



The **St. Johns Servant**

St. Johns
Lutheran Church

Park Rapids, Minnesota

December, 2021

Breakfast in Bethlehem Cancelled

Due to the current COVID surge and low registration numbers, we've decided to cancel the Breakfast in Bethlehem event scheduled for December 4. We're looking forward to doing it next Christmas!



Advent Services—*The Word Became Flesh*

John 1:1–18 introduces one of the Bible's greatest and grandest books, the Gospel according to St. John. These eighteen verses contain some of the most important words written—ever. They explode with light and brilliance, truth and grace. And these verses are full of dearly-loved Advent and Christmas themes, with the most famous one being, "The Word became flesh" (John 1:14). That's the focus of our Wednesday Advent services which will be at noon and 6:00 p.m. The noon service will be live streamed. A light meal will be served by the Ladies Aid following. We will have a meal at 5:00 p.m. before the 6:00 p.m. service. Here's the service focus and menu for each week.

12/1 *You Have My Word!*, John 1:1-5, Evening Guild—pulled pork sandwiches

12/8 *A Man Named John*, John 1:6-9, 15, Youth—taco bar

12/15 *The Word Dwelt Among Us*, John 1:14-18, LLL—ham and scalloped potatoes



Come Worship Christ, the Newborn King

Christmas Eve services will be held on Friday, December 24 at 1:00 p.m., 3:00 p.m. and 5:30 p.m. The 3:00 p.m. service will be live streamed. You do not have to sign up to attend any of the services but for those avoiding crowds, the 3:00 p.m. service is usually has the most people attending. We will have one service with communion on Christmas Day at 9:00 a.m.



Help Make Christmas Special for A Child



The Board of Evangelism would like to ask for your help with this program again, but it will be a little different this year. Ornaments on the tree in the church narthex describe specific children; gender, age, and gift requests, and have a family number. Please take as many ornaments (children) as you would like, but be sure to write your name, child gender and age, and the family number on the sign-up sheet so we know that gifts have been returned. Drop off unwrapped gifts, with the ornament attached, to the box by the tree at church by December 12 and check off your name on the sign-up sheet. Thank you!



Come Sing Christmas Songs with The Senior Choir

Do you love to sing Christmas songs? We would love for you to join our Christmas Choir this year. We will sing with our Sunday Schoolers at their Christmas Program on December 19 at the 10:30 a.m. service and at one of the Christmas Eve services. Rehearsals will be on Wednesdays after the 6:00 p.m. Advent service until Christmas Eve. It's going to be a lot of fun!!!



Cookies and Carols



What is Cookies and Carols anyway? When I was in Walther League (remember that name for the "young people's group" back in the '60's?) we used to go caroling at the homes of our elderly and shut-in members and the best part was always getting cookies and candy from our grateful audience before we left. Well, Cookies and Carols is about singing Christmas carols, but instead of receiving goodies, we give the goodies away to our shut-ins.

On Sunday, December 19 we'll gather in the fellowship hall during coffee hour to sing our favorite carols and indulge in our favorite cookies, which will be furnished by members like you! We simply ask everyone to bring a dozen or two of their favorite cookies or candy and after singing, the Board of Fellowship will make up gift packages of goodies and deliver them to our shut-ins. Please plan on joining us in this yearly tradition here at St. Johns. - **Elayne Luiken**

What's On The Lutheran Hour

- ◆ 12/5 "Because We Belong"
- ◆ 12/12 "When You Are Expecting"
- ◆ 12/19 "Charlie Brown Christmas Tree"
- ◆ 12/26 "Rite of Passage"

◆ 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."



† Funeral

11/22 Loralie Crep





Evening Guild Christmas Caroling

Come and go caroling with the Evening Guild on Monday, December 6. We'll meet at the church at 2:00 p.m., go caroling (hopefully with the church bus) and return to the church for appetizers.



Something New for the Ladies Aid Christmas Party

The Ladies Aid decided to change up their annual Christmas potluck. This year instead of a potluck at noon they will have a party on Thursday, December 9, at 1:00 p.m. You're invited to bring finger food, appetizers, snacks, etc. and gift for exchange not exceeding \$10.

