



# *The* **St. Johns Servant**

**St. Johns  
Lutheran Church**

Park Rapids, Minnesota

September, 2023

## **Opportunities to be in God's Word**

➔ **Sunday School**—Sunday School will begin with Rally Day on September 10. All teachers will be installed at the 8:00 a.m. service that day. Classes will run from 9:15—10:15 a.m.

➔ **Confirmation**—7th and 8th grade confirmation students will begin class on Wednesday, September 20 at 3:30 p.m. A confirmation orientation meeting will be held Wednesday, September 13 at 7:00 p.m. in the social hall.

➔ **Release Time**—Release Time will begin October 4. Students should bring home a form for parents to sign and return to the school. They are “released” from school for an hour on Wednesdays to come to church for religious instruction. The kids learn about the Bible, Old and New Testament stories, creation, Martin Luther and the Reformation.

### ➔ **Bible Studies**

**Sundays, 9:15 a.m.** Pastor Neubauer will lead us through Luther's Small Catechism using his confirmation curriculum.

**Tuesdays, 8:30 a.m. starting September 12** Pastor Neubauer continues “Limping with God.”

**Wednesdays, 10:30 a.m. starting September 5** Pastor Berg will lead the group. They will pick a topic at the first session.

**Thursdays, 6:30 p.m. starting September 28** Pastor Neubauer will lead an eight week new member class.



## **Each One Reach One Workshop**

On September 23, Trinity Lutheran in New York Mills is hosting an *Each 1 Reach 1: Generation to Generation* workshop presented by Mid-South District President Rev. Dr. Roger Paavola.



Each 1 Reach 1 is an organized evangelism effort to help Lutherans carry out their calling through the Great Commission: to make disciples of all nations. Sharing the Gospel with confidence can be a difficult task. Fears of “not getting it right” or making people uncomfortable can keep us from sharing the gift of Christ with others. Each 1 Reach 1 provides resources that take the guesswork and anxiety out of evangelism by emphasizing practical ways to connect with others and start the conversation about Jesus. Generation to Generation is holistic family-life education training created to build and enrich Christ-centered marriages, train parents to equip them with knowledge and skills to influence their child's faith through the developmental and family life cycle.

The workshop runs from 9:00 a.m.—4:00 p.m. It's free including lunch but they would like to know how many are attending by September 15. We're looking at taking the church bus. If you'd like to go, please call the church office.



## Get into A Group

Are you looking for a group to join? Here's some options.

**The Evening Guild** meets on the second Tuesday of each month (September 12) at 2:00 p.m. in the library. This is one of our Lutheran Women's Missionary League groups.

**Ladies Aid** meets the second Thursday of the month (September 14) at 1:00 p.m. in the library. This is our other LWML group. A representative from the Heartland Group Homes in Park Rapids will speak and share details about the history of their group homes, what services they provide, eligibility, and answer questions you may have. All interested individuals invited and welcome.

**Lutheran Laymen's League** will meet Thursday, September 14 at church at 5:00 p.m. for their annual steak fry. This is a men's version of the LWML. They have a Bible study and do "guy" things.

**The Bell Choir** resumes practice on Wednesday, September 13 at 5:00 p.m. If you're interested in joining the bell choir, please contact Vickie Helm at 218-330-3195.

**The Senior Choir** is on hold until we find a new director. If that's you, please call the church office.



## We're Updating the Coffee Schedule and Funeral Serving Groups

Are you a volunteer for either funeral luncheon service or Sunday morning coffee? If you are currently on one or both of these lists, please let the church office or Connie Fondow know if your phone number has changed within the last year. Also let us know if your ability or desire to serve on either of these committees has changed by calling the office (218-732-9783) or Connie (218-330-1684). If you would like to continue to serve, no call is necessary.

### What's On The Lutheran Hour

- 9/3 "Entryway"
- 9/10 "Not Just A Formality"
- 9/17 "The Problem of Praise"
- 9/24 "High Ground"

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. You can also listen on Sirius XM Family Talk Channel 131, Sundays at 9:00 a.m. or any time on SENTRadio at [lhm.org/sentradio](http://lhm.org/sentradio).

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."



