



The Voice

OF ST. JOHN'S LUTHERAN CHURCH

VOLUME 61, ISSUE 1

WINTER 2021 / 2022

Please Note:

Upcoming events, dates, and times are as of the middle/end of October.

Due to the pandemic, these may change.

Watch the E-Voice, Sunday Bulletins, and our website for updates and changes or for more information call the church office.

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Advent and Christmas Worship & Events

Sunday, November 28 - First Sunday of Advent
Worship at 8:30 a.m. and 10:45 a.m.

Advent Fair
Wednesday, December 1, from 5:15-6:15 p.m.

Sunday, December 5 - Second Sunday of Advent
Worship at 8:30 a.m. and 10:45 a.m.

Advent Vespers
Wednesdays, December 8 and 15, at 6:00 p.m.
Contemplative Worship in the Sanctuary

Sunday, December 12 - Third Sunday of Advent
Worship at 8:30 a.m. and 10:45 a.m.

Sunday, December 19 - Fourth Sunday of Advent
Worship at 8:30 a.m. and 10:45 a.m.

Christmas Eve - Friday, December 24
Christmas Vespers at 3:00 p.m. (especially for families and children)
Christmas Vespers with Candlelight at 5:00 p.m.
Christmas Candlelight and Holy Communion at 11:00 p.m.

Christmas Day - Saturday, 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

Sundays, December 26 and January 2
One Worship Service at 10:00 a.m.

WORSHIP SERVICES
8:30 & 10:45 a.m. Sundays
LIVESTREAM
8:30 a.m. Sundays
www.StJohnsNorthfield.org

RADIO BROADCASTS
8:30-9:30 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 & 10:45 a.m. Sundays

Livestream

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



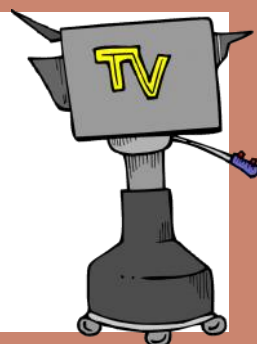
Radio Broadcasts

8:30-9:30 a.m. Sundays
KYMN Radio 1080 AM / 95.1 FM
kymnradio.net



TV Broadcasts

7:30 p.m. Mondays
12:00 a.m. & 9:00 a.m. Tuesdays
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

"I am about to do a new thing; now it springs forth, do you not perceive it? I will make a way in the wilderness and rivers in the desert." – Isaiah 43:19

In the Tony Award winning musical *Next to Normal*, a family is going through a lot of change, loss, and grief. I think one of the most powerful moments in the musical is an exchange between the mom, Diana, and the daughter, Natalie.

Diana says to her daughter, "We tried to give you a normal life. I realize now I have no clue what that is." And Natalie responds, "I don't need a life that's normal, that's way too far away. But something next to normal would be okay."

Something *next to normal*. As our country is experiencing the hopeful decline of the Delta variant and, at the same time, awaiting the approval of vaccines for some younger children, I find myself refusing to use the word "normal", as in "When things are back to normal..." or "Life is starting to feel normal again." Fun fact: the word "normal" is almost entirely absent from the Bible.

I think if we are honest, nothing really feels normal. And perhaps it shouldn't. We *are* different now. Instead, I find that things are feeling next to normal - close to what was, but also different.

It feels next to normal to be in worship together, and with a choir too! It feels next to normal to have small groups meeting at church a little more. It feels next to normal to have Faith Formation programming on Sundays and Wednesdays again.

At the same time, some things feel better than normal. Faith Formation with children and youth has felt focused on community-building and connecting in a way that has been missing in the past. A small group of parents has been gathering during the Sunday School hour, where together they have said, "It's just nice to be together." The short Holy Communion service outside each week has created connecting points for people that might not typically happen on a "normal" Sunday.

On Wednesday evenings, during Confirmation and High School Youth group, I have had the great joy of learning from Emmanuel Kaghondi, our Director of Ministry with Youth & Families. He has been teaching our youth about *ubuntu*, an African worldview centered around the interconnectedness of humanity. A common translation of *ubuntu* is "I am because we are." It is a deep sense of our interdependence with each other, with creation, and with God in order for us to thrive.

After the past 18 months, I think we, as a community and a church, have a deeper sense of *ubuntu*. We have become more aware of our need for one another. We have also become more aware of unmet needs caused by the pandemic that need tending *and* met needs caused by the pandemic that need holding.

