



The

Voice

OF ST. JOHN'S LUTHERAN CHURCH

VOLUME 63, ISSUE 8

DECEMBER 2023



Advent and Christmas Worship & Events

Advent Fair

Wednesday, November 29, from 5:15-7:00 p.m.

Sunday, December 3 - First Sunday of Advent

Worship at 8:30 a.m. and 10:45 a.m.

Advent Vespers

Wednesdays, December 6 and 13, at 6:15 p.m.
Contemplative Worship in the Sanctuary

Sunday, December 10 - Second Sunday of Advent

Worship at 8:30 a.m. and 10:45 a.m.

Sunday, December 17 - Third Sunday of Advent

Worship at 8:30 a.m.

Sunday School Christmas Program during Worship at 10:45 a.m.
(see page 13 for additional information)

Sunday, December 24 - Fourth Sunday of Advent

Worship at 10:00 a.m.

Christmas Eve - Sunday, December 24

Christmas Vespers at 3:00 p.m. (especially for families and children)
Christmas Candlelight and Holy Communion at 5:00 p.m.

Christmas Day - Monday, December 25

Christmas Eucharist at 10:00 a.m.

(This will be a joint ELCA service hosted by St. John's
with Bethel Lutheran Church and St. Peter's Lutheran Church)
Christmas Dinner for All from 11:15 a.m. - 1:30 p.m.

Sunday, December 31

One Worship Service at 10:00 a.m.

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WORSHIP SERVICES

See Page 2

LIVESTREAM

8:30 & 10:45 a.m.

www.StJohnsNorthfield.org

RADIO BROADCASTS

8:30 a.m. Sundays

KYMN Radio 1080AM/95.1FM

kymnradio.net

TV BROADCASTS

NTV Channel 187

7:30 p.m. Mon. / 7:00 p.m. Fri.

12:00 a.m. & 9:00 a.m. Tuesdays

2:00 p.m. Wednesdays

Join Us for Worship!

Worship Services

8:30 a.m. & 10:45 a.m., Sundays

Livestream

8:30 a.m. Sundays
www.StJohnsNorthfield.org



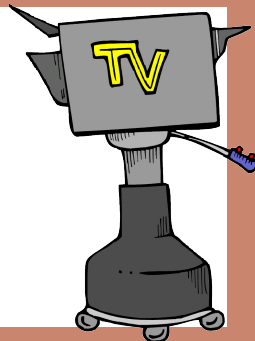
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2:00 p.m. Wednesdays
7:00 p.m. Fridays
NTV Channel 187



www.StJohnsNorthfield.org

WELCOME STATEMENT

St. John's Lutheran Church is a community grounded in the promise of God's grace and called to extend Christ's welcome to all people. Every day, Christ meets us all just as we are, extending love to people of every age, race or ethnicity, physical appearance, sexual orientation, gender identity, physical or mental ability, marital or relationship status, economic circumstance, educational achievement, political affiliation, or religious background.

While we do not always agree, we choose to walk and grow in faith together, believing that God creates diversity, and loves and welcomes us.

We warmly welcome you here.

Blessing Box at St. John's

"Take something if in need; leave something when blessed."



The congregation of St. John's continues to support the "Blessing Box", a mission that started in the fall of 2017. It is similar to the Little Libraries found around town except the Blessing box is filled with donated non-perishable food and personal hygiene products. The idea is that anyone who may be struggling can use the goods to make ends meet. The community is welcome to donate to the box being mindful of Minnesota's temperature changes. Donation Ideas (please check expiration dates): canned goods, pasta, flour, sugar, coffee, crackers, soap, mittens, toothbrush, baby items, such as diapers and pacifiers. The box is located in the drive-up on the north side of St. John's.

From Our Pastors

Dear people of St. John's,

We are entering into the season of Advent, which leads us into the season of Christmas. Advent is a season of patient preparation and waiting – preparing and waiting for Christ to be born once again into the world and into our hearts. I believe it was Meister Eckhart who said that Christ is always needing to be born into the world.

Despite what the song says, this time of waiting isn't always the hap-happiest season of all, is it? While this time of year brings a stirring in our hearts of God-with-us and a chance to gather with friends and family, too often all the holiday cheer can get clouded over with 5 different family Christmases across the state, painful family dynamics, and crushing credit card bills. Or, truth be told, Christmas can often be layered with grief and sadness over the empty chair at the table – left open by the loved one who died recently – or the relationship that came undone this past year.

We can dismiss all this as “holiday stress” or we can name it for what it is – a challenging and painful part of life, which is really hard to get through alone. But here is the good news – we don't have to get through it alone.

