

OCTOBER, 2021

The Messenger is a publication of St. John Lutheran Church, Joliet, IL

SEP



**"It had been 18 months since the ensembles of the St. John Music Ministry had been able to meet in person and what a joyous occasion it was when they finally did!"**  
~ Tori Hicks



An amazing 1st day of Sunday school! Sept. 12



Blessing of the Quilts Sept. 25-26



Confirmation Class Resumed Sept. 22



We stocked the shelves ~Thank you!



Young Adult Ministry Tailgate Party Sept 25



7th - 8th Grade Retreat Sept 18



Youth Choir First Rehearsal Sept 22 {Click play button to play video}



"We've got to do something about this messy house!"

I exclaimed these words to my husband, Chris, in our search for a tape measure. Some of you might have a high tolerance for mess. I do not. I was frustrated the tape measure wasn't in its proper place. We searched the "tool" room in our basement, reaching past the boxes leftover from moving Chris' mom to a nursing home. We searched the corner of the storage room, behind heaps of camping gear dumped from our vacation. We searched through my office workstation, moving piles of papers leftover from planning summer worship.

Two days later while driving my car, I noticed a tape measure nestled in the cubby behind the gear shift. I cannot remember how it got there.

The messy piles in my house are annoying, that's for sure. But I'm not sweating it too much. Instead of judging my messes, I'm practicing how to recalibrate my response to the messes, so I can meet messes with gratitude and joy.

No, this is not some kind of Kondo mojo-move, or a way to ignore what needs tending (I'll get to the messes, eventually). Instead, I'm describing a way to steward what I assume, to be aware how tunnel vision may be working against my joy; to remember why I give my time and resources to things I truly love.

Here's what I'm up to~ First, the practice, which I learned on a retreat. Then, I'll give you an example of how I applied it to my messes:

1. Choose a room in your home, surveying the things around you. Pick an area or item to focus your attention.
2. Look at your chosen item/area. You can choose anything; it doesn't have to be a mess.
3. Physically describe what you are seeing, going into detail for about a minute.
4. Now, describe again what you see, telling the story behind your chosen focus.

As an example, here are quick stories of my stacks, heaps, and piles:

- The stack of boxes in our "tool" room tell the story of a family navigating a transition with courage, choosing to value a person we love as she lets go of her independence.
- The camping gear heaped in the corner tells the story of a family choosing time to connect with one another after a topsy-turvy year of uncertainty, basking in the wonders of starry nights, swimming in a pristine lake, and sharing meals together.
- The piles of files in my office tell the story of the work I care about, and love; a summer of studying the book of Jeremiah, which edified our worship and my own faith life.

In other words: the messes aren't just stacks, heaps, and piles. They are also signs of God's abundance in my life.

We all experience "messy" lives, where a hardship or two is thrown our way. When that happens to you, what do you see, assume, value? How do you respond? Those questions will be the basis for our focus and invitation this October.

October is stewardship month at St. John, when we are invited to financially participate in the mission and ministry of our faith community. But stewardship is more than a financial invitation: it's an invitation to recalibrate our pace, to consider what we value and love, to choose connection over consumption, courage over fear, and care over distraction. It's an invitation to freely live with joy and intention.

One of the highlights of our appeal this year: a tailgate party on October 17th! We figure it's been a messy couple of years for us, Beloved Community, and we need to free up a little joy.

And yet, that's not the whole story, is it-- that it's been messy? Not quite. The whole story of our past few years is the way God surrounded us, and poured out connections, courage, and care onto us. It was amazing. And that, friends, is what October is about, too. A time to say: "thank you, God." Because God's Spirit didn't let any mess go by without also surrounding us with a blessing.

Stacks, heaps, and piles of them.

Peace,

Pastor Jen



**save the date**

# Sunday, October 17

**Outdoor Worship**  
**Tailgate Party**  
**Mortgage Burning**  
**Lisa Marshall Farewell**

More details soon

CHICAGO BEARS

88 vs. 3

GREEN BAY PACKERS

## Kicks off at 11am

# Food Pantry

## Community

The outpouring of support from St. John members and our community has been amazing! We have watched the shelves in the Narthex fill with food, diapers, wipes, and personal care items.