Perhaps God is doing a new thing among us. Maybe things will never go back to normal. And perhaps they shouldn't. The promise of the Gospel is not that God will keep things the same and nothing will ever change. The promise of the Gospel is that God will be with us when

Continued on page 5

From Our Pastors



Pastor Pam Fickenschner



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.



Radio Broadcasts

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.

Stephen Ministry: A New Class

St. John's has begun training a new group of Stephen Ministers! The training involves fifty hours of developing skills in areas such as listening, assertiveness training, confidentiality, crisis theory, and the use of scripture and prayer. St. John's members participating in the training are Erik and Mary Holleque, Barry Becker, Ruth Smestad Anglin, and Carol Breimhorst. In addition, Pastor Carol Sinykin and Nita Kramer from Christ Lutheran Church in Faribault are joining the class. Stephen Leaders Jonathan Davis, Jennifer Edwins, Jo Franklin, and Barbara Wilson will be teachers, and there will be a commissioning service for the group next spring.

St. John's has trained more than 140 members of the congregation as Stephen Ministers over the past 40 years. There are currently eleven active Stephen Ministers serving the St. John's congregation and the Northfield community. As representatives of the congregation, they offer presence, care, and a listening ear to individuals dealing with a challenging time. If you or someone you know could benefit from a Stephen Minister, contact one of the pastors at 507-645-4429.



Barry Becker, Erik Holleque, Ruth Smestad Anglin, Nita Kramer, Pastor Carol Sinykin, Carol Breimhorst, Jennifer Edwins, Mary Holleque, Barbara Wilson, Jo Franklin

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).



Front row: Mari Hanson, Natalie DeGrego, Evan Loe, Jake Tanghe, Thea Hanson
Back row: Madison Hansen, Katherine Organ, Samuel Swedin, Clara Menssen, Erik Boehning, William Becker, Emmanuel Kaghondi (Director of Youth & Family Ministries)
Not pictured: Ava Little, Mason Vatter, Cora McBroom

Tenth Graders Affirm their Baptism

St. John's gives thanks to God that the above young people in our congregation participated in the **Rite of Confirmation** on Sunday, October 31, at the 10:45 a.m. service.

This rite follows a seven year education and reflection program at St. John's beginning with Catechism (CAT) classes in grades three, four, and five; weekday and Sunday classes in grades six, seven, and eight; and classes, retreats, and a mentor relationship in grade nine. The program concluded with the retreat at St. John's on Saturday, October 9. Please pray for these young people and their faith and life as they make this commitment and affirmation.

From Our Pastors

Continued from page 3

things change. The promise of the gospel is that when we are standing before a wilderness, God will make a way where there is no way. God will bring forth water from desert and dry places. Maybe that is what God is up to now among us. Maybe God is making all things new – making us new into one body of Christ for the sake of the world.

May you find places that are next to normal, and better than normal, in this new season.

With peace and love,
Pastor Jonathan

Life and Growth

Baptisms

September 19, 2021

Luca McBroom Squadroni
son of Sarah McBroom and Aaron Squadroni

Deaths

September 29, 2021

Beverly Nestingen-Lundeen



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."

November 10, 2020

Maxine Petrick

November 15, 2020

Dick Beckman

November 18, 2020

Jon Rondestvedt

November 23, 2020

Gertrud Johannsen

November 30, 2020

Joanne Sommers

November 30, 2020

Eugene Nelson

December 18, 2020

Beverly Gallarane

January 14, 2021

Mary White

January 21, 2021

William Rowan

Children and Youth

Important Dates for Children to Remember!

Sunday School Schedule (9:45-10:30 a.m.)

Nov. 7	Sunday School - <i>Daylight Savings</i>
Nov. 14	Sunday School
Nov. 21	Sunday School
Nov. 28	<i>No Sunday School - Thanksgiving</i>
Dec. 5	Sunday School
Dec. 12	Sunday School
Dec. 19	Sunday School
Dec. 26	<i>No Sunday School - Winter Break</i>
Jan. 2	<i>No Sunday School - Winter Break</i>
Jan. 9	Sunday School
Jan. 16	Sunday School
Jan. 23	Sunday School
Jan. 30	Sunday School

ROCK - Wednesday Afterschool Programming

Nov. 3	Programming
Nov. 10	Programming
Nov. 17	Programming
Nov. 24	<i>No Programming - Thanksgiving</i>
Dec. 1	Programming
Dec. 8	Programming
Dec. 15	Programming
Dec. 22	<i>No Programming - Christmas</i>
Dec. 29	<i>No Programming - New Year's</i>
Jan. 5	<i>No Programming</i>
Jan. 12	Programming
Jan. 19	Programming
Jan. 26	Programming

Advent Fair

Wednesday, December 1, 5:15-6:15 p.m.

