



# The Informer

September 2025

*St. John's Lutheran Church*

Volume 69 Issue 9



## In this Issue:

Pastor's Letter	1
Notes from the Balcony	2
Serving the Lord this Month	3
Church News	4-7
From the CID	8-10
Calendar	11

See The Informer  
IN COLOR  
On Our Website

## From Pastor's Pen:

### Culture of Life

We like Helen Mirren, and Jack Bauer's father is okay, so we checked out the 2017 movie *Leisure Seeker* from the library on DVD. The *Leisure Seeker* was the name of their elderly RV, and the movie was about them taking a trip down the Florida Keys. She has cancer and he has dementia, and it turns out that it was going to be their last trip. The movie had its moments, and there were some touching scenes of a husband and wife who had been through a lot together, who had taken care of each other, and who continued to look after each other. We didn't know it was their last trip until the husband parked the RV, hooked one end of the hose to the exhaust, the other end to the interior of the RV. Didn't see that coming, but what was especially troubling is that a double suicide – the wife may have already been dead – should be portrayed in such a matter-of-fact way. A few years ago, we watched *You Before Me*, a movie with a similar ending – didn't see that coming – about a man who had lived a very active life, then was confined to a wheelchair. His family got him a caretaker, who was a young lady, and it looked like they had fallen in love, but the man was determined to go to Holland to have a doctor assist him in suicide. Right up to the last, as it became clear that the girl was the love of his life, you thought he wouldn't do it, but he did. Worse than matter-of-fact, that suicide was portrayed as an act of great courage. The acronym is COD (Culture of Death), and it's becoming more prevalent in our country all the time. Suicide is put forth as a viable option, even for children. The killing of the unborn in the womb is commonplace, and infanticide is increasingly openly in play. At the other end of the lifespan – people who would never put their dog to sleep would do it to their parents. In many ways, the COD represents a journey back to where our ancestors were, back to the time when they routinely practiced all those things – and more – and didn't think twice about it. Then came Christianity, a religion that brings with it a very strong Culture of Life. Christians place a high value on all human life, and it begins with Easter Sunday. The Resurrection of Jesus from the dead was the proclamation and affirmation that the sacrifice The Son made on Good Friday was acceptable to The Father. That sacrifice was His life, given by Him Who had no sin for us who did. The Resurrection was also an emphatic public event that not only declared but also showed that God has power over death and Satan. It is because God so values human life that Christians so value human life, God's greatest gift and His highest creation. We value human life before birth, and contrary to what our critics say, we value life after birth as well; the young and old, the well and sick, people of every tongue and every race because we belong not to a culture of death, but to a Culture of Life.

In Christian Service,  
Pastor Anderson

## Notes from the Balcony

**You are invited**

**to add your voice to the choir!**

**The first Choir Rehearsal**

**of the academic year is**

**Saturday, September 6th**

**9:30-10:30 AM**

**in the choir room**

**No experience necessary**

**Everyone is welcome!!!**



**Cherub chimers is also looking for fresh faces. Any youths aged 3rd grade and older are welcome to come try out our handbell choir. If you are a little younger, but already**

**showing an aptitude for music, please see Christine as well. First rehearsal is Monday, September 7th at 6pm.**



## Serving the Lord this Month

### Ushers

**Sat, Sept 6:** Greg Burke, Larry Ripka, Todd Miller, Rex Newman  
**Sun, Sept 7:** The Mattly family  
**Sat. Sept 13:** Greg Burke, Larry Ripka, Todd Miller, Rex Newman  
**Sun, Sept 14:** Rod Hopkins, George Aukee, and Penny Schreck  
**Sat, Sept 20:** Greg Burke, Larry Ripka, Todd Miller, Rex Newman  
**Sun, Sept 21:** The Mattly family  
**Sat, Sept 27:** Greg Burke, Larry Ripka, Todd Miller, Rex Newman  
**Sun, Sept 28:** Rod Hopkins, George Aukee, and Penny Schreck