We launched a new volunteer sign up system & have welcomed first time, experienced, and returning volunteers. The number of households we serve is increasing as Covid-19 food programs begin to expire despite rising infections. Since March 2020, each week brings new challenges, and our donors and volunteers have overcome every one!

The community of volunteers that I have the pleasure of serving with each week work incredibly hard to provide groceries to families, but I also see the outpouring of love and support from them as well.

When we started drive-thru distribution, one of the hardest aspects, aside from the logistical challenges, was not being able to interact with the families we serve. As we continued to serve in this way, car windows started to come down and our volunteers were able to engage with families. Volunteers started bringing dog treats to give to the pets that ride along to pick up food. Families began to share their stories with our registration team. The logistical challenges the drive-thru presented us with were overcome. It has been amazing to watch this transformation with so much going on around us.

We have much more work to do and we cannot do that work without the support of volunteers and donors. We recently re-launched [stjohnfood.org](http://stjohnfood.org) and would love for you to check it out. Read more about the work we do & sign up for our new Thursday noon-2pm social-distanced, in-person, full-choice distribution starting November! I look forward to serving with you in the future!

*Heather Hinthorn, Food Pantry Director*

## How many volunteer hours do volunteers give to the pantry every week?

### Wednesday Morning Delivery



Every Wednesday we receive up to 15,000 lbs. of food that these volunteers unload, unpack and stock.

### Thursday Night Packing



On Thursday evenings, this group of volunteers shops the shelves and bags all of the shelf stable foods.

### Saturday Morning Distribution



These volunteers arrive with the first rays of sun to distribute the bags, frozen & refrigerated foods.

### #Giving Tuesday is Nov. 30



Giving Tuesday is only 2 months away. It's our only community fundraiser and if your employer participates, please nominate us as your employer's #Giving Tuesday recipient.

We promise that it's pretty effortless because we will give you everything you need...fact sheet, brochures, photos, posters, etc. See Pastor Robin for details!

**Answer: 150 hours!**

# Youth, Young Adults & Families

**Sunday School** All grades are following the same Bible stories we hear in worship this year. We are hearing about the blessing God has for the whole world that started with Abraham, is passed on through Isaac, Jacob, Moses, to us, and through us! Sunday school has been so much fun that we will keep meeting outside as long as weather permits!

- We may not have the tent up, but we will meet in the grass!
- Wear a mask
- Dress for the weather
- Bring a beach or bath towel to sit on the grass and maintain social distancing



## DISMISSAL - FOR THE SAFETY OF OUR KIDS


- Age 3 - 6th grade:
  - **PLEASE, PARENTS, PICK UP YOUR CHILD FROM THEIR TEACHER.**
- Tell your child they should stay with their teacher until you come to get them.

Do not have your child run into the parking lot and jump in your car. Meet the teacher and let them know you are taking them home. This helps them out and eases our minds! Not registered for Sunday school yet? It's SO easy! [Click here to register](#) or visit [stjohnjoliet.org](http://stjohnjoliet.org).

## HUNGER ACTION MONTH - We Stocked the Shelves!

The Sunday school special offering for this fall goes toward the St. John Food Pantry! We thank our Sunday school families and St. John members who have given to our food drive. We continue to collect: kid's favorite shelf-stable food and snacks, toddler and baby food, diapers, wipes and diaper cream.

Place your items on the shelves or in the grocery cart in the Narthex. We appreciate your generous donations! Let's keep going!

 **OCTOBER IS  
PASTOR  
APPRECIATION MONTH**



## Tween GO!

**Sunday, October 10th  
12:15 - 2:30pm**

**Tween** = 4th, 5th, 6th graders  
**GO** = God & Others

Be part of Tween GO! We meet one Sunday a month for a meal, creative activities and small groups who share highs/lows and learn about loving our neighbor. Registrations are taken at the door when parents drop off. We'll spend time outside to keep our kids safe. Come join us for a fun afternoon!

