



The Informer

October 2024

St. John's Lutheran Church

Volume 68 Issue 10



From Pastor's Pen:

"Even if you should suffer for righteousness' sake, you will be blessed. Have no fear of them, nor be troubled, but in your hearts honor Christ the Lord as holy, always being prepared to make a defense to anyone who asks you for a reason or the hope that is in you; yet do it with gentleness and respect." (1 Pet. 3:14-15)

Dear friends in Christ,

I wish to share with you an inspiring story from Jesus Freaks that well illustrates the promise and admonition offered by St. Peter in the above passage.

In the 1960s Mizhong Miao was arrested for spreading what the police called "the poison of imperialism" for preaching the Gospel in underground churches in China. They beat him, he prayed, and while being beaten a supernatural joy filled him. He felt the Holy Spirit surround him so that nothing the Communists did could make him deny Jesus. He was sentenced to five years, but was later given another ten for preaching in the slave camp.

Miao's wife abandoned all hope of seeing him again and divorced him. When he heard the news he was sad, but remembered the words of Psalm 73: "Whom have I in heaven but You? And there is none upon earth that I desire besides You."

One terrible winter an epidemic claimed the lives of 1,050 of the 1,300 prisoners in the camp. Miao was pronounced dead and taken to the morgue, but in his spirit he prayed and was instantly and miraculously healed. He knelt, thanked God, and walked out of the morgue. When the prison doctor saw him walking around he cried out in fear, but Miao called out to him, saying, "Don't be afraid. I am Mizhong Miao. God restored me to health. He sent me to show you the way to God." The doctor fell to his knees and exclaimed, "Your God is a reality!"

After serving fifteen years in the slave labor camp Miao was released. He told the authorities, "Suffering did not diminish my faith but only intensified my relationship with Jesus." Miao continued to work secretly in the underground church for another eighteen years, sharing the saving Gospel of the life, death and resurrection of God's Son, Jesus Christ.

In these changing times, in which the Church and the Gospel are under constant attack, faithfulness to God's Word and witnessing to the truth, can and does produce suffering. In some "democratic" countries clergy are being fined, arrested, and even imprisoned for their proclamation of biblical truths. It has become common for those who identify sin for what it is to be accused of a form of "hate-speech" that should not be tolerated. Perhaps the day will come when Miao's story becomes the shared experience of all believers as the Day of the Lord draws near.

My encouragement to you, even now, is to prepare yourself to give an answer for your hope with gentleness and respect. Do not back down and do not be afraid to face subtle or overt persecution. Trust Peter's promise that if you suffer for righteousness' sake, you will be blessed. If you remain anchored in God's Word, the Holy Spirit will not allow suffering to diminish your faith, but He will use it to intensify your relationship with Jesus. In light of the losses and sufferings we may experience on account of our faith, let us lift up our eyes and pray: "Whom have I in heaven but You? And there is none upon earth that I desire besides You."

In the strength the Lord provides,

Pastor Ymbarger

*See The Informer
IN COLOR
On Our Website*

From Deaconess' Desk

Blessings to you all in Christ!

As we enter the fall months and the leaves all around us have already begun to change and fall from the trees, it becomes ever more clear that there is a season and cycle to everything. This, I know, is no earth-shattering revelation. We have all become accustomed to the regular seasons and cycles of our lives. Further, many of us look forward to the changes in season and the excitement that comes along with the approach of the end of the year.

Sometimes though, certain times of the year, certain seasons, or certain events, no matter how regular, bring about unwanted anxiety, sadness, or stress. It could be that there is an unknown on the horizon. Even though the season is familiar, we don't know exactly what this one will bring. Sometimes, the memories of seasons past leave us wishing we could just go back and experience it the same way it was then. Sometimes, the present season seems like too much to handle given the circumstances and we aren't sure how we will make it through to whatever is supposed to come next.