CATechism for Grades 4 and 5 Starts Nov. 3

Wednesdays, 4:15-5:15 p.m.

Third Grade CAT Retreat

Saturday, January 29
9:00-11:00 a.m., St. John's Hall

3rd Grade Catechism Retreat

Third graders, along with their parent(s), are invited on Saturday, January 29, from 9:00-11:00 a.m. for a Catechism retreat on the Sacrament of Communion at St. John's.

If you are unable to attend, please contact Julie Brehmer at 507-645-4429 or children@StJohnsNorthfield.org.



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.

Sunday Morning Youth Group

On Sunday mornings, during the school year, all youth (grades 6-12) are invited to meet in the Youth Room at 9:45 a.m. for treats, highs and lows, and interactive faith discussion! Other young adults and church members are encouraged to attend for intra and inter-generational connections. These gatherings will be led by Emmanuel Kaghondi and other adults.

Topics:

- | | |
|---------------|--|
| • November 7 | Adam & Eve: The lovable Screw-Ups |
| • November 14 | Abraham & Sarah: The Ordinary Patriarchs |
| • November 21 | Joseph |
| • November 28 | <i>No Youth Group - Thanksgiving Break</i> |
| • December 5 | Moses: The Frustrated Leader |
| • December 12 | Rahab: The Faithful Opportunist |
| • December 19 | Deborah: Thee Exasperated Matriarch |
| • December 26 | <i>No Youth Group - Winter Break</i> |
| • January 2 | <i>No Youth Group - Winter Break</i> |
| • January 9 | Ruth: The Tenacious Outsider |
| • January 16 | David: The Flawed and Beloved King |
| • January 23 | Solomon: The Ambitious Son |
| • January 30 | Jonah: The Passive Aggressive Coot |

Wednesday Confirmation

Youth (grades 6-8) are encouraged to attend on Wednesday nights from 6:15-7:30 p.m. as part of our Confirmation program. We are investing in community building among our Youth this year, exploring aspects of *UBUNTU* - an African worldview centered around the interconnectedness of humanity, nature and God. These gatherings will be led by Pr. Pam Fickenscher, Pr. Jonathan Davis, and Emmanuel Kaghondi.

Large group teaching of the story of scripture followed by guided smaller group discussion time.

Topics:

- November 3 Back to Basics: What is Prayer?
- November 10 Back to Basics: What is the Bible?
- November 17 Back to Basics: What is Salvation?
- November 24 *No Programming - Thanksgiving Break*
- December 1 Advent Fair
- December 8 Advent Vespers
- December 15 Advent Vespers
- December 22 *No Programming - Winter Break*
- December 29 *No Programming - Winter Break*
- January 5 ALL ELCA J-Term Classes from 6:30-7:30 p.m.
- January 12 ALL ELCA J-Term Classes from 6:30-7:30 p.m.
- January 19 ALL ELCA J-Term Classes from 6:30-7:30 p.m.
- January 26 ALL ELCA J-Term Classes from 6:30-7:30 p.m.
- January 28-29 Manna & Mercy Retreat

High School Youth Group

The High School Youth Group will continue to meet on Wednesdays from 6:15-7:15 p.m. to connect with each other and explore what it means to live a life rooted in Christ. Each week's activities will alternate between interest-driven faith discussions, BIG questions, service projects, and casual hangout times to foster communityship with one another in the guidance of adults and supporting parent volunteers.

Topics:

- November 3 What's the purpose of the Church?
- November 10 Who wrote the Bible?
- November 17 Jesus: The Only Way to God?
- November 24 *No Programming - Thanksgiving Break*
- December 1 Advent Fair
- December 8 Advent Vespers
- December 15 Advent Vespers
- December 22 *No Programming - Christmas Break*
- December 29 *No Programming - Christmas Break*
- January 5 People Pleasing and Making Decisions
- January 12 God's Promises and Searching for Purpose
- January 19 What worries me as an adult?
- January 26 Religiosity, Atheism, and Secularism
- January 28-29 Manna & Mercy Retreat

Children and Youth



Upcoming Events

November 7
Youth Bonfire

December 4
Pay It Forward

January 28-29
Manna & Mercy Retreat

Mentee Mentor

9th grade Mentor and Mentee Meetings

Find a time that works for each other
for faith discussion.
Continue to look for opportunities to serve
together in our church
or out in the community.

