

Happy New Year



Sunday School Christmas Program, December 2019; Thank you Mike Evans for the great photos!



Sunday Budget Forums & Congregational Updates

Sunday, January 12th

Sunday, January 19th

Make sure to attend our Sunday Budget Forums and Congregational Updates in the Trinity Room on January 12th & 19th in between worship services. Pastor Jen, the Finance Team and Council members will share the proposed 2020 General Budget, and will lead a discussion on the 2020 ministry year. There is much to be grateful for at St. John, and we have an exciting year ahead of us. Please come and hear all about it!

Wednesday Night Small Group

Begins Wednesday, January 15th

Sign up now for Wednesday Night Small Group with Pastor Jen from 7:00 - 8:15 p.m. beginning on January 15th.

Frustrated with traditional approaches to spirituality?

Feeling guilty about not following a regimented devotional practice?

Wishing there were a way you could embrace God in your everyday life?

Based on James Hazelwood's book, Everyday Spirituality: Discover a Life of Hope, Peace, and Meaning, this small group offers a way forward. Rather than prescribe another attempt at daily devotional readings, written prayers and scheduled moments of quiet meditation, Everyday Spirituality expresses the truth that much of what we already do in life is, in fact, spiritual:

- Walking
- Cooking
- Laughing
- Sleeping
- Moving
- Spending

This small group is an accessible introduction to an ancient yet new way of thinking and being in the world. Rather than dividing spiritual life apart from daily life, Everyday Spirituality helps us to understand that daily life is connected to God, the sacred, the holy. Sign up by emailing stjohn2650@gmail.com.

Congregational Meeting

Sunday, January 26th

In between worship services on Sunday, January 26th, our congregation will conduct our January meeting. Topics will include: fall appeal update and other

income and what it means for our General Budget; and a vote on our 2020 General Budget. Come to the forums on January 12th and 19th to prepare for the meeting!

Workshop: Stewarding Life's End

Sunday, January 26th, 2:00 – 5:00 p.m.

This workshop is designed to relay information on:

- How to talk to your loved ones about end-of-life directives, including palliative and hospice care
- Options to consider when pre-planning funerals (including worship services)
- St. John Columbarium and "green" burial options
- End of life ministries that accompany people from earthly life to eternal life

Join us as we hear from your own pastors and representatives from the fields of hospice care and professional funeral services who regularly have conversations with people who face end-of-life decisions and planning. You will learn information and receive resources to help you steward your life's end. Our speakers are not here to solicit, but to help guide our thoughts as we steward our lives for ourselves and our loved ones.

Sign up by emailing stjohn2650@gmail.com. Sign ups will also be available at worship on the registration sheet in the month of January.



Northern Illinois Synod
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

The Northern IL Synod Social Ministry Committee awarded \$1,000 in grant money toward a free event hosted by the synod Creation Care Team. You are invited to attend this free event on January 25th at Faith Lutheran Church in Rochelle, IL from 9:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.

Dr. Leah Schade is the guest speaker who will be presenting. She is an Assistant Professor of Preaching and Worship at Lexington Theological Seminary.

St. John's Mission Support helps to fund the NIS Social Ministry Committee.

If you are interested in attending or have questions about it, contact Pastor Robin.



Thank you for snagging tags from the Helping Trees during the Christmas season! Your generosity helped others have a lovely Christmas.

Connection Team Announces:

NEW YEAR, NEW YOU!

Sharing with Hospitality In Our Hearts

January/February Nametag Month!



Have you ever wondered, “Who is the person sitting next to me?” We have.

Have you ever walked through the Narthex on Sunday morning and recognize a face and think, “I know that person but just can’t remember his/her name!! It’ll be awkward to ask, so I’ll just keep walking.”

Beginning the first weekend in January on
Saturday, January 4th and Sunday, January 5th,
the Connection Team will sponsor

NEW YEAR, NEW YOU

which will run for six weeks.

Let’s start 2020 with hospitality in our hearts and give everyone we encounter an opportunity to get to know our name. Six weeks might seem like a long time, but it actually takes several encounters for information to stick, so let’s give it a solid try thru mid-February. There will be a Sign Up sheet at the Welcome Center to purchase a permanent nametag if you would like one.

Ah! Image your delight when during the Sharing of Peace during worship you can share a handshake and greet each other by name. Let us know what you think.



They have been hard at work!

