



ST. JOHN'S
LUTHERAN CHURCH



THE EAGLE

Summer 2018

***BECOMING NEW
AS WE GO***



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Becoming New as we Go

Faith this Summer

Written by Pastor Adam Connolly

It's Summer!



Although I am more of a winter person, there is something about summer that I have always looked forward to. While it is not the heat and the humidity, I've been doing a lot of thinking about why I always looked forward to summer. Perhaps it's because for the past 23 years I have been in school and summer brought a much-needed break from academia. Although, I think that it had more to do with the fact that summer often brought opportunities to do something new. Whether it was to see if my athletic abilities got any better (they didn't), or to travel to a different part of the world, or the ability to have

a different experience of God through summer camp and vacation Bible schools, the ability to do something new was the exciting thing about summer.

You might be wondering, what does any of this have to do with St. John's? Well, the answer can be found in the Gospel according to Matthew, where Jesus called the disciples, and calls us, to do something new. "Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the

end of the age" (Matthew 28:19-20). The Most Rev. Michael Curry, Presiding Bishop of the Episcopal Church, puts it this way. He belongs to the Episcopal part of the Jesus Movement. Now, what exactly is the Jesus Movement? In his first address to the Episcopal Church, after his election the Presiding Bishop put it this way, "Now is our time to go. To go into the world to share the good news of God and Jesus Christ. To go into the world and help to be agents and instruments of God's reconciliation. To go into the world, let the world know that there is a God who loves us, a God who will not let us go, and that that love



An aerial photograph of a busy city street with a zebra crossing. Pedestrians are walking in various directions across the white stripes. The text is overlaid on the image in large, bold, sans-serif fonts. The background is a high-angle shot of a city street with a zebra crossing. Pedestrians are walking across the crossing. The text is overlaid on the image in large, bold, sans-serif fonts. The background is a high-angle shot of a city street with a zebra crossing. Pedestrians are walking across the crossing. The text is overlaid on the image in large, bold, sans-serif fonts.

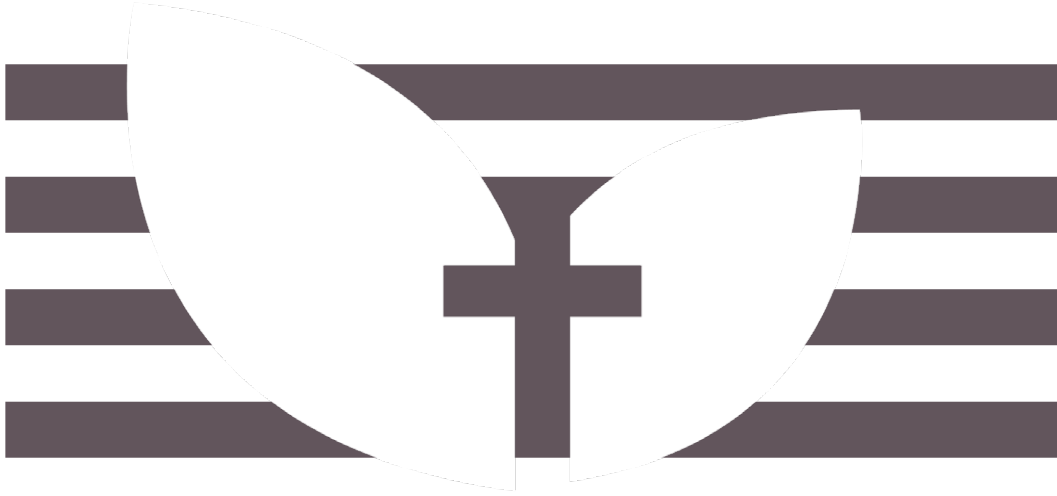
**TO BE
&
MAKE**

**DISCIPLES
OF CHRIST**

IN

**RESPONSE
TO GOD'S**

GRACE



**“HONEY,
THESE
PEOPLE
KNOW
ABOUT
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THEY
NEED
TO
SEE
JESUS.”**

can set us all free.”

We might not be part of the Episcopal branch of the Jesus Movement, but we are part of the Lutheran branch of the Jesus Movement. We are not called to sit still with our faith. We are not to keep the redeeming love of Jesus' sacrifice to ourselves. We are called to go into the world and share with the world that we have a God that loves us. We are called to go into the world and share God's grace with everyone.

On a mission trip to the Rosebud Indian Reservation, I was

reminded of our calling as disciples. Another adult leader asked our site leader if he would be able to tell people about Jesus, and Jesus' love for them. The leader said something that will stick with me for the rest of my life. She said, "Honey, these people *know* about Jesus. They need to *see* Jesus."

Most, if not all, people in our country and in the world have heard about Jesus Christ, the story of his death and resurrection, and his gift of salvation. But people also need to see Jesus. It's not enough for us to just tell people about the story of Christ. We are called to give

voice to the voiceless, to care for those whom society has left behind. It's not up to anyone else; it's our calling, as disciples of Christ, to carry out this task. It is our calling, as disciples, to become the hands and feet of Christ, and care for each other. This summer, I invite you to have a conversation with God, and to see where God is calling you to go into the world and become the hands and feet of Christ.

Finally, God is doing a new thing here at St. John's. After much anticipation, we are in the final stages of putting shovels into the ground and starting the construction phase of our Be Bold

campaign. Make sure you mark Sunday, June 24 on your calendars. Following the 10:00 a.m. Combined Worship Service in the Sanctuary, we will have a groundbreaking ceremony followed by a congregational meal in the Parish Life Center. Construction will begin soon thereafter. Later in this edition of the Eagle there is more information about what construction will look like, along with where you can find the temporary offices for all the staff members throughout the construction project. With the renovation to the current office area, parlor,

and preschool waiting area and the addition of more offices and a choir room, things might be a little chaotic at times. Please be patient with the chaos and the minor disruption in our daily ministry. Sometimes, when God is up to something new in our lives, it causes us to take a step out of our comfort zones and to embrace the challenge. Trust me, however, the final product will be fantastic.

No matter where you are this summer, remember that Jesus has called us his disciples and sends us out, into the world, to share the story of his never-ending

love. And in case you forget, be reminded through the words of David Haas' hymn, *We Are Called*:

"Sing! Sing a new song! Sing of that great day when all will be one! God will reign, and we'll walk with each other as sisters and brothers united in love. We are called to act with justice, we are called to love tenderly; we are called to serve one another, to walk humbly with God."

Pastor Adam





Where in the world are we going to worship?!

BY PASTOR GREG BUSBOOM

"Summertime is also a great time to take our faith on the road, and share the Good News of Jesus with those we will interact with."

WHERE

in the world will we worship during the renovation and construction project that is set to begin the last week of June? Simple! Beginning the weekend of June 30/July 1, all of our worship services will take place in the Parish Life Center (PLC).

Our 5:00 p.m. Saturday worship service and our 8:00 a.m. Sunday worship service will remain almost exactly the same as they are now, just in a different location.

Our combined 10:00 a.m. Sunday worship service will be a somewhat blended style of worship, primarily contemporary but with a few traditional elements incorporated into it so that all will be able to find a home there.

According to the current timeline, the hope is that construction will be far enough along that we should be able to return to the sanctuary sometime in early fall. Until then, let's enjoy the opportunity to worship our one God as one congregation in one worship space. Who knows?! You might just make some new relationships with

folks you don't normally see at your usual worship service. You might just experience a new hymn or a new worship song that adds meaning to your worship experience. You might just experience God's presence in a new way that leads you into a deeper faith relationship.

As we worship in a new space and, perhaps, in a new way, our Lutheran confessions provide us with a helpful guide. In the Augsburg Confession, the definitive statement of what Lutheran Christians believe, written in 1530 during the climax of the Reformation, Article VII defines the church by how we worship.

"It is also taught among us that one holy Christian church will be and remain forever. This is the assembly of all believers among whom the Gospel is preached in its purity and the holy sacraments are administered according to the Gospel. For it is sufficient for the true unity of the Christian church that the Gospel be preached in conformity with a pure understanding of it and that the sacraments be administered in accordance with the divine Word. It is not necessary for the true unity of the Christian church that ceremonies, instituted by

men, should be observed uniformly in all places. It is, as Paul says in Ephesians 4:4-5, "There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called to the one hope that belongs to your call, one Lord, one faith, one baptism." (The Book of Concord, edited by Theodore G. Tappert. Fortress Press: Philadelphia, 1959).

Indeed, though we worship in different ways, we are one church worshipping one God. All of our unique worship expressions here at St. John's are solidly grounded in the preaching of the Gospel and the administration of the sacraments. According to those early reformers, that is enough. As we worship in

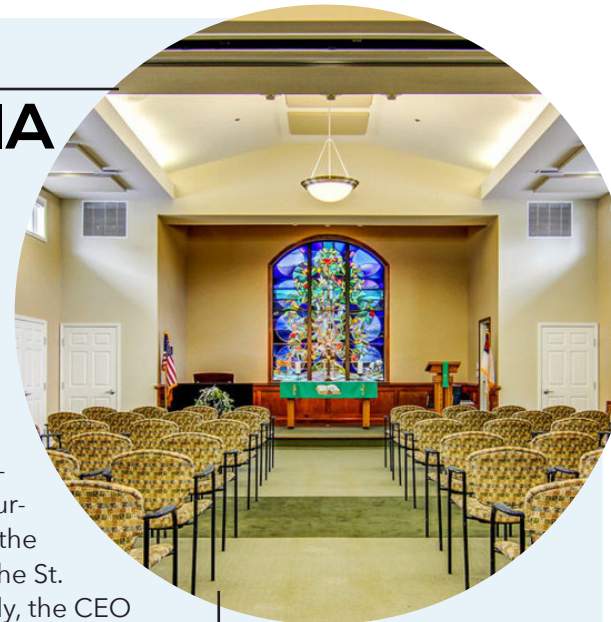
a new way and in a new location during the coming months of construction, God is providing us with a wonderful opportunity to rejoice together in the unity of mission we share to be and make disciples of Christ, in response to God's grace!