News and Updates

Advent Fair Wednesday, December 1 5:15-6:15 p.m.

Celebrate the start of Advent Season by joining us for St. John's Advent Fair!

Plans are underway for Advent Fair to take place outdoors at St. John's this year. Invite family and friends for this wonderful annual tradition!

Watch the E-Voice and the Sunday Bulletin for more details!

Blood Drive Update

Since May of 2020, St. John's has hosted 7 blood drives (2 in partnership with Carleton College) collecting a total of 264 units of blood. Since one unit has the potential to save 3 lives; that is a whopping 792 people helped!

The Red Cross tells us there continues to be a serious ongoing shortage of blood.

Please consider making a difference and donate blood at our next drive scheduled for January 13 from 1:00-6:00 p.m. in St. John's Hall.

You can sign up online at www.redcrossblood.org or by phone: 1-800-733-2767.



Fall Fellowship Events

On Sunday, September 26, we celebrated fall with **Fall Fest** and connected with friends. We had a lunch of hot dogs, chips, cookies, cotton candy, and apples. There were children and youth activities as well.



On Wednesday, October 6, we had our first **Wednesday Night Meal** in 18 months! What a joy to see the planning and effort blossom into nourishment and connection!



Safe Operating Task Force Update

The task force has been meeting now for 20 months, offering advice to the Council on how we respond to the COVID-19 pandemic. We have been very gratified by the diligence of the congregation and staff in carefully protecting one another and the community, by the creativity shown in finding ways to continue to worship, meet and serve, and by the patience and good cheer shown by so many. But we are also all eager to safely resume more normal activities together in person, even as we know people are living in a variety of situations, with different levels of health risk, different work and family exposures, and different vaccination status.

There are several reasons for cautious optimism as we make our plans for the next few months:

1. Vaccination for children is likely to become available.
2. Boosters for higher risk people are likely to be more available.
3. Infection rates are likely to fall.

If that proves true, we will be in a position to take more steps toward normal.

First, beginning October 23, we moved communion from outside into St. John's Hall. We will follow the same structure as for outdoor communion, with those desiring communion moving into St. John's Hall immediately after the service. We will wear masks except when receiving bread and wine for now.

We also believe that it is now reasonable to allow meals in St. John's Hall on other days of the week, following guidelines for masking while moving about. Eating while seated in a large space is something we will allow for those who wish to take part, while being mindful that not everyone is ready to take that risk.

The next step could happen as early as Advent, when we may be able to resume communion in the Sanctuary, as part of the Sunday service. We would continue to use masks until the local infection rate falls below the CDC guideline level, but removing our masks for the receiving of bread and wine may become possible in Advent.

At that same time, we may be able to resume fellowship between services in St. John's Hall, with specific recommendations based on the status of COVID-19 in the community. Yes, that could mean coffee and treats.

Of course, we will adapt plans to the situation and the guidance we get from the CDC and the MN Department of Health. But we want you to be aware of the hopeful planning underway.

News and Updates

Operation Joy

Operation Joy is a community-wide gift sharing program of the Community Action Center and is set to take place on December 8, 2021. While the pandemic has changed some aspects of Operation Joy, the CAC's goal remains the same: to provide a joyful holiday experience for all children in our community.

The best way to support this goal is through monetary donations. Donations are used to purchase gift cards so families can select gifts their children will enjoy the most.

If you would like to support Operation Joy, donations can be made by:

Going online at:
communityactioncenter.org/operation-joy

Send a check directly to:
Community Action Center
c/o Operation Joy
1651 Jefferson Parkway, Suite HS-200
Northfield, MN 55057

**Donations are appreciated by
November 19, 2021.**

In keeping with tradition, children will still each receive a pair of pajamas and families will receive a blanket. St. John's Quilters are donating 70 quilts this year.



News and Updates

Ringling of the Bells in Remembrance of Veterans Day

On Wednesday, November 11,
St. John's will toll its bells 11 times at
11:00 a.m. in remembrance of Veterans Day.

The tolling of bells on 11/11 is a practice
dating back to Armistice Day that ended
World War One as a prayer for peace.

