



The **St. Johns Servant**

**St. Johns
Lutheran Church**

Park Rapids, Minnesota

July, 2018

Newtons Installed

Pastor Joel and Sarah Newton were installed as Associate Pastor and Deaconess here at St. Johns on June 24. It was a wonderful service and everyone enjoyed the delicious meal following the service. A huge thank you to everyone who helped and attended.

They're both already hard at work. We are so blessed to have them as part of our St. Johns family.

Pictured at right: Pastor Tim Ludwig (Sarah's uncle), Pastor Joel Newton, Deaconess Sarah Newton, MN North President Don Fondow and Pastor Jim Neubauer.



July Noon Lunch Concerts

The Noon Concert series has been a huge success so far. Two of the concerts for this month will be here at St. Johns. Concerts run from 12:15—12:45 p.m. Coffee and dessert is provided. Bring your lunch and enjoy some great music!

July 12—Nicolai, Katya and Emily Kivi—string trio

July 19—Sarah Carlson on organ, Jon Romer playing Native American Flutes and Claire Carlson on flute

July 26—Brian Perez and Friends, jazz saxophone at Calvary Lutheran Church



Tubing on the Crow Wing

All youth, grades 5-12, are invited to go tubing down the Crow Wing River on July 24. We're still working out all the details. Watch for a postcard in the mail once we've figured it out.

Save the date!





Ponderings from the Pew

"Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted," Matthew 5:4.



I have been thinking a lot about Caleb lately. When don't I really? But he seems especially close to my heart as summer launches a season of weddings for his classmates, the anticipation of Chelsie's little one, and with the heartbreaking loss of Pastor Robatzen. Celebrations among sorrow; joy in the midst of weeping. All of life seems interwoven this way. Great loss amplifies the realization of the dichotomy between the two emotions as well as the minute separation of them. We are all one tragic accident or misstep away from crashing from the heights of joy to the depths of sorrow at any given moment. The difference between them is vast; the distance between them is nearly non-existent.

The more time that passes since losing someone close, the easier it is to believe that the one you loved so much has been forgotten; wiped from the pages of life as though they never lived. Nobody seems to want to talk about them anymore. Time and life march on without a mention of them. One of Caleb's friends sent me a picture from his vacation that melted my heart. He was off on an island living life the way it should be lived – with abandon, wonderful experiences and beauty. The picture was from a stretch of beach where he had written Caleb's name in the sand as we do wherever we go. Nearly seven years later, he had paused his dream vacation to remember my son. The goodness of life this side of heaven that Caleb will not experience for himself is shared with him from the hearts of those who care about him still.



Caleb, Dom. Rep., 2012

In the very first days of grief, the pain is excruciating. Each morning dawns with the cruel realization that it's not a nightmare that ends when you wake up. As it says in Jeremiah 31:15, "...A voice is heard in Ramah, mourning and great weeping, Rachel weeping for her children and refusing to be comforted, because they are no more." It goes on and on seemingly without end until, slowly, laughter returns and awe at God's sunrises, sunsets and sun beams breaking through the clouds to kiss the earth. Initially, "Blessed are those who mourn..." feels like a slap in the face. Really, God? Really?? But God sends people to hold you tight; someone with grief experience who knows to just come quietly alongside, while silently sharing the burden of sorrow.

Each day leads into the next until you gain some footing again. You learn that grief isn't about the death of your loved one so much as the absence of them in the rest of your life. You learn to bring them with you in your heart, and you begin to think you're fine. Finally. It's ok. But grief doesn't end. A hint of sorrow tinges every joy. An awareness of a gaping hole in everything you do is ever present – what I call the presence of his absence. Some song, or flash of a memory; someone who moves like him, or even a stupid lawn mower driven by someone other than him brings the sorrow back to the surface. And there will be joy and sorrow at the same time, in the same space as life travels on unaware of the impact loss makes.