“INDEED, THOUGH WE WORSHIP IN DIFFERENT WAYS, WE ARE ONE CHURCH WORSHIPING ONE GOD. ALL OF OUR UNIQUE WORSHIP EXPRESSIONS HERE AT ST. JOHN'S ARE SOLIDLY GROUNDED IN THE PREACHING OF THE GOSPEL AND THE ADMINISTRATION OF THE SACRAMENTS.”

ST. JOHN'S AT CONCORDIA

WHERE IN THE WORLD IS ST. JOHN'S?

St. John's is at Concordia Village, a Lutheran Senior Services Retirement Community here in Springfield. Did you know that every Tuesday afternoon at 1:30 p.m., one of the pastors from either Faith Lutheran in Jacksonville, Grace Lutheran in Springfield, Peace Lutheran in Springfield, or right here at St. John's, leads a ½ hour worship service, including Holy Communion, in the Concordia Village chapel? Many of the disciples from St. John's who reside at Concordia Village attend the worship service each week. St. John's disciple Rosemary Carlson, also a Concordia Village resident, spearheads the effort, inviting and encouraging Concordia residents to attend and participate. Often times, when one of the three pastors from St. John's leads the service, they are joined by members of the St. John's choir who share an anthem and help lead the hymn-singing. Occasionally, the CEO of Concordia Village, Jacque Bogner (also an active disciple at St. John's!), pops in as well! The worship service is not limited to residents of Concordia, but is open to all. Can't make it to worship on the weekend this summer? Try Tuesday afternoon worship at 1:30 each week at Concordia Village! The residents would love to have you join them! It's one of the many places where St. John's is this summer and all throughout the year!



GROUND BREAKING SUNDAY

Where in the world is St. John's?
We're breaking ground as we grow in hospitality!

20



18



Sunday, June 24

10:00 a.m. Combined Worship Celebration in the Sanctuary

Worship Service featuring the music of our organist Carlo van Ulft, our St. John's Praise Team under the direction of Christie Lazarides, and our St. John's Chancel Choir under the direction of Sue Hamilton.

Followed by a Service of Groundbreaking and an All-Church Picnic on the Church Lawn.

Fried Chicken
Potato Salad
Baked Beans

Rolls
Ice Cream Sandwich Bars
Iced Tea, Lemonade, Water

Games and activities for all!

Come and be a part of God's future at St. John's as we break ground together!



Summer Worship Schedule

**Where in the world is St. John's this summer?
St. John's is in worship!**

"THEN I HEARD THE VOICE OF THE LORD SAYING, 'WHOM SHALL I SEND, AND WHO WILL GO FOR US?' AND I SAID, 'HERE AM I; SEND ME!'" (ISAIAH 6:8).

SUMMER WORSHIP TIMES ...
IT'S SIMPLE!

5 p.m.
8 a.m.
10 a.m.

*Wherever we are, just come!
Come and hear God's Word!
Come and be fed at God's Table!
Come and grow in relationship
with the community of faith!*

SUMMER WORSHIP LOCATIONS ...
IT'S COMPLICATED!

Weekends of May 26/27 through June 16/17

5 p.m. Saturday - Casual Traditional Worship (Sanctuary)
8 a.m. Sunday - Traditional Worship (Sanctuary)
10 a.m. Sunday - Traditional Worship (Sanctuary)
10 a.m. Sunday - Contemporary Worship (PLC)

Weekend of June 23/24 (Groundbreaking Celebration)

5 p.m. Saturday - Casual Traditional Worship (Sanctuary)
8 a.m. Sunday - Traditional Worship (Sanctuary)
10 a.m. - Combined CELEBRATION Worship (Sanctuary)
Followed by a Service of Groundbreaking and an all-church
Celebration Picnic.

Weekends of June 30/July 1 through September 1/2

5 p.m. Saturday - Casual Traditional Worship (PLC)
8 Sunday - Traditional Worship (PLC)
10 a.m. Sunday - Blended Contemporary/Traditional Worship (PLC)





Top 10 Ways to Worship as you Travel this Summer

Wherever you go this summer, remember, GOD GOES WITH YOU! In fact, GOD IS ALREADY THERE! Make time to worship wherever you are and experience true rest, refreshment, and renewal this summer! Jesus invites, "Come to me, all you that are weary and are carrying heavy burdens, and I will give you rest . . . for my yoke is easy, and my burden is light" (Matthew 11:28-30).

1 **FIND A LOCAL CONGREGATION TO WORSHIP IN WHEN YOU ARE TRAVELING.**

Just think about the lesson you will teach your kids as you show them that worshipping God is important even on vacation! God doesn't take a vacation from us! Why should we take a vacation from God? To find an ELCA congregation wherever you are, go to www.elca.org and click on "Find a Congregation." Or, find a non-ELCA congregation to worship in and experience worship in a new way. Either way, just worship!

2 **PACK YOUR BIBLE AND THEN READ IT!**

Add a book or two from the Bible to your summer reading list and read a chapter or two each night before you go to bed. Better yet, read each night with your family and then talk about what you hear God saying!

3 **REMEMBER TO PRAY TOGETHER BEFORE MEALS, EVEN WHEN ON VACATION!**

It's easy to remember to pray at our own kitchen tables, but not so easy to remember to pray when at a restaurant or at the beach or on a picnic. God can hear you wherever you are, so remember to tell God "thank you!"

4 **SING!**

Most likely you'll spend some quality time together with your family in the car this summer. When you get bored, start singing some of your favorite church songs from Vacation Bible School or church camp or even from the green hymnal! Nothing helps pass the time when stuck in traffic better than a few verses of *A Mighty Fortress* sung in four-part harmony!

5 **MAKE SERVING OTHERS PART OF YOUR FAMILY VACATION!**

Find a soup kitchen, a women's shelter, a Boys and Girls Club, or Habitat for Humanity Project wherever you're traveling this summer and spend a day helping others! Again, just think what a lesson you will be sharing with your kids by serving others together on vacation. Make it a contest to see who can come up with the most creative way to serve others!

6 **AT A WEEKEND BASEBALL OR SOFTBALL TOURNAMENT?**

Between games, invite the other members of your team to join you in devotions or perhaps the Faith 5! Share your high's and low's, read a Bible verse or two, talk about what God is saying, pray together, and then bless each other. You'll be surprised how willing your team members are to share their faith together!

7 **DON'T FORGET TO GIVE!**

Giving is about way more than keeping the church's lights on (though we certainly appreciate not having to work in the dark)! It's about sharing our gratitude to God by giving back the first portion of everything we have! Not going to be in worship? Visit our website at www.stjohnspringfield.org, click on "Give," and see how easy it is to give online!

8 **GOING SWIMMING?**

Remember your baptism! Every time you get ready to jump in the pool, the lake, or the ocean, quickly trace the sign of the cross on your forehead and say to yourself, "I am a child of God!" Then, teach your kids to do the same. Then, SPLASH!!!

9 **EXPLORE THE BEAUTY OF GOD'S CREATION BY VISITING A LOCAL, STATE, OR NATIONAL PARK.**

Create a photo journal of all the ways you see and experience God's handiwork! Then, post your journal online, remembering to give God the glory!

10 **TIP YOUR SERVERS!**

A great way to share a Christian witness is to generously tip those who serve us—especially when on vacation. Go one step further and when leaving that \$5 or \$10 bill on your hotel pillow, write a thank you note and be sure to remind them that Jesus loves them!



ST. JOHN'S ON STAGE

Where in the world is St. John's this summer?

ONE OF
THE MANY
PLACES OUR
CONGREGATION
IS PRESENT IS ON
STAGE ACROSS
OUR COMMUNITY
THROUGH A
VARIETY OF
PERFORMING
VENUES.

BY
PASTOR CARLA WILSON

Each summer St. John's is well-represented at The Muni, the Legacy Theater, and New Salem's Theatre in the Park as a variety of disciples share their musical and theatrical gifts. This summer is no exception. St. John's youth Danny Lee performed in the musical *1776* at New Salem's Theatre in the Park the weekends of May 18-20 and 24-26. The Muni kicks off in June with the high energy musical *Sister Act* featuring St. John's disciples Christie Lazarides Purdy and Carla Wilson. Our very own Director of Music Ministries Sue Hamilton is serving as the vocal director for the production of *Mama Mia* at the Legacy Theater from July 6-29. And, finally, the "sun will come out tomorrow" in August with the production of The Muni's *Annie* under the vocal direction of our Director of Contemporary Worship Christie Lazarides Purdy and starring St. John's disciples Craig Williams II, Alicia Huntley, and Claire Huntley. And, if a beautiful evening of music in the park is more your style, you won't want to miss this year's 57th International Carillon Festival at the Thomas Rees Memorial Carillon in Washington Park June 3-5 and 7-8, coordinated by and featuring our very own Organist Carlo van Ulft. In the article below, St. John's disciple Carla Wilson shares her reflections on the powerful connection between performing in community theater and living out one's discipleship to Jesus.

What does performing in a play or musical have to do with discipleship?

How can saying, "I'm leaving for rehearsal!" ever be translated to mean, "I'm heading out to worship?" Several disciples of St. John's are active in the local theatre community, and we find many opportunities for worship and praise in that involvement.

First, there is fellowship and a genuine desire to lift up and connect with our cast mates. Once rehearsals start, this motley crew of people from all walks of life becomes a family, working toward a common goal (and seeing each other more than we see our real families!). As the days go by, we quickly learn about each other and become interested in each other's lives outside of the show, and when the show is over, those bonds continue. One of our disciples, Craig Williams says, "For me, theater is a very communal activity. People from various walks of life joining together in mind and body to work toward a common goal. You audition together, rejoice in

getting roles together, rehearse together and ultimately perform together. Along the way, we get to know not only the roles we are working to portray, but also one another. Without one another, the show wouldn't be the same. In that respect, I have actively felt the Holy Spirit working within the casts and staffs of the various shows I have been part of. The connections that are made between folks are much like the ones made at church."