We, at St. John's, are in one of my favorite season of church life – Stephen Ministry Training Season.

Stephen Ministers are laypeople trained to provide individual care to people experiencing a difficult time in life, such as grief, divorce, job loss, chronic or terminal illness, etc. In this ministry, we believe that Christ is caring for people through people.

Here at St. John's, we have been a Stephen Ministry congregation since the early 1980s. Over the years, we have trained 150 members as Stephen Ministers. Currently, we have 15 active Stephen Ministers and 10 additional people are being trained in Stephen Ministry this year.

Throughout this year, we hope to build awareness around this long-standing ministry here at St. John's. Our current leadership team includes Jennifer Edwins, Jo Franklin, Barbara Wilson, Ruth Anglin, Sally Lindell, and myself. If you see these folks around, thank them for their hard work in leading Stephen Ministry.

In this holiday season, and beyond, if you or someone you know is hurting and having a difficult time in life right now, consider whether a caring relationship with a Stephen Minister might be helpful, and please let me know.

*Peace and love,
Jonathan*

From Our Pastors



Pastor Pam Fickenscher



Pastor Jonathan Davis

Prayer and Care Ministry

Prayer Chain:

Prayer requests are welcome for any concern or thanksgiving. Requests are kept confidential and not included in Sunday morning prayers unless specifically requested. Contact Mary Cisar with a prayer request or to become a prayer chain volunteer: macisar@gmail.com or 507-663-1097.

Grief Care Resource:

Care Notes are one of the grief support resources at St. John's. Stop by the Commons to pick one up for yourself or for a loved one.

Grief Booklets:

"Journeying through Grief" is a resource for those grieving the loss of loved ones. Contact one of the pastors if you would like a copy or if you would like to give a copy to a friend or family member.



The following St. John's members died in these months last year. We list them so that we can remember these loved ones and their families in prayer "with reverence and affection."

December 12, 2022
Jerry Bothun

December 22, 2022
Gordon Jorgenson

December 25, 2022
Ruth Hansen

Funeral Hospitality

Funeral Hospitality is an important way we can serve and be a blessing to those who are grieving the loss of a loved one. This ministry consists of helping with funeral receptions by doing any of these: donating dessert (homemade or store bought), setting tables, cutting dessert, making coffee, serving/replenishing food and beverages, or assisting with clean-up in the kitchen or dining hall.

Funeral receptions take place very regularly at St. John's both during the week and on Saturdays, at various times ranging from late morning to late afternoon. **We are always looking for more people to join the Funeral Hospitality Email List, in which those on it will simply receive funeral reception notifications with volunteer opportunities.** We want to widen our circle of potential helpers!

If you are willing to join this email list, please contact Angie Gehring at sharedministry@StJohnsNorthfield.org. Thank you!

Poinsettia Orders

The Chancel Guild will be taking orders for poinsettias again this year. The flowers will be used to decorate the church for the Christmas Eve and Christmas Day services.

If you would like to order a poinsettia in honor or memory of someone or in celebration of Christmas, the order form will be available in the church office and on the website.

The last day to have your order form in is Sunday, December 10.



St. John's Stephen Ministers have been trained to walk with those who are facing a challenge in life, whether it be of mind, body, or spirit.

If you know of someone who could benefit from a Stephen Minister, call one of the pastors 507-645-4429 or Jo Franklin (720-281-5107).

Sabbatical Update

Dear members of St. John's,

The fall has been a blur, but before the end of the year I wanted to say thank you for my sabbatical time this past summer. I've had the wonderful opportunity to talk with so many of you about my time away and wanted to share what I was up to on a wider scale. The Personnel Committee granted me a sabbatical after seven years of service at St. John's in 2021. Because of the pandemic and all the uncertainty of traveling, it wasn't until this summer that the schedule worked for me to be away. Midway through June I was able to set down the demands of weekly worship planning and practicing for Sunday and picked things back up again at the start of August. This was the first time in my professional career I've had extended time away from Sunday worship. It was difficult at the start when so much of what I do and love is fed by our singing together, but it eventually became a chance to breathe and rest.

During my time away I was able to find a good balance of rest and excitement. I went on a few trips with friends, visited family, and enjoyed summer life in Northfield. The other time was spent attending two music conferences. The first was the Worship and Music conference held in Montreat, NC, and the other was a week in Philadelphia at the national gathering of the Association of Lutheran Church Musicians. Being in Philadelphia over the July 4th weekend was really fun. It was great to gather and network with musicians who serve Lutheran congregations all over the country.

The last little bit of my sabbatical dreams that I didn't get to complete this year will be to attend a week-long summer course in Cambridge, England in June 2024. The course offers me a chance to sing and study with some of the great English choral conductors.