Bid on A Basket

Place your bid on one of the many baskets displayed in the social hall. Proceeds from the baskets will go to the National Youth Gathering. You can bid in person or online. Bids will be taken until December 19 so be sure to check back frequently and make sure someone hasn't outbid you. This year Jeff Hilgemann is crafting a "man's basket" and challenged other men to do the same. Check out three of the baskets already brought in.



Donna Neumann's famous dark chocolate basket is always popular.



The picture doesn't do this adorable origami wreath justice. Thanks to Betsy Vrudny for this basket.

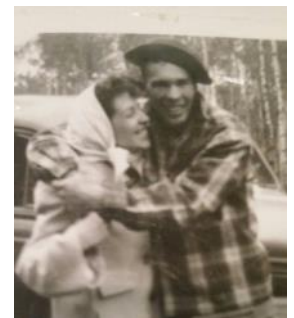


Donna Neumann also brought in this **BIG** snack basket.

Guegel 70th Wedding Anniversary Open House

Bill and Ginny Guegel have been married for 70 years! That's quite an accomplishment. You're invited to come celebrate with them at an anniversary open house on Sunday, December 19, from 1:30—3:00 p.m. in the social hall.

Congratulations on 70 years, Bill and Ginny, and God's continued blessings!





Here's What's Happening with the Youth this Month

Even though we aren't going to get to learn how to play Christmas carols on the kazoo or make beautiful Christmas ornaments (both activities that were planned for Breakfast in Bethlehem) there's a lot going on for our younger members this month.

First, the youth are serving the evening Advent meal on Wednesday, December 8—taco bar! All high schoolers are asked to come to church asap after school to help prep and serve.

Following the Christmas program dress rehearsal on Saturday, December 18, the kids are invited to stay for lunch and fun activities (maybe kazoo lessons?) until 2:00 p.m. Parents, here a little extra time to get in some Christmas shopping.

Pastor Newton is planning a breakfast with the college students some time over Christmas break. There will also be some other fun event planned for everyone during Christmas break.



Coffee for Christmas

As part of their fundraising efforts for the National Youth Gathering, the youth are selling gourmet "Christmas Joy" coffee from Heroes Rise (find out more about the organization at heroesrisecoffee.com) and St. Johns mugs. The coffee is \$20 per 12 oz bag. The mugs are \$5 each. Look for a table set up to purchase your coffee and mugs. This is a great gift idea for the coffee lovers on your list.



Luminaries Light Up Christmas Eve

The youth will be selling luminaries again this year. You may purchase (free will donation) a luminary in honor or memory of someone. Deadline to submit a form is December 19. The luminaries will be lit for our Christmas Eve services.

Pick up a form at church or fill out the form on page 11 and return it with your donation by December 19.



Pie Making went Perfectly

On Sunday afternoon, November 21 a group of youth and adults got together to make pies for the community Thanksgiving meal. Over 20 pies were made—pumpkin, apple, cherry, blueberry, and pecan. Some had crumb topping and some had fancy cut out or lattice crusts. They all turned out great!



Thanks to everyone who came to make pies!

Stewardship Review—October

Avg. Sunday Worship Attendance: **178**

Total Offerings: \$39,719	Total Offerings, October, 2020: \$27,774	Budget/Week \$9,855
Total Expenses: \$35,786	Total Expenses, October, 2020: \$35,868	Budget/Month \$42,705
Difference \$ 3,993	Difference - \$8,094	

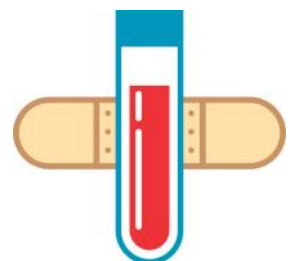
Avg. Weekly Offerings \$9,930	Total Offerings, year to date: \$380,889
Avg. Weekly Expenses \$8,947	Total Expenses, year to date: \$370,339
Difference \$ 983	Difference \$ 10,550