*Don’t miss the St. John
Chorale Christmas Cantata
on Sunday, December 22nd at
both services.*

St. John
SHARING
LOVE *of Christ*
Christmas Eve Worship
3:00 p.m.
5:00 p.m.
11:00 p.m.
At All Services: Communion, Candle Lighting to Silent Night
DEC 19th Advent Evening Prayer, 7 - 7:30pm
22nd St. John Chorale Cantata, 8:30am, 11am
22nd Longest Night Service, 7pm
24th Christmas Eve Worship, 3pm, 5pm, 11pm

MISSION WORK

Adult

Rebuild Homes
and Hope

College-Age



H.S.



February 15-22, 2020
Albany, Georgia

Imagine having your home destroyed without the means to repair it. If you are a "do-it-yourselfer," a "handyman," want to learn some new skills from the experts, or just have a listening ear and a sense of adventure, you are qualified to help repair and rebuild homes and hope. Help people move back into their homes and begin their lives anew. Join us for a road trip to Georgia, in partnership with our friends from Calvary Church of Lemont, where we will work in disaster response after a 2018 category 3 hurricane and a 2017 F2 tornado pummeled the region.

In the Albany, Georgia region, we will be working through the local recovery program called "Inspiritus" that is supported by Lutheran Disaster Response. We will be travelling comfortably in a coach bus and lodging in a building with camp-like facilities (bunk beds, showers, kitchen facilities, washer/dryer), in Hopeful, GA.

Contact

Pastor Robin or Steve Costello to have your questions answered and to let us know you will be joining us.
pastorrobincaldwell@gmail.com
scostello@mccannonline.com

Next Steps

Planning meeting on January 12th at 10:00 a.m. Everyone planning to participate and anyone who has questions about the trip - please come!

June 6th – 13th
Washington, D.C.

This year, for the first time, St. John Lutheran Church is partnering with other ELCA churches to host a college-age mission trip to Washington D.C!

This trip will be geared toward college-age students ages 19-23, and will feature deeper discussions about life and faith, opportunities for service and reflection, and time to explore the city. You won't want to miss this!

Must be one year out of High School by time of trip to attend.

More information is available by visiting: www.thepilgrimage.org

Contact

Email Pastor Evan to Register.
pastorevanmayhew@gmail.com

Next Steps

Sign up by February 15th
Limited spots available!

Cost

Total Cost is \$400.

- \$175 Deposit Due March 1st
- \$225 Balance Due May 1st

July 4th – 11th
Winchester, KY

Save the Date!

On our High School Mission Trips, teenagers come together to serve individuals and communities while building strong, long-lasting relationships with their friends and youth leaders. In one week, hundreds of teenagers from youth groups across the country repair and transform homes while growing closer to Jesus.

Winchester is a historic town where both bluegrass and Southern hospitality abound. They are also known for their Ale-8-One soft drink that dates back to 1926, the only soft drink invented in Kentucky that is still around today. Group Workcamps had been in Winchester over 14 years ago. The hard work of those participants is remembered and, in fact, the reason we've been invited back. You will discover that although Winchester is a few short miles off the highway, they are not out of reach or out of touch. In this historic town and the surrounding rural countryside of rolling hills, residents just need a little help and hope.

Must be finished with Freshman Year to attend.

Contact

Pastor Evan
pastorevanmayhew@gmail.com

Next Steps

Sign up opens in January
\$50 deposit reserves your spot

Cost

Total Cost is \$400.



2019 Donations

Due December 31st

All donations must be received **by Noon on December 31st** to be recorded on your 2019 statement.

January 2nd

January Daybreak Dinner

If you are able to help with transportation, food prep or service for Daybreak, please call Pam Atkinson (586-260-2480) or Stacey Fowler (815) 531-9188.

January 3rd

Annual Committee/Ministry Reports Due

Please email your annual committee/ministry reports to Lisa Marshall, stjohn2650@gmail.com, by Jan. 3rd for inclusion in the 2019 St. John Annual Report. Thank you!

January 5th

Church De-decorating Event

All adults are welcome to help take down our Christmas decorations after the 11:00 a.m. worship service. Thank you for your time!

January 7th, 7:00 p.m.

Green Team

If your New Year's resolution includes something green, make plans to join us on January 7th!

The Green Team met Dec. 3rd. Topics of discussion included recyclable communion cups, (which turned out to be too large for our communion trays). They won't be wasted, we will use them for home communion. We are trying to find the most cost effective recycle bins that won't take up too much space, and also look nice. The idea was brought up to add a water bottle filling station to at least one of our drinking fountains.

Please join us February 9th at 9:45 a.m. for a forum on *How To Live Sustainably* with guest speaker Maria Anna Rafac from the Joliet Junior College. We are also looking into applying for a mini grant from Faith in Place to assist with future projects. **If any of our young adults or teenagers would like to join us, to give us their input or ideas, please come to our meeting.**

January 9th

Knit. Crochet. Pray.