Blessed are those who mourn for they will be comforted. Indeed. We are comforted time and time and time again because the mourning doesn't really end. It becomes a part of life; a part of who we are. There is joy again. There are celebrations, new adventures, babies, life events everyone enjoys. There is beauty and every reason to love life while the heart ever waits on God's time to be reunited as He promises in the life of the world to come.

Blessed are those who mourn for they will be comforted. Amen and amen.

To God be the glory.

Renee' Anderson



Different Day for Blended Worship



The first Sunday of the month is usually a blended service but this month, blended will be on the second Sunday, July 8 at the 8:00 a.m. service. You may be thinking, "but sometimes it's at both 8:00 and 10:30 a.m." and that's correct. We do the blended service up to the sermon at the late service on even numbered months so next month—August (eighth month) it will be blended at both.

We're also looking for new people to join our worship team. If you're interested, please contact Sarah Kaufenberg at 651-260-3350 or kaufengsarah35@gmail.com.

Bring It Home—Coming this Fall

How well do you know the stories of the Bible? How about your children or grandchildren? Want to know the Bible better? Then sign up for "Bring It Home—Reading the Great Stories of the Bible," a program sponsored by Minnesota North to encourage us to get to know the Bible better through a regular reading schedule. You can watch a video with more information at the "Bring it Home" link on their website, mnnlms.org. You'll also have the opportunity to purchase two great Bible books from CPH at a fraction of their regular price. Watch for updates in the bulletin and newsletters.



What's On The Lutheran Hour

- 7/01 "Truly the Worship of God"
- 7/08 "Sufficiency"
- 7/15 "My Feelings, Meet God's Word!"
- 7/22 "You Feed Them"
- 7/29 "It's Not a Cruise Ship"

Listen to the Lutheran Hour every Sunday on KPRM 870 AM at 9:30 a.m. or KTIG 102.7 FM at 5:00 p.m. on Sundays.

The Lutheran Laymen's League sponsors the program on KPRM each Sunday. If you would like to help sponsor the program your gift may be placed in the offering and earmarked "Local Lutheran Hour."

In the meantime, check out one of the great books in our church library.

† Baptisms

6/03/18 Olivia Quinn Maier
Kelly and Carrie (Johnson) Maier

6/10/18 Adalynn Leigh Berthiaume
Anthony Berthiaume and Taylor Folken

† Weddings

6/16/18 Amy Luther and Devan Bergerson
6/23/18 Rhonda Paulson and Anthony Eskola

† Funeral

6/15/18 Virgil Linkert



Stewardship Corner—Presenting our Bodies as Living Sacrifices

Some of you will remember that during the Second World War there was a very famous poster picturing our good ole Uncle Sam. He was pictured wearing a red, white, and blue top hat. It was a poster used by our government and by the military to recruit men and women to serve their country. The man in the poster had a serious and stern look pointing his finger and saying, “I Want You!” I want you to enter the service of your country. Even though this enlistment could mean death, hundreds of thousands of men and women volunteered for service.



We are told by the Apostle Paul in Romans 12:1 that God “wants you!” “*I appeal to you brothers, by the mercies of God to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship.*” It may not sound as serious as laying down your life for your country, but it is! God is saying that He wants you to live and die for Him. He wants you to give your life for Him. God wants you completely. Everything that you are and have should belong to Him. God wants all of you.



In our daily routines, we tend not to take this notion of giving everything to God too seriously. However, God’s Word clearly wants us to think more about how we can use our lives and our bodies in service to Him. The question to consider is, “Do we use our bodies in ways that honor God?” Let’s consider our hands. Do we use them only to serve ourselves or do we use them in service to God? Do we use our eyes, ears, brains, mouths, etc. in service to God? God says every part of us is to be used as an act of worship. Everything we do can be an act of worship.

Do we think of the things that we do in our daily routines as being acts of service? We should consider that activities such as cooking meals, cutting the grass, changing diapers, going to school or going to work can be acts of worship. We can also consider refusing to enter into gossip as an act of worship. When we reach out to help a neighbor, we should see that as an act of worship. God is seeking our total commitment.

