



The Informer

July 2024

St. John's Lutheran Church

Volume 66 Issue 9



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From Pastor's Pen:

My faithful family in Christ,

Imagine walking into Burger King and ordering a Big Mac. Burger King does not sell Big Macs. They have their own menu of items with which to serve you. It is unreasonable, even unlawful, for them to offer what another chain does. Everyone seems to accept that fact.

Yet, that is not true when it comes to congregations. Often there is the expectation that each congregation should offer whatever program another church has, especially if it seems successful. "It is really great and brings a lot of people into the church, we should offer that, too!"

The thing is that each congregation offers its own "menu", based firstly on its theology. Secondly, a congregation offers those items which it has the personnel and resources to offer. Not every congregation can offer all the things that may be happening in every other congregation. There are many good things that are offered by other congregations and some things that seem "good" but are really not.

The problem is that a church is not in the business of selling hamburgers. While there is a difference between a Big Mac and a Whopper, a hamburger is a hamburger. Not so with churches! The spiritual food it offers is the most important thing. The differences among churches are significantly more important than special sauces, mustard, ketchup pickles, tomatoes or onions.

Sadly, there is a crisis in the spiritual food that is being offered in many congregations these days. It doesn't take a Doctorate in Theology to recognize that things like the Resurrection of Christ, the Bible as the authoritative Word of God, salvation by grace through faith in Christ, and so many other articles of the Christian faith are up for grabs in the consumer driven, fast-food, churches that seem to be drawing many customers.

It used to be that people joined congregations on the basis of what that church taught and believed. When it became necessary to change congregations, they looked for one of the same denomination. We called that "Denominational Loyalty." Such loyalty has been replaced by a "service" mentality. What a church teaches about God, salvation and Christian living has become less important than what it offers the "consumer oriented" members and seekers. We need to remember and impress upon our friends and family members who have placed personal taste and menu options, that the "spiritual menu" must be the primary consideration when "church shopping." Faithfulness to purity of teaching and the right administration of Christ's sacraments must come first.

My hope and prayer is that more and more of you will be faithful in attending worship and Bible studies so that you can properly discern what is the good and perfect will of God and be grateful for this congregation to which He has called you.

In Christ's love,

Pastor Umbarger

See The Informer
IN COLOR
On Our Website

Meet the Deaconess

Dear St. John's,

Greetings from your new deaconess intern Kimberly Bower! I am so excited to be joining your congregation and getting to know you all as I work and learn over the next year.

A little bit about me: I am originally from Broomfield, Colorado which is the North Metro area of Denver. I lived there my whole life until I moved to Fort Wayne, Indiana to pursue my vocation as a deaconess. I went to the University of Colorado in Boulder for my undergraduate degree. I majored in Civil Engineering with an emphasis in Structural Engineering. I worked very briefly in the engineering world before I went to CTSFW and although I enjoyed my time in that field, I knew it wasn't for me.

I decided to apply to the deaconess program during my senior year of college and I pretty much made that transition right away. And yes, it was a big change going from an engineering path to churchwork. I very much like to study theology and I am especially passionate about the hymnody and liturgy of the church. This along with the opportunity to support the work of the church encouraged this change of path. I have learned so much in my studies over the last couple of years, but I look forward to learning much more by being directly involved in the day-to-day life of the church.

Outside of my studies and work, I really enjoy games and music. I play the cello and love to sing. Over the years I have picked up many hobbies but one of the ones that has stuck most recently is crochet. I think it is great to have outlets and creative outlets have been especially fun for me over the years.

I look forward to getting to know you more as I start here at St. John's.

Blessings,

Deaconess Bower



CAKE RECEPTION and CARD SHOWER

You are cordially invited to meet the new deaconess and have a delicious piece of cake on Sunday, July 7th after worship.