### † Baptism

8/13 Walker Vernon Anderson  
Brandon & Kellie Peterson Anderson





## Stewardship Review—July

Avg. Sunday Worship Attendance: 194

Total Offerings: \$46,675	Total Offerings, July, 2022: \$33,739	Total Offerings, year to date: \$269,185
Total Expenses: <u>\$34,650</u>	Total Expenses, July, 2022: <u>\$42,862</u>	Total Expenses, year to date: <u>\$251,667</u>
Difference \$12,025	Difference - \$9,123	Difference \$ 17,518

Avg. Weekly Offerings \$9,335	Budget/Week \$10,807	CNB Checkbook Balance: \$88,764
Avg. Weekly Expenses <u>\$6,930</u>	Budget/Month \$46,831	Less dedicated accounts - \$ 3,276
Difference \$2,405		Difference \$85,488

Our Healthy Balance Goal \$74,000	Front Entry Payable \$2,702
Raised so far <u>\$63,213</u>	
Still need \$10,787	

## Main Street Living for September

“**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 KVRN Fargo-Moorhead Channel 15 and archived on [www.mainstreetliving.com](http://www.mainstreetliving.com) (click on “North (Fargo)” under the picture). Depending on your cable provider you might be able to watch Main Street Living out of the Twin Cities instead. You can check this option out on their website, too.



Here’s the schedule for “North” for September:

September 3: Rev. Scott Brown, Ebenezer Lutheran Church, Alexandria, MN, and St. James Lutheran Church, Parkers Prairie, MN, presents the message: “God’s Way”, based on Matthew 16:21-28. *This Is the Life*: “The Sound of Doors Closing” – A man’s mid-life crisis and the effect it has on his family.

September 10: Rev. Sam Pitsch, Our Redeemer Lutheran Church, Moorhead, MN, presents the message: “A Hard Pill to Swallow” based on Romans 13:1-7. *This Is the Life*: “Tina” – Two lonely people, a woman and a child, come together through Jesus.

September 17: Rev. William Aufdenkamp, Christ Lutheran Church, Elbow Lake, MN, and Zion Lutheran Church, Hoffman, MN, presents the message: “Who Do You Think You Are?” based on Romans 14:8. *This Is the Life*: “Look to the Mountain” – A hopeless situation becomes more hopeless when a down and out man kidnaps a young girl for ransom money.

September 24: Rev. Guy Roberts, Zion Lutheran Church, Detroit Lakes, MN, presents the message: “Our Life in Song” based on Psalm 27:109. *This Is the Life*: “Home Free” – A family learns the real meaning of love, and that it comes free.



**Parish Planning Council Meeting Minutes**  
**St. Johns Lutheran Church, Park Rapids, MN**  
August 22, 2023

**PRESENT:** Pastor Berg, Connie Fondow, Lori Griess, Randy Griess, Jerry Grudem, Rod Helm, Elayne Luiken, Pastor Neubauer, Jay Pike, Derek Ricke and Ginny Ranisate. Rod Helm called the meeting to order. Motion by Elayne, second Connie, to approve minutes of the May 23, 2023 meeting as printed in the newsletter. Motion carried.

**TREASURER'S REPORT** – Ginny Ranisate

Year	Income	Expense	Difference
8/31/2022	311,199	320,589	-9,390
8/22/2023	300,305	289,456	10,849
Difference	-10,894	-31,133	--

Figures compare the end of August last year to today for this year. We still have one more week of offerings and one more payroll for this month. Discussed moving funds into CDs as the rates are favorable now.

CNB Checking Account as of 08/22/23	81,103
Less Dedicated Funds	<u>- 2,521</u>
Available Funds	78,582

CNB Dedicated Funds Savings as of 08/22/23	36,378
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LCEF Current Fund as of 08/22/23	124,693
Less End. Fund Interest	- 2,033
Less Parsonage Proceeds	- 18,548
Less Healthy Balance (Goal is \$74,000)	- 63,240
Less T. Haberer Memorial/Interest	- 19,094
Less T. Haberer Trust	- 17,243
Less R. Haberer Memorial	<u>- 1,051</u>
Available Funds	3,484

Front Entry Payable \$2,072

Motion by Lori, second Randy to approve treasurer's report. Motion carried.

**PASTORS REPORTS**

Membership changes: transfer in Rev. Chad Berg, St. Andrew's, West Fargo, ND and Rev. Randy and Linda Stroming, Mount Olive, Anoka, MN. Motion by Jerry, second Jay and carried to approve membership changes.