Finally, I thank you for trusting me to be gone. I know the music was different while I was away but I felt refreshed and ready to start again in August. I feel so well supported by this congregation. I love singing together in worship and I look forward to serving St. John's for many more years to come.

*With gratitude,
Nathan Proctor*

Life and Growth

Deaths

November 12, 2023
Lyla Arneson Paulson

November 13, 2023
Andrew Nelson



Radio Broadcasts in November

November 5, 2023
Given by Hazel Peterson.

November 12, 2023
Given by Tony Becker and Beckie Judge.

November 19, 2023
Given by Cora Scholz
in memory of Bob Scholz
at the time of his birthday.

November 26, 2023
Given by Bruce and Audrey Moe
in memory of their daughter,
Carolyn Moe Buzza.

If you would like to
sponsor a broadcast (\$160),
please contact the church office
by phone at 507-645-4429 or email at
office@StJohnsNorthfield.org.

Children and Youth

Important Dates for Children and Youth to Remember

Sunday School Schedule

December 3, 10, 17

No Sunday School December 24 and 31

Wednesday After School Schedule

December 7, 14, 20

No Wednesday Programs

December 27 and January 3

Advent Fair

Wednesday, November 29, 5:15–7:00 p.m.

Details in the Article on page 10

Sunday School Christmas Program

Sunday, December 17

10:45 a.m. Worship Service

Details in the Article on page 13

3rd Grade Catechism Retreat on Holy Communion

Saturday, January 27

9:00–11:00 a.m., St. John's Hall

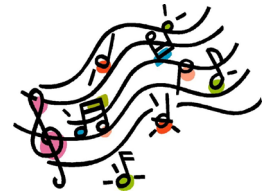
Third Grade Catechism Retreat Saturday, January 27

Third graders, along with their parent(s), are invited to attend a Catechism retreat on the Sacrament of Communion, Saturday, January 27, 9:00–11:00 a.m. at St. John's.

If you are unable to attend, please email Julie Brehmer at children@StJohnsNorthfield.org.

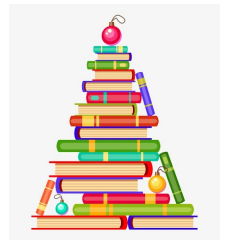
Kids! Would you like to be part of the Sunday School Christmas Program Prelude/Offering Music?

Sunday school children are welcome to participate in the prelude/offering music for the Sunday School Christmas program on December 17. We welcome solos or ensembles, short instrumental or vocal pieces. Please sign-up in the lower Commons or email Julie Brehmer, children@stjohnsnorthfield.org if your child is interested in participating.



Christmas Books Available

St. John's Library has many wonderful Christmas and Advent books and are available for parents and children to check out - some will be on display in the library and others will be downstairs by the Nursery.



Blessings and congratulations to our 3rd Graders who received their Spark Bibles in October!

3rd Grade Bibles are purchased using money from the Johnson Memorial Bible fund.

Henry Davis, Solomon Hassanally, Zachary Paulson, Amelia Timmer

Sunday Morning Youth Group (Grades 6-12) 9:45-10:30 a.m., Youth Room

On Sunday mornings during the school year, all youth are invited to meet in the Youth Room at 9:45 a.m. for treats, highs and lows, and interactive faith discussion. Each week we get a little practice using our Bibles and practice telling our shared story as a community of God's children.

Why do we do this?
**"To care for each other as we learn to
live Christian lives together"**
Wednesday Night Programming
Wednesdays 6:15-7:30 p.m.

December

All Youth: Middle School Confirmation and High School Youth Group

(Grades 6-12)

- December 6 Advent Vespers - Community Ministry
- December 13 Advent Vespers - Community Ministry
- December 20 Advent Vespers - Caroling
- December 27 No Programming - Christmas Break

January

Middle School Confirmation J-Term

(Grades 6-8)



SCAN ME

January 3, 10, 17, and 24 (31st held as a snow day)
In collaboration with St. Peter's Lutheran Church and Bethel Lutheran Church, the Northfield ELCA churches will once again hold a collaborative J-Term. The month of January will be a chance for Lutheran youth in Northfield to come together and explore a variety of topics through the lens of faith. Use the QR code to sign up online.

High School Youth Group

(Grades 9-12)

- January 3 Faith of a Child: Veggie Tales
- January 10 Faith of a Child: Mr. Rogers & Daniel Tiger
- January 17 Finals Self-Care Center
- January 24 Faith of a Child: Sponge Bob

Mentor & Mentee Meetings

Working one-on-one with youth is a meaningful experience that we take seriously. The first Sunday of each month is designated as a Mentor/Mentee Sunday. If necessary, mentoring pairs can make arrangements that fit their schedule.