Serving the Lord This Month:

Ushers

Sat, July 6: Greg Burke, Todd Miller, Rick Newlon, & Larry Ripka
Sun, July 7: Glen McMillin, Stratton Churchill, Tim Stone, Ralph and Mark Grotelueschen
Sat, July 13: Greg Burke, Todd Miller, Rick Newlon, & Larry Ripka
Sun, July 14: Rod Hopkins
Sat, July 20: Greg Burke, , Todd Miller, Rick Newlon, & Larry Ripka
Sun, July 21: Glen McMillin, Jeff Belan, Tim Stone, Mark Grotelueschen, and Kris McAnally
Sat, July 27: Greg Burke, Todd Miller, Rick Newlon, & Larry Ripka
Sun, July 28: Glen McMillin

Greeters

Sat, July 6: JoAnn Sager
Sun, July 7: Dennis & Marsha Boarts
Sat, July 13: JoAnn Sager
Sun, July 14: Marsha Boarts
Sat, July 20: JoAnn Sager
Sun, July 21: Marsha Boarts
Sat, July 27:
Sun, July 28: Marsha Boarts

Acolytes

Sun, July 7: John Kjera
Sun, July 14: Alice Schmidt
Sun, July 21: Lydia Merritt
Sun, July 28: Bentley Orton



Altar Guild

Kathy Ahrens and Rebecca Hinman

Communion Assistants:

Sun, July 7: Jim Homann and Jonathan Schmidt
Sun. July 21: Brian Kern and Ralph Grotelueschen

Eternal Candle

July 7: Evan & Dawn Antolik, in honor of Collin's birthday
July 14: OPEN
July 21: Lucille Perley
July 28: Craig & Annie Churchill, in honor of Sloane's birthday



Flowers

July 7: George & Marlene Fellows, in honor of their anniversary
July 14: Lucille Perley
July 21: Ruby Pancrazio
July 28: Lucille Perley



Church News

Birthdays

**July 1:** Peggy Murphy**July 2:** James Sharp & Larry Sims**July 3:** Alice Heller**July 4:** Lois Kelly**July 5:** Aliza Stone & Rose Sullivan**July 7:** Laura Chaffee & Cori
Rossmiller**July 9:** Collin Antolik, Nathan Duffy, &
Megan Hess**July 12:** Nancy Gosa**July 13:** Michael Dosch, Ron Erickson,
Kevin McAnally, Brayden Medinger,
Jackson Weathers & Mary Whipple**July 14:** Sue Heller, Henry Schmidt, &
Ron Whipple**July 16:** Amanda McMillin & Noah
Ryan**July 17:** Jane Hipple**July 19:** Mike Murphy**July 20:****July 21:** Lauren Belzer, Greg Burke,
Ann Cobb, Darlene Dopson, Sharon
Durling, & Scott Mattly**July 22:** Steve Braddy, Lee Copeland,
Amanda Flaugh**July 23:** Nick Johanson & Keith
Verschoore**July 24:** Perry Aukee, Larry Hipple, &
Grace Schmidt**July 25:** Ann Bowman, Cody
Rossmiller, Gregory Smart, & David
VanSeveren**July 26:** Troy McDonald**July 27:** Sloane Churchill**July 28:** Nancy Smart**July 29:** Greg Hart, Kaitlyn Israel &
Donna Moews**July 30:** Janice Coon, Jim Moews &
Jacob Rowe**July 31:** Wendy Verschoore

Weekly Attendance & Offerings

<u>DATE</u>	<u>THIS YEAR</u>	<u>LAST YEAR</u>	<div>Notes from the Balcony Answers:</div> <div>1. LSB 761 <i>Rock of Ages</i> 2. LSB 965 <i>God Bless Our Native Land</i> 3. LSB 801 <i>How Great Thou Art</i></div>
5/26	120	92	
6/2	151	152	
6/9	128	142	
6/16	146	132	
6/23	136	134	
Average monthly attendance of St. John's membership: 27%			

Membership Report**Death:**

Alice Heller (06/23/24)

Transfer Out:

Ben and Caleb Engebrecht

Church News

**JULY 12TH FELLOWSHIP FRIDAY COOKOUT**

Join us in a special 2nd Friday Fellowship as we spend time in fun fellowship with Deaconess Bower.

Bring the whole family for a cookout, outdoor games, and/or cards and dominos inside. We will gather and begin grilling at 6pm, eat at 6:30pm.

We will provide hotdogs, brats, burgers, buns, condiments, and cold beverages.

Please bring a side dish or dessert to share.

Please sign up to help us plan, and let us know what activities you wish to participate in: beachball volleyball, ladder ball, bocce ball, bags/corn hole, etc.

This event will take place inside if the weather doesn't cooperate.