## Blessing of the Animals

**October 10th in the Parking lot at 12:15pm**

Join us in celebrating the feast of St. Francis at St. John's Blessing of the Animals! At this service, we remember that God loves all our fellow creatures on the Earth and calls us to show that love to the animals in our care! Animals with paws, claws, scales, feathers, or hoofs are all welcome to receive a blessing. You can also bring a picture of your pet or even your child's stuffed animal! Leashes or appropriate control restraints required for safety (except fish). Even if you don't have a pet, feel free to join us for a fun, joyful, and very creaturely short worship service!

**Confirmation** classes are for our 7th, 8th, and 9th grade students. We meet most Wednesday nights during the school year from 7- 8:15 pm. We want youth to learn about faith in a way that connects to their lives and answers the real questions they have. The year will be packed with large group learning events based on the 10 Commandments and the story of the Exodus, small group check-ins, activities to practice faith, service projects, and time set apart to connect with each other.

**This Month:** we dive into the story of the Exodus, how God's people struggled and complained their way through the wilderness, and how God offered the 10 commandments as a means to bless the whole world with their example of a just and loving community.

At the end of the month, our youth will take part in the long-lived confirmation tradition of decorating pumpkins as Bible characters! It should be a fun-filled month! [Full schedule.](#)



## October Confirmation Schedule

October 2021	Event/Topic	Attendance
10/6 (Wednesday), 7:00 - 8:15 pm	Care Group Leaders Meeting	<b>Leaders Only - NO students</b>
10/13 (Wednesday), 7:00 - 8:15 pm	Learning Event: Pharaoh, the Plagues, and the Story of the Exodus	All students & leaders
10/20 (Wednesday), 7:00 - 8:15 pm	Learning Event: Wilderness Wanderings & the 10 Commandments	All students and leaders
10/27 (Wednesday), 7:00 - 8:15 pm	Fellowship Night: Pumpkin Decorating Contest	All students and leaders

**High School FIRE** Are you in high school? Do you need a community that loves you just as you are? Or a safe space to talk about life? FIRE may be the family you need! Join us on Wednesdays at church from 8:15-9:30pm for a "mini-Sabbath" where we share highs and lows, process life, faith, and the world, play games, and pray for each other (all while being our silly, messy selves). We have a place for you! To join and to stay up to date with meeting times and changes, text the Remind code @pastorevan to the number 81010.

### High School Fall/Winter Retreat 2021

November 12-14, 2021

Lutherdale Bible Camp - Elkhorn, WI

**Register Now!**

We have a series of things planned for our retreat, including: canoeing, high ropes course, rock-wall climbing, zip-lining, archery, (basketball, 9 square in the air, volleyball, ping pong, etc.), devotions, bonfires & s'mores, board games, GaGa ball, pizza, snacks, exciting late night outdoor games, movie night, hanging out, etc.

Total Cost: \$150 (includes all meals, two nights lodging, and all activities). \$50 deposit due Oct. 24th, with the remaining \$100 due Nov. 7th. Partial and full scholarships available by request. Please contact Pastor Evan if you are interested in having a friend outside of St. John join you.

**The Youth Service Team** An excellent new addition to our high school ministry is the Youth Service Team which meets the 1st and 3rd Thursday of every month from 7-8:30pm at church. If your child has a heart for serving others, is looking to grow as a leader, and needs service hours for school or college applications, this group combines all three of these needs.



Participants will have the opportunity to both plan and engage in service opportunities throughout the year while building leadership skills and acting on their passion for changing the world. For more information about joining this group, speak to Erica Swanson ([keswanson2001@gmail.com](mailto:keswanson2001@gmail.com) or 630-802-7466) or join the BAND group (similar to Remind) using this link <https://band.us/n/a6a159n9n9a6q> or scanning our QR code with your camera app.

