

# *THE GOOD NEWSLETTER*

*June 2020*



ST. JOHN EVANGELICAL  
— LUTHERAN CHURCH —

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**“God’s Love in Action”**

## *Pastor's Note*

Here's one of my favorite jokes:

A grasshopper walks into a bar. The bartender says, "Hey, we have a drink named after you!" The grasshopper says, "You've got a drink named 'Steve'?!"

That joke always makes me laugh! Laughter is a good thing. Especially in stressful times, like these. A recent article I read said that one of the ways we can deal with quarantine fatigue is to "Keep yourself mentally stimulated but distracted." Enjoying things that make us laugh engages our brains and keeps our minds off of the things we can't do anything about. There's a reason why I often try to incorporate humor into worship services ... because laughter is healing.

In Genesis 18, when three heavenly visitors show up at Abraham and Sarah's tent to give them the surprising news that they would have a son, Sarah laughs and says, "Am I to have joy now? Even in my old age?" And the answer is "yes"... thanks to God, you can have joy, even now. These days of social isolation are taking its toll on all of us. The powerlessness and uncertainty we're all feeling is enough to make us exclaim, "Am I to have joy NOW?" And the answer is "Yes!" We have a savior who has defeated death and so we know that we will end up with God and each other in the end. That's a joyful thing!

On May 31<sup>st</sup>, we celebrated the beginning of the season of Pentecost. Pentecost is a celebration of the presence of the Holy Spirit in the Church and in our lives. The Holy Spirit bears fruit in our lives in many ways and one of those fruits is joy. The Spirit helps us be joyful ... even now. That joy is a gift from God. So, keep laughing and don't let anyone or anything steal it from you!

Here's another favorite joke:

A guy was washing the dishes in his kitchen and he heard a knock at the front door. He opened the door and there was nobody there. Just as he was closing it he looked down and was surprised to see a snail standing there.

"Can I have a glass of water, please?" asked the snail.

The man was kind of freaked out by the thought of a talking, door-knocking snail, so instead of answering, he picked up the snail, threw it as far as he could, and went back to the dishes.

Several months later the man heard a knock at the front door. He opened it and there was nobody there. Just as he was closing it he looked down and was surprised to see the snail again.

"Hey, what'd you do THAT for?!" said the snail.

May you be open to the unexpected surprises God brings you even now. And keep laughing!

Peace,  
Pastor Russ



### *From the Executive Board...*

**A message from the St. John Executive Board:** The COVID-19 pandemic has affected all of our lives since March 2020 when churches were closed to prevent the spread of the virus. The St. John Lutheran Church Executive Committee, Council, and staff are committed to protecting the health and welfare of the members of our congregation and have prepared a reopening plan that outlines what church activities are allowed as we progress further into the COVID-19 pandemic. This was based on reviewing current government and ELCA publications, health authority publications, and interviews with local health providers. It is a complicated situation with no easy answers. Once the plan is approved, it will be made available to the congregation.

No matter what phase of the plan we are operating under, we ask that all members follow the recommendations to help mitigate the spread of the virus, practicing social distancing, wearing masks, and proper hand hygiene (soap and water or 60%+ alcohol hand sanitizer). Be responsible. Do not attend or visit the church if you are feeling ill, have been exposed to someone with COVID-19, have a compromised immune system, or are at high risk of exposing others. The best way you can love your neighbor is to protect their health and yours. If at any point in time a parishioner becomes ill with COVID-19 and has been in attendance at church, a small group, or worship service, the parishioner is highly encouraged to contact Pastor Leeper or church office staff immediately in order that the church may assist with contact tracing and initiate appropriate disease mitigation processes.

The Executive Committee and Church Council asks that the members of St. John please remain patient throughout the reopening process, keeping in mind this may take some time to work through. This is new territory for all of us and we are endeavoring to make the best decisions we can. As the people of St. John, we must be prepared to take a few steps forwards and possibly many steps backwards at any point in time. The Church Council is committed to regularly reviewing the reopening process and making scientific, fact-based decisions in conjunction with thorough moral deliberation that benefits the well-being of all the people of St. John and the greater Charles City community.

#### **Our Generosity in February, March, and April**

Your offerings to St. John were shared beyond our walls in the following ways:

8% of our regular February offering (\$2414.44), March (\$2195.45), and April offering (\$4077.36) went to support the mission of the larger church.

2% of our total offering goes to support our community needs. In February (\$823.13) was donated to the ELCA Good Gifts. In March and April, a total of (\$2063.36) was given to the Northeastern Iowa Food Bank.

The First Quarter 8% of the Thank Offering (\$ 2868.49) was designated to the following: (\$2500) to the EPIC Scholarship Fund for students attending Lutheran Colleges and (\$394.20) to "Hope for Life" for the purchase of car seats for those in need.

*FYI...*

**As of now...**

Worship services are being recorded for you to listen to and watch. The Sunday service will be available on Sunday mornings at 9:00 a.m. or a few minutes later on KCHA FM 95.9. You can also go to [www.stjohncharlescity.org](http://www.stjohncharlescity.org), click on "Watch & Listen", then podcast, then choose the date of the service you want to listen to. To watch the service go to the St. John Facebook page or to YouTube, (search St. John Lutheran, Charles City, Iowa). The E-skinny also provides a link.