Service Project Events are also meant to put our faith into action and to enhance the Mentor/Mentee relationship. Opportunities for community events will be in the E-Voice, The Voice, and on the St. John's website.

Mentor/Mentee Sundays Coming Up: December 3 and January 7

Children and Youth

Christmas Party!

All youth (grades 6-12) are invited to a Christmas party on Sunday, December 10 from 1:00-3:00 p.m.

Come for crafts, games, cookies, and conversation. Maybe even show off a Christmas sweater.

**Summer 2024
Youth Summer Trips**

Summer trips are in the works, but hold the week of June 17. Thank you for your patience as we get all the details in place.

**Northfield Week
at Good Earth Village
along with Bethel and
St. Peter's Churches
June 23-28**

Good Earth Village offers camps for grades 2-7 with 2 or 5 night options (depending on grade).

Sign up on December 2 or 3 for a 40% discount. Plus, use code NORTHFIELD24 for an additional \$100 off a full week or \$50 off a half week as a "campership" from St. John's.

Visit <https://goodearthvillage.org/northfield> for details or contact Julie or Kristin with questions.

the **WOMEN'S** page

Gatherings

Baby Boomers

Saturday, Dec. 2, 4:30-6:00
Alison Kavanaugh's home
428 Ford St. E

Women's Breakfast Group

Saturday, Dec. 9, 9:00am
St. John's Fireside Rm

Elizabeth Circle

Thursday, Dec. 14, 1:30pm
St. John's Library

Lydia & Paul Circle

Wednesday, Dec. 6, 9:00am
Coffee and Conversation
10:00 Bible Study
St. John's Hall

Mary Circle

Friday, Dec. 8, 1:00pm
Jo Olson's home
516 Southbridge Dr.

Wellspring

(for 30-50 somethings)
Starting January 2024 (Jan 8)
6:30-8:00 pm
Fireside Room



Knitters (Prayer Shawls)

2nd & 4th Thursday
10:00a St. John's Library

Knitters (World Vision)

1st & 3rd Wednesday, 10am
Kathy Vang's home
414 Waterwheel Dr. Dundas

Night Knitters!

1st & 3rd Wednesday
6:00pm, St. John's Library

Quilters & Bandage Rollers

Thursdays, 9:00a - noon,
Fellowship Hall



RECIPE: Christmas Goodie Boxes

for St. John's Home-bound and Assisted-living folks

PREP DATE: Saturday, December 9, 2023

PREP TIME: 10:00am to Noon YIELD: 60 boxes & cards

INGREDIENTS: DIRECTIONS:

- baked cookies
candies
tissue paper
boxes
ribbon
tape
music
women
laughter
1. Bake (or buy) cookies and bring them to the Fellowship Hall.
 2. Help stuff goodie boxes.
 3. Sit at the crafters' table and make a Christmas card, to be included with each gift box.
 4. Listen to Christmas music.
 5. Enjoy a cup of coffee with other St. John's Women

FROM THE KITCHEN OF: St. John's Women



ANNUAL CHRISTMAS & CAROLS LUNCHEON

Saturday, January 6, 2024
Ruth's on Stafford

11:30 am-1:00 pm

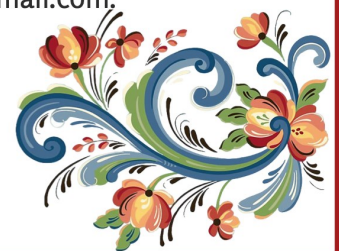
Please join us for a time of fellowship, delicious food with a Norwegian theme to honor the heritage of our church, (don't worry, no lutefisk!) and festive holiday music presented by Carol Benson and other musicians!

ALL women of St. John's are invited!

The cost is \$25, payable in advance at the registration table, by mail or drop off a check to the church office, or pay through PayPal, link: www.StJohnsNorthfield.org/women. A registration table will be located in the Commons between services in December, or email your reservation intent to women.stjohns500@gmail.com.

Please note that payment will no longer be collected at the event.

Looking forward to a wonderful celebration of the holiday season!





Just Love” Triennial Musings

by Jo Franklin

I was so grateful to be one of six St. John’s members to attend the Phoenix WELCA triennial in September, along with 800 other women from around the world. We were so inspired by many voices from marginalized communities, giving us great hope for the future of the church. Two of those voices were from Native American communities.