### Greeters

**Sat, Sept 6:** Chuck Brokaw  
**Sun, Sept 7:** George Aukee and Penny Schreck  
**Sat. Sept 13:** Chuck Brokaw, and Steve and Rose Sullivan  
**Sun, Sept 14:** George Aukee and Penny Schreck  
**Sat, Sept 20:** Chuck Brokaw  
**Sun, Sept 21:**  
**Sat, Sept 27:** Chuck Brokaw  
**Sun, Sept 28:** Lucille Perley

### Communion Assistants

**Sept. 7:** Jonathan Schmidt & Kevin McAnally  
**Sept. 21:** Glen McMillin & Jim Homann

### Acolytes

September acolytes will be scheduled after registration and the 5th graders complete their training.



### Altar Guild

Wendy Rossmiller, Cory Rossmiller, and Brandi Erickson



### Eternal Candle

**Sept 7:** Todd and Jeri Miller, in honor of their wedding anniversary  
**Sept 14:** The Belan family, in memory of Ed  
**Sept 21:** Karen Schmidt, in honor of her 88th birthday  
**Sept 28:** OPEN



### Flowers

**Sept 7:** Todd and Jeri Miller, in honor of their wedding anniversary  
**Sept 14:** Tim and Tamee Stone  
**Sept 21:** Karen Schmidt, in honor of her 88th birthday  
**Sept 28:** Nancy Williams



## Church News

### Birthdays

**1st:** Jen Belzer & Nolan Johnson  
**2nd:** Debby Weidenbach  
**3rd:** Adam Lack  
**5th:** Larry Dodge & Jayden Fairweather  
**6th:** Matthew Dosch  
**7th:** Dean Bull, Hillary Ekin, & Pam Fisher  
**8th:** Sheena Johnson, Kathy Petosky, Troy & Trace Shryack  
**9th:** Brenda Hanerhoff  
**10th:** Nancy Cartwright

**11th:** Chris Heller, Cheryl MacDougall, & Keith Schnabel  
**12th:** Lenora Busch & Thomas Weathers  
**13th:** Kaitlyn McMillin  
**14th:** Annie Churchill, Otto Hartweg, Owen Hawkins, Rick Newlon, & Demetrius Williams  
**15th:** Alan Ahrens & Martha Merritt  
**21st:** Karen Schmidt  
**23rd:** Parker Myers & Addison Rowe

**25th:** Steven Lackey, Brian & Tom Hart  
**26th:** Noreen Hopkins  
**27th:** Tara Hawkins  
**30th:** Lori Hopkins & Glen McMillin



### Weekly Attendance Offerings

DATE	THIS YEAR	LAST YEAR
7/27	240 (Pastor Umbarger's retirement)	123
8/3	117	158
8/10	116	149
8/17	147	140
8/24	111	140

Average monthly attendance of St. John's membership: 29%

### Membership Report

#### Address update:

Ingrid Hodshire-new room #4102 bed 2

**NOTICE  
OF  
BOARD  
MEETING**

**DON'T FORGET-**  
**ALL BOARDS MEET ON SEPTEMBER 4th at 6:30pm.**  
**There is a Parish Planning meeting on Thursday, September 11th, and a Voter's meeting on Sunday, September 14th during the Sunday school/ Bible study hour!!!**

## Church News

**LWML - Lutheran Women's Missionary League** is an auxiliary of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod. All ladies are welcome!

The next LWML meeting will be **Thursday, September 18th at 1:00 pm** in the Janssen rooms. We will be packing treat bags for the homeless.



Mark your calendars For The:

**LWML Christmas Cheer Brunch**

**A Traditional St. John's Advent Celebration For all Women**  
**Saturday, December 6, 2025 at 10:00 a.m.**



## St. John's Mission Dollars at Work **AbleLight**

At the December 2024 Voters Meeting the congregation voted to support several ministries. One of these ministries is AbleLight formerly know as Bethesda.

**AbleLight** is a faith based group that supports and advocates for all people with developmental disabilities to ensure they have security, dignity, and hope.

