

THE EAGLE
St. John's Newsletter
May 2, 2021

From Our Pastor ...

"Connected." I dare say that when you and I hear that word these days we probably think first about the internet, our devices, and social media. I wish that I thought first of Jesus the Vine and me as a branch – a living connection that bears fruit, not an electronic pipeline that often produces dissension, sludge, and envy. In the sheep-themed cartoon below, Rick (the one with the dark nose) and Ted are discussing this Sunday's Gospel. Rick rolls his eyes because Ted supposes that his electronic connection is essential. Nope!

"Connected." That's what Christians like you are. From your Baptism on, connected by faith to the Triune God, you are a branch grafted into the life-giving Vine. Abide in Him. Worship here every week. Commune often. Meditate upon the Bible in your home. Pray daily. Christ is your essential connection.

I'm very happy to hear that the leaders of E.A.S.T.E.R. (Effingham Area Special Teaching Education in Religion) are resuming this wonderful ministry for special needs neighbors! Saturday, May 15, we'll be hosting them again from 9:30-11:00 a.m. If you are interested in being a helper, I urge you to reach out to Joan Garbe (217-739-2269).

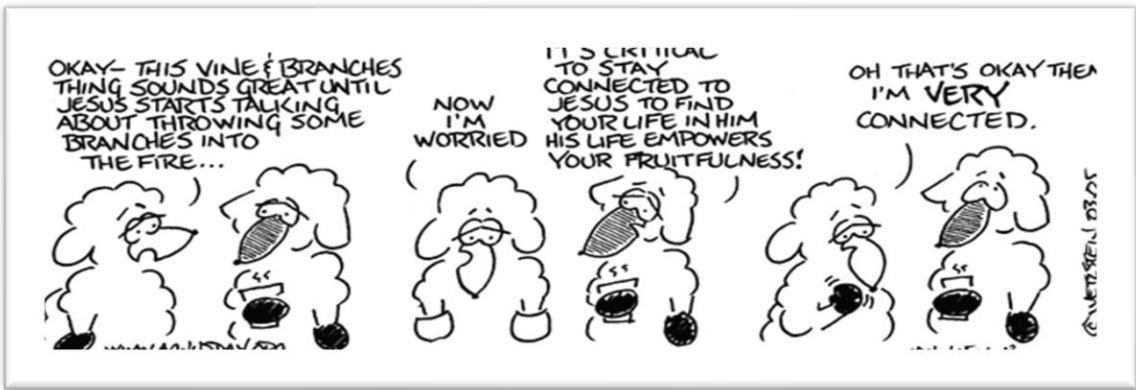
Last week Pastor Fortkamp and I, with our wives, attended the clergy breakfast hosted by The Family Life Center. What a powerful and positive ministry this is in our community, worthy of our support and involvement. I hear that next weekend our Social Ministry Board will be helping us participate in the Baby Bottle fundraiser in support of the FLC. Praise God. Support LIFE.

I recently used my internet connection to sign-up for two events here at St. John's. I went to our church website and registered to be a VBS Volunteer and to participate in the May 23 Convocation "The Harvest Is Plentiful!" I urge you to, too!

Congratulations and "God bless" to Norma Lansing, who was chosen as the Effingham Citizen of the Year! Her work on behalf of our county has also blessed our ministry. A blessed retirement (except from ushering)!

And finally, join me and others for Sunday morning Bible Study in the Trinity Rooms at 9:15 a.m. On May 16 I will be teaching a special lesson focused upon "shepherding our strays." I, and our elders, need you – the active sheep of the Lord's fold – to help encourage and reach the inactive members of the congregation. We want all to have the essential connection – Jesus, the Vine. Come, please!

Pastor Fortkamp



LCMS Stewardship Thought

John 15:2 – “Every branch of mine that does not bear fruit he takes away, and every branch that does bear fruit he prunes, that it may bear more fruit.” God is interested in the fruit that we bear in good works, and He even prunes us so that we may bring forth more fruit. Trusting in our Lord’s work for us, we are grafted by grace into His vine. We desire to be more like Him and grow into His image. That’s growth in fruit bearing, and it always comes with some pruning.