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 12.



All Creation Sings Hymnals Dedicated

On Sunday, September 19, during worship we dedicated our copies of the new hymnal supplement *All Creation Sings*. This supplement, released in 2020 by Augsburg Fortress, is a collection of 200 hymns and songs designed to be used alongside our current hymnal *Evangelical Lutheran Worship*. In addition to new music, there are two new communion liturgy settings that we will explore together when we return to indoor communion, and newly written prayers. Through the generosity of church members, we purchased 330 books for the Sanctuary. Many books were given in memory or in honor of loved ones - parents, grandchildren, teachers, friends, saints of our congregation - all named within the front of the books. They are located at the ends of each of the pews and you are invited to pick them up and page through them to see what new things stand out to you. St. John's has a history of being early adopters when it comes to new worship resources and it's exciting to join with other congregations across the ELCA as we sing from *All Creation Sings*.



Adult Choir and Handbell Choirs Resume Rehearsals

After almost 18 months, rehearsals for St. John's Chorale and the Rejoice Ringers resumed again in October. Both groups began working to prepare music for worship on Sunday but with new safety measures in place. After lots of study, and following the recommendations of the Safe Operating Task Force, participants are vaccinated and masked, with extra space between them. Rehearsals also take place in bigger spaces to allow for improved ventilation.

Even following these precautions, we recognize that not everyone feels comfortable ringing or singing at this time and that's completely okay. We will gladly welcome you at whatever point you feel ready.

Celebrating Carol Benson

On Sunday, October 3, we celebrated the retirement of Carol Benson as the director of the Jubilate Choir. Carol has led groups of children and youth in singing for over 30 years at St. John's and in the wider Northfield community. She began her time at St. John's in 1986 directing the Primary Choir of children in 3rd-5th grades. Over the years she led the Primary Choir, the Hosanna Choir, the Alleluia Choir, and finally the Jubilate Choir. She helped our young people experience beauty and wonder grounded in God's love. Carol is an incredible gift to our community and we thank her for so many years of faithful service. We give thanks for all the anthems shared in worship, spring musicals, Orff instruments, rhythm instruments, all shared in praise of God. One surprise shared with Carol in worship that morning was a hymn text written by Bruce Benson.

"Listening to Young Children Sing"
(sung to the tune of "All Things Bright and Beautiful")

Refrain:

List'ning to young children sing
A hymn of joyful praise,
Stirs an old soul to give thanks
For gifts of life and grace.

1.
Just sit up straight and listen,
as Carol's choirs sing,
Your own heart grows more youthful,
your spirit too takes wing. (refrain)
2.
Some find the children naughty;
For others, naughty's cute.
And Carol thinks, "Thank God for kids!
There's just no substitute." (refrain)
3.
Consider all the children,
their voices raised in song;
It's just because she loved them,
that Carol stayed so long. (refrain)

St. Olaf Choir Scheduled to Sing at St. John's on Sunday, January 9

We welcome the St. Olaf Choir and its director, Dr. Anton Armstrong, to worship services on Sunday, January 9.

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.

News and Updates



November 7 is All Saints Sunday

This is the day the church particularly gives thanks for those who have gone before us in faith.

St. John's will remember by name those members who have died in the past year, ringing the bell, and lighting candles in memory of each of them.

Kathryn Haugen
Maxine Petrick
Dick Beckman
Jon Rondestvedt
Gertrud Johannsen
Joanne Sommers
Eugene Nelson
Beverly Gallarane
Mary White
William Rowan
L. Gordon Smith
Robert "Bob" Scholz
Marlene Engstrom
Pauline Fagre
Alvhild Sherve
Dorothy Ostlie
Beverly Nestingen-Lundeen
Helen Radtke
Jim Thompson
Paul Raadt
Eldora Seitz
Rae Pearson

St. John's also rejoices with thanksgiving at these new saints who have entered the baptismal waters in the past year.

Case Andrew Tussing
Luca McBroom Squadroni

One may not see
God's Spirit,
but Her contrails
are everywhere.



WHAT'S BEEN HAPPENING IN 2021?

JUSTICE

Each month of the school year, since February 2021, Courageous Conversations offered programs (via Zoom) on Race Matters. That's eight programs, attended by an average of 50 households in the Northfield community.

DISCIPLESHP

Each month small groups continued to meet via Zoom, outdoors, indoors with masks... keeping relationships strong, praying for one another, and sharing our love of God's Word.