Secondly, we are all together each evening because we share a love of performing. I believe that when we are doing something we love to do, it makes God happy, because he made each one of us with unique gifts and interests. Using those talents lights us up inside, because we are igniting a spark put into us by our Creator. When you have thirty or more people singing and dancing their hearts out because they love it, the result is a very loud, joyful noise!

On a deeper level than fellowship, there are ways we minister to each other, as anyone involved in a close-knit group can attest. We pray for each other, and many of us pray together before each show. People carry burdens that can't always be checked at the door, and life

happens, even in the span of an eight-week rehearsal schedule. We are there for each other, not just with prayer, but in understanding, hugs, encouragement, and cookies.

There are underlying themes in all works of art, and while certainly not all of them are uplifting, many are, or they remind us that love will triumph over hate and people are generally good at heart. These themes bring cast and audience members together, and for a brief moment, unite us as humans and children of God. One of the musicals being produced this summer at the Muni is "Sister Act," which concludes with these lyrics, which I think we've all heard before, in form or another:

***Every sister and brother
Love one another
Spread it around
and Get Down!***





Growing as Disciples This Summer

BY PASTOR ADAM CONNOLLY

"Summertime is also a great time to take our faith on the road, and share the Good News of Jesus with those with whom we will interact."

WHILE

many of our structured Discipleship activities take a break during the summer, that doesn't mean we have to take the summer off from growing in our discipleship. Summertime is often filled with vacation trips, travels to visit family, summer camps, sports and many other things that take us away from St. John's and the Springfield area.

Summertime is also a great time to take our faith on the road, and share the Good News of Jesus with those with whom we will interact.

To help you stay connected with St. John's this summer and continue growing in your relationships with God, the community, and one another, the staff at St. John's has compiled a wide variety of activities in which you can partake. Take a look at the list and see how you can incorporate some of these suggestions into your summer plans.

At Home

STUDY A FAITH-BASED BOOK: Find a group of friends, or even family members, and read a book about faith. Take time to discuss the contents of the book, sharing your faith with other Lutherans, other Christians, and even non-believers. Imagine how God will work through these discussions!

FAITH 5: A simple way to incorporate faith into your daily lives. Often done before bedtime, this practice can really be done anytime you have five to fifteen minutes during the day. It can even be done while you are eating supper together. The five steps are:

- 1 - Share your highs and lows
- 2 - Read a Bible verse or story
- 3 - Talk about how the Bible reading might relate to your highs and lows
- 4 - Pray for one another's highs and lows
- 5 - Bless one another

READ YOUR BIBLE: This can be done whether you are traveling to the other side of the world or staying put in the Springfield area. Pick a section of the Bible and dive into God's Word. Perhaps you will read about the Prophets in the Old Testament, or read all of Paul's letters from the New Testament. Or, if you are really ambitious, read the entire Bible, from "In the beginning," to "amen!"

Online

DAILY DEVOTIONS: Did you know there is a group of St. John's staff and disciples that write daily devotions to use? You can pick up a copy in the PLC Lobby, the Narthex, find the devotions on our website, or email Amanda Lawler at alawler@stjohns-springfield.org and we will send them to your email everyday.

SIGN-UP FOR ST. JOHN'S WEEKLY EMAILS: Every Tuesday and Friday, we send out emails, keeping you informed on what is going on at St. John's. Especially as we enter into our building remodel and construction, we will also be sending updates in these emails on how the project is progressing. Visit the St. John's website at www.stjohns-springfield.org to sign up to receive these emails.

RECEIVE DAILY TEXT: This summer, we will be sending out daily text messages with either a Bible verse, or a question for you to ponder or discuss with family and friends. Text "stjohns" to 31996 to receive these messages.

LIVESTREAM: If you are not able to join us in worship this summer in person, please consider joining us through our livestream. Our 10:00 a.m. worship is broadcast through Youtube and saved for you to watch throughout the week, if you cannot watch Sunday mornings. Even though you might be 5,000 miles from Springfield, you can still be part of our worshiping community every week.



On the Road

VACATION BAGS: We'll be putting some bags together for your family to take along on vacation! The bag will include plenty of questions to ask on car rides and during dinner, game recommendations for road trips, weekly devotions, small LED candles, and Faith5 bookmarks to help you remember to practice them daily. We will also include some ideas for service projects you can do anywhere. Take your faith on the road this summer!

PHOTOS OF WHERE YOU SEE GOD: When you are traveling, be on the lookout for where God is active and take some pictures. Send those pictures, along with a brief description to Tucker Good at tgood@stjohns-springfield.org. We will compile the images into a collage of where St. John's disciples saw God this summer to display this fall.



At Church

VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL: St. John's Vacation Bible School will be July 9 - 13, but if you are spending an extended amount of time with grandparents or other family, search for a Vacation Bible School that you can attend where you're headed.

MARK OUR MAP: Either before or after your vacation, find the large map in the PLC Lobby and take one of the flags, write your family name and the dates you will be traveling. Place the flag on the map where you will be traveling. Let's see where in the world St. John's families travel to this summer!



Loving

Our

Neighbors!



At Vacation Bible School,

we spend the week getting a huge dose of God's love. There are so many things we could teach the kids about our Creator, and it is our hope that they leave with spiritual growth in a few areas: growing closer to God, growing closer to one another, and growing closer in community. This is why we have chosen to support a very local mission during VBS this year. Each summer, our Neighborhood Ministry Team collects school supplies and backpacks to pass out to families in our congregation and neighborhood. We are partnering with the

Neighborhood Ministry Team this year to help collect even more supplies for children throughout the week of VBS

One of our goals at VBS is to teach children to reach out to one another in times of need. We want them to understand that hard times can happen to anyone, and when a person goes through something tough, God calls us to offer our friendship and support. We want our children to grow in compassion and understanding, and we hope to help them see that we all go through our own struggles, and in those struggles we can choose kindness and love again and again. On July 9-13, we

will grow together each day from 9:00-11:30 a.m. We will celebrate together with all families at a picnic on the church lawn on Friday, July 13 at 5:30 p.m. and we will show off the kids' musical talents on Sunday, July 15 at 10:00 a.m. worship in the PLC. Register for VBS today on the Children's page at our St. John's website!

You can also give to this project by bringing school supplies to St. John's on Sundays or throughout the week during office hours starting in July. We will share a list of school supplies needed later this summer. All donations will be given to Springfield area students in August.



SAM NEHRING

Director of Children and Family Ministries at St. John's

Shipwrecked VBS
July 9-13, 2018

Register online at stjohns-springfield.org/children

1
You could be the one Jesus uses to transform a child's life forever.

No pressure.

2
You will make life-long memories with children and other volunteers.

3
You will learn and teach that God's love is incredible, faithful, invincible, unconditional, and very real.

4
You will witness the undeniable curiosity of children as they question everything, yet they remain faithful.

5
You get to think and act like a kid all week! Well... most of the week.

6
You will build new relationships with new people at St. John's.

7
You get to eat yummy snacks every day.

8
You can greatly improve your craft-making skills in Imagination Station.

9
You get the joy of having the theme songs stuck in your head forever! Or at least until next year's VBS.

10
You will probably learn some fresh new jokes from the kids in your crew. Everyone will think you're **HILARIOUS**, obviously.



10 REASONS TO VOLUNTEER AT VBS!



VBS VOLUNTEER POSITIONS

- SET-UP TEAM**
- STATION LEADER**
- CREW LEADER**
- LEADER ASSISTANT**
- GREETER**
- HOSPITALITY TEAM**
- MUSIC TEAM**

Coming this Summer:

Preteen Ministry!

This summer, we are starting a brand new Preteen Ministry! We kicked off the summer with a lock-in for our students who just completed 4th-6th grade, and we will continue to meet throughout the summer for group events.

We want to develop preteens' spiritual growth by creating a ministry that is specific to their age group. Preteens often end up falling into an awkward limbo where they are too old for typical Sunday School routines, and they are not quite ready for the intensity of Confirmation. Not everything about these years has to be awkward - we understand that they are ready to start contemplating tougher questions about life and faith, and we are ready to guide them into that new territory. If you or your child are in this age group, we encourage you to come

check out what's in store for you over the next few years! Our lock-in starts at 7:00 p.m. on Friday, June 1 in the Parish Life Center, and we will have several other events throughout the summer. We hope to see you here!

Sign up to receive emails and texts about events at www.stjohns-springfield.org/children.



4 WAYS TO HELP PRETEENS SEE WHO THEY ARE

An excerpt by Courtney Wilson from Childrensministry.com

My son was 11 years old when he needed to choose his first pair of glasses. I'd decided to order them from a company that encourages you to choose frames based on a social media vote. After being unsatisfied with any of our choices, we drove to their small pop-up store in Chicago.

At the store, the staff made my son feel like he was the coolest kid on earth. They gave input on what frames would be the best fit for his face; then they got the rest of the customers to take part in an impromptu live vote for the best frames. Once the public had spoken and the frames were chosen, they took his picture and sent us on our way, applauding his choice. The smile on my son's face said it all to me—this group of people approved of him, and in one encounter they had shaped his identity and confidence.

This may seem like a story of one preteen choosing a pair of glasses, but it mirrors the experience of so many of our preteens as they seek to find their identity in our culture. Sometimes called the Plurals, or Generation Z, this group has known nothing other than living life in the light of social media, the instant response of a smartphone at all times, and the multitasking of using multiple devices at once in order to fit an extra two hours of screen time into a day.

Just like my son as he chose his glasses, this generation seeks validation from outside themselves—which is understandable, as they have watched their parents post their every move on Facebook and obsess over how many “likes” appear. Their widening circles of influence have come at the expense of a certain authenticity of relationships. While these kids rely on an “external brain” (via the Internet that is literally carried in their pockets), they can find information from a myriad of sources, some familiar and some completely foreign. There is no changing the need to rely on their “internal heart” and the need to have God, their very source of life, be the loudest voice in their lives.

