



May 2021 Newsletter

God has put the body together... so that there should be no division in the body, but that its parts should have equal concern for each other. If one part suffers, every part suffers with it; if one part is honored, every part rejoices with it. Now you are the body of Christ, and each one of you is a part of it.

-1 Corinthians 12:24-27

Dear Friends in Christ,

As Governor Walz announced a few weeks ago the end of the mask mandate in Minnesota, along with other loosening of COVID-19 restrictions, we know that some of you shouted, "Hallelujah!", while some felt a mix of caution and joy, and others felt yet another surge of fear and frustration.

It is really hard to know how best to be the body of Christ together right now. We certainly feel this as your pastors, as we discern together with staff and members of the Safe Operating Committee, what the coming weeks and potential changes in our COVID restrictions look like. The Apostle Paul reminds us that our faith calls us to consider the needs of our neighbors, as members of this one body of Christ. As our Bishop Regina Hassanally wrote recently, "What impacts one member impacts the body. Said another way, the choices of one member have consequences for the others." What it looks like exactly to be the body of Christ at this time is not entirely clear. But know that, as your pastors, we trust in the CDC and believe their guidelines to be safe *and* we are still discerning what is best for our *community well-being* as we move forward. For the past 4 weeks, we have been welcoming a limit of 60 registered guests into worship and it has gone really well. Many have said that it felt very safe. You can read more about the work of the Safe Operating Committee and anticipated changes to our COVID restrictions in this newsletter.

Also, know that one of the unanticipated gifts of this past year is that we have started livestreaming our worship services (with the immense help from Dave Zdenek, Mark Gleason, and Daniel Edwins). This livestreaming worship will continue on for the foreseeable future, as we know this worship ministry (alongside the radio broadcast) is deeply appreciated near and far.

As we enter into these summer months, we really want to see you back in church as soon as you feel comfortable. In fact, we can't wait to see you in church. We know some of you have been holding off coming to worship as you have been wanting others to have the opportunity first, while others have been waiting for other reasons. And some of you didn't know you could come to worship until this very moment! As you make choices in the weeks and months ahead, you have our love and support whatever you choose *and* you remain a crucial member of the body of Christ.

We hope you enjoy the articles and information in this newsletter that show the variety of faithful ways we together have continued to be the church in recent days. It continues to be a joy to be your pastors.

With love and deep gratitude for each one of you,

Pastor Jonathan Davis

Children's Ministry

Thanks to all who connected with Virtual Sunday School this year! It was so much fun to see the kids via Zoom on Sunday mornings. Thank you to our volunteers: Stephanie and Lily Almen, Sue Brockman, Candace Godfrey, Kristy Harms, Arielle Loy, Amy McBroom, Katherine Norrie, and Melissa Pellinen. A special thank you to Arielle Loy for creating the awesome Sunday school videos for our littlest ones! We had a wonderful turn-out for the Easter Egg Hunt Drive Thru this year! Thank you to all of the volunteers that helped make this a special event, and a big thank you to our Easter Bunny, Peder Lindell! This summer we look forward to Bingo, Bubbles, and Root Beer Night at Brockman/Evenson Farm in June, VBS in August, among other upcoming fun opportunities!

- Julie Brehmer, Director of Children's Ministry



Youth Ministry



This spring, in addition to virtual meetings over Zoom, the middle school and high school youth program enjoyed engaging in various community service projects, as well as church parking lot gatherings and bonfires for socializing and connecting with one another. We

thank the members of St. John's for contributions of food and time that created meals for the Key Youth Center, which was a huge success! This month the youth program also delivered 10 packages to TORCH students. A big thank you to all volunteers and donors for your support as we continue to serve our community!

- Emmanuel Kaghondi, Director of Ministry with Youth & Families

Upcoming Youth Program Summer Events:

- **June 16: Food Scavenger Hunt, 7:00-8:30 p.m.** - A joint family event between St. John's, Bethel, and St. Peter's Lutheran churches. We are a family! We will hunt for food in the neighborhood for the CAC. The winner gets a prize!
- **June 23: Summer Meet-Up, 6:00-8:00 p.m.** - A joint HS/MS event between St. John's, First English Lutheran Church in Faribault, and Our Savior's Lutheran Church in Owatonna. Meet at River Bed Nature Center in Faribault for games, connection building, and worship.
- **June 27 - July 2: HS/MS Youth Summer Trip** - This year we are going to Camp AMNICON for outdoor adventure and connection building.
- **July 14: Feed my Starving Children** - A joint MS/HS event between St. John's, Bethel, and St. Peter's Lutheran churches. Join us for this fun trip to package food that will be delivered all over the world!
- **July 25: Youth Movie Night at St. John's**

Congratulations to Our Graduating High School Seniors!

Class of 2021

Amelia Becker, Nicholas Boehning, Clayton Garlie, Jaida Gehring, Will Knutson, Kai Legvold, Peder Lindell, Ethan Little, Erica Loe, Kaylee Malecha, Elsa Nystrom, Stephany Perez, and Carl Welbaum

Outdoor Coffee and Communion Events



During May, the Adult Ministry & Education Board hosted two new opportunities on Wednesday afternoons to safely gather outdoors for fellowship and Holy Communion on our lovely church grounds. Those who attended enjoyed some casual socializing followed by joining together in prayer and communion led by the pastors. The canopy over the area in front of the Commons doors provided protection in the event of a rain shower. This June, four more opportunities to gather outside for coffee and communion will take place. Look for the sign-up link in the weekly E-Voices and on the church website.