Thankfully, we are not left alone to deal with these unwanted or unpleasant feelings. When we are sad thinking about the past, we can look to the joy of Christ to sustain us on our way. When we are anxious about our future, we can remember His words that say to us, "Do not be anxious... Look at the birds of the air: they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they?" (Matthew 6:25-26). And when we are weighed down by the struggles of life, we can cling to the hope of the resurrection and the knowledge that our Lord is actively working in our lives to lead us to everlasting life.

So, whether you are feeling the pressure of the changing seasons or are living in excited anticipation, just know that none of us are ever alone. We are put here as a Christian community to love and be loved by others. We are here to help each other through the change in seasons where needed, and to praise God for His many gifts to us in every time of our lives.

"Entrust your days and burdens To God's most loving hand; He cares for you while ruling The sky, the sea, the land. For He who guides the tempests Along their thund'rrous ways Will find for you a pathway And guide you all your days" - LSB 754:1



Serving the Lord this Month

Ushers

Sat, Oct 5: Greg Burke, Todd Miller, Rick Newlon, & Larry Ripka
Sun, Oct 6: Esther Cashion, Tim Stone, Clinton and Jackson Merritt, and Mark Grotelueschen
Sat, Oct. 12: Greg Burke, Todd Miller, Rick Newlon, & Larry Ripka
Sun, Oct. 13: Esther Cashion, Tim Stone, Clinton and Jackson Merritt, and Mark Grotelueschen
Sat, Oct. 19: Greg Burke, Todd Miller, Rick Newlon, & Larry Ripka
Sun, Oct. 20: Esther Cashion, Tim Stone, Clinton and Jackson Merritt, and Mark Grotelueschen
Sat, Oct. 26: Greg Burke, Todd Miller, Rick Newlon, & Larry Ripka
Sun, Oct. 27: Esther Cashion, Tim Stone, Clinton and Jackson Merritt, and Mark Grotelueschen

Communion Assistants

Oct. 6: Dennis Boarts & Glen McMillin
Oct. 20: Jonathan Schmidt & Jim Homann

Eternal Candle

Oct. 6: Evan & Dawn Antolik, in honor of their anniversary
Oct. 13: Craig & Annie Churchill, in honor of their anniversary
Oct. 20: Rick & Janet Newlon, in honor of their 36th anniversary
Oct. 27: Karen Schmidt



Acolytes

Sun, Oct. 6: Joel Duffy
Sun, Oct. 13: John Kjera
Sun, Oct. 20: Nathan Duffy
Sun, Oct. 27: Briella Churchill



Greeters

Sat, Oct 5: Sharon DeWulf & Joyce Hoffman
Sun, Oct. 6: Marsha Boarts
Sat, Oct 12: Sharon DeWulf & Joyce Hoffman
Sun, Oct. 13: Marsha Boarts & Kathy McDowell
Sat, Oct. 19: Sharon DeWulf & Joyce Hoffman
Sun, Oct. 20: Marsha Boarts
Sat, Oct 26: Sharon DeWulf & Joyce Hoffman
Sun, Oct. 27: Marsha Boarts

Altar Guild

Marsha Boarts and Diana Lackey

Flowers

Oct. 6: Kent & Carla Umbarger, in honor of their 4th anniversary
Oct. 13: Nancy Williams
Oct. 20: OPEN
Oct. 27: Karen Schmidt



Church News

Birthdays

October 1 - Ron Rogers
October 2 - Rolen Stone
October 3 - Sherry Orey
October 4 - Tom Nielsen & Joyce VanSeveren
October 6 - Mary Heino & Wanda Resch
October 7 - Shannon Brand, Flo Moore,
 Alexander Shryack, & David Sountris
October 8 - Jeri Miller
October 9 - Peyton Mattly
October 10 - Cris Braddy, Trevor Keogh,
October 12 - Diana Lackey & Ron Wilson
October 13 - Esther Cashion, Rick Fauser,
 Jill Johanson, & Sebastian Parker
October 14 - Kathy McDowell
October 15 - Frank Hodshire
October 17 - Barbara Buck