**Though the St. John building is closed to the public, you can call the office with any questions or concerns.** When staff is there your call will be answered, otherwise leave a voicemail for Kathy. When you call the office after the announcement there is a short pause and then her voicemail. Kathy can check her voicemail from home. You can also reach her by emailing [khoeft@stjohncharlescity.com](mailto:khoeft@stjohncharlescity.com).

**Your offering can be mailed to:  
St. John Lutheran, 200 S Main St  
Charles City, IA 50616**

**Kans for Kids Kickoff!**



The Stewardship board will be collecting pop bottles & cans (NO glass) as a fund raiser for youth activities such as Bible camps, preschool, etc. They have placed a fenced area at the top of the hill by our small shed to collect cans. On **Saturday, June 20<sup>th</sup> from 10:00 a.m. – noon board members will be there to collect your cans!** If you cannot make it during that time, please call the office and we will arrange a time to pick up your cans so they can be counted during the Kickoff. Our pop can/bottle collection site will be a year-round fundraiser.

The Synod Assembly in June has been postponed. The 2020 Northeastern Iowa Synod Assembly will be held August 22 at Nazareth Lutheran Church in Cedar Falls, Iowa. Please note change of location. Due to the unknown duration of the COVID-19 pandemic, updated registration forms will be mailed to congregations on June 22. Registration forms will also be available on the synod website. The Synod Council and staff will continue to monitor restrictions on large gatherings. If we need to cancel/postpone August 22, a decision will be made by July 15. The alternate date of August 22<sup>nd</sup> has been selected for the main purpose of electing a new bishop.

**Music at St. John!**

If you have a favorite hymn or song (including Praise songs from the radio) let Melanie know and she will include the song in summer worship services!  
You can call 641-228-3397 with your favorites!



**Board Meetings in June:**

June 2<sup>nd</sup>: Building & Grounds, 5:30 p.m.  
June 7<sup>th</sup>: Deacons, 10:30 a.m.  
Family Board, 10:30 a.m.  
Stewardship board, 10:30 a.m.  
June 9<sup>th</sup>: Council, 6:00 p.m.  
June 10<sup>th</sup>: Parish Ed, 5:15 p.m.  
Finance board, 5:30 p.m.  
June 14<sup>th</sup>: Youth Board, 10:30 a.m.

## Simply Giving Form

The St. John Stewardship Board would like to take this opportunity to tell you about a simple way you can guarantee your offering to God. **It's called Simply Giving.**

Simply Giving is a stewardship program that allows anyone from St. John the chance to give their offering through electronic funds transfer (EFT) directly from their checking or savings account.

You determine the amount you want to give and the frequency of your giving. Want to give \$50 every week? Perfect! Wish to donate \$125 every other week? You got it! Perhaps you'd like to give \$200 once a month? Absolutely!

It's easy to set up. Fill out this form, attach a voided check or savings deposit slip, put it in the offering plate or return it to the church office.

Simply Giving assures your offering to God is given as you see fit. It's easy, convenient and helps assure that St. John can meet its financial obligations.

For more information, please contact Linda at 641-228-3397.

### St. John Lutheran's Simply Giving "God's Love In Action"

Your Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_  
City, State, Zip \_\_\_\_\_  
Email Address \_\_\_\_\_  
Telephone \_\_\_\_\_

#### Contributions:

- \_\_\_ 1. **Enroll in Simply Giving with my giving going to:**
- |                                |                 |
|--------------------------------|-----------------|
| St. John Ministry Support Plan | \$ _____        |
| Other                          | \$ _____        |
| <b>Total Contribution</b>      | <b>\$ _____</b> |
- \_\_\_ 2. **I would like to \*change my contribution**  
to the following amount \$ \_\_\_\_\_

*\*Changes can be done by a phone call, a voided check or deposit slip is not required*

**Effective Date of First or Changed Contribution** \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_

#### Frequency of Contribution (Total Contribution divided as indicated)

- \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Per Week on Mondays  
\$ \_\_\_\_\_ Semi-monthly - 1st & 15th  
\$ \_\_\_\_\_ Monthly on the 1st  
\$ \_\_\_\_\_ Monthly on the 15th

#### Checking/Savings Account Authorization *Please Debit my...*

- \_\_\_ Checking account (Attach voided check)  
\_\_\_ Savings account (Attach voided deposit slip)

Routing # \_\_\_\_\_

*Valid routing # must start with 0, 1, 2, or 3*

Account # \_\_\_\_\_

I authorize the above organization to process debit entries to the above account. I understand that this authority will remain in effect until I provide reasonable notification to terminate the authorization.

Authorized Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_

  
Simply giving®

## Youth & Family

*“May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, So that by the power of the Holy Spirit you may abound in hope.” Romans 15:13*  
Blessings, Laurie Heidebrink

### YOUTH NEWS

WIYLDE has been postponed and the format changed because Synod Assembly has been postponed. I will advertise the new date as soon as I know when it is.