Do you like to knit or crochet? Would you like to meet others with the same interest? If so, join us at the newly formed Prayer Shawl Ministry and spend time with new friends knitting or crocheting prayer shawls.

The Prayer Shawl Ministry will meet monthly and create prayer shawls for people who need extra comfort and support during life's tough times. We anticipate meeting the 1st Thursday of the month for fellowship, supply replenishment, knitting/crocheting and packing finished shawls. Contact Rachel at rcyergler@gmail.com or sign up in the Narthex.

To receive a shawl, fill out a request card at the Welcome Center or contact Rachel at the above email.

January 11th

Fellowship Event

We'd love for you to join us at Board Therapy Paint and Sip Studio in Romeoville on January 11th for a night of fun, fellowship, and paint! Board Therapy specializes in wood board paint projects, with 15 different stains and over 40 paint colors! Choose your unique design at the studio. We will be meeting at 6:30 p.m. at the studio, 209 W. Romeo Rd. in Romeoville. We have 24 spots reserved, so be on the lookout for a sign-up sheet soon! Boards are \$30. Register and pay for the event online at boardtherapystudio.com.

January 12th

Fair Trade Coffee for Sale

Fair Trade Coffee will be available on January 12th. Hope to see you there!

January 30th

Homebound Ministry

Homebound ministry members plan to meet on January 30th at 2:00 p.m.

January Special Offering

Seminarian Support Fund

Our Seminarian Support Fund provides financial assistance to St. John members who attend seminary. Mike Markwell has been a seminarian student since the fall of 2016 at the Lutheran School of Theology in Chicago. Sue Hoff began this fall as a commuter seminarian student at Wartburg College.

You can support our seminarian fund by enclosing your donation in the blue pew envelope and mark Seminarian Support. Thank you for supporting our seminarians!



January 26th, 27th

February 1st, 2nd

SouperBowl of Caring

Souper Bowl of Caring is a national movement that originated in churches to help support hunger ministries. At St. John, it is a significant fundraiser for our food pantry. Watch for the stellar posters made by our youth. You will see their smiling faces handing out donation envelopes on Youth Weekend January 25th – 26th, and then again with their soup pots in hand to receive your donations Super Bowl weekend, February 1st and 2nd.

March 7th, 6:45 p.m.

Taste of St. John – SAVE THE DATE

Food, fun, fellowship and raffles to support our youth to go on their mission trip and other youth activities. Tickets go on sale Youth Weekend, January 25th and 26th.

Your support, time and donations are greatly appreciated. More details next month.

St. John Youth & Family Ministries

Faith Formation for Youth and Families

Confirmation

January 1 (Wednesday): NO CONFIRMATION (HAPPY NEW YEAR!)

January 8 (Wednesday) 7-8:15pm: Leader's Meeting (Leaders Only- No Students)

January 15 (Wednesday) 7-8:15pm: Learning Event for all students and leaders

January 17-19 (Friday-Sunday): High School Winter Retreat (9th Graders encouraged to attend)

January 22 (Wednesday) 7-8:15pm: Learning Event for all students and leaders

January 25 & 26 (Sat. & Sun.): Youth Weekend (All are welcome to assist with worship!)

January 29 (Wednesday) 7-8:15pm: Learning Event for all students and leaders

January 5th

Sunday School Resumes

Sunday School classes resume on January 5th.

Save the date: Sunday School mid-year teacher's meeting will be held on Sunday, February 2nd at 11:00 a.m.

The children's Christmas program was held on December 8th. The kids did an awesome job of telling the story of Christ's birth. This year we elected to support St. John's Quilting ministry. We collected \$417.27. A special thank you to Pastor Robin, Ellen Goodwin, our teachers and the volunteers who helped to present our program.

Best wishes for a Happy and Blessed New Year!

January 12th

Tween GO!

Tween = 4th, 5th, and 6th grade kids

GO = God & Others

If you are in 4th, 5th, or 6th grade, you can be part of our Tween GO ministry! We meet one Sunday afternoon a month. Come join us for our meal, creative activities, small groups who learn about the Fruits of the Spirit and participate in highs/lowes.

Our next meeting date is January 12th from 12:15 - 2:30pm. Registrations are taken at the door when parents drop off their youth. Come to our Karin Johnson Fellowship Hall at 12:15 p.m. on January 12th and be part of a great afternoon!

FEAST of FIRE and FIRE 2

Feast of FIRE and FIRE 2 are "mini-Sabbaths," providing time for our high school students to hang out and check in with one another, our adult leaders, and Pastor Evan. It's a casual time, very similar to a confirmation care group where we share highs and lows, prayer, and food. All high school students are welcome to attend and you can bring a friend. You can find us in the Youth Room.