CNB Checkbook Balance as of 10/31/21: \$92,145	Kitchen Payable \$11,171
Less dedicated accounts - \$ 1,199	
Difference \$90,946	

Our Healthy Balance Goal \$74,000
Raised so far \$52,026
Still need \$21,974

Successful Blood Drive

Blessed are the volunteers, for without them, what would we do? I'd like to thank everyone who volunteered to make the blood drive possible and especially those who donated blood during our blood drive on November 2 and 3. The donors were able to successfully donate a total of 161 blood products. Three people gave for the first time. This wonderful outcome could not be accomplished without the help of our volunteers and donors. Thank you so much, everyone, for your support!



Elayne Luiken, Blood Drive Coordinator

Check out the insert included with this newsletter for some timely tips on year end contributions.



Sunday School News

Christmas Program

We're planning to have our annual Sunday School Christmas program on Sunday, December 19 at 10:30 a.m.

Practices have been scheduled for Wednesdays, December 1, 8 and 15 from 3:15 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. for all 1st through 6th grade Sunday School students. There will be a dress rehearsal on Saturday, December 18 from 10:00 - noon for all grades. There's lunch and fun activities planned after rehearsal, too.

We plan to pick up children from the Century School on Wednesdays for practice. Please contact Sarah Kaufenberg and let her know if your child is coming or for any questions at 651-260-3350, kaufenbergssarah35@gmail.com.



- 12/09 Grace Hockett
- 12/15 Shae Halbasch
- 12/24 Owen Christensen
- 12/28 Theodore Komppa
- 12/30 Gavin Smith

Baptismal Birthdays

- 12/04 Alex Lof
- 12/05 Zachary Harju



PUZZLE

F M K N L A D E G S C E J A T S

H
M
V
S
R
B
O
L
Y
Q
O
X
A
V
H
R
T

What's in a name?

An angel told Joseph what to name Mary's baby. Solve the puzzle to discover the name's meaning.

Directions: Begin at the circled H below and follow the arrows. Circle every other letter, and then place them in order to complete Matthew 1:21.

"S_e w_ll __ve b ir__
to __ s_n, and __u a_e to
gi_e _i_ the __me J__us,
b_c_u__ he _ill s_e his
__ op_e f_o_ t__ir s_n_."

MATTHEW 1:21, NIV

A I N G F I P (H) S C I B E J H A

Answer: "She will give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus, because he will save his people from their sins." Matthew 1:21, NIV

Lessons this Month

- 12/5 A Resurrection Sign—Jesus Raises Lazarus
- 12/12 The Thankful One—Jesus Heals Ten Lepers
- 12/19 Christmas Program Rehearsal
- 12/26 No Sunday School



Main Street Living North Programs for December

“Main Street Living” is a locally produced TV program that includes a 30 minute worship service led by participating pastors of the Minnesota North and North Dakota Districts of our LCMS, along with a 30 minute Lutheran Hour program (normally “*This Is The Life*,” along with occasional church-season specials). Programs are broadcast at **9:00 a.m. Central time** on FOX station KVRP Fargo-Moorhead Channel 15 and archived on www.mainstreetliving.com. Click on “North (Fargo)” under the picture.



December 5: Rev. Matthew Meyer, Beautiful Savior Lutheran Church, Callaway, MN, presents the message: “Jesus is coming, Hurry up and Look Busy,” based on Luke 3:1-14. Lutheran Television episode: “Stable Boy” - A manger scene comes to life and tells the story of the first Christmas.

December 12: Rev. Thomas Clark, Immanuel Lutheran Church, Hankinson, ND, presents the message: “A Country in Trouble,” based on Zephaniah 3:14-20. Lutheran Television Special: “Red Boots for Christmas” - A shoemaker learns the true meaning of Christmas.

December 19: Rev. Kent Borglum, St. John’s Lutheran Church, Montevideo, MN, presents the message: “According to Plan,” based on Micah 5:2-5a. Lutheran Television Special: “Christmas Is” - The shepherd in a Christmas play learns the importance of Christmas.