Pastor Neubauer reported that it has been a quiet summer. He participated in Pastor Berg's ordination/installation. For Sunday Bible class they have been trading off on Deeper Dive. He wasn't really involved in VBS much this year due to being gone with family. He is working on revamping his 3<sup>rd</sup> grade Release Time materials. He also started the Monday Message – good comments. Helped with ABC Open House. He and Derek planned one focus dinner which went well. Did mini golf and tubing on the Crow Wing with the youth.

Pastor Berg is settling in. He served as a counselor at LIC his first week here. Did Bible story, led opening and closing for VBS. Preparing for sermons, learning how St. Johns conducts services, preparing for upcoming meetings. I have worked on preparing different events for our youth. Tuesday 8-12<sup>th</sup> meet at church. He is compiling information from the various Concordia Universities for the youth. Studying for bus license. He requested a demographic study, Mission Insight, from the district office. This demographic study provides analytical information collected from the latest census. The information shows the range of the generations that live in Park Rapids, along with the type of careers, jobs, income, etc. The expense is covered by the Synod, nothing will come out of the church budget.

**BOARD REPORTS****CHRISTIAN EDUCATION** – Lori Griess presented her report.

Sunday School: Connie and Melissa have reviewed the lessons and made a schedule for the upcoming year. Teachers are in place, still need subs. The Christmas program will be a traditional program. We discussed the Sunday School openings and the time involved. Also discussed the option of having an opening once a month in the social hall to present attendance awards. Connie informed the board that she will be unable to continue in the role of Sunday School Superintendent. Staci Lee is planning to take the position.

VBS: Attendance was way up compared to last year. Thanks for all the help. Having discussion about VBS options next year. Served supper which was popular. We got a new tent which was great. Offering of \$369 sent to Food Shelf. Discussed sending a photo/blurb to the paper like we did last year.

Preschool: At this time there are a few openings left. The open house was held August 16. Five to seven scholarships needed.

Release Time: Classes will begin on October 4. Due to changes in the classroom format after the remodel of the school, 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade classes won't be attending in two years.

**CHURCH PROPERTIES** – Randy Griess reported. Parking lot sealed. A/C for kitchen and offices will be installed soon.

**ELDERS** – Jerry Grudem reported that the elders continue to assist the pastors as they shepherd our congregation. Continue with same staff health insurance.

**EVANGELISM** - Connie Fondow reported. The Board of Evangelism is considering the possibility of facilitating a monthly BINGO event at either Crystal Brook or Diamond Willow. We will discuss this further at our September board meeting. We are anticipating the planning of our second "Breakfast in Bethlehem" on December 2. Finalizing plans will take place at our September meeting.

**PARISH FELLOWSHIP** – Elayne Luiken reported. The board made Father's Day gifts and handed them out to the dads on Father's Day, June 18. They prepared and served a luncheon for Pastor Berg's installation on Sunday, July 16.

**PUBLIC RELATIONS** – Derek Ricke is the new director. He reported on the discussion at focus dinner and follow up meetings with younger members with families. He received some good feedback. Two possibilities that came up were to have in-service for Sunday School/children's church, where the children would go to another room for activities during part of the service and to have a young toddler room during Bible Study. We will look at implementing the children's church at the 10:30 a.m. service.

Pastor Neubauer and Derek discussed the role of public relations. Derek is working on a logo brand study. He plans to send a survey to PPC members. Discussed purchasing an electronic sign.

**STEWARDSHIP** – Jay Pike is the new board director. He is planning to meet with the rest of the board.

**YOUTH** – Pastor Berg is planning a cookout for 8<sup>th</sup>-12 graders August 29. Looking at doing outdoor movie nights as a youth fundraiser.

**OLD/NEW BUSINESS:**

Increase credit card limit to \$5000. Motion by Lori, second Connie to increase Virginia Ranisate and Pastor Neubauer's card limits to \$5000 and authorize a new card for Pastor Chad Berg with a card limit of \$5,000.

Governance Structure – no further progress.

"Shareboard" – Please share this information with your board members.

Passed out budget worksheets and information.