**CHURCH
COOKOUT**



Join Us



Voters Meeting Minutes

1. The meeting was called to order at 10:30 a.m. by president, Rod Hopkins.
2. Pastor Umbarger gave a devotion on St. Paul discussing being steadfast in prayer and to proclaiming the Gospel.
3. Treasurer's Report - Norm Antolik
Handed out the May Financial Statement. Pastor inquired if offerings were down for May. Norm said he didn't think so, but with some members donating through their Required Minimum Distributions it is harder to tell. Some months will be up other's down.
4. Trustee's Report - Evan Antolik
 - a. Evan reported the gym roof has been completed. If the weather cooperates, the sanctuary roof will be done this week.
 - b. Pastor asked about problems with sign on the avenue. Evan said he had to update the software and that should take care of the problem.
 - c. Larry Hipple said there would be some additional cost for drain covers that needed to be replaced.
5. Board of Outreach – Charlie Britton
 - a. They will be following up on families of the VBS students.
 - b. A new bible study will start this fall, "Every One His Witness". He encouraged members to participate in the bible study.
6. Board of Human Care – No Report
Pastor did say that Greg Burke is retiring as Food Pantry Coordinate on June 30th. We need a Coordinator to continue the pantry. They will no longer be doing the restaurant pickups. Annie has been doing the monthly orders and reports. Anyone interested please see Pastor.
7. Board of Youth – No report
Pastor reported that 9 had attended VBS.
Fellowship Committee Report – Carrie Homan
Carrie reported that from the survey last fall they started several activities.
 - a. 2nd Friday Fellowship – July 12th will be a cookout with our deaconess.
 - b. Activities Room is open Wednesdays from 1:30 to 3:30.p.m. during the summer months. Besides games there are craft projects and puzzles. Anyone can come in and work on the craft or puzzles anytime the church is open.
 - c. The walking club started out strong but dropped off so it was discontinued.
 - d. An outing going to see a play is scheduled on August 23. The play is "The Money in Uncle George's Suitcase" at Richmond Hills, Geneseo on August 23. Cost is \$12.00. Please signup.
 - e. Congregational Picnic Sept 8 – More information as plans are finalized.
 - f. Also looking into rebooting the Dinner Club to maybe 3 times a year at church.
8. Executive Board – Rod Hopkins
 - a. Rod reported that the Endowment Committee is made up of Ralph Grotelueschen, Glen McMillian, Janet Hill and Jonathan Schmidt. That one more member is needed. Ralph said he had asked Rick Newlon.
 - b. Rod said that he had been reviewing the Strategic Planning Report. We have accomplished a few of our goals, but he would be reviewing with the Deaconess when she settles in.
 - c. In January we will begin the calling process by setting up a meeting the CID President.

Voter's Meeting Minutes Continued

9. The Board of Elders – Jim Homan
 - a. Need Usher Captains for this summer.
 - b. Jim reported they have been working on a Statement of Belief document. This is to help protect our congregation should it ever be challenged by the secular world for our beliefs and practices. They are planning on presenting it to the Voters at the September meeting.
 - c. Jim also said we are streaming through 2 platforms, the church website (Subsplash) and YouTube. An average total of 113 views on Subsplash and 57 on YouTube. Average watch time was 11-12 minutes, but he cautioned this is an average some may only have view a minute which would bring the averages way down. Ralph commented they had difficulty understanding the singing. Jim said that pastor has a microphone and there is only a small microphone in the balcony. It would be costly to improve the wiring.
10. Pastor's Report
 - a. Pastor Umbarger reported that we have 509 baptized and 436 communicant members. The average worship attendance on a weekend is 142. He gave comparison of three years, 2004, 2014 and 2024. There has been a decline in our membership, but there is a trend of decline of Christianity in America. He said do not lose heart the church is still proclaiming the gospel and is growing in other countries.
 - b. Pastor said with the decline in membership there could be changes in the future such as congregations merging or sharing pastors.
 - c. Pastor urged everyone to attend the bible study this fall "Every One His Witness". It is a new bible study helping us to be better witnesses in this new era.
11. Since there was no new business, Jim Homann made a motion to adjourn. Motion was seconded :Larry Dodge. Motion Passed
12. The meeting was closed with the Lord's Prayer at 11:23 a.m.

We very much appreciate all members who attended the Voter's meeting.