December 26: Rev. Richard Snow, President, Nebraska District LCMS, presents this year’s “Christmas Message.” Lutheran Television Special: “Puzzle Club Christmas” - The Puzzle Club must solve a missing person mystery before Christmas.

Parish Planning Council Minutes October 26, 2021

CALL TO ORDER - Rod Helm

OPENING PRAYER - Pastor Newton

Attendance: Present: Jerry Grudem, Connie Fondow, Lori Griess, Randy Griess, Elayne Luiken, Rod Helm, Ginny Ranisate, Shirley Potter, Pastor Newton, confirmation student Mason McCarthy. Absent: Pastor Neubauer, Pam Heeren, Mike Poole and Brandi Backmann

APPROVAL OF THE PPC MINUTES OF 05/25/21 MEETING

Motion by Lori Griess to approve minutes as printed in newsletter - second Elayne Luiken. Motion carried.

TREASURER’S REPORT – Ginny Ranisate

Motion by Randy Griess to approve Treasurer’s report – second Connie Fondow. Motion carried.

(Continued on page 8)



(Continued from page 7)

Year	Income	Expense	Difference
2020	347,690	360,595	-12,905
2021	379,504	360,712	18,792
Difference	31,814	117	

Income is up and expenses are about the same compared to last year at this time.

CNB Checking Account as of 10/26/21 103,835
 Less Dedicated Funds - 1,007
Available Funds \$102,828

CNB Dedicated Funds Savings as of 10/26/21 \$39,259

LCEF Current Fund as of 10/26/21 117,759
 Less Endowment Fund Interest - 2,250
 Less Parsonage Proceeds - 18,548
 Less Healthy Balance (Goal is \$74,000) - 51,767
 Less T. Haberer Memorial/Interest - 21,639
 Less T. Haberer Trust - 19,096
 Less R. Haberer Memorial - 1,168
Available Funds \$3,291

Kitchen Payable \$12,065
Front Entry Payable \$51,836

MEMBERSHIP CHANGES

Motion by Lori Griess to approve the following membership changes. - Second Elayne Luiken. Motion carried.

Transfer In: Shirley DeMaris from Lutheran Church of the Good Shepherd, Babbitt, MN, Shirley Dickhausen from Redeemer Lutheran Church, Menahga, MN, Amanda, Michelle, Shania Farlee from Christ Lutheran Church, Wolf Lake, MN, Larry and Renee Hills, Alive Lutheran Church, Monticello, MN

Affirmation of Faith: Wayne and Beth Krueger, Calvary Lutheran, Park Rapids, MN, Doris Schmidt, Bethany Lutheran, Nevis, MN

Transfer Out Jonathan Fondow and daughter, Claire, to Gloria Dei, Elizabethtown, KY

PASTOR'S REPORTS - Pastor Newton

General

New Members and Transfers

Wednesday Bible Class: *The Benedict Option* and cultivating the Christian faith.

Summer Adult Bible Study: *Christians in a Woke World* (continuing for the Fall)

Youth Bible Study: Defense against the Dark Arts

Researching for the Family Task Force

Studying for the STM Comprehensive Exam to be taken November 30th



Youth

Thanks to Jerry Grudem and everyone who helped with the new bus—it's working out great!

Tuesday, July 13, 1-5pm: Tubing the Crow Wing – 14 present (Thanks, Larry Hetrick and Pastor Neubauer!)

Friday, July 23, 3-7pm: Family Kickball/Whiffle Ball Game – 12 present

Friday, July 23 7pm-Saturday, July 24 9am: Camp Lockout – 7 youth (Thanks to Brandi Backmann for chaperoning!)

Tuesday, August 31, 1-4pm (15): Evergreen Park – 15 youth (Thanks to Larry Hetrick for Driving!)

Sunday, September 12, 1-4pm: Bike to Dorset – 13 youth (Thanks, Donna Neumann, Dustin Lof, and Tori Harju!)