In Romans 12:1, we are told, “*by the mercies of God, to present our bodies as a living sacrifice.*” It is God’s mercy and love that motivate us to offer our lives in commitment to him. Because God loves, God enables us to give all that we are and have.

Simplify Your Summer -Try Automatic Offerings

Looking for ways to simplify your life? Try automatic offerings. This option is great for those who are gone a lot, work weekends or just need to beat the rush of heading out the door on Sunday morning. You can choose a frequency that works for you. Stop in or call the church office for details.





Stewardship Review—May

Avg. Sunday Worship Attendance: **277**

Total Offerings: \$32,053	Total Offerings, May, 2017: \$41,765	Total Offerings to date: \$182,839
Total Expenses: \$31,633	Total Expenses, May, 2017: \$30,681	Total Expenses to date: \$158,540
Difference \$420	Difference \$11,084	Difference \$24,299

Avg. Weekly Offerings \$8,013	Budget/Week \$9,201
Avg. Weekly Expenses \$7,908	Budget/Month \$39,870
Difference \$105	

CNB Checkbook Balance as of 05/31/18: \$114,554	
Less Dedicated Accounts \$813	
Difference \$113,741	Our Healthy Balance Goal \$74,000
Less Healthy Balance \$34,895	Raised so far \$34,895
Difference \$78,846	Still need \$39,105

Voters Meeting Minutes June 8, 2018

Meeting called to order by Dr. Rod Helm, Executive Director. Opening Devotion – Pastor Neubauer. Roll Call --- approximately 50 voters in attendance.

Receiving of new voting members: Motion by Larry Hetrick, second Jerry Grudem to accept into voting membership Lori and Randy Griess. Carried.

Approval of minutes from November 19, 2017, February 11, 2018 and March 25, 2018 voters meetings as printed in newsletter. Motion by Marty Steffel, second Larry Hetrick. Motion carried.

Treasurer's Report:

Motion by Ken Schroeder, second ? to approve treasurer's report. Motion carried.

Year	Income	Expense	Difference
2018	191,610	159,772	31,838
2017	207,997	165,370	42,627
Difference	-16,387	-5,598	--

Income and expenses are down compared to last year at this time. We are \$39,105 short of our goal of \$74,000 for Healthy Balance.

(Continued on page 6)



(Continued from page 5)

CNB Checking Account as of 6/05/18	121,561
Less Dedicated Fund	-208
Available Funds	121,353
Less Healthy Balance	<u>-34,895</u>
Total	86,458

CNB Dedicated Funds Savings as of 6/05/18	26,837
---	--------

LCEF Current Fund as of 6/05/18	122,953
Less Parsonage Proceeds	-18,548
Less Endowment Fund Interest	- 686
Less T. Haberer Memorial/Interest	- 21,151
Less T. Haberer Trust CD	- 78,029
Less R. Haberer Memorial	<u>- 1,770</u>
Available Funds	2,769

Board Reports

Elders Report – Jerry Grudem

The elders continue to assist the Pastor with communion and as requested.

Board of Evangelism – Connie Fondow

The Board of Evangelism has engaged in the following projects since our last report on November, 2017:

Our board coordinated the Toys for Boys and Girls and Tiny Tots campaign at St. Johns. We had an overwhelming response with congregational members donating a large number of toys to Park Rapids area children at Christmas time

Many of our members also responded to the request for gift cards from various nationally known businesses which were to be sent to Trinity Lutheran Church in Port Arthur, Texas. We continued our focus of assisting the Port Arthur area residents by sponsoring and promoting a Trivia event in March. Once again, our members participated with enthusiasm and generosity. The board wishes to thank all of you.

Debbie Luther, one of our board members, has taken pictures of this year's confirmands with his/her mentor and has posted them for you to check out. We are hoping to enlighten our members a bit more on the confirmand mentorship program in an attempt to spark some additional interest for the coming year. Please consider becoming a part of this important program for our youth. The time commitment is minimal, and getting to know one of our outstanding young people is very rewarding. The board sponsored a pizza party in April for the confirmands and mentors. The event was well attended.