Kelly Sherman-Conroy, a Native American theologian and the director of public ministry at Nativity Lutheran Church in St. Anthony, Minn., led the Bible study each day. Sherman-Conroy pointed attendees toward the sanctity of all people and life. “Remember the people of the land and don’t forget their stories or struggles,” she said. She gave thanks that we’re not a single story; rather, “we are deeply woven into the fabric of life.”

St. John’s will look forward to hosting Kelly Sherman Conroy at our Courageous Conversations on April 4, 2024, when she will speak on: "From Trauma to Triumph: Cultivating Hope and Resilience - A Lakota Perspective"

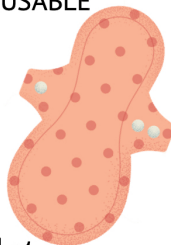
Vance Blackfox, ELCA director for Indigenous Ministries and Tribal Relations, and a citizen of the Cherokee Nation, stated that “women of the ELCA are committed to justice—and are doers.” Blackfox spoke about the Truth and Healing Movement, which seeks to increase ELCA Lutherans’ understanding of how colonization has impacted Indigenous people. He shared that the ELCA is leading the way to explore Lutheran participation in Indian boarding schools, and give support for communities impacted by murdered and missing Indigenous women and girls. The movement will also offer ways to participate in the national Truth and Healing Movement. Take a look at this important work in the ELCA by Googling "ELCA Truth and Healing."

Project ReTHINK Period

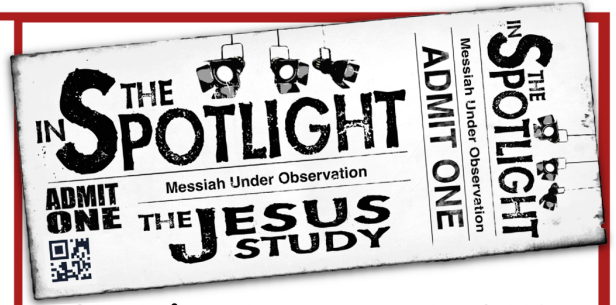
BE PART OF A PROJECT TO HELP PROVIDE FREE REUSABLE MENSTRUAL PADS TO THOSE IN NEED. DONATE:



- Thread** **Plastic snap fasteners**
- Ribbon** **Cotton Flannel**
- Velcro** **Terrycloth (towels)**
- Waterproof fabric (pul)**



Drop items in the donation box, located at the St. John's Women's bulletin board.



Starting January 17 & 18

Wednesdays	Thursdays
5:30 pm-6:30'ish	9:00 am-10:00'ish
Hybrid Zoom	Hybrid Zoom
at St. John's	at Zdenek's home
(room TBD)	

What is WELLSPRING?

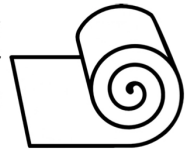
A new monthly gathering - focusing on women younger than the Baby Boomers and desiring meaningful community

First Monday of the month
January 8th, 2024
6:30-8:00 pm
St. John's Fireside Room

for info: jillnestvedt@gmail.com

A MARRIAGE !! Quilting and Bandage Rolling

It's easy to take for granted an abundant supply of sterile gauze rolls when we seek medical treatment here in Minnesota. However, mission hospitals and rural clinics worldwide often lack basic supplies, including this type of bandage. We can help by turning clean, used sheets into bandages which Global Health Ministries distributes to organizations in need. Join us on Thursday mornings in St John's Fellowship Hall from 9:00 am-noon to help with this important ministry. A 5 minute tutorial will get you started. Come as you are anytime during those hours and stay as long as you wish. If you can sit and turn a crank, you can participate!



Like us on Facebook: "Women of St. Johns"

Friend us @ Kvinner St. Johns (Kvinner: Norwegian for "Women" 🙄)

Correspondence: women.stjohns500@gmail.com

Visit our web pages: www.stjohnsnorthfield.org/women



News and Updates

St. John's Advent Fair Wednesday November 29

Everyone is invited to St. John's Advent Fair on Wednesday, November 29, in St. John's Hall.

Come enjoy our Wednesday Night Meal and Advent activities for all ages.

We encourage you to bring friends.
The more the merrier!

Time:

5:15-6:15 p.m.
Wednesday Night Meal
5:45-7:00 p.m.
Advent Fair Activities

Can you help with Advent Fair?

- Dinner - set-up, serve or clean-up
 - Help with crafts/shops
 - Food demonstration – show how to make your favorite Christmas treats
- Fair trade sales of coffee, tea, and chocolate will be available.

Contact Julie Brehmer if you have questions at 507-645-4429 or children@StJohnsNorthfield.org.



St. John's Forums 9:45-10:30 a.m. in the Sanctuary

December 3

Kelli Podracky, Executive Director of the Northfield Union of Youth

Come hear Kelli Podracky, Executive Director of the Northfield Union of Youth, provide detailed information about the vital youth services provided for our Northfield youth, and answer questions about The Key, during the December 3 forum.