Sunday, October 10, 4:30-7pm: Fall Festival – 18 youth. Hayride, pulled pork BBQ sampler, apple dipping bar, pumpkin decorating, “punkin’ chunkin,” ghost in the graveyard, and deer-in-the-headlights. (Thanks to Brandi Backmann, Jay and Marlene Pike, Terry Novak, Jerry Grudem, and Pat Nevala for making it possible!)

Sunday, October 17, 5pm: Shareholders Dinner (Youth Gathering fundraiser) – 12 youth (Thanks to the Beckmann's and Lof's for organizing and making the delicious food!)

Thursday, October 21, 5-10:30pm: MEA Bonfire – 12 youth, had a bonfire, hotdog roast, s'mores, and a hayride; played volleyball and sardines, smashed pumpkins (Thanks to Roger Hanson for helping!)

November 21, 4:30-7pm: Pie Bake – We'll enjoy supper together and make pies for the Community Thank Meal. Come on out to serve our neighbors and have a great time!

July 9-13, 2022: LCMS Youth Gathering – 14 youth, 3 chaperones (Brandi Backmann, Pastor and Sarah Newton). Thanks to everyone for being so supportive of our fundraisers!

Personal

George is loving preschool (Thanks, Kim Neubauer and Mary Harvala!), helping to load the dishwasher, take out the trash, and rake and burn leaves. He's working on learning John 1:1-14.

Norah is learning to sit nicely without throwing fits, talking in mostly understandable conversation, and following her brother wherever she can.

Katy's happy and healthy, baptized September 5th. Thanks, everyone, for the kind notes and gift cards, and for the shower—it was a great time! Also, she rolled over yesterday.

Sarah's been finishing up the kitchen (thanks to Jerry Eischens for helping with the cabinets!), painting, cooking wonderful meals, and enjoying Mothers of Preschoolers group.

We went down to Illinois a few weeks ago to help sort through some of my Uncle Ken's books and things in his office. It was good to see my family again and talk with my aunt and cousins about him.

Basketball hasn't started up for this year yet, since Faithbridge's roof blew off and they're still repairing.

Sarah Newton will be starting up the women's Bible Study again this week and is teaching Release Time Classes.

BOARD REPORTS

ELDERS – Jerry Grudem – Elders continue to assist pastors.

EVANGELISM – Connie Fondow

The Board of Evangelism continues to prepare for the “Breakfast in Bethlehem” outreach event to be held on December 4th at St. Johns. We encourage members to have make their reservations online or by calling the church office no later than November 24th.

(Continued on page 10)



(Continued from page 9)

The board hopes to coordinate St. Johns participation in the community Christmas project "Toys for Boys and Girls and Tiny Tots". Please watch the bulletin for information regarding this gifting event.

Information pertaining to a Trivia event at St. Johns will be forthcoming early in 2022.

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION – Lori Griess

Sunday School attendance is averaging about 28-30 students. Post cards were sent to those students who have not yet attending Sunday School this year. Sunday School Christmas Program is titled "One Night in Bethlehem". It will be presented on December 19th at 10:30.

VBS was well attended with about 55 children attending. Weather cooperated and the children loved the science theme.

Last year's third graders have been presented with their bibles following a 3-week class.

Release Time is meeting on Wednesday mornings as in previous years. It was very well attended last week with over 120 students.

Pre School is full for the year. Staffing is the same, with Kim Neubauer as director and teacher and Mary Harvala filling the aid position.

Budget was reviewed at the last board meeting with some changes made in a number of areas.

YOUNG PEOPLE – Brandi Backmann (see Pastor Newton's report above)

CHURCH PROPERTIES – Randy Griess

The basic objectives of this Board are the proper maintenance and repair of church property, the representation of the congregation in all legal matters, and the general protection of the congregation against loss or damage of whatever nature.

Sand/gravel in parking lot – taken care of by Sanquist and Roger Hanson

Roof leak on addition – repaired. Leak around vent furnace room repaired.