The good news—the REALLY good news—is that we can use God's Word to shape the identity of our preteens. When we can help them shift their focus from what the many say about them to what the one—their heavenly Father—thinks about them, we shape their identity in truth and love.

Here are 4 ways we can begin to help our preteens see and understand their identity in Christ through God's Word:

1

Give them the reliable source

Preteens are literal thinkers—which is one of the dangers of having the

Internet as an external brain; distinguishing between truth and fiction is more about the source of the information than the information itself. If a source has given reliable information in the past, a preteen is likely to see any information from that source as truth; and if a source gave information that was false, the source (in the preteen's mind) is unreliable and false. This can work in our favor when we teach God's Word. If we can teach the Bible in such a way that we leave no doubt as to its validity, our kids will return to it as a primary source of information and identity.

2

Help them see their world through God's Word

Once we have established God's Word as a

reliable source, then we have given preteens an entire book of truths about the Creator of the universe. At this age, preteens define themselves by the brands and social issues they identify with. If they have established truths about God, they can use them as a framework for how they see the world. While they may be individualistic in their thinking, they are living in a culturally diverse world. Use God's Word for the answers to social justice issues. Point out specific stories in which God intervened on behalf of the weak or established His promise to the humble and faithful. Because of their awareness of these issues and because of their multicultural classrooms, evoking passion about loving God and loving people—and really considering ways to put that faith into action—will turn these kids' hearts toward God and His Word.

3

Let them wonder

Don't let them pull out their personal Internet devices to find the answer to a

question. The danger in instant gratification is that our kids are never given the opportunity to simply BE and WONDER. Giving kids a question and then letting them think creatively about it will stretch them. It'll even rewire those connections in their brain that they may have lost through our “wiki society”. We see examples throughout Scripture. Psalmists wondering at creation, disciples in awe of Christ, and crowds struggling to comprehend God's power in healing. Each time it would seem their faith was increased as they were stretched. Let's allow space and time for kids to wonder about God. Then encourage them to use what they know of Him through His Word to draw conclusions. It'll increase their confidence in God's Word—and solidify what they know to be true about God.

4

Turn the mirror around

Our culture encourages people to “show themselves” rather than “know themselves”.

It's critical that we use these truths from God's Word to “turn the mirror around”. It shows preteens how their own identity is reflected in their relationship with Christ. For example, they see themselves in the story of God's people being freed from slavery. Then they identify with situations in their own lives when they have felt bullied or enslaved. They can then find freedom because of their relationship with God. When they hear the story of Jesus raising Jairus's daughter from the dead, they know the care Christ has for kids their age—and they can stand confidently in that. When they know that Jesus died for them in order to change their identity from one known by their sins to one known by God, they can't help but see themselves as children of the Most High King.

I believe that as we teach our preteens through God's Word, we establish it as truth. This gives them the confidence to understand it and see themselves in it. I believe we'll see a generation with identities shaped not by what the world “likes,” but by Christ's love.

YOUTH

going with god to houston, texas



From June 26 - July 2, 15 St. John's youth, along with 4 brave adult chaperones, will be traveling to Houston, Texas for the ELCA Youth Gathering. This trip will be filled with a ton of fun and time to grow in our relationship with God and one another as we dive deeper into what it means to be "Saved by Grace" (Ephesians 2:8). It also gives us an opportunity to partner with a service organization in the Houston area as we become the hands and feet of Christ, sharing our gifts with our brothers and sisters of Houston.

According to the ELCA Youth Gathering website, the mission of Service Learning Day is to:

- Invite participants to enter into the diverse story of Houston.
- Empower our partners in Houston to further their mission.
- Join in relationships of accompaniment with our partners.
- Create opportunity for transformative experiences for Gathering participants so they return home as agents of change in their own communities.

The ELCA Youth Gathering invites participants to engage in one day of service learning during their time in

Houston. As a faith community, the ELCA Youth Gathering combines meaningful service, instruction and reflection with a faith lens of accompaniment.

So, what exactly will we be doing? We won't find out until we arrive in Houston, but there is a good chance we will be doing one of the following: Working with Kids in day camps; Helping make meals to serve people in need; Sorting donations from all across the world that have come into the Houston area following Hurricane Harvey; or helping rebuild homes after Harvey.

Even though you won't be in Houston with us, you can still follow our journey and get updates from Houston. Each night (June 27-June 30), you can go to elca.org/gathering and watch the livestream from our nightly celebrations. Also, if you like St. John's on Facebook, we will be providing daily video recaps on what we did and where we saw God.

Many thanks for all your support in making this a memorable experience in the faith lives of our youth and for all who will experience the love of God this summer in Houston!



DEEPENING OUR RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD THIS SUMMER



Part of our Confirmation Ministry here at St. John's is spending a week at Augustana College for Confirmation Camp. Our youth will join with other youth from the Central/Southern Illinois and Northern Illinois synods as we focus on the First Commandment: You shall have no other gods. Our confirmation students will be learning about how God gathers us, our relationship with God, confessing our sins to God, trusting in God, and being called to worship God. As part of camp, we will be sent out into the Quad Cities area to partner with local service organizations as we help pack dental bags, work with an adult day service organization, work in gardens, and work with the Boys and Girls club.

During the week of June 11-15, please include our confirmation students in your prayers that through this week of fun and learning they may deepen their relationship with God and with one another.

Words of advice from former campers:

Don't be scared to meet new people.

Take showers early.

Actually sleep when you are supposed to.

Go for the chocolate chip muffins at breakfast.

Eat as much as you can.

Open yourself up to doing new things that take you out of your comfort zone.

Calling all St. John's High School Youth!

It's not too late to sign up for 2018 Leadership Lab. What is Leadership Lab? It's a place where you will learn leadership skills that will follow you throughout your whole life as well as learning about, and growing in your relationship with God, yourself, and others!

When: July 23-28

Where: Augustana College

Cost: \$205 *Financial assistance available. Talk to Pastor Adam or Pastor Greg*

If you are interested, pick up a registration packet from the Welcome Center or talk to Pastor Adam. Registrations are due back to Pastor Adam or Pastor Greg by Sunday, June 20.



ADULTS



St. John's 150th Anniversary Germany Tour Registration

July 26-August 6, 2020

Join Pastors Greg and Adam as we celebrate our 150th Anniversary with a Germany Tour. We will travel to the major Luther sites, including Worms, Eisenach, Erfurt, Eisleben, and Wittenberg, as well as to Frankfurt, Mainz, Leipzig, Dresden, Nuremberg, and Munich. We will also experience the Oberammergau Passion Play which only happens every 10 years.

Cost: \$3,599, plus airfare. Registration is currently open to St. John's disciples. Starting July 2, registration will be open to family and friends of St. John's disciples. After August 2, registration will be opened to members of Peace and Grace Lutheran Churches. Registration will be closed when we reach 35 people.

To register, please contact Rhonda Neubauer, Church Administrator at 793.3933. For more information, contact Pastor Greg or Pastor Adam at 793.3933.

GET UP AND GO GRANOLA!

The idea for Get Up and Go Granola came when MacKenzie Steen saw a recipe in a cooking magazine. Realizing that this would be a perfect match for St. John's, the idea to make it for the whole congregation was born. After discussions with the small group Beyond Bread, plans were underway. We learned that it takes a lot longer than you think to make 600 cups of granola, but when you do it with a small group of fellow disciples, you learn a great deal, laugh a lot, and strengthen your relationships! Since many have inquired about the recipe, here it is!

- 5 cups old fashioned oats (not quick cook)
- 1/4 cup sliced almonds
- 2 tsp cinnamon
- 1/4 cup oil (regular vegetable/canola)
- 1/2 cup maple syrup
- 1/4 cup brown sugar
- 1 tsp vanilla
- 1/2 cup raisins

Preheat oven to 300 degrees.

In a large bowl, mix the oats, almonds, and cinnamon.

In a medium sauce pan, mix the oil and syrup. Over medium heat, warm for a few minutes (do not allow to boil). Add the brown sugar and vanilla. Lower the heat to low. Stirring constantly continue to heat until all of the sugar is dissolved and no longer feels "gritty" when stirred. Pour over the oat mixture in the bowl and stir until it is evenly coated.

Spread onto a lightly greased cookie sheet. Bake 1 hour to 1 hour 15 minutes until lightly golden in color. Stir every 20 minutes or so to achieve even color. Remove and allow to cool on the baking sheet. Add the raisins and toss to mix. Store in an air tight container.

Get up and Go!

Sister Act at the Muni

JUNE 24
6:30 P.M.

A light supper will be provided before the show. Show starts at 8:30 p.m. Call Carol Lange at 217.553.438 for tickets.

Annie at the Muni

AUGUST 9
6 P.M.

A light supper will be provided before the show. Show starts at 8:00 p.m. Call Carol Lange at 217.553.438 for tickets.

Dinner Night Out

On the third Tuesday of every month we gather at local restaurants to share in a meal. These meals are often accompanied by great conversations, laughs, and a time to connect as disciples. In order to make sure there is adequate space for all, please contact Becky Smith at 217.494.5523 the day before if you are planning to attend.

JUNE 19

Mario's Chatham

JULY 17

Brickhouse

AUGUST 21

Obed and Isaac's





COMMUNITY CARE

Moved by God to Go

BY
LESSLIE MORGAN

"In a blink of an eye life can change as it did for me that late summer afternoon"

EVEN

those of us who are strong in faith may begin to doubt God's presence much less God's omnipotent control over the difficult times we face. In a blink of an eye life can change, as it did for me that late summer afternoon. I was so excited to be out on the golf course again. I was just beginning to hit towards the green when I heard a train whistle, then a tremendously loud crash as the car broke in two and was carried down the track. It is true that time stands still in such a horrific accident. While my golf partner performed CPR, I was calling 911 and directing a search because of the children's toys and clothing scattered throughout the crash scene. As I walked across the track, the late afternoon sun made the train crossing's flashing lights difficult to see. Soon police and ambulances arrived and we left the golf course in absolute shock.