January 15th, 22nd, 29th; 8:15 – 9:15 p.m.

H.S. FIRE2

We meet on Wednesdays after Confirmation from 8:15 - 9:15 p.m. in the Youth Room. If Confirmation is on break, we are on break. Snacks, sharing highs and lows and prayer at the end. Plenty of time to hang out and take a mid-week break.

January 26th; 6:00 – 9:00 p.m.

H.S. Feast of FIRE

Meets usually once a month on Sunday nights from 6-9pm. We meet for a longer time, and you are encouraged to bring food to share with others, like a potluck. We eat and usually play games, hang out, have a short reflective time, share highs and lows, and prayer.

January 17th – 19th, 2020

H.S. Winter Retreat

There are still plenty of spots open! Sign up at stjohnjoliet.org.

Arrive at church at 6:00 p.m. Friday, January 17th
Return to church on Sunday, January 19th,
around 10:00 - 10:20 a.m.

Retreat Activities:

Tubing, gym time, devotions, BIG bonfires, GaGa ball, food, games, LASER TAG, challenge course, broomball, hanging out, etc.

Total Cost: \$125 (includes all meals, two nights lodging, and all activities)

\$50 deposit due Jan. 5th, balance due Jan. 12th,
Partial and full scholarships available by request.
Please contact Pastor Evan (email is best) if you
want to bring a friend outside of St. John.

Retreat location:

Dickson Valley Retreat Center 8250 Finnie Road
Newark, IL 60541 630.553.6233

<http://www.dvcrc.com>

January 25th – 26th

Youth Weekend

Every year, we devote a weekend where our youth lead worship. Save the date for this year's event! If youth are interested in participating, please contact Pastor Evan by email: pastorevanmayhew@gmail.com

January 26th

FAITH MILESTONES – The Ten Commandments

Faith Milestones are learning events to help families nurture their kids in the Christian faith, strengthen the bonds among them, and fulfill promises they made. One of the promises parents make at a child's baptism, is to teach them the Ten Commandments.

After several weeks in Sunday School this past fall learning how Moses met God in a burning bush, how Moses brought the Ten Commandments from God to the Israelites, and how they learned to put God first and love their neighbors, the fulfillment of that promise will be marked in worship on January 26, when first graders and their parents will receive a blessing and a Ten Commandments pin.

February 6th – 9th



Teens Encounter Christ (TEC) is a three-day faith retreat focused on the Easter celebration. It involves meeting new people, learning new ideas, and growing in spirituality. Throughout the weekend, teens are given the opportunity to explore their faith through the personal testimonies of both youth and pastors.

**Thursday, February 6th @ 4pm through
Sunday, February 9th @ 7:00-8:00pm**
at

St. Olaf Lutheran Church
W653 Roosevelt Rd., Rubicon, WI 53078

Cost is \$80 per participant and due on/before Jan. 20th
Open to High School Students, Sophomore and Up!
(Scholarships Available)

This retreat will include: lots of food/snacks, games, singing, meeting new people, growing in faith, swimming at a pool, general silliness, and lots of memories!