**College-age Check-in** Are you between the ages of 18-23? Do you need a community to belong to? Our "College-age Check-in" is a community of college-age people who meet twice a month to reconnect, share high and lows, wrestle with becoming adults, play games, and navigate life together. To find out more about when & how we meet, contact Pastor Evan (or scan the QR code to join our GroupMe.)



**College Care Packages** Every fall we send our college-age youth care packages filled with dorm-ready food and encouraging messages. Parents of College-age youth, an email should be in your inbox asking for mailing address information (should you want your child to receive a package). Congregation members should look for opportunities to donate food in the Narthex! **Sign up your College-Age youth for a care package here! Deadline 10/13**

### Young Adult Ministry (YAM):

Are you roughly between the ages of 25-40? Are you struggling with faith, finding a community, or being who you want to be? Well, so are we! Our Young Adult Ministry (YAM) kicked off last month with a tailgate party, and we can't wait to see what's next! We are excited to build a new community where we can support one another, talk about faith, reflect on our hopes, fears and goals, and help each other navigate "adulting". If you would like to be a part of this ministry, talk to Pastor Evan and keep your eyes open for future events!

## Council Minutes - August 17, 2021

An in-person meeting was held at St. John; masks were worn and safe distancing was observed.

The meeting was called to order by Jackie Mansholt at 7:05 p.m.

Present: Pastor Beamsley, Pastor Caldwell, Pastor Mayhew, Ken Swanson, David Luecht Keri Cortese, Jackie Mansholt, and Brent Rimmke. Excused: Glenn Smith, Shawn Roark, Kristen Vorrier, Jonathan Adams, and Meghan Doyle. Guest: Emmett Cortese.

Devotions were led by Ken Swanson.

**Presentation:** Emmett Cortese gave a presentation to the Council for a proposed Eagle Scout Project. Emmett outlined a proposal to construct a patio and benches with a fire pit on the St. John property at the back of the parking lot between the big trees. After Council approval, he would take the project to the Scouting Committee, Council and upper echelon for approval.

**Motion:** [Rimmke/Luecht] To approve Emmett Cortese to proceed with the Eagle Scout project to build a patio with fire pit and benches on St. John property between the trees. The motion passed unanimously.

### Consent Items

There were no changes to the consent items so they were adopted as follows:

1. Approval: Agenda and July Minutes
2. Worship Attendance - July
3. September Devotions - David Luecht

### Discussion: Our Money Story and future church growth

Pastor Jen reviewed the discussions of the history of St. John from the past meeting that included financial and spiritual impact. She noted that history has taught us that when there is a crisis, something amazing follows.

**Executive session:** The council [Rimmke/Swanson] went into executive session. The council [Rimmke/Luecht] returned from executive session.

**Motion:** [Rimmke/Swanson] To accept the resignation of Pamela Blaesing as our part-time office assistant effective September 15, 2021. The motion passed unanimously.

### Discussion: Update on Fall Programming & Events.

The fall programming has been moved back; there were many considerations that are included to maximize safety for all during this pandemic. Pastor Jen indicated that a newsletter will come out at the end of August and will identify the starts dates/signups for the fall programs. She also indicated that she is very grateful for the staff and the congregation.

### Council Date Change

To accommodate schedules, the Council agreed to move the September Council meeting from September 21st to September 28th at 7:00 p.m.

### Adjournment and the Lord's Prayer

**Motion:** To adjourn the meeting [Swanson/Caldwell].

Motion carried. The meeting was closed with the Lord's Prayer at 9:13 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Pam Blaesing, Recording Secretary

## Support Groups

Contact the church office to get contact information for the following support groups:

- A.A. - Thursdays, 7pm on Zoom
- A.A. Women's Group - Mondays, 6:30pm at St. John
- Al-Anon - Mondays, 7pm at St. John
- Ala-Teen - Sundays, 6-7:15pm Mokena Fellowship Center, (downstairs) 13550 W. Maple Rd (Rt. 30), Mokena, IL 60448

## Small Groups

Monday night small group, 6:30pm  
Contact: Linda Evans, [lindaevans1975@gmail.com](mailto:lindaevans1975@gmail.com)

Thursday morning Coffee With Friends, 9:00am  
Contact: Marsha Getz, [marshagetz@comcast.net](mailto:marshagetz@comcast.net)

Thursday night Martha Circle, 6:30pm  
Contact: Lynne Smith, [lynneglenn@hotmail.com](mailto:lynneglenn@hotmail.com)

## 110 Quilts Made!



Where do our quilts go? St. John LWR quilt donations went to Georgia (USA) in June 2020 and Chile in August 2020.