At work on Monday, my co-worker told me that she knew the crash victim who had died shortly after the crash. The young mother was a 911 responder and had dropped her young son off shortly before the crash. I couldn't get the young mother and her family out of my thoughts. A year or so before, my nephew fell and lay in a coma for days before passing. It helped my brother

and sister-in-law to talk with his first responders. I felt moved by God to go to the visitation and let her parents know what had happened. Like Moses, I felt totally out of my comfort zone.

I asked God to help me provide the comfort they so needed. When I arrived, I waited nervously in line and when it was my turn, I told them why I was there. We hugged and cried together. I could not help but think that God's purpose in my life was to be there at that moment for that very purpose.

Shortly after the accident, St. John's Lutheran Church established the Stephen Ministry program and I became one of the seven Stephen Ministers commissioned on April 6, 2003. Since that time, I have had the opportunity to serve the Lord by walking alongside of several care receivers who just needed someone to listen, encourage, and pray with them on their faith journey.

Have you ever thought of becoming a Stephen Minister and truly make a positive difference in someone's life? Please prayerfully consider joining us in this special ministry.



ABOUT OUR STEPHEN MINISTRY PROGRAM

I believe that as alive Christians we are meant to serve others, particularly those in need. This one-on-one ministry seems to be an effective way to be involved in bringing God's love and guidance to people who are hurting, need a friend or someone to share their pain.

– Linda Bryant

“My Stephen Ministry care receiver and I both were going through deaths in the family at the same time and both believe that our faith was strengthened talking together.”

“My Stephen Ministry commitment has been a source of joy to me and I feel that God has blessed me through my helping others. The friends that I have made through Stephen Ministry, both with fellow ministers and our care receivers have been a gift from God.”

– Evelyn Lageman

“Each of my Stephen Ministry care receivers has broadened my understanding of how problems affect other people and has brought me closer to God.”

– Jan Evans

“Love one another as I have loved you,” Christ told us and here at St. John's there are many programs that touch people's lives. One of them is the Stephen Ministry program that began with the first class of Stephen Ministers commissioned in 2003. Pastor Kenneth Haugk created the Stephen Ministries in St. Louis in 1975 and since then the program is active in 12,000 congregations. The Stephen Leaders are those people in the congregation who have taken special leadership training in St. Louis, recruit and are involved in the Stephen Ministers' fifty hours of training, provide for peer supervision, and match the care giver to the care receiver.

The Stephen Ministers are the individuals who have received the training and have been commissioned to reach out to give ongoing Christian love and care to an individual who may be

- **struggling with the death of loved one**
- **terminally ill**
- **disabled or handicapped**
- **lonely**
- **struggling with a job crisis**
- **a new member of the church of community**
- **struggling with a sad time in his or her life**
- **new parents**
- **struggling with a divorce**
- **having difficulty with retirement**

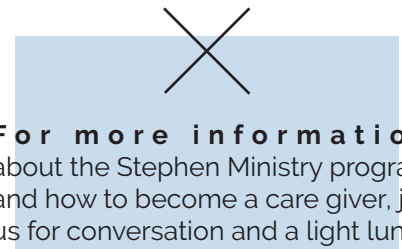
The relationship between the Stephen Minister and the care receiver is absolutely confidential - woman to woman and man to man. Stephen Ministers do not try to fix the care receiver of his or her problems; they focus on the process of caregiving and rely on God to achieve results. Listening is one of the most important parts of being a Stephen Minister who often has to work hard not to say what he would do in the situation.

St. John's congregation is to be lauded for bringing this program to our church and community. The following members are those who are involved in the Stephen Ministry Leadership: Supervisor Cindy Koonce, Ruthie Steen, Cindy Sedam, Lesslie Morgan, and Pastor Pam. Current Stephen Ministers include: Muriel Atkins (also as an acting facilitator,) Kurt Flaherty, Jan Evans, Barbara Boosinger, Carol Lange, the Rev. John Kelley, Evelyn Lageman, Linda Bryant, Therese Phillipa, Sherry Sinnott, Normajean Sanders, Kay Van Fossan, Lyn Sisson, and Elaine Birtch.

BY
ELAINE BIRTCH



The name Stephen comes from St. Stephen, who was the first layperson commissioned by the Apostles to provide caring ministry to those in need (Acts 6).



For more information about the Stephen Ministry program and how to become a care giver, join us for conversation and a light lunch on Sunday, June 17, at 11:45 a.m. in the Adult Meeting Room. (AMR).

Stepping out in Faith

by Dan and Michelle Simmons



LAST SPRING

Pastor Greg gave his 8th grade confirmation class an assignment about baptism. Our daughter Elinor (with help from mom and dad) was to create a display board explaining what her baptism means. We were hopeful that this assignment would help Elinor better understand how much she is loved by God. We adopted Elinor from China when she was 8 1/2 months old. Before we knew Elinor, before she was born, God knew her. God loved her first and He brought us together. When we were in China to get our baby we thought about her baptism. In Guangzhou we bought a white silk gown for her to wear when she was baptized at St. John's not long after we returned home.

At the same time we were working with Elinor on her baptism board, another St. John's family was working on paperwork to adopt their daughter from China. We did not know the Bangert family and they did

not know us. Pastor Greg knew us all and we are thankful that he helped us to make a connection. We kept in touch over the past year as they waited, were matched with Evie and then traveled to China in April to be united with her.

We have enjoyed being able to encourage and pray for the Bangert family as they moved through their faith journey to add Evie to their family. Our decision to adopt Elinor really wasn't a decision at all. God was calling us to take a step in faith

and, if we did, He would provide both for us and for Elinor. Is God calling you or someone you know to consider adoption?



The Simmons family on the left, and Bangert family on the right, together at St. John's.

Before we knew Elinor, before she was born, God knew her. God loved her first and He brought us together.

Evie, Oliver, and Isaac Bangert receiving books from the Simmons family.



Get Up. Take a Shower. Go to Church.

- BY KAREN ROBINSON

Legal ways to immigrate to the United States are through marriage and family connections, work visas, or political asylum. Another option, though a long shot, is the Diversity Visa (DV) Lottery. Although called a lottery, it does not award recipients money. Instead, each year it allows 55,000 foreigners an opportunity to obtain Green Cards and legally immigrate to the U.S. Over nine million people enter the DV Lottery per year. The odds of holding a

randomly drawn number are extremely small. Mistrale Nectata is a fellow disciple at St. John's. Her husband won a number in the DV Lottery allowing them legal immigration to the U.S. from Cameroon, Africa. Regardless of their country of origin, DV Lottery immigrants' experiences seem to follow a pattern: high expectations, preparations, immigration, and settling. I use this pattern to share Mistrale's story.



High Expectations

Before and after arrival to the states DV lottery winners have high expectations for a better life, better educational opportunities, and ultimately to make more money. Mistrale's expectations evolved from movies and other media, depicting life in the states as one of ease, convenience and wealth. These expectations motivated Mistrale and her husband to enter the DV Lottery for several years. Eventually Mistrale quit entering because the odds of winning were too small. However, her husband did enter the lottery, without her knowledge, and that year his number was a winner. It is worth mentioning that her husband had travelled to Europe and tried to warn Mistrale that actual life in the U.S. might not meet her high expectations.

Preparations and Anticipation

DV Lottery winners go through the feelings of luck, happiness, and excitement along with some fearfulness and anxiety. Filling out lots of paper work, attending interviews, and extensive vetting prior to the actual immigration keeps the winner very busy. It is an expensive time of paying application fees, arranging travel, determining where to move, and deciding if it makes financial sense to ship personal belongings or leave them behind. Although family members may be supportive of the winner's opportunity to go to America, there is apprehension about leaving family behind. In Mistrale's instance, her children could not come with her until additional arrangements and sponsorship were complete.

Immigration

After the euphoria of expectations, anticipation and preparation, the actual immigration experience is tiresome and stressful for DV Lottery winners. Mistrale went through a time of depression, especially as she awaited the arrival of her Social Security Card and Green Card. Without the cards, she could not apply for work. She missed her children. The current realities of her situation did not align with her expectations of America. She felt her life was moving backward and to a lower standard than what she left in Cameroon. To make matters worse, she ultimately accepted a job for which she was over qualified. Despite being tri-lingual, (speaking French, English and her tribal language) and having an extensive work history in office management and sales, she



was unable to obtain comparable work in Springfield. Her first job was a housekeeping position in a hospital, thus dispelling the easy prosperity myth that was her motivation for coming to the U.S. She came to realize Americans work hard and put in long hours to make a living.

Mistrale believes there are two obstacles preventing her from better work opportunities: being black and having an accent. "Many people wrongly assume I am from the jungle, although I am a city girl", said Mistrale. "And, their wrongful assumptions make me feel like "the other"" Unfortunately, Mistrale's interpretations of co-workers' assessment rings true with other immigrant's reports; having an accent makes a person appear less intelligent. When managers and co-workers treat immigrant employees as inferior, it increases the susceptibility of the immigrant to making more mistakes or forgetting, resulting in exasperating on-the-job experiences.

Mistrale says being treated as "beneath or less intelligent" than others "hurts her heart".

However, the way that St. John's has welcomed her and her children is what "heals her heart". She is thankful for the sense of belonging at St. John's. This helps her cope with the outside world. Three St. John disciples sponsored the immigration of her children so the family could reunite in the U.S. These disciples also are Godparents and baptismal sponsors to the children.

Settling

Most DV Lottery winners indicate a time of settling into their work and life. Offers to immigrants to participate in higher education are numerous, but expensive. Mistrale used her housekeeping position at the hospital as a springboard to becoming a Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA). She is currently working as a CNA while continuing her studies in nursing.