Respectively submitted by Diana Lackey, Date: June 16, 2024

St. John's Voter's Mtg.
June 16, 2024

1. Diana Lackey	10 Charlie Britton	19 Kayla Quisenberry
2. Steven Lackey	11 Joan Britton	20 Kim Schmidt
3 Rod Hopkins	12 Jim Homan	21 Ann Churchill
4 EARL SCHAEFER	13 Carol Homan	
5 Dennis Schaefer	14 Larry C. Dodge	
6 Marge Schaefer	15 Emma Antolik	
7 Ann Engelbrecht	16 Norm Antolik	
8 Brad Engelbrecht	17 James Hople	
9 Andy Dege	18 Shirley Dege	

Notes from the Balcony

The green color has returned to the church banner and paraments and will stay there for the next several months. As of May 19, we entered the season of Pentecost which, although it is in the non-festival half of the church year, each Sunday is a celebration of our Lord's resurrection and we will be singing many of the favorite hymns you chose last September. We focus on the preaching of Christ which is spread with the intent of new life and growth.

Three of your favorite hymns that we plan to sing this summer are:

LSB 761 Rock of Ages

LSB 801 How Great Thou Art

LSB 965 *God Bless Our Native Land*

See if you can match the description with the correct hymn. Answers are on page 4 of the Informer.

1. The writer of the text of this hymn was Anglican cleric and hymnwriter, Augustus Toplady (1740-78). Augustus was raised by his mother after his father, who was a commissioned officer in the Royal Marines, died when Augustus was only one. He studied at Westminster School, London, and Trinity College, Dublin. While there he was converted at a church meeting in a barn. There is a story that the inspiration for this hymn may have occurred during a storm while he took shelter under a rock. The hymn credits the salvation of the miserable sinner to Christ alone as affirmed in Acts 4:12, "And there is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved."
2. Originally, this was a patriotic hymn for the Kingdom of Saxony written by poet and writer Siegfried August Mahlmann in 1815. The text was modified for use in the U.S. by Charles Brooks and John Sullivan Dwight, both Harvard graduates. This prayer for our country is fitting, as directed in 1 Timothy 2:1-2, "First of all, then, I urge that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgivings be made for all people, for kings and all who are in high positions, that we may lead a peaceful and quiet life, godly and dignified in every way."
3. This hymn originated in Sweden. It was written by the Lutheran lay preacher Carl Boberg in 1886 and first published in a newspaper as a nine-stanza poem. The inspiration for the poem came on a warm day full of color and beauty. A storm with thunder and lightning appeared and he and his friends had to take cover for a short time. That evening, after hearing church funeral bells in the distance, he wrote this hymn of praise to God. In 1949, Stuart Hine, a missionary to Ukraine, added the third and fourth verses where we sing of Christ's taking our sins to the cross and of our joyous anticipation of Christ's return. George Beverly Shea sang this hymn at the Billy Graham Crusades.

May God bless your July.

In Christ,

Christine Engebrecht

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
30 9am - Worship w/ 10:15am - Cake Reception	1 8:30am - Staff Meeting 10am - Food Pantry 6:30pm - Guitar Jam	2 9am - TOPS 1:30pm - Activities Room	3	4	5 5pm - Worship w/	6
7 9am - Worship w/ 10:15am - Cake Reception	8 8:30am - Staff Meeting 10am - Food Pantry 6:30pm - Guitar Jam	9 9am - TOPS 1:30pm - Activities Room 4pm - Fellowship committee	10 2pm - Braddy Event	11 6pm - Outdoor Cookout	12 5pm - Worship	13
14 9am - Worship 10:15am - Bible Study /	15 Informer Deadline 8:30am - Staff Meeting 10am - Food Pantry 6:30pm - Guitar Jam	16 9am - TOPS 1:30pm - Activities Room	17 11:30am - Ladies Luncheon	18 5pm - Worship	19	20
21 9am - Worship w/ 10:15am - Bible Study /	22 8:30am - Staff Meeting 10am - Food Pantry 6:30pm - Guitar Jam	23 9am - TOPS 1:30pm - Activities Room	24	25 5pm - Worship	26	27
28 9am - Worship 10:15am - Bible Study /	29 8:30am - Staff Meeting 10am - Food Pantry 6:30pm - Guitar Jam	30 9am - TOPS 1:30pm - Activities Room	31	1	2	3

St. John's Lutheran Church



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We're On the Web!!
www.stjohnsem.org

Walking in the Light of Christ!



Worship Schedule:

Saturday worship– 5:00pm

Sunday worship- 9:00am

10:15am– Sunday School
& Bible Study

Office Hours:

Monday – Thursday 8:30 am– 12 noon



Inside our Sanctuary.