## Prayer Shawl Ministry

*Stitched in Prayer, Given in Love*

Calling all knitters! The Prayer Shawl Ministry begins monthly meetings starting on Thursday, October 7th.

We will be meeting in the Trinity Room from 7 - 8pm on the first Thursday of the month. We hope to see you there.

## Service Group Survey

Our newly formed Youth Service Group wants to serve you. They want to know, "What do you need help with right now?" Take their 2 question survey by [clicking here](#) or visiting [stjohnjoliet.org](http://stjohnjoliet.org).



# Music Ministry

The singing was heard throughout the sanctuary and halls of the church as the **St. John Chorale** began rehearsing on September 8th. It was an emotional experience to sing together again as we prepared to lead worship on Sunday, September 12th in the new space in the Sanctuary. Susan Fick and the singing members of the St. John Chorale will be leading worship 3 - 4 times a month. We are all looking forward to being back together with our community of faith. The Chorale rehearses every Wednesday from 7:45 to 9pm. Anyone interested in singing with the Chorale should contact Tori Hicks [torihicks@stjohnjoliet.org](mailto:torihicks@stjohnjoliet.org).

**The Handbell Ensemble** and the Handbell Choir started rehearsals on September 13th. The beautiful sounds of their ringing will enhance our worship services several times during the fall. Under the watchful eye of Sarah Wernli, these musicians will once again add to the worship setting through music.

**The St. John Praise Team** is transitioning with the addition of a new accompanist, Janet Bloomquist, and Director, Tori Hicks. We are thrilled to have some of the same wonderful musicians in the group to maintain the high level of musicianship they reached under Ellen Goodwin's direction. The Praise Team meets on Thursday evenings at 7:00. If you would like to join in leading worship through contemporary music, please contact Tori at [torihicks@stjohnjoliet.org](mailto:torihicks@stjohnjoliet.org).



**Youth Choirs and Youth Chimers** started up at the end of September. Lots of information has gone out about these opportunities for the children of St. John. Check [stjohnjoliet.org/music-1](http://stjohnjoliet.org/music-1) for details or contact Tori.

The members of these ensembles are thrilled to be back at in-person rehearsals however we are all taking every measure to be mindful of the protocols of care that St. John Leadership has outlined.

I am so grateful to have the opportunity to serve as the Music Director at St. John Lutheran Church. I felt called to St. John in 1991 and I still hear that call today. Thank you for this amazing place!

*With a grateful heart,  
Tori Hicks, Music Director*

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*Dear St. John Family:*

*Thank you for all of the cards, notes, flowers, and gifts you shared with me during my farewell at the end of August. I am blessed to know how much my music ministry has meant to all of you during these past 14 years. Your love and encouragement sustains me as I continue on the next steps of my journey.*