What began with a small, Christ-centered home in Watertown, Wisconsin, has grown into a national organization that has supported thousands of people with developmental disabilities. Throughout their history, their commitment to Christian love and care has guided them as they have expanded services.

Today, they continue this mission by fostering a loving and inclusive community that honors God's call to serve. Their programs not only provide care but help each person overcome their challenges to live a fulfilling life, embraced by faith and empowered by love. They have some services in 12 states : California, Colorado, Illinois, Indiana, Kansas, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, New Jersey, Oregon, Washington and Wisconsin. Check out their website: <https://ablelight.org/>



- ♦ **Congregate Living.** Their group homes and intermediate care facilities (ICF) offer a safe and loving home, fostering independence and well-being.
- ♦ **Shared Living.** Connects people with developmental disabilities to caring families who offer a safe and warm home.
- ♦ **Supported Living Services.** Include offering tailored support to help people with developmental disabilities achieve their personal goals and live fulfilling lives.
- ♦ **Employment Supports.** Helps people with developmental disabilities reach their full potential through meaningful employment. Connecting abilities and creating opportunities
- ♦ **Day Programs.** Serves as a bridge to the community and provides people with developmental disabilities a dynamic and supportive environment where individuals can learn new skills and form meaningful connections with others in a fun, joyful atmosphere.
- ♦ **Thrift Shops.** <https://ablelight.org/thrift-stores/>



## Church News

### ACTIVITIES ROOM

Beginning on Monday, September 7th, the activities room will be open on both Mondays and Wednesdays again. Everyone is welcome to come play card games, board games (usually dominoes), sit and work a puzzle or just chat and hang out! Bring a friend! We meet from 1:30-3:30 in the Activities room.



### 2nd FRIDAY FELLOWSHIP

Join us in the activities room on Friday, September 12th at 6:30pm to play various card and board games. Bring a snack to share if you wish!

### MOVIE NIGHT

Saturday, September 20<sup>th</sup>  
6:30pm in the cozy 2<sup>nd</sup> Ed Wing room

Join us after Saturday night worship for an indoor movie, drive-in style!

"Concessions" will include: walking tacos, nachos, popcorn, pizza rolls, cookies, and popcorn. BYOB (beverage)...we will have a few beverages on hand, but bring your favorite.

Bring your favorite lawn chair or blanket (or we will have chairs for you)

Let us know what movie you want to see. Depending on the choices, we might offer 2 movies, or save the 2<sup>nd</sup> for a 2<sup>nd</sup> movie night.

Choices are in three categories:

Animated (Cars or How to Train Your Dragon),  
Classic (Back to the Future or Indiana Jones),  
Christian (The Forge or War Room).

Sign up at the Sign- Up Station



---

### CONFIRMATION INSTRUCTION

Back to school means back to Confirmation classes! This year the class will meet on Sundays during the Sunday school hour, beginning on September 7th. A letter was sent to all students aged 5-7th grade inviting them to attend. If you did not receive a letter, please see Annie in the office. Your child's spiritual development is very important to us at St. John's.

## Church News

### EVENT PLANNING AND FACILITIES USE

If you are planning any kind of event or activity that will use the church facilities, you **MUST** fill out a calendar request form. This is the only way to get approval from the Board of Trustees to use the space. This includes personal events such as birthday parties, but also if your board is planning an activity- the Trustees ask that this protocol be followed. The forms are located in the office, in a mailbox slot labeled "calendar request forms". Please put completed forms in Flo's box.

### CPR CLASS

Don't forget to sign up for CPR on 9/6/25 in the Jansen room from 10:00- 12:30. Our church nurse will provide the training cost free- brush up on your skills or learn a new skill. It could help save someone's life.

### BLOOD DRIVE

A blood drive is scheduled at St. John's on 10/11/25 from 8:00 - 12:00. Appointments will be scheduled in September. Contact Jill Schofield and look for additional information in September bulletins. Your blood is needed.