January Birthdays & Anniversaries

- 1 Birthday: Eric Nash; Anniversary: Tim & Erin Koenig
- 2 Birthday: Marie Anderson, Carole Cox, Richard Fries, Jia Renzi
- 3 Birthday: Jill Doyle, Madison Duke
- 4 Birthday: Kathryn Lenz, Steve Liss
- 5 Birthday: Scott Benedict, April Carlson, Seth Freeman, Amy Kutz, Amy Morris, John Neville
- 6 Birthday: Lori Opiela
- 7 Birthday: Anders Carlson, Andrew Covault, Vicki Forkel
- 8 Birthday: Phyllis Norder, Joseph Norris, Kaylee Pahr, Cody Paulsen; Anniversary: Eric & Mary Ann Egger
- 9 Birthday: James Eklund, Kathleen Gossen, Suzanne Hoff, Colton Miller
- 10 Birthday: Jason Apt, Jordan Baugh, Ann Cummings, Jim Duren, Jeanine Fuller, Henry Mastin;
- 11 Birthday: Charlene Bailey
- 12 Birthday: Alan Anderson, Erik Anderson, Nancy Conrad, Taylor Dutton, Jim Graefen;
Anniversary: Jack & Connie Olson
- 13 Birthday: Sandra Baron, Sally Ferguson, Olivia Morales, Carol Rolnik; Anniversary: Arnie & Bernie Oppenheim
- 14 Birthday: John Gierich, Rowan Knudsen, Christopher Jones, Drew Spencer, Colin Turner
- 15 Birthday: Allison Gunnink, Ava Kiefer, Norm Roland
- 16 Birthday: Henry Bay, Robert Clinkert, Amanda Humphries, Gillian Turner, Rosemary Valentin
- 17 Birthday: Olivia Brawthen, Andrew Daniels, Dianne Seeman, Mike Walden; Anniversary: Bill & Lyn Warren
- 18 Birthday: Reno Fabian; Anniversary: George & Judy Coope
- 19 Birthday: Emily Benedict, Linda Erchinger, Maricay Miller, Lauren Tobolic
- 20 Birthday: Jeff Hopper, Megan Mariotti, Michelle Mariotti, Logan Nash, Alexis O'Brien, Parker Peszynski
- 21 Birthday: Aaron Leonhardt; Anniversary: Daniel & Brenda Hahn-Boisvert
- 22 Birthday: Sarah Kehrner, Mack Monteith, Lily Mumm, Ashlyn Noon, Breana Tarnowski
- 23 Birthday: Angela Koenig, Mark Lenz, Angie Loch, Jeff Nugent
- 24 Birthday: Josh Gierich
- 25 Birthday: Kelly Batterman
- 26 Birthday: Joshua Andrade, Adam Bialas, Logan Bialas, Edwina Gell, Benjamin Gunnink, Mark Maxwell
- 27 Birthday: Cooper Allen, Dominique Archambeau, Leith Crowther, Peggy Graefen, Eric Isaacson, Jenelle Lambert, Brianna Worthley; Anniversary: Jason & Kristen Vorrier
- 28 Birthday: Ashlyn Freeman, Emily Gierich, Jeremy Knudson
- 29 Birthday: Sarah Jandejska, Claire Paquette, Jennifer Prosise, Colleen Tobolic
- 31 Birthday: Mike Chitkowski, Michelle Covert, Isaak Johnson, Bridget Kemp, Ken Padgitt, Wilma Smith;
Anniversary: Jeff & Heidi Nugent

Announcements

We Welcome through the Sacrament of Holy Baptism:
Mackenzie Rose Hardie, daughter of Joshua & Lisa Hardie
Emma Grace Brynda, daughter of David & Amy Brynda
Ivy Rose Llorens, daughter of Alyxandra & Megan Llorens

Congratulations to:

Courtney Kohler and Frank Lapash on the birth of their son, *Maverick Richard Lapash*,
and to new grandparents, Scot & Michelle Turvey

Our Sympathies to:

Nicki Alander on the passing of her sister, *Pauline Jurgens*

Andrew & Debbie Furman on the passing of grandfather, *Tom Tourlas*

Arlene Hansen on the passing of her husband, *Ken Hansen*

Denise Mader and the Gurley family on the passing of Denise's grandmother, *Stephanie Nowicki*

Mike & Debbie Murphy on the passing of Debbie's aunt, *Marilyn Bennett*

Mike & Mary Wilcox and family on the passing of Mary's father, *Douglas McNabb*

Thelma Rhind on the passing of her cousin, *William Laasch*

Rick & Marsha Getz on the passing of Rick's great-niece, *Alexis DiMarco*

Family and friends of *Phyllis Snure*

Illness/Recovering:

Jim Alberico, Nicki Alander, Christa Arnold, Pat Bambule, Gail Bartz, Renee Bogacz, Bill Bromer, Cody Carter, Roy Conterez, Tiffany Crowther, Arlene Erdahl, Susan Fick, Gail Hartley, Pat Block-Hay, Kari Hernandez, Diane Kaiser, Dawn Kemp, Bill Kerschbaum, Barb Koskiewicz, Cathy Kush, Kathy Lenz, Caroline MacGregor, Chris Markwell, Lynn Martinek, Don Meints, Joe Miller, Kathy Moore, Madison Mumm, Cathi Niewinski, Jeff Niewinski, Arnie Oppenheim, Kim Pennington, Lee Perignon, Cheryl Pierce, Mathew Rathbun, Evan Sauerwein, Joe Scaglione, Mindy Scaglione, Dick Seaberg, Jim Simmons, Michelle Turvey, Scot Turvey, Al Wilke, Lori & Wendy Zach

Hospitalization/Surgery/Testing:

Joe Aincham, Wilkie Parrish, Katie Shafer

Prayer Concerns:

Robb Bobb, Megan Kaiser-Olejniczak, Quiaoit family, Rich Santoro & Julie Arinaga family, Trueblood family

Serving in the Military:

Kyle Baugh, Quinton Beyer, Daniel Bornhoeft, Thomas Bornhoeft, Isaiah Caldwell, Erik Carlson, Nick Fischer, Andy Groh, Noah King, Aaron Mateski, Nathaniel Richardson, Paul Shen, Jennifer Swanberg, Kyle Taylor, Emily Vance, Len Wruk

Homebound/Care Facility:

Christa Arnold, Betty Barnes, Barbara Buse, Sally Ferguson, Ardeth Holtz, Mary Johnson, Ardys Koch, Marilyn Krautstrunk, Victor & Norene Mazylewski, Donna Nelson, Wilkie & Carol Parrish, Norma Reed, Wilma Smith, Al Stadelmaier

Memorials:

In memory of *Phil Calahan* by Dick & Sheila Seaberg, Greg & Cheryl Pierce, Glenn & Lynne Smith, Jerome Koch, Jim & Diane Barnes, George & Judy Coope, Steve & Phyllis Norder, Cynthia Robinson, Bruce & Joyce Stejskal, Joan Fry, Linda Koerner, Robert & Doreen Swanson, Kurt & Candy Ulbricht, Stephen & Tessie Heath, Shirley Masters, Steve & Mary Jo Volkening, Roger & Carolyn Wyss, Argonne Engineering Golf League, Mark & Penny Collins, Marge West, Caroline Fox, Mark Kroll

In memory of *David Egly* by Karen Egly

In memory of *Phyllis Snure* by Rachel Gerler, Donald & Beverly Spier, Berniece Rittorf family

To the Youth Fund in memory of *Sylvi Jones* by Kurt Meyer

To the Food Pantry in memory of *Dorothy Ervin* by Lisa & Tom Schiller

November 2019 Council Meeting Highlights

By Pastor Jen

Pastoral Acts

Funerals: Celebration of life for Philip Calahan on November 9, 2019

Baptisms: Rowan Asher Koenig

Octoberfest

Debbie and John Kogelman and their team of sous chefs created a wonderful German meal and welcoming atmosphere to raise funds for Mwangaza. It was gratifying to come together, imagining the rich and important work done in Tanzania. We will continue to forge connections to this important partnership when we welcome Daudi Msseemmaa to our congregation on December 8th to hear his first-hand experience as a senior advisor to Mwangaza.

New Members

People are seeking a place to nurture and grow their faith through an engaging faith community. Your hospitality and outreach connected with 10 families who chose to be members of our congregation on October 20. During our new member classes, we discussed our Lutheran identity and the “why” behind our St. John ministry, the meaning of grace, how the Bible is a Living Word, and how faith practices center us in our lives. Nearly half of our new members are in their 20’s and 30’s. If you see someone you do not know at church, take a risk and introduce yourselves. When we know one another, our faith community is strengthened, and we feel a sense of belonging which is so important in our world today.

Confirmation

Our congregation is committed to creating an atmosphere where youth feel they can share their lives and build their faith. Our focus for this confirmation year is the Bible. We’re reviewing Bible stories and our Lutheran identity through interactive learning. People of all ages need to make sense of our complicated world, and I’m confident this is happening week after week with our confirmation groups. More than ever, I see the kids engaging with their faith and their relationships with one another. We’re so grateful for Pastor Evan’s talent of writing confirmation curriculum, and for the 18 adults who come week after week to lead our small care groups.

Commitment Weekend and Church Finances

Through our giving, we are engaging people in their faith journeys and reaching out to make a difference in our community and world. We’ve had a wonderful response to our fall appeal and are well on our way to reaching our goal to receive 260 financial commitments for 2020. The videos were uplifting, the skits a lot of fun, and our mini-faith series videos (you received these via email) made me grateful to be part

of a congregation who cares deeply for their shared mission. Dawn MacGregor manages the communications for our stewardship appeals, and her talent and devotion to the work is creative and inspiring.

Our financial snapshot the end of October looked very healthy! Thank you for your offerings, because they helped us through some unexpected maintenance items involving our boilers and heating units. Some parts of our boilers had a hard time with the arctic blast the beginning of the year. But our online giving and offerings kept us steady and ministry could continue to happen unimpeded. Keep those letters and cards coming...we have a goal to end the year with a balanced budget and we are almost there! Expect a year-end letter outlining what we can do as a congregation to reach our goal.

Mobile Food Pantry

One of the highlights of the month was attending the Mobile Food Pantry with the other 150+ volunteers and 300 families who came to receive food. Steve Engel is a member of our congregation and his firm at Baird & Warner sponsored the event. You cannot imagine the amount of work that happens behind the scenes to prepare for the event. Every minute spent and every penny donated is worth the moments when we come together to serve and receive all God is giving us. I came away from the day feeling joyful for the work.