Blood Drives at St. John's

During this difficult year when our building was unable to open to groups; one bright spot was our continued ability to host Red Cross blood drives. Since last May, we have been able to safely host six blood drives in our spacious St. John's Hall. Two of those drives were in partnership with Carleton College, as the college was closed to outside visitors. Here are the numbers: at our last drive on May 10, we collected 42 units of blood, which was 8 units over their goal! During the last 6 drives this past year we have collected a total of 227 units of blood, which has the potential to help 681 people! Truly we are blessed at St. John's to be able to offer this lifesaving service to our community. Thanks to all you generous donors! – Sally Lindell, Parish Nurse



Properties and Grounds Update

This spring various improvements have been made to our church building. Recently an “in-line pump” was put in the boiler system, and new carpet was installed in three of the basement offices. Chipped tiles in the Commons area are currently being replaced. All WiFi access points have also been upgraded. Other repairs and upgrade projects will continue to be addressed during the year. - Tim Byers, Facility Manager

Thank you to all volunteers who helped with the annual spring clean-up!



Outdoor Worship Service at Goodtree Farmstead: June 13 at 11:00 a.m.

We invite all ages to come to worship at beautiful Goodtree Farm, located at 8289 300th St. W., Northfield, just northwest of town. This service will include Holy Communion. Masks will be optional. The farm allows a large number of people to comfortably gather, but RSVPs are needed to plan for sufficient parking space in the adjoining field. To sign up to attend, go to the church website or the weekly E-Voice and click on the link, or call the church office.



Last summer and fall, St. John's had 3 worship services at this lovely setting, hosted by the Welbaum family, who are members of St. John's. We look forward to these outdoor worship opportunities while the weather is warmer!

Installation of the 2021 Church Council Members



Council Members of 2021: Gene Bakko, Paul Beck, Rachel Brownlee, Marilyn Calcutt, Rodney Christensen, Ruth Dahl, Mark Gleason, Kristy Harms, Carolyn Nitz, Rob Nutt, Suzanne Pfau, Jane Rizzo, Suzy Taggart

Welcome Newcomers to St. John's!



Grant and Ruth Aaseng



Andy Ness



Dean and Deb Schoeb

Baptism

Case Andrew Tussing – May 23, 2021

Deaths

November 23, 2020
Gertrud Johannsen

November 30, 2020
Joanne Sommers
Eugene Nelson

December 18, 2020
Beverly Gallarane

January 14, 2021
Mary White

February 21, 2021
Robert "Bob" Scholz

April 11, 2021
Marlene Engstrom

April 30, 2021
Pauline Fagre



Safe Operating Committee Update

The Safe Operating Committee has met several times this month to discuss our phases of re-opening of the building and activities. St. John's will not change our worship plan for the month of May, but we intend for increasing capacity for all people (all ages, regardless of vaccination status) and indoor activity through the summer. The Church Council will approve a plan by the end of this month, and details of worship times and changes in safety protocols will be forthcoming soon. We look forward to seeing you in church - and outside to socialize - soon!

The **Church building** will re-open with regular office hours **beginning June 1**. Watch for the complete schedule in forthcoming E-Voices.

While the coronavirus news in our county and state is encouraging, we are aware that everyone's level of comfort in returning to full activity is different, for a variety of reasons. Thank you for continuing to be mindful of your neighbors and respectful of differing comfort levels as we get used to gathering in person again.

Barb Howe Retires from Open Door Nursery School



This month, Barb Howe is retiring from over 20 years of directing the Open Door Preschool in St. John's lower level. She has been a part of the lives of so many people in our community – some of whom are now fully grown adults. On May 18, the preschool families surprised Barb with a Little Free Library dedicated in her name on St. John's east side. It is a terrific sign of the life that Open Door has brought to our building and our neighborhood over the years!

Open Door will continue to operate during the next school year under new leadership. St. John's is grateful to be able to be able to continue this partnership.

Livestream, Radio, and TV Worship Continues

Radio broadcast of worship can be heard on KYMN at 95.1 FM/1080 AM and at www.kymnradio.net on Sunday mornings at 9:00 a.m. Livestream can be viewed on our church website home page at www.StJohnsNorthfield.org. Services can also be viewed on Northfield TV cable channel 187 on Mondays 7:30 p.m., Tuesdays at 12:00 a.m. and 9:00 a.m., Wednesdays at 2:00 p.m., and Fridays 7:00 p.m. Worship from previous Sundays are also linked on St. John's website home page.

Check out the church website and calendar, and the weekly E-Voice news for continued opportunities to get involved in our church and community! St. John's invites all to a variety of discussion groups such as Manna and Mercy, Pub Theology, and Courageous Conversations, along with different book clubs and classes offered throughout the year, focusing on a wide variety of topics. There are service opportunities to assist and support those in need in both our congregation and larger community, as well as frequent special events both online and in person. The ways to get involved are numerous, and we welcome all to join us in learning, growing, worshipping, and celebrating life together in faith!