October 19 - Amber Medinger
October 20 - Andy Burke, Merle Loete,
 & Kaylie Pena
October 22 - Sharon DeWulf
October 24 - Jeff Fauser, Kelly Lack,
 & Dawsyn McDonald
October 25 - Gracie Erickson, Jenna Murphy,
 & Margery Park
October 26 - Jean Morrical
October 27 - Payton Braddy
October 28 - Wendy Trujillo
October 29 - Mark Copeland
October 31 - Eloise Kjera & Jonah Wilson

WEEKLY ATTENDANCE

DATE	THIS YEAR	LAST YEAR
8/25	140	134
9/1	140	143
9/8	120	127
9/15	137	157
9/22	109	126

Average Monthly Attendance for St. John's: 26%

MEMBERSHIP REPORT

Marriage

Todd Miller and Jeri Clark (09/07)
 New Address: 1302 W. 2nd St.
 Coal Valley, IL

New Members

Eric Schofield & Jayden Fairweather



Church News

ALTAR GUILD

There is an Altar Guild meeting scheduled for Tuesday, October 15th at 6:30pm! It is very important that you attend, as we will be scheduling advent and Christmas and need lots of help!



LWML - Lutheran Women's Missionary League

an auxiliary of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod.

LWML Vision Statement

The LWML is the leading group for LCMS women where each woman is welcomed and encouraged to use her unique God-given gifts as she supports global missions and serves the Lord with gladness.

DATES to MARK

Sunday, October 13th - LWML Sunday. Stop by our table in the concourse to learn more about LWML.

Thursday, October 17th - LWML Meeting at 1:00 pm in the Janssen rooms. We will be making simple cards to send to the shut ins. Please join us in fellowship and service.

**This month we are spotlighting two of the organizations
that have received national LWML grants:**

2023-2025 Mission Grant No. 3

SERVING GOD'S CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

Journeys Lutheran School | \$100,000

Journeys Lutheran School in Milwaukee is *Serving God's Children with Special Needs* by providing educational opportunities in a specialized setting to meet the children's needs. The vans purchased with grant funds will be used to transport the children to and from events, internships, and other activities. To learn more, visit lwml.org/2023-2025-mission-grant-3.

2023-2025 Mission Grant No. 4

FORTIFYING FAITH IN THOSE WITH VISION IMPAIRMENT

Lutheran Braille Workers | \$100,000

Church News

CHILI COOKOFF FUNDRAISER FOR THE FOOD PANTRY

**Sunday, October 13th, 4-6pm
\$10 adults**

Children 12 and under free with a canned food donation



Come try various versions of this fall favorite of fresh, homemade chili, and cast your vote for favorite tasting plus vote for the table with the 'best presentation'!

There will also be a bake sale.

Bring your friends! Bring your family! Bring your neighbors and co-workers!

We are in need of chili cooks and baked sale bakers!

There is a sign-up sheet at the Sign- Up Station
(the table under the bulletin board in the hallway).

Please be part of this fun event and support our mission to provide food to families in our community who are in need!

**TRUNK OR TREAT**

Join us on **Sunday, October 27th from 1-3pm** for an afternoon of safe and fun treating. We will be outside in the parking lot and yes, there will be hayrack rides!!!

There will be a sign-up sheet at the Sign-Up Station...please let us know if you will be decorating a trunk.



Church News

BLOOD DRIVE

Every two seconds someone in the U.S. needs blood. It is essential for surgeries, cancer treatment, chronic illnesses, and traumatic injuries. Whether a patient receives whole blood, red cells, platelets or plasma, this lifesaving care starts with one person making a generous donation.

- Approximately 29,000 units of red blood cells are needed every day in the U.S.
- Nearly 5,000 units of platelets and 6,500 units of plasma are needed daily in the U.S.
- Nearly 16 million blood components are transfused each year in the U.S.
- The average red blood cell transfusion is approximately 3 units.
- A single car accident victim can require as many as 100 units of blood.
- Blood and platelets cannot be manufactured; they can only come from volunteer donors. The blood type most often requested by hospitals is type O.
- One donation can help save more than one life.

Sickle cell disease affects 90,000 to 100,000 people in the U.S. About 1,000 babies are born with the disease each year. Sickle cell patients can require blood transfusions throughout their lives.