All Saints

During All Saints worship I felt sadness, hope, and gratitude. But I never felt alone. You may also feel the same way. On All Saints, the sanctuary was packed with people, your crosses adorning our chancel bearing the name of your loves as we gathered in great hope that God brings life out of all our losses. I was reflecting on the importance of marking our hope and our grief in the midst of a culture that has little time to spend on naming our losses. God promises life out of endings. Gathering to remember our hope is so important to healing. We are doing important work when we share our lives and hopes together.

Building Security

We are committed to providing a place for ministries and community groups to meet at night. We are also committed to providing a safe space to meet. The challenge is the layout of our building. If the doors are unlocked or propped open in the evenings, anyone can enter, and people are unaware of who is in the building. This raises security risks. We have found solutions for most nights but have most concern for Monday and Thursday evenings. Lisa Marshall volunteered to adjust her work hours on Mondays and Thursdays so she could arrive in the afternoon and stay through the evening. As a staff, we agreed the adjustment in her

schedule would not adversely affect the daytime staffing in the office. As of last week, we began opening and supervising the church entrance nearest the office for approximately 30 minutes when the majority of people arrive. After that, the doors are locked and people will ring the doorbell to be admitted into the building. We will evaluate the change in a few months to see how it's working. We want to emphasize we are not adding hours onto Lisa's role, but adjusting her start and finish time on Monday and Thursday. Stay tuned to hear how it's working!

Other Important Items

Our Church Council will be discussing the future trends of the ELCA, which I'll be preparing to communicate with the congregation in the next few months. We are working on communicating our December worship and activities schedule, and the congregation will receive postcards this December to share with others to invite them to worship. I'm also working with Property and Finance Committees to imagine what we will need to care for our aging building, and how we will raise the funds to support our needed future maintenance. We are in the last stages of preparing the 2020 Budget and present a draft of the budget to Council in December and the congregation in January. In a few weeks, leaders around the East Conference will gather with Bishop Clements and staff to discuss congregational vitality.

By Pastor Robin

Food Pantry

November 2nd Mobile Food Pantry

It was a beautiful, chilly day to host 300 clients and over 150 volunteers, who gave away more food than we ever have before. I am grateful to the leaders who work tirelessly to make this huge event possible: Dawn MacGregor, Janel Eaton, Michelle Covert, and Pastor Jen, along with each station leader. We gave away 170 donated coats and sweaters under the leadership of Jenn Radtke, and the remaining 30 were delivered to Daybreak homeless shelter. Among the volunteers were some of our major givers from outside our congregation whose generous donations make the food pantry sustainable.

Partners

I am thrilled to report that the two major donors have committed to give to the food pantry again next year. Their continued support is a testament to the change we are making in the lives of people who come to St. John in need of help and in need of helping. Bringing people together, we are crossing boundaries of class and race to work and walk with our neighbors. As of November 13, Jewel has raised \$4000 for holiday meals for people in need in our congregation and food pantry. Janel Eaton is leading the effort to

get volunteers to spread the word about our food pantry at a table at Jewel, Chuck Cortese is leading meal pick up/delivery to St. John and Dawn MacGregor is leading the distribution day. You can support our holiday meals by shopping at Jewel (at Caton Farm and Rt. 59) and donating towards them. \$65 is enough for a holiday meal with all the sides. Holiday meals will be distributed November 25.

Food pantry volunteers and staff continue to take ownership of this good work we do and take responsibility for the care of our neighbors. Whenever there is a need, it is met. People are so generous with whatever they have to give. Janel Eaton, Chuck Cortese, Jackie Mansholt, Barb Furmankiewicz and Dawn MacGregor continue to be leaders that keep the food pantry strong as the numbers of people in need surge again this fall. Children's Ministries

Faith Milestones

Faith Milestones are learning events to help families nurture their kids in the Christian faith, strengthen the bonds between them, and fulfill promises they made. One of the promises parents make at a child's baptism, is to teach them the Creeds of the church. The fulfillment of that promise will be marked in worship on November 17, when 5th graders and their parents will receive an Apostles' Creed coin, blessing and recognition.

Sunday School Christmas Program

We are celebrating the birth of Jesus with our Sunday school kids who will tell the story of God's Greatest Gift to the world on Dec. 8. Our special offering will go toward the St. John quilting ministry in remembrance of the swaddling cloth that Mary and Joseph wrapped Jesus in to keep him warm. Quilts made here throughout the year go to warm families around the world who are assisted by Lutheran World Relief during times of crisis.