During these last six months the board has continued to send cards to members who, for a wide variety of reasons, may have become inactive.

The Board of Evangelism's intentions for future focus will be:

(Continued on page 7)



We will continue to provide the Hubbard County jail with Recovery Bibles for the inmates' personal use.

We will attain information from the pastors as to how we may possibly assist them with outreach to our members. We are interested in becoming better equipped with the tools needed for intentional member outreach.

The board will continue to match congregational mentors with new confirmands in the fall.

We will be researching ways to effectively use the funds that were originally generated for Dawn's Room at the Intervention Center. This organization has undergone a complete change in staffing and service delivery to clients. Our intention is to keep the congregation informed as to what our options might be for assisting these women and their families.

With your support the Board of Evangelism plans to continue to organize events that will involve internal and external Christian outreach. Your positive responses and willingness to participate is always greatly appreciated.

Board of Christian Education – Ruth Knaack

Release Time

Fourth graders prepared and presented a Christmas program for grades 1-4 on December 20.

Students made Valentines which were mailed to their parents or passed out in Bible Class.

Area businesses presented books to students in grades one and three.

Showed a video about VBS to students and sent home registrations forms and information.

Laurie Kimball has agreed to serve as director again next year.

Sunday School

Christmas program was on December 20, preceded by a meal served by the Sunday School teachers.

Mixed reviews about the change.

Began a new class for 6th grade in January. Jerry Werder was the teacher; learned about the New Testament.

All students sang in church on Palm Sunday.

Last day of class was May 20. Celebrated with a group lesson and pancake brunch.

Working on whether we should change the format of Sunday School to better serve the needs of the kids, parents, and teachers.

Brandi Backmann has agreed to serve as Sunday School superintendent for next year.

VBS

Dates are June 4-8. Sarah Kaufenberg is serving as director this year. The theme is Splash Canyon.

Offerings this year go to buy Arch books and Bibles for kids in Madagascar.

Preschool

Enrollment for this year was 41 students. Tuition prices raised \$5 per month. 37 enrolled so far for next year. Closing program for 3-4 year olds was May 15. Preschool graduation was May 16. Last day of class was May 25. Enrollment is open for next year. Please call if you have questions or need information.

(Continued on page 8)



(Continued from page 7)

Actions: Ordered ESV Bibles for use by Sunday school, Release Time, and adult Bible classes. Working with Sunday School teachers to better serve the needs of the families in our congregation.

Board of Young People Report – Brandi Backmann

December: Prepared and served evening meal for Advent

January: Had a full bus and went snow tubing at Detroit Mountain

February: Prepared and served evening meal for Lent and had a full bus again for the afternoon at Three Bears Waterpark

March: Prepared and served evening meal for Lent

April: Prepared and served Easter breakfast and had an afternoon of sweets and board games

May: Board member and junior parents Dee and Trevor Persons set-up and served cake between services for Senior Recognition Sunday.

Board of Church Properties – Brad Dahn

New John Deere riding lawn mower was purchased. This should last us for many years. We have been working on the door issue (arms hitting on closure) and got an estimate to move the door in four inches. However, it added a new problem to the outside door with the auto opener. We may have to put an auto opener on the inside door also.

Pastor Newton's office has been painted and all three offices have new ceiling and LED lights installed. Makes them better lit and acoustics sound good.

The boiler room has also been painted and looks pretty spiffy for a boiler room. Stick your head in and check them out.

Church yard cleanup was May 12 and thanks to Scott Olson, Jerry Grudem, Virg Eskola, Ken Smith, DeWayne Mead, Brad Dahn and Ginny Ranisate, the yard is clean, trees trimmed, sod repaired, weeds sprayed, branches picked up, sand blown off the parking lot, playground checked over for safety and lawn fertilized. Thank you to all!

Had the light in the choir room fixed, new light on flag pole and a few other things repaired.

Jerry Eischens made the parts to finish off the balcony stair project.

Discussed new law requiring wireless frequency usage.