BLOOD DRIVE

BLOODCENTER.ORG

St. John's Lutheran Church
Saturday, October 12th
8:00am – 11:30am
Church Gym

To book your appointment, contact Tamee Stone at tameestone@gmail.com or scan the QR code.

Appointments preferred. Walk ins welcome.






DOUBLE THE GIVING
GOOD GIVING
DOUBLE THE GOOD

FRANKLY BLOOD SAVES LIVES
ImpactLife

Give & get choice of a gift card, a donation to area food banks or bonus points to the rewards store!

**ImpactLife**
50 Years of Saving Lives



Vendor Event



**Place: St. John's Lutheran Church
1450 30th Ave, East Moline,
Illinois**

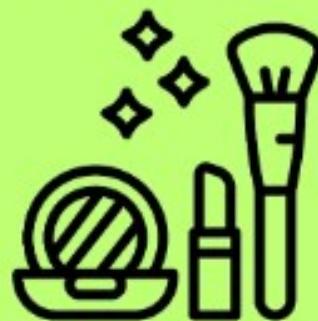


When: Saturday October 26, 2024

Time: 11:00a-3:00p

Crafts, Scentsy, Mary Kay,

**Tupperware, Tumblers and so
much more!**



Contact Jill Schofield for information, 309-721-1646

Notes from the Balcony

October says “Halloween” to most people. To me, it says “Reformation Day!” This is one of my favorite Sundays of the year. I especially love singing *A Mighty Fortress* with all my might and whatever other great hymns of faith and the Bible are chosen for that day. One hymn often chosen to substitute for the *Santus* on Reformation Day is *Isaiah, Mighty Seer in Days of Old* (LSB 960). It is one of my mom’s favorites, and mine too, particularly on Reformation Day. Martin Luther himself wrote this hymn based on Isaiah 6:1-4 as the *Santus* for his German Mass in 1526.

In the Divine, or communion, Service, the *Santus* follows the Proper Preface in which the pastor acknowledges that we should be thankful in all times and places and then adds a special thanksgiving which corresponds with the church holiday or season of the Sunday. This prayer concludes with a reminder that, even if we cannot visibly see it, we do not sing God’s praises alone, or even just with our church family, but join in with “angels and archangels and all the company of heaven.” Isaiah actually saw this wonderful vision recorded in Isaiah 6:1-4:

“In the year that King Uzziah died I saw the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up; and the train of his robe filled the temple. Above him stood the seraphim. Each had six wings: with two he covered his face, and with two he covered his feet, and with two he flew. And on called to the another and said:

‘Holy, holy, holy is the Lords of hosts;
the whole earth is full of his glory!’

And the foundations of the thresholds shook at the voice of him who called, and the house was filled with smoke.”

“*Santus*” is the Latin word for “holy.” The *Santus* we generally sing in the Divine Services refers to this Divine vision and then transports us to the entry of Jesus into Jerusalem on Palm Sunday where we sing “*Hosanna*” recognizing that Jesus comes also to us in His body and blood at the sacrament. Luther’s *Santus* keeps us with Isaiah in God’s presence providing a more detailed description of the throne room of God. The poetry Luther wrote is some of the most beautiful in the hymnal (my opinion, of course).

“Isaiah, mighty seer in days of old,
The Lord of all in spirit did behold
High on a lofty throne, in splendor bright,
With robes that filled the temple courts with light.
Above the throne were flaming seraphim;
Six wings had they, these messengers of Him.
With two they veiled their faces as was right,
With two they humbly hid their feet from sight,
And with the other two aloft they soared;
One to the other called and praised the Lord:
‘Holy is God, the Lord of Sabaoth!
Holy is God, the Lord of Sabaoth!
Holy is God, the Lord of Sabaoth!
His glory fills the heavens and the earth!’
The beams and lintels trembled at the cry,
And clouds of smoke enwrapped the throne on high.”

I will admit that the hymn tune can be a bit challenging but give it a try and one of these years you will have it. Or you can always listen to it on YouTube in preparation for the last Sunday in October so you can belt it out with the congregation, brass, choir, and all the company of heaven.