LIFE QUOTE From Lutherans for Life

“We pray in our services for ‘the race of man’ not the races of man. There is only one race. All else are ethnic, national, cultural, or other differences. We’ve past histories to trouble us to be sure—like the Irish and the English, the Jew and the Christian, the Greek and the Ottoman Turk, and the slave and the slave owner—but there is no place from which a genuine reconciliation can emerge today, except in Christ. The goal is fellowship, brotherhood in Christ.” *James M. Kushiner, The Fellowship of St. James – A Life Quote from Lutherans For Life • lutheransforlife.org.*

This Week’s Sunday School Lesson

Jonah 1-3

“Unwilling Prophet” is the title of this week’s lesson. Jonah, a reluctant prophet, tries to flee God’s calling to declare His message to Nineveh. Attempting to escape by boat, Jonah finds himself cast into the sea, swallowed by a great fish, praying for deliverance, and spit up on the beach three days later. The people of Nineveh receive and respond to the message Jonah delivers, repenting of their sins before God. Angered at God’s mercy, Jonah heads out of the city to sulk. There, God reminds Jonah who is in control.

May Pantry Donation

Ritz Crackers & Peanut Butter

Drivers Needed

The Elders are needing volunteer drivers to assist with picking up those who need a ride to church on Sundays. If you can help, please contact:

Keith Knight (217-821-6719)

Deepest Sympathies

To the family of Gerard Bierman. He passed away Friday, April 23, 2021. Please keep his wife Carla & daughter, Cathleen, in your prayers.

Prayer List

Debbie Barr, Dick Hulskotter, Dean Wetherell, Brian Wenhe, Shirley Cheadle, Deb Meyers, Doris Hammer, Craig Wolff, Bob Miller, Cassie Power, Brett Kull, Rose Boggs, Mike McWhortor, Zach Fritcher, Evelyn Shumaker, Janet Brinkopf, for the family of Gerard Bierman, & the family of Terry Fieltz.

Members of the Armed Forces, including Dylan Koester, Ryan Budde, Paul Smith, Nathan Vail, Baileigh Longwell, Jason Mette, Gabriel Walker, Johnathon Schuette, Henry Bielenberg; and all first responders of our community and nation

Your Response to the Gospel

Our Attendance Last Week

In Person Attendance

| | |
|--------------------------------|-----|
| Sunday, April 25..... | 374 |
| Online Worship Views..... | 88 |
| Sunday School Pre-K-HS..... | 38 |
| Adult Sunday School Class..... | 9 |
| LifeLight..... | 8 |

Our Offerings Last Week

| | |
|---|-------------------|
| General Fund, April 25..... | \$5,434.55 |
| Online General Fund..... | \$1990.00 |
| Total General Fund Offering | \$7,424.55 |
| Building Fund..... | \$110.00 |

Deepest Sympathy

Thoughts & prayers to Becky Fielitz and family at the passing of Terry. He passed away Tuesday, April 28 at home. Visitation for Terry will be Sunday, May 2, from 1:00 – 3:00 p.m., with the funeral beginning at 3 here at the church. Memorials may be made to St. John's Lutheran Church or the donor's choice.

Today's Light Review

Pastor Burdick will offer a review session for our monthly **Today's Light** Bible readings. Monday, May 3 at 4:00pm or 5:30pm, come take a look back at Daniel, Hosea, Joel and Amos. In the Trinity Room.

Lydia Guild---LMWL Mission

We are taking Orphan Grain Train donations for Health Kits, School Kits, & Pill Bottles until May 2nd for our mission projects for LWML Central IL District 75th Anniversary. Our donations will be sent to those in need all over the world. Along with your prayers & donations for the LWML, we can help families in need & teach them about Jesus through our mission work. You can see the list of needed items at the display. You may place donations in the boxes designated for the specific items.