The Key is the longest running youth-run youth center in the nation! It is a life-giving community and a safe place for youth to connect with each other, caring adults, and their community. The Key is open 2:30- 9:30 p.m. during the school year, and 2:00-9:00 p.m. during the summer. Free meals and access to resources are available every day on a self-referral basis for all youth.

The Key is run by NUY's Key youth board and is democratically elected by youth. They hire and review all staff as well as make programming and policy decisions about The Key. It's a place to do art on the walls, sit and relax, get help with homework, play music, connect with friends, and to find resources to organize and mobilize about needs in the community around mental health, homelessness, social activism, arts access, food access, and so much more.

January 7

ISAIAH and Faith-based Organizing

Kathryn Lozada has been the Southern Minnesota Regional Organizer with ISAIAH for six years, organizing people of faith and shared values towards racial, economic, and climate justice in Minnesota. Join her and St. John's leaders to learn how ISAIAH has been working for years on the state and local level and finally won significant victories this state legislative session! We also hope to hear from you how these policy wins could impact you and your loved ones, what our communities still need to thrive, and how we could put our faith in action and potentially have more collective impact by partnering with other faith communities.

St. Olaf Choir Scheduled to Sing at St. John's on Sunday, January 14

We welcome the St. Olaf Choir and its director, Dr. Anton Armstrong, to worship services on Sunday, January 14.

They will lead us in worship and sing anthems at several places in our worship services.

This is a long-standing and deeply beloved tradition at St. John's as we welcome the choir back to the place of its birth and as we are blessed by their wonderful leadership and music.



St. John's Community Wednesday Night Meals

St. John's Wednesday Night Meal Team consists of volunteers who have generously shared their time, talents, and sunny attitudes by planning, shopping, cooking, setting up, serving, washing dishes, or cleaning tables and floors in the dining hall to help make this free-will offering dinner a success! It has been a real privilege to work with such an awesome crew while experiencing the joy of feeding and conversing with our many hungry guests! We've seen the number of diners steadily grow since our first meal was served in September, and we always welcome more volunteers, especially with clean-up. More hands make lighter work, AND we have fun doing it!

The Wednesday Night Meal Team includes those pictured above (left to right): Pat Tabery, Bob Tabery, Craig Schultz, Martha Erickson, Chris Erickson, Angie Gehring (Shared Ministry Coordinator), and Gerri Licke. Also part of the dedicated meal crew, but not pictured: Doug Johnson, Karen Schuette, Fran Wood, Marilyn Calcutt, Jill Enestvedt, Don Sahling, and Jill Malecha. Photo taken by Fran Wood.

Contact Angie Gehring at sharedministry@StJohnsNorthfield.org to sign up to assist with clean-up or other needs. No prior experience is necessary, and you determine which Wednesday(s) you want to help. It's a great opportunity to feel connected and to make new friends! **Thank you to all** of those who have generously donated desserts for our meals, with a special thanks to Cora Scholz and Judy Cederberg who have brought a dessert for every meal thus far! We are so blessed!

We invite you to join us for dinner from 5:15-6:15 p.m. on the following remaining meal dates: November 29, December 6 & 13, January 10, 17, 24 & 31, February 7, 21 & 28, March 6, 13 & 20, April 3, 10, 17 & 24, and May 1 & 8.

News and Updates

St. John's Wednesday Night Meals

Let's get together for Dinner -
Come, share a meal!

All are welcome, it's a fantastic time for
fellowship for ALL ages!

Supper is served from 5:15-6:15 p.m.
in St. John's Hall.

Free will offering appreciated!

Wednesday, November 29
Advent Fair Meal

Wednesday, December 6
Totchos with the Fixings

Wednesday, December 13
Meatball Stroganoff

Wednesday, December 20
No Meal - Christmas Break

Wednesday, December 27
No Meal - Christmas Break

Wednesday, January 3
No Meal - Christmas Break



News and Updates

St. John's 2023 Community Christmas Day Dinner is Around the Corner!

The planning process for the Community Christmas Day Dinner event hosted by St. John's has begun!

To help make this wonderful dinner that is free and open to all successful, many volunteers and food donations will be needed.

Watch for opportunities to sign-up beginning November 29 at the Advent Fair, continuing until Christmas.

Thrivent Members: If you are a Thrivent member, consider helping by applying for a Thrivent Action Grant that can be used to help pay for the turkeys and other expenses. Anything will be greatly appreciated!