A blessed Reformation month to all, standing alone on Scripture, faith, grace, Christ, and God’s glory.

In Christ,
Christine Engebrecht

From the CID

LCMS Stewardship Ministry – lcms.org/stewardship Newsletter Article – October 2024

“The Singing Church”

Lutherans have historically been called “the singing church.” There is no doubt that music has been a major component in the theology and practice of the Lutheran church. Luther once remarked about music, “We can mention only one point, namely, that next to the Word of God, music deserves the highest praise.”¹ Music has a power and purpose that cannot be understated in our worship and the life of the congregation.

But music does more than touch the emotions. Music is a vehicle that carries both the musician and the hearer deeper into connection with the truth of the Scriptures. This is true of the most complex Bach chorale and even the simplest of songs like “Jesus Loves Me, This I Know.” Each musical selection within the church shapes the thoughts, minds and faith of the people who experience them.

This is also true of stewardship hymns. We are currently considering the verses of “Forgive Us, Lord, for Shallow Thankfulness” (LSB 788) as it shapes our understanding and practice of stewardship. This month we take a deeper dive into verse two:

Teach us to thank you, Lord, for love and grace, For life and vision, for a purpose clear, For Christ Your Son, and for each human face that shows Your message ever new and near.

The stanza begins by touching on the truth of the Law. Thankfulness is not a natural posture for fallen humanity. For sinners curved in upon themselves, thankfulness for love and grace is something that must be taught. We are those who hoard and clutch. Our confession of our shallow thankfulness highlights the need for us to learn thankfulness to God.

Thankfulness also points to what we are stewards of: love and grace! All the things we have traditionally called stewardship aren’t actual stewardship. Rather, what matters is how we steward the one, true and only treasure: the love and grace of God revealed to us in the Gospel of

Jesus Christ. So, all stewardship is stewardship of the Gospel! How can we gaze at the cross and empty tomb and not be thankful?

The LCMS defines stewardship as “the free and joyous activity of God’s family – the church – in managing life’s resources for His purposes.” God’s love and mercy give us a clear purpose as we live out our Baptism and practice this joyous stewardship. All we are, all we have entrusted to us, and all we are called to do is to connect others with the love and mercy of God revealed in Jesus!

The faithful steward sings with lips and life of this love and mercy that is ever new and near. In the Scriptures. In the Lord’s House. At the Lord’s Table. This is where our stewardship song starts and ends. Our family, our co-workers and classmates, and our world need to hear this song!

¹ Martin Luther, “Preface to Georg Rhau’s *Symphoniae iucundae*,” in Luther’s Works, ed. Jaroslav Pelikan, Helmut T. Lehmann, and Christopher Boyd Brown, vol. 53 (Philadelphia and St. Louis: Fortress and Concordia Publishing House, 1955–), 321–322.

From the CID

May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that by the power of the Holy Spirit you may abound in hope. Romans 15:13 (ESV)

It is very easy for us to worry about things. We worry about our health and the health of our family. We worry about paying the bills. We worry if we have saved enough for retirement. We worry about the direction our country is headed. We worry about the future. We do indeed spend a lot of our time and energy worrying about things. Worrying can cause us to get discouraged and it certainly can take the joy out of living.

Paul reminds us to look to the Lord and trust in Him. Christ has already conquered sin, death and the devil and He has given us life and salvation through His death and resurrection. If the Lord has accomplished this for us, He will certainly give us all that we need in this life. He is our Good Shepherd who guides us and looks after us. He comforts us in His Word. It is the Lord who turns our worry into peace, hope and joy. In times of worry let us turn to the Lord and trust in Him. Remember the Lord has promised that He will never leave us or forsake us.

In Christ,

Pastor Kevin Wendorf (St. John's -- Chatham, IL)

Items of Interest to Share

Youth Worker Event at Camp CILCA has been Postponed.

We thank those who registered and planned on attending the Youth Workers Event at Camp CILCA in September. After prayer and discussion, we postponed the retreat until a more opportune time—hopefully this Spring.