Pastoral Care

Homebound Communion – We have a team of members who bring sanctuary, friendship, and Holy Communion to people who are unable to join us in worship. They typically visit about once/month, offering bulletins and announcement sheets, and CDs of the worship services, along with wafers and wine, and companionship. Our homebound communion ministers were thanked and blessed in worship on November 10. In addition, I was able to make seven homebound visits and two hospital visits this past month.

Looking Ahead

Advent Evening Prayer, Christmas Program, Adult Mission Trip, Food Pantry development and staffing considerations, Vacation Bible School Leadership

Outside Our Doors

Synod Council Visits

I visited the council meeting of Faith Lutheran Church, Joliet, as a neighbor and representative of the synod to tell them about all the good work we do in our ELCA congregations, synods, and worldwide, and what a difference in the world our Mission Support dollars make. Bishop Clements is asking all of our synod congregations to commit to giving 5% above what we gave the previous year, to sustain the local and global reach we have sharing and caring for our neighbors in the name of Jesus Christ.

NIS Social Ministry Committee

We awarded \$1,000 in grant money toward a free event hosted by the synod Creation Care team. January 25, 9:30-12:30, Faith Lutheran Church, Rochelle, IL, with guest speaker Dr. Leah Schade, Assistant Professor of Preaching and Worship at Lexington Theological Seminary. You are invited ☺ Grant money awarded through the social ministry committee is a part of the synod budget that our congregation's mission support helps fund.

By Pastor Evan

Youth, College-Age & Young Adult

College Check-in

There were several highlights from this month, the first of which was our first College Check-in. A handful of our local college students and I met at a local restaurant to catch up, share joys and frustrations, and talk a little about the world we live in. There was a lot of energy around the table, deep discussions, and an abundance of laughter. I look forward to seeing how these monthly gatherings develop over time.

Young Adult Group

Our young adult group met again this month and had a wonderful conversation about what our purpose together would be. At our next gathering we will engage in a visioning process and define the "why" of our group.

High School

Finally, on November 6th, our high school students gathered to pack and decorate 33 care packages for our college-age youth. It was a fun night and I've already received grateful messages!

Working on new ministries takes effort, and I definitely was ready to take a breath at the end of the month, but this is exactly the kind of challenge that keeps me energized.

Looking Ahead

College-age Mission Trip

As the year draws to a close, I will be working to shore up the final details of our college-age mission trip for June 2020. I'll be meeting with our church partners again on November 21st with a goal to have registration open in December.

Advent

It is time for Advent once again, and so I will be working with Pastor Robin to put together our weekly advent prayer services. I really enjoyed the reflective time last year, and I'm glad to be working on this again.

Other

I am continuing to work on administration for our winter/spring youth events and starting to recruit for Badger TEC and Winter Retreat.

Additional Ministries Inside and Outside Our Doors

Stewardship

Another highlight was our stewardship campaign. I had a blast working on the skits with Pastor Jen and Pastor Robin, and I think that showed. It was great to work on something that made all of us laugh.

Green Team

This past month, our Green Team held a Solar Panel Forum on Oct 27th and we're proud to say there was a wonderful turn out! We're excited to see how much energy there is for green initiatives at St. John. We will also be working on providing more opportunities for our youth as a part of our work.

NIS Racial Justice Sub-Committee

Outside of our church, I recently attended the third meeting of the newly formed Racial Justice Sub-Committee for the Northern Illinois Synod. We made plans for presentations at the Congregational Resourcing Event and began to talk about our shared purpose statement.

Council Discussion Items:

- Building Security
- 2020 Goals and St. John Vision Process

Detailed Ministry Reports and Council Minutes are available on the bulletin board outside the church office. Monthly Council agendas are available at the Opportunity Wall typically the Sunday before the Council meeting.

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Pastor Jennifer Beamsley
 Pastor Robin Caldwell
 Pastor Evan Mayhew

Lisa Marshall, Church Administrator
 Pam Kornaus, Program Administrator
 Ellen Goodwin, Praise Team and Youth Choir Director
 Tori Hicks, St. John Chorale Director
 Dawn MacGregor, Food Pantry Director
 Sarah Wernli, Handbell Choir Director
 Pamela Blaesing, Office Assistant

Worship with Us:

Saturday evening 5:30 p.m.
 Sunday traditional service 8:30 a.m.
 Sunday contemporary service 11:00 a.m.
 Sunday School 9:45 a.m.



St. John by the Mail – Joliet IL

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Christmas Eve Worship, December 24th
 3:00 p.m., 5:00 p.m., 11:00 p.m.

December Memories

More photos and memories on Facebook