### CANNED FOOD DRIVE

The food pantry is desperately in need of canned food! For the month of September, we are asking for donations of canned fruits and vegetables. There will be a table set up in the hallway near the gym. Thank you for your support of our mission to help feed families in need!



### WOMENS' BIBLE STUDY- Great Women of the Bible

In this four-session, small-group Bible study series, participants will look at the lives of only the most familiar women in God's Word. From Eve, the first woman, to those women who helped Jesus' apostles, participants will see God's grace in action as He calls and leads these women in their daily lives. Through their God-given faith and their faith-filled deeds, you will be inspired by these great women of the Bible.

Session 1: Eve

Session 2: Sarah

Session 3: Rebekah

Session 4: Leah and Rachel

These are only a few of the women mentioned in God's Word. In its pages we learn of their weaknesses and their strengths, their trials and their triumphs. Above all, we see God in His abundant grace forgiving, sustaining, and inspiring His beloved daughters for service in His name.

**We will meet on Wednesdays at 10am beginning on September 10th. All are welcome!**

## From the CID

No harvest is completed without hard work. Near our cities and next door to our rural congregations, fields will soon be swarming with machinery and manpower to bring in the corn and beans. It will take work.

*"The harvest is plentiful," Jesus said (Matthew 9:37). We know He was speaking not about corn and beans, but boys and girls, precious men and women. They don't come automatically. It takes work. The work of the Holy Spirit through the Word. The Word spoken by you ... after you have listened attentively. There's help available for the witnessing work you're expected to do. In your church there are probably four posters displayed that are titled "Witnessing Helps." They're also available on our District website. These four posters offer us practical help for the work done by our ears, hearts, minds, and mouths. The harvest is plentiful! The work is hard ... but not too hard. God will do His work – through you.*

-Pastor Mike Burdick

St. John's Lutheran Church, Effingham

---

### DOLLARS FOR MISSIONS

**Pray For Our Central Illinois District Missions supported by your church's Mission Dollars to the District.** Our Lord Jesus said, "Pray the Lord of the harvest to send laborers into the harvest." This month, please remember in your prayers all the students, particularly those from CID, who are studying at our Synod's colleges and seminaries to become pastors, teachers, and other kinds of church workers – many of whom are supported by scholarship money from CID.

CID is pleased to announce that sufficient funds have been received for the DFM project to replace insulation in the chancel ceiling at Wittenberg Lutheran Center, Normal. Originally estimated at \$10,000, this project will likely be completed at a lesser cost.

The way stands clear for a new project. Immanuel Lutheran Student Center in Macomb was dedicated in 1969, but some of the equipment in the kitchen of the apartment for the live-in student who takes care of the student center (the sexton) has not been replaced since then. The current DFM project is for \$11,000 to replace the original kitchen equipment in this apartment.

The deadline is September 1, 2025, to propose projects to be funded in the following priority order: 1.) new church starts; 2.) mission-focused augmentations to present ministries within CID; 3.) existing CID missions.

### CID Junior High Youth Event – Save the Date

Theme: "Make A Joyful Noise"

Saturday, November 8<sup>th</sup>, 2025, at Camp Cilca

Time 9 am – 4 pm (sign-in will start at 8:30 am)

Cost \$40.00 (includes Lunch, T-shirt, and a full day of activities)

Start planning now to attend this Junior High Youth Event. Online Registration information (including t-shirt orders) will be available soon.



## From the CID

### WORKER WELLNESS

In cooperation with Concordia Plans, which is providing a \$10,000 grant to CID, the District's Committee for Human Care and Worker Wellness has developed two goals for 2025-2026:

1. To raise gold/platinum status participation in Vitality from 11.5% to 15%
2. To train at least one person for certification as a MHFA (mental health first aid) trainer.
  - Are you interested in taking such training?
  - Are you simply interested in promoting Church Worker Wellness in general?

If your answer is "yes" to either of the above, contact Human Care Executive Ken Schurb before the end of August.