Mistrale's Faith and Coping Strategies

Mistrale's depression continued for several months after her arrival to the U.S. Although

meeting other Cameroonian immigrants in Illinois lifted her spirits, the major turning point resulted from of a phone call Mistrale made to her sister in Cameroon. Her sister listened to Mistrale's lament and then asked, "Have you joined a church?" When Mistrale answered "No", her sister told her "Get up! Take a shower! Go to Church!"

Mistrale chose to attend St. John's because it is close to the German Evangelical denomination she belonged to in Africa. After attending the traditional services a couple of times, Pastor Ladd encouraged her to attend the Contemporary Service. She found this service closer to her worship experiences in Cameroon. It seems she is adjusting to life in Springfield, although she says, "It takes a lot of inner strength and motivation to remember that I am more than how the world so poorly judges." During the low times, she relies on a saying from her church in Cameroon, "Your faith will make you rise."

HEALING SERVICE

AUGUST 12, 3:00 P.M.

At some time or another, everyone needs healing. As God's beloved children, we turn to God for healing from physical, emotional, spiritual, and relational wounds we experience. As we are church together, we gather together to pray for healing and to give thanks for healing. The service includes the reading of scripture and songs, a time for silent prayer. Everyone is invited to this worship service to seek healing for yourself, for someone you know, and for the world in which we live.

ALZHEIMERS SUPPORT

THIRD MONDAYS

Do you care for someone diagnosed with Alzheimer's disease or a related dementia? Are you looking for information and support? You are not alone. St. John's hosts an Alzheimer's Association Caregiver Support Group. The group meets monthly on the third Monday in the AMR. The Alzheimer's Association Caregiver Support Groups provide emotional, educational, and social support for family and friends of individuals with Alzheimer's disease and other related dementias. For more information, call the Alzheimer's Association Illinois Chapter at 800-272-3900 or go to alz.org/Illinois and click on 'Support Groups.'

BLOOD DRIVE

JULY 5 AND AUGUST 30

St. John's will sponsor blood drives at The Central Illinois Community Blood Center (1999 Wabash Avenue). Thanks to the generosity of those who donate blood, the center is able to collect life saving blood products that have the potential to assist many critically ill patients. Please help if you can!



OUTREACH AND MISSION

FOR

For 147 years, the disciples at St. John's have brought the Word of God to the mission field known as Springfield, Illinois. Through our partnerships with service organizations in the community, we have taken the call to become the hands and feet of Christ to heart and have followed the command to care for one another.

Going into God's Mission Field

BY
PASTOR ADAM CONNOLLY

Over the past year, the Social Ministries team has been in discussion and discernment as to how God is calling us to continue taking God's Word into Springfield through our many ministry partnerships. As we began this process, we witnessed that there are many more opportunities and ways we can be connected than one group of people can effectively coordinate. In order to best continue this mission, as well as provide opportunities for new partnerships, the Social Ministry team has decided it would be best if we split into more topic and area specific ministry teams. This will allow us to strengthen our relationships with community partners, such as Contact Ministries, Grace Food Pantry, and many others, as well as give us more opportunities to partner with other organizations. On the next page, I'll introduce you to the new ministry teams.

[Read on→](#)

"For 147 years, the disciples of St. John's have brought the Word of God to the mission field known as Springfield, Illinois."



CHRISTMAS MINISTRY TEAM: This ministry team oversees two main projects around Christmastime. First, the team is responsible for running Breakfast with Santa. Through our partnership with the Committee for Children, this event serves as one of their major fundraisers for the year. We also will be responsible for the Mitten Tree, and distributing hats, mittens, scarves, and other cold weather clothing throughout the city through our partnerships with local schools and other social service organizations

HUNGER MINISTRY TEAM: Our hunger ministry team partners with organizations in Springfield with the primary focus of feeding people. Right now, we work with providing food and help for the Grace Food Pantry through our weekly collections and Thanksgiving food drive, as well as working with the St. John's Breadline, by providing help as well as by partaking in Breadline Sunday in November.

NEIGHBORHOOD MINISTRY TEAM: This team is primarily responsible for the behind the scenes work with our summer Dinners on the Lawn. However, we are always looking for new ways in which we can strengthen our relationships with our neighbors at Fairlawn and the surrounding neighborhoods.

MATERNAL CARE TEAM: This team supports and partners with service organizations that work with providing care for mothers in our community. We are currently helping the MERCY House by providing Mother's Day gifts and by collecting items for layettes to be given to the Kumler Outreach Ministries.

PRISON MINISTRY TEAM: Currently, we are working with Lutheran Social Service of Illinois in providing volunteers for the Storybook project, although in the past we have also worked with adult literacy programs and helped by collecting and distributing clothing.

SCHOOL SUPPORT MINISTRY TEAM: This team works closely with our partnerships between St. John's and Dubois and Harvard Park Elementary Schools. We are always looking for volunteers who are interested in tutoring students, as well as volunteers to help out teachers in any way. We also help run the Harvard Park Hams around the Easter season.

UNITED CEREBRAL PALSY MINISTRY TEAM: We work, in partnership with UCP, on providing cards to UCP clients around many major holidays, as well as providing Christmas presents and a fellowship opportunity around the Christmas holiday.

If you feel God calling you to help out in our local mission field through one of these ministry teams, or if you have another idea on how St. John's can help our community, please talk to Pastor Adam, and he will get you connected to the right person.



ON A MISSION

June 17-23, 16 disciples from St. John's will be making the journey to Marion, Virginia, as they become the Hands and Feet of Christ by completing various service projects through Project Crossroads as well as running a Vacation Bible School in partnership with Speedwell United Methodist Church in Speedwell, Virginia. Using the theme verse of Micah 6:8, we hope we will deepen our relationship with God, one another and the community, as we "Do Justice, Love Kindness, and Walk Humbly with our God"

As of May 15, the list of St. John's disciples includes the following: Pastor Adam, Elizabeth Barkley, Janice Barnard, Jay Barnard, Abbey Beall, Josh Eiter, Meghan Eiter, Darviel Johnson, Taylor Justison, Barb Kuhnly, Ted LaBelle, Steve Lashbrook, Rose Moser, Dan Simmons, Harry Simmons, and Lucrece Yompan-Pancha.

During this week, please include the following in your prayers:

- Prayers for the health, safety and travel of our team.
- The communities of Marion and Speedwell,
- Pray for the children, who will experience God through Vacation Bible School.
- Project Crossroads and Hungry Mother Lutheran Retreat Center, that God would bless their ministries to their communities.

Meals on the Lawn

**BEGIN
WEDNESDAY
JUNE 6
6 P.M.**

**THIS
SUMMER,**



you are invited to join us once again for our weekly “Meals on the Lawn” Wednesday nights at 6:00 p.m. The meals will start on June 6 and run through August 8. There will be no meal on the 4th of July. Following the meal, there will be a different, fun activity each week, from playing with bubbles and making crafts to watching a movie on a big screen in the grass. You can also wear your gardening clothes and come work in our Community Garden after the meal.

Groups of St. John’s disciples will provide the Main Dish and you are asked to bring a side to share. If your group would like to provide the main dish, please call Suzie Weissberg at 341-1678. For planning purposes, our goal is to advertise the main dish in the Messenger the Sunday prior to each Wednesday meal.

Please plan on joining us as we continue growing in our relationships with one another and with our neighborhood community!



SPREADING GOD'S LOVE,



PRAYER SHAWL MINISTRY

O

ur prayer shawl ministry was established more than five years ago to knit/crochet shawls for members needing comfort. We tried to gather as a group during the week, but it became difficult to find a time that suited all.

Now we knit on Sundays between services, but most of the shawls are made in the homes of members. The Altar Flower Ministry Team delivers the shawls to members needing comfort and healing. Each shawl given includes a card with the following statement: "This shawl is a comforting reminder of God's unending love for you. Wrap it around your shoulders or drape it across your lap and take a moment to close your eyes finding peace in God's presence. Let the warmth of God's love bring healing to your heart. Cast your worries onto this tapestry of love with the assurance that God hears all prayers and answers all prayers." (Author unknown)

Evidence abounds that the shawls are appreciated. One member had the shawl wrapped around her when a church member came to call. Another had the shawl draped across the sheet of the hospital bed. Still another wants to take it everywhere they go. One of our shawls that was delivered to a member that has since passed was returned by her daughter-in-law to our ministry. We re-gifted it to another member who wore it all the time - all providing evidence that our work is appreciated.

Constructing a shawl takes many hours of handwork. We often run short, so we ask that anyone with this talent try to help us out by knitting or crocheting a shawl. Our group also gives handmade dishcloths to our new disciples as part of the gift package presented to these new members upon joining our church. Please join us on Sunday morning to knit or crochet and enjoy coffee and fellowship. If you wish to brush up on skills, we can help with this too. We also can provide some yarn to make your shawl or dishcloth. Your talent would certainly be appreciated.

This shawl is a comforting reminder of God's unending love for you



—
LYNNE EWAN

ONE STITCH AT A TIME



At about 12:30 in the afternoon on the second Friday of each month, the first person usually shows up in the Parish Life Center Lobby, with their latest project. Over the next half hour, the rest of the group shows up, with their bags of completed projects and things they are working on. By 1 p.m., the group has assembled and after a time of fellowship, the group begins to share the projects they have completed in the last month.



The Stitch and Share ministry team is made up of people who like to do just that - use their gifts of sewing and knitting to create many things that are distributed to the Springfield area. In the past two years, the group has donated items to St. John's Children's Hospital, Midwest Mission Distribution Center, Contact Ministries, Ronald McDonald House, Springfield Clinic Cancer Center, Simmons Cancer Center as well as many other groups.

Two of the big projects that we actively support are making Pretty Pockets to be given to cancer patients and making pillow cases for St. John's Children's Hospital. Did you know that it is a goal of St. John's Children's Hospital to give each child patient a special pillowcase, to brighten their stay in the hospital? In the past two years, we have made over 1,000 pillowcases to give to St. John's Hospital.