Meeting adjourned. Closed with Doxology. Next Parish Planning Council Meeting is scheduled for October 24, 2023 at 6:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,  
Virginia Ranisate, Acting Secretary





## Sunday School News

Sunday School starts September 10 at 9:15 a.m. We're looking forward to seeing **YOU** there!

### Our Staff

PK-K Sandy Phillips  
1-2 Ruth Knaack  
3-4 Shelley Lof  
5-6 Melissa Koch  
7-8 Tori Harju  
Superintendent Staci Lee



### Happy Birthday!

9/2 Colton Nilson  
9/4 Henli Maier  
9/7 Addison Tretbar  
9/11 Elena Bradow  
9/12 Sophia Neubauer  
9/16 Cecilia Quinn  
9/17 Kinley Eskola  
9/20 Lincoln Hall  
9/22 Kiften Luther

### Baptismal Birthdays

9/6 Elijah Williams  
9/13 Elena Bradow  
9/14 Gavin Etter  
9/14 Brielle Knutson  
9/15 Nakova Eskola  
9/25 Hadley Branstrom



## A PATH TO PRAYER

God's Word offers lots of insights about how to pray.

*Directions: Use the code to fill in the blanks and complete a Bible passage about prayer.*



ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ  
ZYXWVUTSRQPONMLKJIHGFE DCBA



R G S Z M P N B T L W

V E V I B G R N V R

I V N V N Y V I B L F

R M Z O O N B

K I Z B V I H U L I Z O O

L U B L F R Z O D Z B H

K I Z B D R G S Q L B

K S R O R K K R Z M H

1:3-4, NIV

Answer: I thank my God every time I remember you. In all my prayers for all of you, I always pray with joy. Philippians 1:3-4, NIV

### September Lessons

9/10 Handmade—Adam and Eve  
9/17 A Sign and A Promise—Abram  
9/24 A Merciful Substitute—Abraham and Isaac

### September Memory Verse

*I praise You, for I am fearfully  
and wonderfully made.  
Psalm 13:14*



## Back to School Bash for 5th-7th Graders

On Saturday, September 16 from 4:00—7:00 p.m. 5th-7th graders are invited to come to church for a cookout, games and bonfire as we get back into the school routine. Pastor Berg is looking forward to meeting everyone.



## Take Home A Book

You can check out a book and you don't have to return it. We have a new free book rack in the front lobby. Take a look and see if there's some that interest you. Of course, if you don't mind returning the book, there's also a great selection of reading material in our church library. Stop in and browse for your next great read.

## Supporting South Sudan Seminarians

On August 21, about 20 people came to hear two pastors from South Sudan speak. They are in the U.S. attending classes at Concordia Seminary, St. Louis. Despite the difficulty understanding them—they definitely didn't have "Minnesota" accents—it was an interesting presentation and brought home how blessed we are to live in the United States.

Both men have wives and children back in South Sudan. They cannot travel back home until their classes are done. If they do, they will lose their visas and not be able to return. Pastor Nicholas has a seven month old child he has not seen. Sudan/South Sudan has experienced years of civil war and unrest. There are approximately 70 pastors serving the 150,000 Lutherans in the country. Pastors are not paid for their work and must have other income, like growing fruit/vegetables to sell. They travel long distances over rough roads to preach. English is the official language of South Sudan but there are over 90 other languages spoken in the country. Students enroll for a four year course at the seminary in Yambio to become pastors. During that time they stay in Yambio, away from their families. Courses are taught in English. Usually, the students are not able to read, write or speak English at a level necessary for the classes. They also don't have a thorough understanding of Lutheran beliefs.

In closing, Pastor Nicholas and Rev. Celestino said despite the challenges—war, poverty, distance—doors are opening in Africa. Please pray for them and the Church and Christians in South Sudan, that Gospel message may continue to be spread throughout the country.

On Sunday, August 27, we took a special door offering for the English as a Second Language project which seeks to help potential seminary students learn English and Lutheran beliefs through a course learning from an English text of Luther's Small Catechism. About half of the \$40,000 cost has been raised. Response was fantastic! \$2,200 was given just from that door offering.. Thank you to everyone for your generous gifts!



Pastors Nicholas, Lutz and Celestino

**St. Johns  
Lutheran Church**

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*Pastor James Neubauer*

*Pastor Chad Berg*

*Pastor Larry Harvala*



The Lutheran Church -- Missouri Synod

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