*Gratefully,  
Ellen Goodwin*

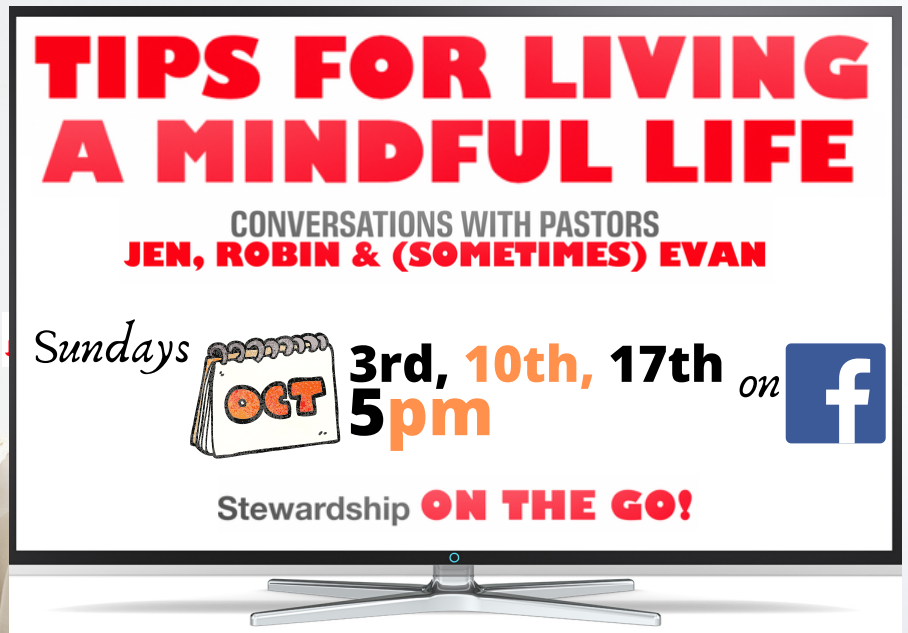
*Thank you to Marge West, Sandy & Mike Smith, Steve Norder and Bill Jensen for their dedication to keeping our gardens beautiful!*

*Thank you to Rick Korczak for doing a wonderful job on maintaining our lawn.*

*You are all a blessing to our congregation!*

*In Gratitude,  
Lisa Marshall*

Watch  
the trailer



*St. John*  
LUTHERAN CHURCH  
2650 Plainfield Road  
Joliet, IL 60435

<b>Pastor Jen Beamsley</b>	<a href="mailto:jenbeamsley@stjohnjoliet.org">jenbeamsley@stjohnjoliet.org</a>
<b>Pastor Robin Caldwell</b>	<a href="mailto:robincaldwell@stjohnjoliet.org">robincaldwell@stjohnjoliet.org</a>
<b>Pastor Evan Mayhew</b>	<a href="mailto:evanmayhew@stjohnjoliet.org">evanmayhew@stjohnjoliet.org</a>
Tori Hicks	<a href="mailto:torihicks@stjohnjoliet.org">torihicks@stjohnjoliet.org</a>
Heather Hinthorn	<a href="mailto:heatherhinthorn@stjohnjoliet.org">heatherhinthorn@stjohnjoliet.org</a>
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Lisa Marshall	<a href="mailto:lisamarshall@stjohnjoliet.org">lisamarshall@stjohnjoliet.org</a>
Nicole Adams	<a href="mailto:nicoleadams@stjohnjoliet.org">nicoleadams@stjohnjoliet.org</a>



#### NEW OPPORTUNITY!

Help us pick up donated groceries from local grocery stores on Wednesday mornings. Contact Heather Hinthorn or Pastor Robin to find out more at 815-439-2320 or email [stjohnfood@gmail.com](mailto:stjohnfood@gmail.com).

It's easier than ever to volunteer to serve our hungry neighbors; just choose your dates and sign up online! Meet us at church on the dates you've signed up and we will introduce you to our other volunteers and show you how we serve our neighbors!

**Digital readers, sign up here!** Paper readers, visit [stjohnfood.org](http://stjohnfood.org) and click volunteer!



815-439-2320

815-439-0575

[info@stjohnjoliet.org](mailto:info@stjohnjoliet.org)

[stjohnjoliet.org](http://stjohnjoliet.org)

[stjohnfood.org](http://stjohnfood.org)

St. John by the mall - Joliet, IL

St. John Lutheran Church, Joliet

#### Church Office Hours:

Monday/Wednesday/Thursday 9am-4pm  
Tuesday/Saturday by appointment  
Friday 9am-1pm  
Sunday 8:30-11:15am

#### Worship with us!

Saturdays, 5:30pm  
Sundays, 8:30am, 11am  
Livestream Sundays 8:30am