Mike Riewer, custodian, is doing a very good job and is very handy at fixing things.

Stewardship Report – no report

Parish Fellowship Report – Elayne Luiken

On Monday, November 27 our board coordinated decorating the church for Christmas.

Cookies and Carols was held on Sunday, December 17 during coffee time between services.

On Monday, January 8 the Christmas decorations were taken down.

The board assisted the Evangelism Board with Trivia Night March 11 by preparing and serving the meal.

Our board prepared and served the evening Lenten meal on Wednesday, March 14.

The board prepared and served the evening meal for the confirmands, their mentors and families on Wednesday, May 2.

The installation of Pastor Joel Newton and his wife, Sarah, will be Sunday, June 24. Our board will assist Laurie Kimball in setting up, serving and clean-up for the brunch to be served immediately following the 9:30 a.m. service.

(Continued on page 9)



(Continued from page 8)

Motion by Russ Brown to approve board reports, second Larry Hetrick. Carried.

Membership Changes

Motion by Larry Hetrick, second Paula Eischens to approve the following membership changes by transfer in: Joan Rucktaeschel, First English, Dorset, MN and Tim and Betsy Vrudny, Redeemer, Delta, CO. Carried.

Pastor Neubauer's Report

Teaching times: Sunday morning Parables of Jesus; Tuesday morning finished Titus and on break for summer; Wednesday morning Release Time -3rd (11 students) My Bible and 7th -8th (23 students) Genesis 1-11; Confirmation 7th and 8th Grade (22 students) Confirmed 8 this past Sunday.

ABC Preschool: Closing Programs and Devotions.

Misc: Various home visits, Youth, Circuit/District/Regional Events, District Convention, Properties. Check out our updated website – still in progress of updating.

Old/New Business

Pastors' Parsonage Allowances – Pastor Neubauer explained the request for the resolution. It is not a budget/salary increase. Rather it helps with income tax as the amount listed in the resolutions becomes non-taxable income for the pastors. Pastor Neubauer requested the increase from \$8500 to \$12,500 because of some extra housing expenses this year.

Motion by Jody Yliniemi, second Donna Neuman to approve the following resolution.

RESOLVED that St. Johns Evangelical Lutheran Church, as a standing resolution to remain in force and effect until such time as amended or revoked, hereby authorizes and establishes a parsonage allowance for Pastor Neubauer in the amount of \$12,500 per year. Motion carried.

Motion by Jody Yliniemi, second Jerry Grudem to approve the following resolution.

RESOLVED that St. Johns Evangelical Lutheran Church, as a standing resolution to remain in force and effect until such time as amended or revoked, hereby authorizes and establishes a parsonage allowance for Pastor Newton in the amount of \$8500 per year. Motion carried.

Pastor Joel and Sarah Newton Installation Service – June 24, 2018 – 9:30 a.m. (one service only) with brunch to follow service. Moving day is June 14. Call Larry Hetrick if you are willing to help.

Circuit Forum Lay and Pastoral Delegate -- David Vik accepted lay delegate nomination by Darlene Wallick. Pastor Neubauer will serve as pastoral delegate. The Circuit Forum date has not been set at the time of the voters meeting. Vote for circuit lay and pastoral delegates will take place at that meeting. Those elected will attend National Convention in Tampa Bay, Florida in July, 2019.

Kitchen remodeling --- A committee needs to be formed. Last remodel was about 25 years ago.

Adjourned. Closed with doxology.

Respectfully submitted,
Shirley Potter



Sunday School Page

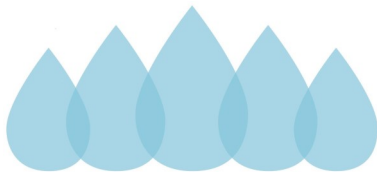
Happy Birthday!