VBS Supplies

We need your help! The VBS committee is in need of items to help in decorating the church. The theme is Rainforest Explorers so we are looking for jungle type items:

Artificial ferns, palm trees, vines, flowers

Stuffed/plastic: snakes, turtles, exotic birds, & jungle type monkeys

Other materials: Cardboard, toilet paper rolls, burlap & brown packing paper.

If you donate an item you need returned to you, PLEASE put your name on the item & we will do our best to return it.

Help Grow Our Library!

May 2nd & 9th there will be an opportunity to support the children & youth library. Ammon Probst & Kathy Burdick will be available at a table during coffee hour where you can choose books to sponsor from a list! If you are not able to stop by at that time you can call:

Ammon (309-255-2898)

or

Kathy (309-255-8343).



We have a wonderful Sunday School Ministry with children and adults studying the same lessons from age three and up. Pre-K through 5th Grade classes meet in the Education Building. Today, May 2, those youngest grades will begin meeting in the classrooms upstairs in the Ed Building. The upstairs rooms have recently been painted, cleaned and decorated. You're welcome to go over and take a look, either before 9:30am or after 10:15am. See the tunnel, too, which displays some artwork by the children! Take a look. Lift up a prayer for our Sunday School.

VBS Decorating

The next decorating meeting for VBS will be Wednesday, May 5th at 6 p.m.



High School Youth:

Our monthly gatherings are resuming! Gather for supper, fun, and Bible Study at 4:30pm Sunday, May 2 at Kathy & Pastor Burdick's house, 717 South 1st St. Weather permitting, we'll be outside. It's great that the Sunday morning Bible class has grown a lot in the past year. Let's grow our LYF gatherings, too! See you in church -- and May 2nd at the Burdicks! Can't make it in May? We'll meet again in June

CALENDAR-----May 2, 2021 – May 9, 2021

| | | | |
|---|---|------------------------|--|
| Sunday | 2 | 8:00 a.m. & 10:30 a.m. | Worship Services |
| | | 9:15 a.m. | Sunday School |
| | | 10:00 a.m. | Worship Service/Mediacom Channel 81 |
| | | 1:00 - 3:00 p.m. | Visitation & funeral for Terry Fielitz |
| | | 4:30 p.m. | High School Youth at Burdick's |
| <i>Preschool—Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, & Friday</i> | | | |
| Monday | 3 | 4:00 p.m. | Board of Trustee |
| | | 4 p.m. & 5:30 p.m. | Light Review |
| | | 5:30 p.m. | Choir |
| Tuesday | 4 | 7:00 p.m. | Lydia Guild |
| Wednesday | 5 | 1:00 p.m. | Office Staff Devotion/Meeting |
| | | 7:00 p.m. | Adult Catechism |
| Thursday | 6 | 10:00 a.m. | Preschool Graduation, Ms. Carrie's 4 yr. old T/Th Class |
| Friday | 7 | | Pastor Sabbath |
| | | 10:00 a.m. | Preschool Graduation Ms. Carrie's 4 yr. old M/W/F Class |
| Saturday | 8 | 8:00 a.m. | Praise Band Practice |
| | | 5:30 p.m. | Worship Services w/HC |
| Sunday | 9 | | Mother's Day |
| | | 8:00 a.m. & 10:30 a.m. | Worship Services w/HC |
| | | 9:15 a.m. | Sunday School |
| | | 10:00 a.m. | Worship Service/Mediacom Channel 81 |

Birthdays This Week

- 5/02 Brian Haake & Warren Habbe
 5/04 Alex Junge, Beckett Sams, Lisa Norton,
 Carolyn Webb, & George Soltwedel
 5/05 Mary Brown
 5/06 Fred Meislahn & Troy Probst
 5/07 Bev Kopplin, Jim Klein, Kal Keitel,
 Richard Wendling, & Stephanie Gordon
 5/09 Graham Wendling, Kara Koester, &
 Tamara Root

Anniversaries

- 5/02/65 Richard & Nancy Ohnesorge
 5/02/20 Tanner & Ashley Veach
 5/03/69 J. P. & Terry Simmons
 5/03/86 John & Suzanne Lechman
 5/03/97 Mike & Marla Pilcher