If you have any questions, please contact Angie Gehring at sharedministry@StJohnsNorthfield.org, or call the church office.



Stewardship Appeal 2024

If you already pledge your financial support to St. John's, we thank you and urge you to continue your support. We also urge you to consider increasing your existing pledge. If you haven't pledged before, we urge you to consider making a first-time pledge; writing down a goal helps make it happen!

As our budget committee considers important decisions about next year's worship, programming, maintenance, and benevolence, we still need to receive many more responses in order to be confident.

If you give electronically through automatic transfer, please review your giving, and let us know your 2024 intent, even if it is to remain the same. Your generosity is heart-warming and assures continuation and growth of the missions of St. John's.

Members can make a pledge using a pledge card, or you may respond electronically on the website, or using the QR code.



If you haven't volunteered to get involved in the amazing work that happens here at St. John's, think about what you might like to know more about, and what you might want to be involved with. Your time and talent have so much value to St. John's.

Wrapping Up the Fall

Thank you so much to all the parents and to all the volunteers who supported the youth this fall in their events and milestones. In the last couple of months we have celebrated with the 10th grade students as they affirmed their baptism and launched the 9th grade students into their mentor/mentee relationships.

Wednesday nights have been full of learning and exploration and fun. The high school students baked cookies, packed TORCH care packages, took a prayer walk, and explored tough faith questions like "Does God forgive *everything*?" The middle school students explored the meaning of relationship with others, with self, and with God, and learned about worship. Andy Dimick came on October 11 to help us think about healing relationships, and the connections between forgiveness and mental health.

Also, on November 1, we joined with the other ELCA churches in town, Bethel and St. Peter's, for a fun night with Louis & Dan and the Invisible Band and a talk by Louis Epstein about embracing one's own religious identity while embracing diversity in community.

Amy Rudser, Michael Mandsager, Steve Taggart, Anna Smith, and Alli Walters have been providing amazing adult presence and guidance in our small groups, reinforcing the message that we grow in faith in community. Thank you to everyone for your prayers and support of these young folks. It is truly a gift to work and learn with them.

~Kristin Partlo

St. John's Children's Christmas Program Sunday, December 17



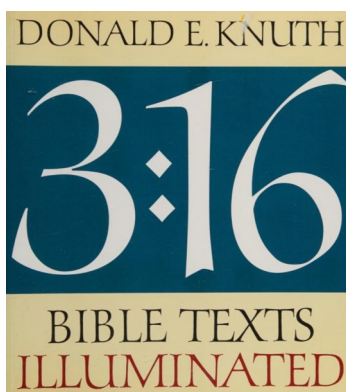
St. John's Children's Christmas Program will be held on Sunday, December 17, at the 10:45 a.m. service.

The program, "The Christmas Gift" is performed by children in preschool–grade 5.

If your child is unable to participate please notify his/her teacher or email Julie at children@StJohnsNorthfield.org.

New in the Library

One way to brighten a winter day is to seek out beauty, not always easy to find in the dormant season. But beauty can be found in the St. John's library! One visually stunning book on the shelves is 3:16: *Bible Texts Illuminated*, by Donald E. Knuth. The author enlisted more



than fifty calligraphers to illuminate the sixteenth verse of the third chapter of every book of the Bible (those that have three chapters or more). Knuth's three-page commentary accompanying each illuminated verse—from Genesis 3:16 to Revelation 3:16—serves as an inviting introduction to the biblical book in which the verse is found. Since each chapter is short and written in engaging style, the book provides an excellent way to become better acquainted with the Bible—in addition to providing a treat for the eyes.

Another splendid book containing calligraphic illuminations is *Gospels and Acts*, a replica in manageable size of that portion of the Saint John's Bible. Find it shelved in the library's oversize section.

From the Property & Grounds Board

Thank you to all who helped make the Fall Churchyard Cleanups on Saturdays, October 14 and 28 extremely successful! Much work was accomplished. Hedges were trimmed, dead wood was removed, weeds were pulled, perennials were clipped off, numerous leaves were swept and raked, and many trailer loads of yard debris were hauled to the compost site. Also, a special thank you goes out to the fifteen Adopt-A-Garden individuals or families, who worked to make our church grounds pleasant throughout the entire growing season.

News and Updates

It's Easy! Direct a Holiday Gift to St. John's!

If you are an eligible member of Thrivent Financial, don't forget to direct Thrivent Choice Dollars.®

Grant funding from Thrivent Financial through its Thrivent Choice® program is directed to our ministry among youth and to the Women of St. John's Lutheran Church.

Eligible Thrivent Financial members who have Choice Dollars available have until March 31, 2024, to direct any remaining 2023 Choice Dollars.