Summer Mission Trip 2020 – The trip to North Dakota has been canceled for this year because of safety concerns with traveling and staying and working in such close quarters. (We also do not know if the church where we planned to stay would even have been open to out-of-state guests by that time.) I hope to go to North Dakota in the future as I think it will be a great trip!

### SUNDAY SCHOOL NEWS

The last day of Sunday School was originally scheduled for Sunday, May 3<sup>rd</sup>. I continued to email activity pages with the page number and Scripture reference of the related Bible Story to the Sunday School parents through the end of May. I would like to thank my puppeteers for their performances of the Bible stories. It made it more fun than just listening, I am certain!

The Parish Education board would like to thank all our Sunday School teachers, substitutes, helpers and all the parents who brought their children to Sunday School classes. You have **all** made a difference in these kids' faith journeys.

VBS – In-person VBS has been canceled for this summer due to safety concerns of being in large groups. The Parish Education board is currently deciding whether we will try some form of online VBS later in the summer or cancel for this year.

## St. John Christian Preschool



It's hard to be unhappy when God blesses us with a beautiful springtime world! However, this spring is definitely been one unlike any other!

On May 15, Carleen, Pastor Russ, Gma Evelyn, Gma Cindy, and myself had a drive-through “Moving-On” Ceremony for our friends going on to Kindergarten! It was definitely NOT the way we wanted this to happen, however it was great to see their SHINY SMILING faces!! They pulled up to Mrs. Laue to get their supplies left at preschool, then drove up to Pastor Russ to receive their “mortarboard”, then drove to me to get their “diploma” and get a picture, and then finished with the grandmas passing out a bubble wand and a balloon!

While it was sad to say good-bye to our little ones who are moving on to Kindergarten, it is a blessing to be able to continue touching the lives of new friends who will enter our preschool in the fall.

We are excited to welcome many of our preschool friends back for the afternoon classes next year and are also anxious to meet many new friends. We do have a few openings in our program, but spots are filling up fast! Our **morning** classes (there is a 2-day and 3-day option) are open to any child who will be at least 3 on or before September 15, 2020. Our **afternoon** classes (there is a 3-day and 5-day option) are open to any child who will be at least 4 on or before September 15, 2020. Please call the preschool (228-7274) if you would like more information.

Thank you for the many blessings that you bestow upon our preschool program. Without your prayers and support we would not be able to do what we do. We love sharing God's love with our friends and we thank you for helping us share that important message!

In HIS Name, Whitney Franke

*People Page...*

**June Birthdays**

1 <sup>st</sup>	Jim Gambaiani	24 <sup>th</sup>	Helen Schmidt
15 <sup>th</sup>	Louis Streich	25 <sup>th</sup>	Shirley Hall
21 <sup>st</sup>	Clarice Leraaen	26 <sup>th</sup>	Mary Lindaman
23 <sup>rd</sup>	Lynn Poppen		

St. John's Parent Support Group will be meeting on an **as needed basis ONLY**.

Anyone who needs to meet should contact Jill Connell at 319-215-8252 or [jillconnell@hotmail.com](mailto:jillconnell@hotmail.com).



**June Anniversaries**

June 25, 1948	Bob & Eunice Tommingo
June 29, 1958	Bob & Helen Peterson
June 30, 1957	Ron & Connie Rasmussen

**Linda Reit** will be calling for **Meals on Wheels drivers!** St. John drives the weeks of June 8<sup>th</sup> & June 15<sup>th</sup>. If you would like to volunteer, you can call Linda at 641-220-1720.



*With sympathy...*

**The Funeral of**

*Sylvia Nadine Schoneman Frascht, May 23, 2020*

*Memorials were given in memory of...*

**Doris Thorson, Leon Isakson, Shirley Jacobson : Wendell & Donna Patten**

**Rev. Dr. Paul Mork: John & Myrna Culbertson, Wendell & Donna Patten**

*June 2020 birthdays/anniversaries*

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1	2	3	4	5	6
	Jim Gambaiani Mikaela Kreger	Melanie Johanningmeier	Mike Cotton Randy Evans Sara Titus	Roger Jacobs	Lindsay Wiltse	Angela Ayers Bob Dight Greg Heidebrink Morgan Kellogg Kash Kubik Roger Michael
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
	Annemarie Hansen Jacob Vance	Mike Brown Janice Dana	Kyleigh McDonald		Alvin Marth	
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
Linda Frascht	Joshua Johnson Louis Streich	Hallee Hoeft Tyler Parish		Kip Hauser Marth	Cory Isaac Oetken	
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
Gary Dana Randy Heise Clarice Leraaen	Gavin Connell Quinn Heidebrink Jeremy Heyer Lorne Johnson Addison Tracey	Christian Kreger Sue McDonald Colleen Ortmyer Dennis Petersen Lynn Poppen	Sarah Bauer Mandi Sande Helen Schmidt	Shirley Hall Kay Slindee John Swiggum	Brent Hinz Tyler Kubic Brandi Lantz Mary Lindaman Kari Unga	Dennis Brinkman
28	29	30				
Sonja Cotton Benjamin Tracey	Wendy LaBarge Diane Sande	Madisyn Millermon Gary Quade				