Boiler Display – hot water for kitchen – referred to Samuelson.

GFI Kitchen – Mike Riewer

Altar rail loose – tightened – ok.

Old Bus – party in Osage still interested?

Seal coat parking lot or budget for overlay.

Budget – Initial draft – turned in to Ginny Ranisate.

STEWARDSHIP – Pam Heeren – absent no report

PARISH FELLOWSHIP – Elayne Luiken

The board served a picnic for the Sunday School teachers on Sunday, June 13th at Pastor and Sarah Newton's home, in appreciation for their work and dedication during the past year.

Fellowship hosted a reception following the dedication service for the new entryway on Sunday, August 29th

We hosted a baby shower for Pastor and Sarah Newton on Thursday evening, September 16th.

Fellowship is planning a reception between services on Sunday, November 21st for the new member welcome.



We will prepare the breakfast for the Christmas Nativity Breakfast on Saturday, December 4th hosted by the evangelism board.

Cookies and Carols is scheduled for December 19th between services.

PUBLIC RELATIONS - Pastor Newton stated a new church logo is being designed.

OLD/NEW BUSINESS:

Canopy Update – clearance signs will be installed soon over the canopy

2022 Budget – reviewed budget

Voters Meeting – reviewed voter meeting agenda. Meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, November 23, 2021, at 7:00 pm

There was discussion regarding stewardship drive –concerned with lack of members volunteering of their time and talents.

Closed with Luther’s Evening Prayer and Doxology. ADJOURNMENT.

Respectfully submitted
Shirley Potter

A huge thank you to Shirley Potter who has served as secretary of the congregation for years. She recently retired for the second time and decided it was also time to step down as secretary. We appreciate her work on behalf of St. Johns.

Shirley’s retirement means we will need a new secretary. This is a volunteer position and mainly requires attending Parish Planning Council and Voters Meetings and taking minutes. If you’re willing to serve in this position, please talk to Executive Director, Dr. Rod Helm, or call the church office.

Christmas Eve Luminary Form

Please write your name as you would like it to appear in the booklet:

Phone Number: _____ Freewill Donation: \$ _____ Paid: Yes No

I would like my Luminary: In Honor of _____ In Memory of _____

Name(s)

Personal message: Ex: Miss you, Love you, Proud of you, etc.



**St. Johns
Lutheran Church**

803 West First Street
Park Rapids, MN 56470

Phone: 218-237-9783

Fax: 218-237-9785

Website: www.stjohnspr.org

Pastor James Neubauer

Pastor Joel Newton



The Lutheran Church -- Missouri Synod

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

Return Service Requested

Inside this issue:

<i>Breakfast in Bethlehem Cancelled</i>	1
<i>Advent Services—The Word Became Flesh</i>	1
<i>Come Worship Christ, the Newborn King!</i>	1
<i>Help Make Christmas Special for A Child</i>	1
<i>Come Sing with the Christmas Choir</i>	2
<i>Cookies and Carols</i>	2
<i>What's on the Lutheran Hour</i>	2
<i>Funeral</i>	2
<i>Evening Guild Christmas Caroling</i>	3
<i>Something New for the Ladies Aid Christmas Party</i>	3
<i>Bid on A Basket</i>	3
<i>Guegel 70th Wedding Anniversary Open House</i>	3
<i>Here's What's Happening with the Youth This Month</i>	4
<i>Coffee for Christmas</i>	4
<i>Luminaries Light Up Christmas Eve</i>	4
<i>Pie Making Went Perfectly</i>	5
<i>Stewardship Review</i>	5
<i>Successful Blood Drive</i>	5
<i>Check Out the Insert with Tips on Contributions</i>	5
<i>Sunday School News</i>	6
<i>Main Street Living</i>	7
<i>Parish Planning Council Meeting Minutes</i>	7
<i>Thanks to Shirley!</i>	11
<i>Christmas Luminary Form</i>	11



For God
so Loved the World,
that he gave
his only son,
that whoever believes
in him should not perish
but have eternal life.

John 3:16