Overall, since January of 2016, we have made over 1,800 items, which include:

- 1020 Pillowcases
- 224 Pretty Pockets
- 4 Layettees
- 22 Kimonos
- 129 Bookbags
- 34 Quilts
- 157 Bears/dolls
- 11 Puppets
- 38 Bibs/burp clothes
- 68 Baby Blankets
- 77 Preemie Hats
- 32 Chair Bags
- 13 Craft Aprons
- 12 Doll Clothes
- 2 Skirts



The Stitch and Share ministry team is always looking for more disciples who have the gift for sewing and knitting, as well as for more fabric to support our ministry. We meet the second Friday of the month at 1:00 p.m. All are welcome!



TAKING GOD'S LOVE TO THE GLOBAL COMMUNITY

BY
PASTOR ADAM CONNOLLY

EACH MONTH, A GROUP OF ST. JOHN'S DISCIPLES INTERESTED IN HELPING OUT OUR SISTERS AND BROTHERS LOCATED THROUGHOUT THE WORLD GATHER FOR A TIME OF CONVERSATION AND DISCERNMENT OVER WHERE WE FEEL GOD CALLING US TO HELP IN THE WORLD.

The Global Missions team actively supports a number of ministries throughout the world. We help bring awareness to the Foods Resource Bank projects that we support, most recently, helping raise funds this past Lent for Nicaragua Mateare-Carazo, we support the Stubbs' family and their missionary work in Tanzania, selling Equal Exchange products once a month, and by collecting items to be distributed throughout the world by Lutheran World Relief.

The tables filled with Coffee, Chocolate and other goods is often a welcome sign each month as we provide an opportunity

needed. This past fall, we collected enough towels, soap, toothbrushes, combs & finger nail clippers to make over 100 kits. We also sent many quilts, made by our Stitch and Share ministry team.

The Saturday before Halloween, our parking lot looked like a giant assembly line. After starting off our day the only way a Lutheran can, with lots of coffee, cars and vans filled with boxes of quilts, personal care kits, school kits and other items started showing up in droves. After loading a van and two rather large trailers, these items were transported to

AFTER STARTING OFF OUR DAY THE ONLY WAY A LUTHERAN CAN, WITH LOTS OF COFFEE, CARS AND VANS FILLED WITH BOXES OF QUILTS, PERSONAL CARE KITS, SCHOOL KITS AND OTHER ITEMS STARTED SHOWING UP IN DROVES.

for St. John's disciples to purchase Fair-Trade products through Equal Exchange. Every time you purchase coffee, tea, chocolate or olive oil, you are directly helping a farmer as they support their families in developing countries. Over the past year, St. John's disciples purchased over \$5,000 in these products, which puts us in the top 5% of all congregations that support Equal Exchange and their ministries.

Each fall, we serve as a collection point for Lutheran World Relief as churches from the area drop off quilts, soap, and various care kits to be distributed across the globe to places dealing with the aftermath of natural disasters, drought, and inadequate living conditions. Here, at St. John's, we collect items to make personal care kits that are sent most often to refugee camps, although they are sent wherever they are

Bloomington, IL on their way to the LWR warehouse in St. Paul, MN. The congregations in the Central Illinois area collected and donated 10,638 quilts, 5,875 personal care kits, 6,523 school kits, 1,316 baby care kits, 328 fabric kits, 2,224 pounds of soap, & 124 tied fleece blankets, enough to fill an entire semi-trailer! These items have been distributed all over the world, and have helped make the lives of their recipients a little better. Many thanks for all who donated this past fall. This upcoming August, we will again collect these items as we look forward to the 2018 Ingathering.

We are always looking for new ways in which we can help out our global family. If you have any ideas, or are interested in being part of our Global Ministries Team, please contact Pastor Adam, or Rose Moser.



Partnering / FOODS RESOURCE BANK

A HUGE THANK YOU

to all St. John's disciples for your continued support of our relationship with Foods Resource Bank. As you will recall, this past Lenten season, our mid-week offerings went to support FRB's Micaragua Mateare-Carazo program. We raised nearly \$6,000, that has been sent in support of helping farmers develop better methods to farm in a region where climate change has brought severe drought and extremely high temperatures. This project, which encompasses 8 communities, 220 households, and 1251 individuals, helps educate farmers in new growing techniques as well as provides seeds and fruit trees that will help with food security for years to come.

With support from FRB and Church World Service, the local partner, CIEETS, coordinated involvement of the rural families, community leaders, members of local organizations, municipal government and networks to improve food security in the area through conservation agriculture, planting fruit trees and patio gardens, community advocacy, and access to clean water. Training was focused on food production and processes to strengthen participants' ability to face periods of crisis brought about especially by the effects of adverse weather events like repeated droughts and flooding.

One person who has benefited from this project is Eva. By learning new techniques, Eva and four others from her community were able to complete a construction project that allows for potable water to be piped directly in their homes. With the access to water, she was able to plant fruit trees behind her home, which will provide food for her family as well as a source of income.



1251 People
\$6000





We Are Where Our Money Is

BY PASTOR GREG BUSBOOM

"How thankful I am to serve a congregation whose treasure is not just at 2477 West Washington but is shared around the world in so many powerful and amazing ways!"

WHERE

in the world is St. John's? One of the most Biblical ways to answer that question is, "We are where our money is!" After all, in one of the many teachings Jesus shares about the relationship between faith and money, he teaches, "For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also" (Matthew 6:21). The order of Jesus' phrases is important. According to him, our hearts follow our treasures and not the other way around. All too often we assume that the closer we get to Jesus, the more we will give to the ministry of God's kingdom. However, at least according to Matthew 6:21, it's really just the other way around. The more we give to the ministry of God's kingdom, the closer we get to Jesus! Think for a few moments about the significance of Jesus' teaching and its application in your own life of giving.

- We are in the 130 congregations of the Central/Southern Illinois Synod of the ELCA doing Jesus' ministry across the lower 2/3 of the state of Illinois!*
- We are in the 7 ELCA seminaries, the 28 ELCA colleges and universities, Lutheran Outdoor Ministries, and Lutheran Campus Ministries across our nation!*
- We are serving at the Tumeini Lutheran University and Seminary in Tanzania alongside of our sponsored missionary Randy Stubbs!*
- We are at the Grace Lutheran Food Pantry providing boxes of food to hungry individuals and families right here in our own community week in and week out!*
- We are in the prisons of Illinois making it possible for incarcerated parents to read books to their children back home!*
- We are training lay catechists at two Lutheran Bible Schools in our companion synods in Madagascar!*

- We are repairing and rehabilitating homes for low-income families in the Appalachian region of western Virginia!*
- We are providing food sustainability to hungry people around the world through the ELCA world hunger appeal!*
- We are assisting struggling families in our own congregation and community with utility bills and medical treatments and Christmas gifts for their kids!*
- We are at a growing project in Nicaragua equipping farmers there to provide adequate food and income for their families and their communities!*

In these and so many other places around the globe, St. John's is present! Again, in the words of Jesus, "For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also" (Matthew 6:21). We are where our money is! How thankful I am to serve a congregation whose treasure is not just at 2477 West Washington but is shared around the world in so many powerful and amazing ways! Thank you for continuing to share the financial treasures of this congregation in places that are truly worthy of having our hearts follow!

St. John's at Synod Assembly

This year's assembly takes place June 7-9 in Champaign as voting members from each of the synod's 130 congregations gather to worship, to learn, and to conduct the business of the synod. This year's assembly theme is "Remember, I am with you always," based on Matthew 28:20. Daily Bible Study will be led by The Rev. Dr. Martin J. Lohrmann, Assistant Professor of Lutheran Confessions and Heritage at Wartburg Theological Seminary in Dubuque, Iowa. At the Festival Worship Service, a Festival Offering will be received for the ministries of the Lutheran Church in Madagascar. Voting members to this year's assembly from St. John's include Pastor Greg Busboom, Pastor Adam Connolly, Pastor Pam Mitcham, Taylor Justison,

WHERE IN THE WORLD IS ST. JOHN'S THIS SUMMER? ST. JOHN'S IS AT THE 31ST ANNUAL SYNOD ASSEMBLY OF OUR CENTRAL/SOUTHERN ILLINOIS SYNOD, ONE OF 65 GEOGRAPHICAL SYNODS THAT COMPRISE THE EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA (ELCA).

Pastor John Kelley, Elizabeth Kelley, Rose Moser, David Richter, Kristen Schmid Schurter, and Sam Simmons. St. John's disciple Dan Simmons, who also serves as the synod attorney, will again serve as the assembly parliamentarian. Remember to pray for each of our

congregation's voting members, as well as the entire assembly, that they might be led by the Spirit as they deliberate and make decisions for the sake of Christ's gospel witness in the world!

What Difference Does My Giving Make?

In addition to providing financial support to all of the ministries that happen in and through our congregation of St. John's, a significant portion of our annual General Operating Budget goes to fund mission and ministry that happens beyond the walls of our congregation—in our local community, across our state, and around the world. One of the many outreach ministries that receives funding through our General Operating Budget is our congregation's annual mission trip to Marion, Virginia. Since 2008, each summer, including this coming June 17-23, our congregation has sent a group of 20-30 disciples to the Appalachian region of western Virginia, one of the poorest regions of the United States, to partner with Project Crossroads, a social ministry of the United Methodist Church, that provides much needed home repair and rehabilitation to low-income families and individuals. This year, \$4,500 from our General Operating Fund is being used to purchase building supplies for these projects, as well as to offset the cost of those participating from St. John's. Through your generous giving to St. John's General Operating Fund, God is making a HUGE difference both in the lives of those disciples from St. John's who participate in the mission trip as well as in the lives of those who directly benefit from their home improvements! THANK YOU!!!

