Robert, and daughter, Joce.

Mrs. O. obtained her associate's degree in Early Childhood Education from Northeast Community College in 2023 and will be working toward her early childhood inclusive bachelor's from UNK in the fall.



LHNE NEWS

FEBRUARY 2024



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



@LHNEagles



lhneagles

LHNE COACHING OPPORTUNITY

Lutheran High is looking for a head track and field coach for the coming seasons. If you are interested in applying or have any questions, please contact Preston Sunderman at psunderman@lhne.org or call the school at 402-379-3040.

FARM AUCTION

The LHNE Farm and Equipment Auction will be on Saturday, March 2nd at 10:00 A.M.

Lutheran High Northeast is seeking donations of farm, outdoor, and shop equipment (in working order) for a one-day auction outside the Ag. shop at LHNE. This 'leap year' event is a great opportunity to benefit the students by sharing 'retired' equipment, tools, or hardware! To donate, please email a description and photo of the item(s) to farm@LHNE.org by February 9th. Items must be delivered to LHNE by Thursday, February 29th, but may be delivered earlier by contacting Development Director Fred Aufdembrink.

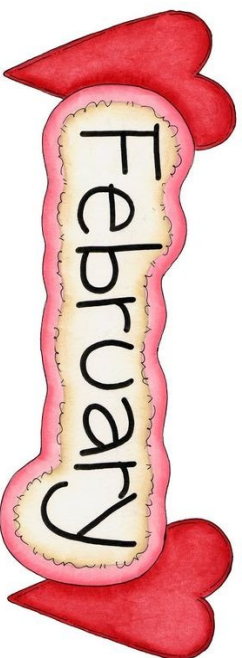
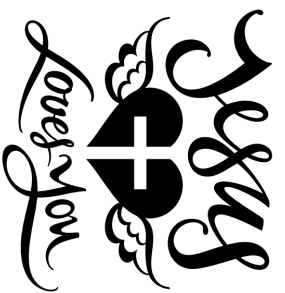
The auction will be conducted by the Blank Agency of Madison. All donations will be acknowledged with a letter and receipt following the auction for tax purposes. (402) 379-3040 farm@LHNE.org

NEBRASKA TAX OPPORTUNITY

This new year brings a wonderful opportunity for you to benefit students who attend private schools and receive a dollar-for-dollar income tax credit for up to 50% of your Nebraska income tax liability for 2024. For more information, please visit the LHNE website and click on the Opportunity Scholarships of Nebraska link.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Feb. 1 - BB at Wayne
Feb. 2 - Wrestling @ Norfolk Catholic
Feb. 3 - FBLA Neon Dance
Feb. 3 - Speech @ Wayne
Feb. 5 - BB vs Wisner
Feb. 6 - BB vs. LCC (SENIOR NIGHT)
Feb. 8 - Pep Rally
Feb. 8 - FFA Mtg
Feb. 8 - FBLA Mtg
Feb. 9 - BB vs. Summerland
Feb. 9-10 - Wrestling Districts
Feb. 11-17 - FBLA Week
Feb. 12-13 - Girls BB Subs
Feb. 12 - No School Circuit In-Service
Feb. 15 - Girls BB Subs
Feb. 15-17 - Wrestling State
Feb. 16 - Boys BB vs. Howells-Dodge
Feb. 18-24 - FFA Week
Feb. 18 - Booster Club Mtg
Feb. 19-20 - Boys BB Subs
Feb. 19 - Pep Rally
Feb. 23-24 - FFA Leadership Conf.
Feb. 23 - No School
Feb. 23 - Boys BB Subs
Feb. 23 - Girls BB District Final
Feb. 23 - Home Speech Invite
Feb. 24 - Boys BB Sub State
Feb. 26 - Boys BB Sub State
Feb. 26 - FFA District DCE Competition
Feb. 26 - LHSANN Board of Directors Mtg
Feb. 28 - March 2 - Girls BB State



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1	2 10:00 St. John Orphan Grain Train Volunteer Day	3
4 9:00 BC Fire Dept Warneke Benefit Pancake Feed @St John	5	6 1:00 Senior Fun Day	7 6:30 Choir	8 6:30 PTL Meeting At ELC	9	10
11 Sunday 9:00 am School Chapel Wednesday 8:30 am Education Hour/ Sunday School Sunday 10:15 am	12 8:00 Council Meeting	13	14 6:00 Fellowship Meal Soups & Cinnamon Rolls 7:00 Ash Wednesday Worship	15	16	17 5:00 Prayer Meeting
18 Bible Studies: Tuesday-7:00 pm Parish hall Wednesday 9:30 am Women's Study Parish Hall Classroom	19	20 1:00 Senior Fun Day	21 6:00 Fellowship Meal Mexi's & Potato Salad- WINGS 7:00 Lent Worship	22	23	24
25 Men's Study Parish Hall	26 7:00 Quarterly Voters' Meeting	27	28 6:00 Fellowship Meal Hot dogs/Brats/Chips 7:00 Lent Worship	29 1:30 WINGS Meeting		



Connecting People in the Heart of Jesus



Connecting people in the heart of Jesus

February 2024

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
Life Week January 29 - Feb. 2						
4 Worship 9:00 AM Education Hour 10:30 AM Adult Sports Fellowship 6:00 PM	5 Chicken Strips	6 Boys (A & B) vs. Immanuel Columbus @ LHNE 6:00 PM Chili	7 Mrs. Kolbbaum leads chapel 8:30 AM Chicken Noodle Soup	8 Boys (A & B) vs. West Point @ LHNE 5:00 PM PTL 6:30 PM French Toast Bake	9 No School Professional Development Sloppy Joe	10 Girls (A) CLS Tournamnet Worship 6:00 PM
11 Worship 9:00 AM Valentine's Day Servant Project Education Hour 10:30 AM Adult Sports Fellowship 6:00 PM	12 No School Preschool - 8th Grade P/T Conferences	13 1st Grade Parent-Teacher Conferences 4:00 PM - 7:00 PM	14 Ash Wednesday Pastor Fouts leads chapel 8:30 AM 6:00 PM Chili Supper 7:00 PM Ash Wednesday Worship	15 Full Day of School Preschool - 8th Grade P/T Conferences 4:00 PM - 7:00 PM Briggs & Barrett Servant Project & Pizza 5:30PM	16 No School Winter Break G & B (B) @ Christ Lutheran 4:30 PM	17 Boys (A) Christ Lutheran Tournament Worship 6:00 PM
18 Worship 9:00 AM Education Hour 10:30 AM Adult Sports Fellowship 6:00 PM	19 Goulash	20 Chicken Alfredo	21 Tomato Soup	22 KFC Bowl	23 G & B (A) C-Club Tournament	24 G & B (A) C-Club Tournament Worship 6:00 PM
25 Worship 9:00 AM Education Hour 10:30 AM Adult Sports Fellowship 6:00 PM	26 Volers Meeting 7:00 PM	27 Quiz Bowl in Neligh	28 Miss Werner leads chapel 8:30 AM 6:00 PM Hot Dog & Brat Meal 7:00 PM Worship	29 Cowboy Burger	1 Fish	2 IGNITE Auction



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