But St. John's Lutheran Church needs your support now - this year. Go to [Thrivent.com/thriventchoice](https://thrivent.com/thriventchoice) to learn more. Or call 800-847-4836 and say "Thrivent Choice" after the prompt.

Don't let Choice Dollars expire. (Note: Eligibility is based upon premiums and contract values - not all members of Thrivent are eligible).



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News and Updates

Pub Theology in November

What is Pub Theology?

It is weekly conversation around questions of faith, God, Jesus, the Bible, current events, and culture. No fancy theological or biblical knowledge needed in order to participate. Just bring your questions, thoughts, and experiences.

We will meet on Monday, December 4, from 6:00-7:30 p.m. at The Contented Cow.

The topics vary and will be published ahead of time on Facebook, in the E-Voice, and an email list.

Contact Pastor Jonathan (jdavis@StJohnsNorthfield.org) to add your name to the email list.



Year-End Giving

Year-end giving typically provides an outsize portion of St. John's annual budget. If you have not yet been able to contribute in 2023 and can at this time, your gifts to our operating funds will be much appreciated! Mailed checks need to be postmarked by December 30. Online gifts can be given by December 27 via our website at www.StJohnsNorthfield.org. Thank you!

An Epiphany Invitation

Have you ever thought you might like to write? Many have discovered that writing as a creative outlet can help us understand our past and renew our energy for living the Christian life.

How have our stories transformed us?

You're invited to join us on an Epiphany journey of inspiration and discovery through writing and sharing our stories in a safe place. Whether you want to write for yourself, for others, or to leave a legacy, we welcome you.

Time: Tuesday Mornings, 10:30 a.m. - noon

Dates: January 9, 16, 23 & 30

Place: St. John's Library

Questions? Please feel free to contact Barb or Chris.

Barb Kuhlman, long-time member of St. John's, former therapist
bkuhlman47@gmail.com

Chris Engstrom, Spiritual Director, retired Pastor
revchristea@me.com

Coffee Sales

Fair trade sales of coffee and more during
will be on the following Sunday:
December 3

If you need items other times during the
month please contact Dawn Tommerdahl at
dawn.tommerdahl@gmail.com
or 701-238-5038.





Sunday Hospitality

Who doesn't enjoy having a treat while visiting with friends, fellow church members, and guests?

If you can share a dozen or so treats, or would like to help with the serving or clean-up on any particular Sunday, you can either sign-up in CCB (a direct sign-up link can be found in the weekly E-Voice) or contact Angie Gehring at sharedministry@StJohnsNorthfield.org.

It's a fun way to help foster connections among people and provide a welcoming atmosphere!

News and Updates

Senior Pastor

Pam Fickenscher

pfickenscher@StJohnsNorthfield.org

Associate Pastor

Jonathan Davis

jdavis@StJohnsNorthfield.org

Director of Children's Ministry

Julie Brehmer

children@StJohnsNorthfield.org

Director of Ministry with Youth & Families

Kristin Partlo

youth@StJohnsNorthfield.org

Facility Manager

Steve Harner

facility@StJohnsNorthfield.org

Music Ministry

Nathan Proctor

music@StJohnsNorthfield.org

Music Staff

Green Bouzard - Jubilate Choir

jubilatechoir@StJohnsNorthfield.org

Arielle Loy - Children's Music Director and
Early Childhood Specialist

arielleloy@gmail.com

David Sims and Will Fecko - Directors of
Rejoice Ringers

Office Manager / Finance Manager

Leah H. Garlie

office@StJohnsNorthfield.org

Parish Nurse

Sally Lindell

parishnurse@StJohnsNorthfield.org

Shared Ministry Coordinator

Angie Gehring

sharedministry@StJohnsNorthfield.org

Congregation President

Kathy Shea

kathleen.louise.shea@gmail.com



St. John's
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500 Third Street West · Northfield MN 55057

PHONE

507-645-4429

EMAIL

office@StJohnsNorthfield.org

WEBSITE

www.StJohnsNorthfield.org

OFFICE HOURS

9 a.m. - 4 p.m. M-Th

9 a.m. - 3 p.m. Fri



Early Deadline for the Voice!

With the holiday season upon us and a need to keep communication flowing - the deadline for the January Voice is EARLY!

*The deadline for January's Voice is
Wednesday, December 13.*

Please get submissions in by the deadline. If articles are not in, they will not appear in the January edition of the Voice.

Thanks for your help and cooperation.

Annual Meeting Reports!

For all those who are submitting information for the Annual Report - the due date for reports is **Friday, December 22.**

Please get the reports in on time!

Mark your calendar for the annual meeting on Sunday, January 28.