### ONGOING AMBASSADORS FOR CHRIST

Our District, along with two others (South Wisconsin and Southern Illinois) has been awarded a grant by the Bolick Foundation to partner with the Ongoing Ambassadors for Christ organization to develop adult teams of 3 to 5 people per District. These teams would travel to District congregations and offer either 2 and a half day or 5 day events that would provide evangelistic practice by a) canvassing neighborhoods; b) engaging in "dry run" practice of witnessing skills with church members; and c) helping a congregation to begin or to augment its evangelistic efforts in a nearby nursing home.

- Would you be interested in serving on such a team yourself? Do you know someone else who would?
- Might your congregation be interested in hosting such a team to work in your midst?

If the answer is "yes" to any of these questions, or if you would like more information, please contact Evangelism Executive Ken Schurb.

### LERT

The 2025 LCMS National Disaster Response and Training Conference will be held Wednesday, Sept. 17, through Friday, Sept. 19, at The LCMS International Center in St. Louis.

Meeting under the theme "Serving the Suffering: The Church's Role in Recovery," attendees will learn how the church can respond in crisis situations with the physical and spiritual care that is so desperately needed by those affected.

Attendees will also hear practical advice and guidance from pastors, disaster response coordinators and others who have responded to significant disasters.

For more information, please visit [the LCMS website](#).

---

### Work and Keep

*“The Lord God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to work it and keep it” (Genesis 2:15).*

Genesis chapters one and two are familiar to us. We know them best as the Creation Account. Chapter one is where we hear the familiar, “let there be...and there was” directives. Chapter two gives us the account of Adam (the man) being formed from the “Adamah” (the dust) and becoming a living being when he receives the breath of life in his nostrils. Because of this, it would be quite easy to simply lump these two chapters into the category of creation accounts.

But do not be too hasty in this! While these two chapters do faithfully relate to us the account of creation, they also give us the creation of the “office” of steward. The man, created in the image of God in Genesis 1 and formed from the dust in Genesis 2, is created for a distinct purpose. He is created to be a steward of the perfect and beautiful creation that the Lord has made! In fact, this is THE reason that man was made. He — and we — were created in the image of God to be stewards of God’s creation.

This purpose is spelled out in verse 15 of Genesis 2. The steward has one job, with two purposes. It is fitting that in the month that our nation marks Labor Day, we consider the task of steward. The first purpose of the job of steward is to work. The steward is the caretaker of the Garden. Being a steward is work! Before the fall into sin, this was not an onerous task. But it was an active thing.

Imagine being a farmer in the Garden of Eden! Work would be only harvest. No plowing. No planting. No cultivating. No weeding. The perfect garden that the Lord had made would simply produce automatically to provide for man, woman, and all living beings!

But there is a second task in verse fifteen. The word “keep” is not just a synonym for work. This second task is related to defending. This garden, holy by virtue of its being called into existence by a holy God, needed to be defended. Here is where the vocation of steward becomes priestly. The steward was to defend the perfect and holy garden from that which was unholy. Later in the Old Testament, this was the task of the priests in the tabernacle and temple. They were to defend with their lives the Holy of Holies. This too is the labor of stewardship. It is a labor that calls the steward to be willing to put the garden before life!

Stewardship was always work. It only got burdensome after the original steward, Adam, failed to defend the garden from the alien word of the serpent. But this was not a failure of harvest. It was a failure to defend the garden! As a result, all work that followed that failure became burdensome.

The steward failed but was never fired. That is why we have such an issue with stewardship to this day. We continue to live out a pre-fall vocation in a fallen world as failed stewards. That is why we in the church need to be reminded of our vocational call to be stewards. We so easily forget that this world is not ours to do with as we please. Nothing is ours. We are but stewards entrusted with managing the creation for the glory of God and the benefit of the neighbor.

It is a daunting task. But it is the one to which we have been called. We cannot do it on our own. Apart from the grace of God shared with us through Jesus, we would be burdened to the point of temporal and eternal death. But the Holy Spirit calls us by the Gospel! This Gospel connects us to the fertile garden of Christ’s Work on our behalf. Now we are stewards of that grace! The Holy Spirit works this in and through us today and every day.