Those of you who registered and paid your fees will receive a refund of those dollars from the Northern Illinois District. Please watch for future communications about a rescheduled date.

Camp CILCA's G.R.I.T. Run -- Saturday, October 5, 2024

The 5-kilometer course includes narrow trails, steep hills, creek bed crossings, scenic views, and stairs. Open Run participants will be able to take an alternative route for anyone nervous about navigating the creek bed. Open run participants ages 6-18 run for \$10, and participants 19+ run for \$30.

HELP WANTED Camp CILCA is looking for one or more **housekeepers** to help prepare facilities for the summer camp program, outdoor education, and retreats. If you know someone interested in this contact Camp CILCA at 217-487-7497 or director@cilca.org.

Camp CILCA exists to strengthen and foster faith in Jesus Christ and relationships with others in a unique outdoor setting.



From the CID

MUSIC FOR MISSIONS EVENT to Support Christo Rey

This event is a sacred music concert and hymn sing in support of Christo Rey (Christ the King) Lutheran Church, East Moline.

The event is scheduled for Sunday, October 13, 2024, at 2:00 p.m. at St. John's Lutheran Church, 711 Court St., Pekin. Music for Missions will feature guest organist Samuel Bishop, vocalists Allison Harley and Jennifer Rosa, the Bells of St. John's, St. John's Sanctuary Choir, and ample congregational singing.

A free-will offering will be collected to support Christo Rey Lutheran Church, a mission congregation of the Central Illinois District, LC-MS. Refreshments will be served following the program. Everyone is welcome! For more information, contact the St. John's, Pekin church office at 309-347-2136.

Current DFM Project

Amount to be funded: \$25,000 (is currently half-funded)

Project: Replace furnaces at Immanuel Lutheran Student Center, Macomb

It is a great blessing that all four of CID's campus ministries are headquartered in facilities near their campuses. Three of the four are owned by the District. One is the Immanuel Lutheran Student Center in Macomb, one block from Western Illinois University.

Church services are held at 11:00 a.m. every Sunday in the student center's Chapel of St. Timothy the Learner. Students and members of Immanuel Lutheran Church, CID's partner in campus ministry in Macomb, attend. On Wednesday evenings, students are invited to meals prepared by church member families in the student center kitchen prior to a weekly Bible study session also in the student center. The pastor's office and church office for Immanuel Macomb are located in the center and highly accessible to students.

The student center celebrated its 50th anniversary some five years ago. Now, the furnaces need to be replaced. The current Dollar for Missions project will provide \$25,000 for furnace replacement to keep the student center operational for years.

Pray For Our Central Illinois District Missions supported by your church's Mission Dollars to the District. Our Lord Jesus said, "Pray the Lord of the harvest to send laborers into the harvest." This month, please remember in your prayers all the students, particularly those from CID, who are studying at our Synod's colleges and seminaries to be pastors, teachers, and other kinds of church workers – many with the help of scholarship money from CID.

St. John's
Lutheran
Church



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

Walking in the Light of Christ!

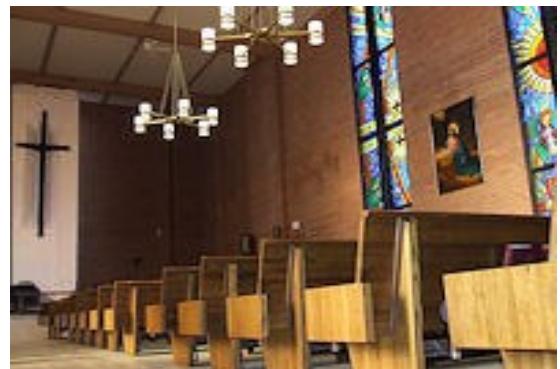


Worship Schedule:

Saturday Worship- 5:00pm
Sunday Worship- 9:00am
Sunday School
& Bible Study-10:15am

Office Hours:

Monday – Wednesday 8:30am– 2:00pm
Closed for lunch from 12-1pm
Thursdays– 8:30am– noon



Inside our Sanctuary.