STEWARDSHIP

220 School Kits to Lutheran World Relief (LWR)

118 quilts LWR and Global Health Ministries (GHM)

108 baby care kits to LWR

28 fabric kits to LWR

48 hospice kits to GHM

200 rolled bandages to GHM

7 twin flat sheets and 33 pillowcases to GHM

10 College Care Packages, each with a cozy throw blanket, and \$85 in gas and Target cards to TORCH students

20 Knitted prayer shawls

3 Knitted baptismal blankets

ALL THE INFO YOU NEED:

www.StJohnsNorthfield.org/women
women.stjohns500@gmail.com
Also in the yearbook, found in the commons on the credenza under the women's bulletin board.

YOU MAY NEVER KNOW THE ENTIRE DRAMA BEHIND THE HOLY SPIRIT'S ACTIVITIES,

but sometimes you're allowed to glimpse a bit of the adventure as it passes through your own hands. This is a story from Cindy McBroom, who joined St. John's with her husband, Jon, a few years ago. Since she didn't know many people in the congregation, she decided to get acquainted with St. John's quilters. She wasn't a seamstress, but she cut squares, and tied knots, and made friends.

Not long after, Jon made a mysterious discovery. In his car there appeared a box full of beautiful fabric, lots of it, right off the bolt – which was curious, because there was no note, no explanation, and Jon is not a seamstress!

Cindy brought the box to the quilters and they decided the fabric was too exquisite to cut into quilt squares. This treasure was destined to make beautiful dresses! So they bought matching thread, bundled pieces into individual fabric kits and shipped them off to Lutheran World Relief.

We don't know from whence the fabric originated, or who put it in Jon's car. We don't know where in the world, or in whose hands, the bundled kits landed. We are convinced, however, some women who'd been asking God to provide cloth, received answers to their prayers in the form of lovely bundles of fabric, and St. John's quilters got to be a part of it.

FYI: Lutheran World Relief Fabric Kits provide fabric and thread for vocational training programs teaching sewing, and for newly trained tailors to launch their sewing businesses.



COURAGEOUS CONVERSATIONS Building the Beloved Community

November 4, 2021 7:00p "Moving Forward"

St. Olaf Campus Life

Deanna Thompson, Director, Lutheran Center for Faith, Values, and Community

Alyssa Melby, Program Director, Academic Civic Engagement

Anja Dulin, St. Olaf student

Learn how Lutheran values are supporting anti-racist action underway on campus, how these initiatives intersect with work occurring in the local community, and how anti-racist work in a predominantly white institution presents both challenges and opportunities.

Register:
www.StJohnsNorthfield.org/courageous



The Library at St. John's From the Adult Ministry & Education Board By Genevieve Quarberg

Although the Library at St. John's is in a unique place, close to two main entrances, you must choose to enter it. I encourage you to do just that.

For several months, Anita Hellie and Marilyn Calcutt have worked hours to rearrange or secure new bookshelves, cataloguing all the retained books on the computer (replacing the card catalogue), and attaching new, large number designations to the books, as well as on the shelves. It is now easier to browse for books and the space is pleasant for small group meetings.

If you are looking for encouragement and growth in understanding what it means to be a Christian in this muddled, murky world, perhaps the "old" words of writers like Luther, C.S. Lewis, Buechner or Bonhoeffer would appeal to you. If you are looking for contemporary words, check *The Message*, a fresh translation of the New Testament, Psalms and Proverbs by Eugene H. Peterson, one of the many Bible translations available for your perusal in the library (not to be checked out).

Such browsing may lead you to choose to buy *Living the Message*, a year of daily reflections by Eugene H. Peterson. Or, after reading some of Bonhoeffer's books (many recently given to us) you might want to secure your own copy of *A Year With Dietrich Bonhoeffer*, excerpts from his writings.

Our collection of children's books is a treasure! Parents and grandparents can enjoy reading them as much as children can enjoy looking and listening.

It's easy to check out books by signing the card on the inside of the back cover and leaving it in the basket on the desk. Tell yourself to return the book within a month!



News and Updates

Pub Theology Returns in November

What is Pub Theology?