This is the work of the church. It is also the work of the individual steward. The Lord has placed us in the “garden” with the same twofold purpose: work and keep! Enjoy your labor. For in the Lord, our labor is never in vain!

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
31 9am - Worship w/Communion 10:15am - Bible Study /	1 10am - Food Pantry 6:30pm - Guitar Jam	2 9am - TOPS 1:30pm - Activities Room 3:30pm - Fellowship	3 9am - TOPS 1:30pm - Women's Bible study 1:30pm - Activities Room	4 <b>All Boards Meet in Prep for</b> 5:30pm - Call Committee 6:30pm - Board Meetings	5 9:30am - Choir rehearsal 10am - CPR Class 5pm - Worship w/	6 9:30am - Choir rehearsal 10am - CPR Class 5pm - Worship w/
7 9am - Worship w/ 10:15am - Bible Study / 10:30am - Confirmation	8 6pm - Cherub Chimers 6:30pm - Heavenly Ringers 10am - Food Pantry 6:30pm - Guitar Jam	9 9am - TOPS 10am - Women's Bible study 1:30pm - Activities Room	10 9am - TOPS 10am - Women's Bible study 1:30pm - Activities Room	11 6:30pm - Parish Planning 6:30pm - 2nd Friday	12 9:30am - Choir rehearsal 5pm - Worship	13 9:30am - Choir rehearsal 5pm - Worship
14 9am - Worship 10:15am - Voter's Mtg / 10:30am - Confirmation 2pm - Ahrens Family Event	15 <b>Informal Deadline</b> 6pm - Cherub Chimers 6:30pm - Heavenly Ringers 10am - Food Pantry 6:30pm - Guitar Jam	16 9am - TOPS 10am - Women's Bible study 1:30pm - Activities Room	17 9am - TOPS 10am - Women's Bible study 1:30pm - Activities Room	18 11:30am - Ladies Luncheon @ 1pm - LWML	19 9:30am - Choir rehearsal 1pm - Hopkins event 5pm - Worship w/ 6:30pm - Movie Night	20 9:30am - Choir rehearsal 1pm - Hopkins event 5pm - Worship w/ 6:30pm - Movie Night
21 9am - Worship w/ 10:15am - Bible Study / 10:30am - Confirmation 1pm - Hopkins event	22 6pm - Cherub Chimers 6:30pm - Heavenly Ringers 10am - Food Pantry 6:30pm - Guitar Jam	23 9am - TOPS 10am - Women's Bible study 1:30pm - Activities Room	24 9am - TOPS 10am - Women's Bible study 1:30pm - Activities Room	25 6:30pm - Board Meetings	26 9:30am - Choir rehearsal 5pm - Worship	27 9:30am - Choir rehearsal 5pm - Worship
28 9am - Worship 10:15am - Bible Study / 10:30am - Confirmation 1:30pm - Mary Kay facials	29 6pm - Cherub Chimers 6:30pm - Heavenly Ringers 10am - Food Pantry 6:30pm - Guitar Jam	30 9am - TOPS 10am - Women's Bible study 1:30pm - Activities Room	1 9am - TOPS 10am - Women's Bible study 1:30pm - Activities Room	2 6:30pm - Board Meetings	3 9:30am - Choir rehearsal 5pm - Worship w/	4 9:30am - Choir rehearsal 5pm - Worship w/

St. John's Lutheran Church  
1450 30th Ave.  
East Moline, IL 61244

Tel: 309.792.0755  
Fax: 309.792.0776  
Email: [office@stjohnsem.org](mailto:office@stjohnsem.org)  
Web: [www.stjohnsem.org](http://www.stjohnsem.org)



## Office Hours:

Monday – Wednesday 8:30am– 2:00pm  
Closed for lunch from 12-1pm  
Thursday– 8:30am-noon

## Worship Schedule:

Saturday worship– 5:00pm  
Sunday worship- 9:00am  
Sunday School  
& Bible Study-10:15am