General Operating Fund

As of April 30, 2018

Income:	\$ 350,821.86
Expenses:	\$ 353,570.27
Ahead/(Behind):	\$ (2,748.41)

Remaining Balance on Existing Mortgage
\$ 1,076,949.26

"A man came from Baal-shalishah, bringing food from the first fruits to the man of God: twenty loaves of barley and fresh ears of grain in his sack. Elisha said, 'Give it to the people and let them eat.' But his servant said, 'How can I set this before a hundred people?' So he repeated, 'Give it to the people and let them eat, for thus says the Lord, 'They shall eat and have some left.'" He set it before them, they ate, and had some left, according to the word of the Lord" (2 Kings 4:42-44).



.....

Here we Grow!



The time has come! After years of prayer, conversation, more prayer, dreaming, more prayer, planning, more prayer, capital campaigns, more prayer, meetings with architects and engineers, and, yes, more prayer, WE'RE BREAKING GROUND on St. John's future!

HERE'S THE TENTATIVE TIMELINE:

- JUNE 24
Celebration Service of Groundbreaking followed by Church Picnic
- JUNE 25
Construction Begins
- SEPTEMBER 4
Phase One of Construction Complete (Renovated Narthex)
- DECEMBER 28
Phase Two of Construction Complete (New Office Addition)
- JANUARY 2019
Dedication Celebration

WHAT AN EXCITING TIME TO BE PART OF ST. JOHN'S!!! COME AND GROW WITH US!!!

BE BOLD Capital Campaign Update	
Amount Pledged through May 31, 2020	\$ 1,578,608.37
Amount Received as of May 6, 2018	\$ 1,001,350.61

*THANK YOU, THANK YOU, THANK YOU for your **BOLD** generosity as we grow together in our mission to be and make disciples of Christ, in response to God's grace!*



We Are Where Our Money Is ...

So far in 2018, St. John's has shared the following financial gifts to further the work of Jesus beyond the walls of our congregation!

Given to the Central/Southern Illinois Synod of the ELCA. 50% of these monies remain in our synod to support the ministries of its 130 congregations. 50% of these monies are shared with the churchwide expression of the ELCA to support its congregations, agencies, institutions, missions, and ministries.

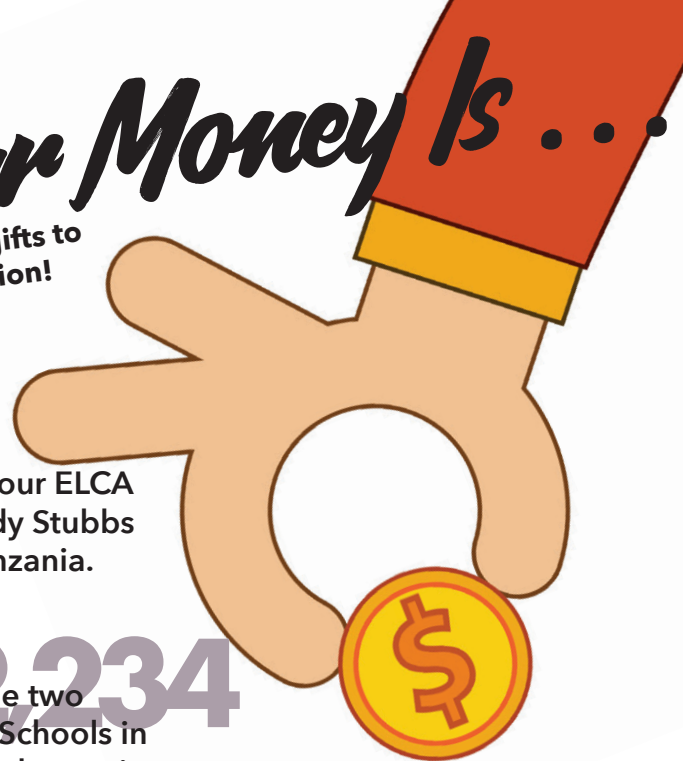
\$31,497

Sponsorship of our ELCA Missionary Randy Stubbs serving in Tanzania.

\$8,000

Given to the two Lutheran Bible Schools in Madagascar as they train lay catechists to assist pastors in spreading the good news of Jesus in our companion synod.

\$2,234



Used to support our congregation's 11th annual mission trip to Marion, Virginia as we partner with Project Crossroads to repair and rehabilitate homes for low-income families and individuals.

\$8,500

Given to the Grace Food Pantry in downtown Springfield to support their food ministry to those in need in our community.

\$2,951

Resources shared through the Pastor's Discretionary Fund to assist congregation and community members with utilities, medical expenses, rent, counseling, and other needed services.

\$7,800

Shared with the Story Book Project of LSSI to help incarcerated parents read and record stories for their children back home.

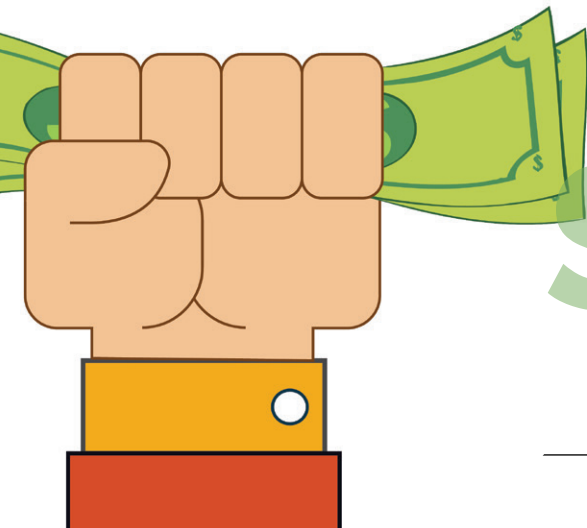
\$2,234

\$5,981

Given to the Foods Resource Bank Growing Project in Nicaragua to help develop sustainable agriculture practices in local communities.

Shared with ELCA World Hunger to fight hunger locally, nationally, and around the globe.

\$1,000



\$55,964

Total monies shared SO FAR in 2018 BEYOND THE WALLS of our congregation! We are where our money is!



HOW HAS GOD DESIGNED YOU TO SERVE?



BY
PASTOR KRISTEN SHMID-SCHURTER

Find out by filling out the three-step worksheet below. You may be surprised by the results! God could be calling you to something new, or use you to help others discern and develop their gifts. All of us have gifts, and when we use them we inspire others to do the same. We may never know what God does with the mustard seeds of our ministry.

STEP ONE: BUILD A FOUNDATION

Fill your cup:

To minister effectively you need to be filled by a relationship with God, so that you draw on God's strength, not yours ... so that you are overflowing, not empty.

In addition to worship, choose another way to be filled with God's strength, i.e. prayer, devotions (available from church), fellowship, small group, Bible study, Faith 5 and hymns/praise music and list here:

When we are spiritually fed we can hear God's voice. It may be a nudge, or an idea that won't quit.

STEP TWO: DISCERN HOW GOD CREATED YOU TO SERVE

"For as in one body we have many members, and not all members have the same function ..." (Romans 12:4)

Fill others' cups:

God gives all of us different gifts to do God's work. Like puzzle pieces, we are all unique and designed to function together.

What do you enjoy doing? (i.e. reading, camping, gardening)

What do you care about? (a certain cause or group of people)

How do you serve willingly and lovingly? (vs skill alone)
(list top 3 from Spiritual Gifts inventory on church website)

STEP THREE: MATCH YOUR GIFTS WITH THE WORLD'S NEEDS

How is God calling you?

Your ministry is where the world's needs and your gifts, what you care about and love to do, come together.

List your ideas: can be for church, community, neighborhood, job, family; something new or something you are already doing. Can be an ongoing project or a spontaneous, one-time action. (i.e. Funeral Meal Ministry team, mentor, teach \$ management at shelter, reach out to other disciples):



If you have questions about how God has designed you for ministry, or would like more information about opportunities at church or in the community, contact Director of Spiritual Gifts Ministries Kristen Schmid Schurter at (217) 793-3933 x206 or ksschurter@stjohns-springfield.org.

FOR FURTHER REFLECTION

Consider

How are you already ministering in your daily life?
Can you be more prayerful?
Can you invite someone to join you?
What can you do to dig deeper right where you are? How are you developing your gifts?

Do you sense elements of an “unlived life” in yourself?
“The lived life of the carpenter Jesus of Nazareth held the unlived life of the Messiah.”
- J. Russell Crabtree, Owl Sight.

He had to leave a perfectly good life in order to save us.

Next steps:

Prayer. Be open to what God has in store for you.

Pay attention to other people’s feedback.

Experiment with different ministries.

How do you feel afterwards? Gifts are different than skills. When we use our gifts, we may be tired, but we also have a sense of satisfaction and contentment.

Notice and affirm others’ gifts!

Spiritual Gifts: Everyone has gifts, and all gifts are needed! Spiritual gifts are abilities God gives us through the Holy Spirit so we can make our unique contributions, working together for the common good. Spiritual gifts describe how we are motivated, what draws our attention, and where we see the bigger picture of God’s work in the world. Our gifts are also where others see God through us.



ROMANS 12:4-8

“For as in one body we have many members, and not all the members have the same function, so we, who are many, are one body in Christ, and individually we are members one of another. We have gifts that differ according to the grace given to us: prophecy, in proportion to faith; ministry, in ministering; the teacher, in teaching; the exhorter, in exhortation; the giver, in generosity; the leader, in diligence; the compassionate, in cheerfulness.”

EPHESIANS 4: 11-13

“The gifts he gave were that some would be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, some pastors and teachers, to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ, until all of us come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to maturity, to the measure of the full stature of Christ.”

1 CORINTHIANS 12:4-10

“Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit; and there are varieties of services, but the same Lord; and there are varieties of activities, but it is the same God who activates all of them in everyone. To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good. To one is given through the Spirit the utterance of wisdom, and to another the utterance of knowledge according to the same Spirit, to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healing by the one Spirit, to another the working of miracles, to another prophecy, to another the discernment of spirits, to another various kinds of tongues, to another the interpretation of tongues.”

Remember: You are fearfully and wonderfully made (Psalm 139:14).



ST. JOHN'S

LUTHERAN CHURCH

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