7/03 Ali Roberts
 7/04 Kaelynn Hartig
 7/06 Annie Mayer
 7/08 Samantha Fiemeyer
 7/12 Emma Berghuis
 7/12 Natalie Berghuis
 7/14 Natalie Backmann
 7/15 Jillian Neubauer
 7/20 Alex Lof
 7/28 Naomi Knaack



Baptismal Birthdays

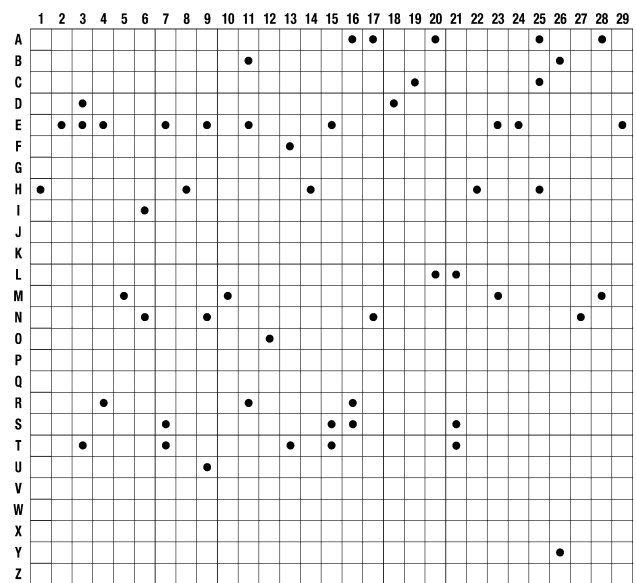
7/06 Cash Luther
 7/14 Ketch Luther
 7/27 Dylan May



Wonders of creation

Our Creator is in control of the entire universe!

Directions: Beginning with column 1, go down each column until you come to a dot. Write the letter that's found to the left of the dot on the blank below to complete Psalm 147:4, NIV. (Some columns have more than one letter.)



_____ PSALM 147:4, NIV

Answer: He determines the number of the stars and calls them each by name. Psalm 147:4, NIV

We are currently accepting volunteers for the 2018/2019 Sunday School year. We are searching for teachers and classroom helpers! Classroom helpers are a great way to serve if you would like to be involved in our Sunday School program, but are not quite comfortable teaching. Please contact Brandi Backmann at 218-252-1888 or stjohnsprsundayschool@gmail.com or Pastor Neubauer if interested.

Thank you for your continued support and prayers for our Sunday School.



Scenes from Splash Canyon Vacation Bible School



Decorating shirts at crafts



Bible Challenge



Fun and games outside



Snack time



Learning new songs during opening



Pastor Neubauer "wrapped up" in VBS

Thanks to all our wonderful volunteers for making Splash Canyon a great experience for the kids!



**St. Johns
Lutheran Church**

803 West First Street
Park Rapids, MN 56470

Phone: 218-732-9783

Fax: 218-237-9785

Website: www.stjohnspr.org

Pastor James Neubauer

Pastor Bill Neumann



The Lutheran Church -- Missouri Synod

Nonprofit Organization
U.S. Postage
Park Rapids, Minnesota
Permit No. 6

Address Service Requested

Inside this issue:

<i>Newtons Installed</i>	<i>1</i>
<i>July Noon Lunch Concerts</i>	<i>1</i>
<i>Youth Tubing on Crow Wing</i>	<i>1</i>
<i>Ponderings from the Pew</i>	<i>2</i>
<i>Different Day for Blended Service</i>	<i>2</i>
<i>Bring It Home—Coming This Fall</i>	<i>3</i>
<i>What's On The Lutheran Hour</i>	<i>3</i>
<i>Baptisms, Weddings, Funeral</i>	<i>3</i>
<i>Stewardship Corner—Living Sacrifices</i>	<i>4</i>
<i>Simplify Your Summer—Try Automatic Offerings</i>	<i>4</i>
<i>Stewardship Review—May</i>	<i>5</i>
<i>Voters Meeting Minutes</i>	<i>6</i>
<i>Sunday School Page</i>	<i>10</i>
<i>Scenes from Splash Canyon VBS</i>	<i>11</i>



"Ethel, take a leap of faith!"