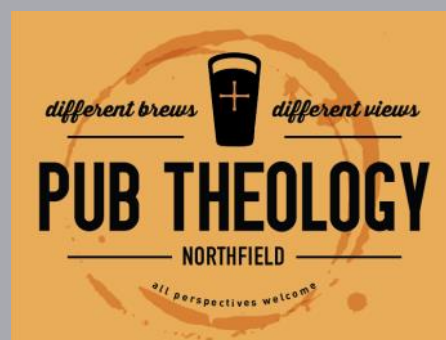
It is conversation led by Pastor Pam and/or Pastor Jonathan around questions of faith, God, Jesus, the Bible, current events, and culture. No fancy theological or biblical knowledge needed in order to participate. Just bring your questions, thoughts, and experiences.

We will meet on the following Mondays
from 6:00-7:30 p.m.
November 1
November 15

Feel free to invite family and friends, neighbors, and strangers.

The topic and location 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.



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, 2020, to direct any remaining 2019 Choice Dollars.

But St. John's Lutheran Church needs your support now - this year. Go to 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).



Stewardship Appeal 2022

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! 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.

Please let us know your intention for giving next year by **Sunday, November 15.**

Your Stewardship Board

Annual Meeting Reports

For all those who are submitting information for the Annual Report, please turn your report in by Monday, December 20, and mark your calendar for the annual meeting on Sunday, January 23 (watch future publications for more details regarding the annual meeting).

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 2021 and can at this time, your gifts to our operating funds will be much appreciated! Mailed checks need to be postmarked by December 31. Online gifts can be given by December 28 at www.StJohnsNorthfield.org. Thank you!

ELCA World Hunger

Working with and through our congregations, in the United States, Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands, Lutheran churches overseas and other partners, ELCA World Hunger is uniquely positioned to reach communities in need. From health clinics to microloans, water wells to animal husbandry, community meals to advocacy, your gifts to ELCA World Hunger make it possible for the ELCA to respond, supporting sustainable solutions that get at the root causes of hunger and poverty.

Each November we focus special giving on world hunger. Please consider a donation to ELCA World Hunger by mailing a check to the church (note ELCA World Hunger on the memo line of your check) or through online giving. Visit <https://elca.org/Our-Work/Relief-and-Development/ELCA-World-Hunger> to learn more about how the ELCA has made positive differences in peoples' lives around the world. Thank you.

It's Not Just for Women Anymore

Church circles and Bible studies were traditionally gatherings of women who would meet in homes on a rotating basis, enjoy coffee and a treat, and spend time on a Bible Study. This has worked for many years; but as our population has aged and many retirees have downsized into smaller living spaces, it has become more and more difficult to accommodate Bible Study groups in homes.

Because of this changing demographic, the Lydia Circle decided several years ago to begin meeting in St. John's Hall. The social time with coffee and treats continued as well as the Bible studies led by a circle member, but the location made it easier for those who had a hard time navigating steps and parking at or near homes to attend. Lydia Circle decided that more changes were needed.

Circles at St. John's use the Bible study from the *Gather Magazine*. A change was made in these studies. Rather than a year-long study, the magazine changed the format to having the study be three continuous months in the Fall (September, October, and November) one topic for December, one continuous study during the winter months (January, February, March, and April) and one individual study in May. Still, something was missing!! As everyone knows, St John's has an abundance of retired pastors. It was decided to ask these St. John's clergy members to help lead Bible Studies. This would enable the Circle to gain a clearer insight into the topic of these multi-monthly studies. This was the beginning of having clergy lead our studies. The group still met for coffee and treats, but the Bible study was led by a retired pastor. The group still felt something was missing!

Why not invite the men and other members of the congregation to join us? Some men were dropping their wives off at the church door and then picking them up when the Bible Study was over. Why not ask them to stay for coffee and the Bible Study? Why not ask those who are not involved in another circle to attend? This would be a Bible study for all to attend without the commitment of having to join. So became the birth of the Lydia and Paul Circle. The result is a group of people who learn and discuss these Bible lessons together.

Anyone who is interested in attending should feel free to come to the December meeting. Check us out. A copy of the month's study can be emailed to you before the meeting day. All are welcome - both men and women. If you have questions or want a copy of the study, please feel free to contact:

- Anita Hellie at 507-301-3609 or ahellie@charter.net
- Marilyn Calcutt at 507-210-1052 or merilyn.calcutt@gmail.com

We meet the second Wednesday of the month at 9:30 a.m. in St. John's Hall. You are welcome!

St. John's Staff

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pfickenscher@StJohnsNorthfield.org

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OFFICE HOURS

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

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



Sunday, January 23, 2022