



# The Informer

September 2023

St. John's Lutheran Church

Volume 67 Issue 9



## In this Issue:

Pastor's Letter	1
Notes from the Balcony	2
Serving the Lord this Month	3
Church News	4-7
Calendar	9

See The Informer  
IN COLOR  
On Our Website

## From Pastor's Pen:

*"You are the salt of the earth, but if salt has lost its taste; how shall its saltiness be restored? It is no longer good for anything except to be thrown out and trampled under people's feet." (Matthew 5:13)*

My Christian friends,

Among the great writings of C.S. Lewis is the highly provocative book *The Screwtape Letters*. In this work Lewis had an experienced demon, Screwtape, advising his novice nephew, Wormwood, on the subtleties and techniques of tempting people. In one instance he notes that the goal is not wickedness, itself, but indifference. Screwtape encourages his nephew to keep the prospect comfortable at all costs. If he should become concerned about anything of importance, get him to think about his lunch plans instead.

Today, we are experiencing the consequences of this tactic of indifference in the Church and the desire of Christians to remain comfortable at all costs. For decades the spiritual and moral decay of our society has been evident, and we sat idly by and watched. In recent years we have witnessed so many evils, so many things that God condemns become normative. What scripture describes as evil, people now call good. What it declares good, people call evil. If the devil's goal is to lead us to indifference, it seems that he has hit the bullseye. And now, because we Christians have been more interested in being comfortable than being the salt of the earth, we find ourselves being trampled under people's feet.

It is time that we stop thinking about our lunch plans and begin to demonstrate some genuine concern over what is going on in the world and in the Church. It is time for us to be concerned about the kind of world in which our children are going to be forced to live. It is time for us to be concerned about the wickedness that is consuming us. It is time for us to be concerned about the loss of faith and decline in church activity and membership. It is time for us to be concerned about the millions upon millions of people who are perishing forever without Christ.

Have we already lost our taste? Can our saltiness be restored? Are we already to the point of not being good for anything but being trampled under people's feet? I do not think so. I know the hearts and minds of many of you who are concerned and committed to serving. So go for it! Be the salt that the Lord has made you to be! Point out wickedness and pursue righteousness. Condemn evil and extol what is good. Give praise and glory to God and share the Good News of Christ. Do not be negated by indifference, rather be someone who actually makes a difference!

In Christ,

*Pastor Umbarger*

## Notes from the Balcony

For the last few years, September has been the month we have asked for the favorite hymns of the members of St. John's. This list has been very helpful in choosing hymns that have special meaning to our people. This month I have written a brief description of three of the favorite hymns of St. John's and challenge you to see if you can identify them. Maybe knowing a little of their stories will make them even more treasured.

1. This favorite hymn was first sung by a schoolmaster to a dying child in the novel, *Say and Seal*. It was written in 1860 by the two sisters, Susan and Anna Warner. This two-volume book became a best seller. Originally a four-stanza song, William Bradbury added the chorus we are familiar with when he set the poem to music. It has been translated into many languages and is a beloved song in Sunday Schools around the world for its simplicity in telling the story of Jesus.
2. This favorite hymn was written by the Englishman John Newton (1725-1807) who was originally a slave trader. After a storm at sea, he converted to Christianity and became an Anglican minister who then campaigned against the slave trade. This hymn had been recorded by pop stars and even had a PBS documentary written about it. The tune in our hymnal is called NEW BRITAIN with the composer unidentified. Solo bagpipe often plays a stirring rendition of the tune at memorial services. In this hymn, God's expression of awe-inspiring grace to the underserving sinner results in the sinner's grateful expression of thankfulness.
3. This favorite hymn was written by the successful Chicago lawyer, Horatio Spafford (1828-1888). He and his wife expressed and lived their faith and were friends with Dwight L. Moody. Within a year, he lost his only son to illness and most of his finances to the Chicago Fire. Then in 1873, his four small daughters drowned in a shipwreck. Spafford quickly took a ship to Britain to meet his wife who survived the wreck. When the ship passed over the place where his children died, he wrote this hymn. The tune was composed for the hymn by the musician Philip P. Bliss. This beautiful hymn reminds the Christian that the importance of Christ's cross brings comfort and contentment even in the most difficult of times. Many found comfort in this hymn during 2020.

You will have to use your hymnal (or Google) for the answers. The Lutheran Service Book numbers for the descriptions above are 588, 744, and 763 in the above order.

God's blessings to you all,

Christine Engebrecht



## Serving the Lord this Month

### Ushers

**Sat. Sept. 2:** Greg Burke, Chuck Brokaw, Larry Ripka, Todd Miller, Rex Newman

**Sun, Sept 3:** Brian Nielsen

**Sat, Sept 9:** Greg Burke, Chuck Brokaw, Larry Ripka, Todd Miller, Rex Newman

**Sun, Sept 10:** Brian Nielsen

**Sat, Sept 16:** Greg Burke, Chuck Brokaw, Larry Ripka, Todd Miller, Rex Newman

**Sun, Sept 17:** Brian Nielsen

**Sat, Sept 23:** Greg Burke, Chuck Brokaw, Larry Ripka, Todd Miller, Rex Newman

**Sun, Sept 24:** Brian Nielsen

### Greeters

**Sat. Sept. 2:**

**Sun, Sept 3:** Marsha Boarts & Larry Dodge

**Sat, Sept 9:**

**Sun, Sept 10:** Marsha Boarts & Larry Dodge

**Sat. Sept 16:**

**Sun, Sept 17:** David & Candace Sountris

**Sat, Sept 23:**

**Sun, Sept 24:** Marsha Boarts & Larry Dodge

### Communion Assistants

**Sept. 3:** Ralph Grotelueschen & Glen McMillin

**Sept. 17:** Brian Kern & Jim Homann

### Acolytes

**Sept. 3:** Bennett Johnson

**Sept. 10:** Alice Schmidt

**Sept. 17:** Lydia Merritt

**Sept. 24:** Johnny Kjera



### Altar Guild

Marsha Boarts

&

Jennifer, Grace, and Alice Schmidt



### Eternal Candle

**Sept 3:** Tim & Tamee Stone

**Sept 10:** Troy & Val McDonald, in honor of their anniversary

**Sept 17:** OPEN

**Sept 24:** Karen Schmidt



### Flowers

**Sept 3:** Tim & Tamee Stone; celebrating our dads, Sunny & Albert

**Sept 10:** Bill & Donna Green, remembering our parents

**Sept 17:** OPEN

**Sept 24:** Karen Schmidt, in honor of her 86th birthday

## Church News

### FOOD PANTRY

For the month of July, the St. John's food pantry served 140 households, with 430 individuals and 167 children.

Our Riverbend food order was \$1085.04

Your response to God's blessings was donations in the amount of \$1714.87. This includes a donation from Hy-Vee for \$89.97 from the plant sale in May. Thank you for your continued support of our mission to provide assistance to those in our community in need.

### LCMS MENS AND WOMEN'S BOWLING LEAGUE

Did you know the LCMS bowling league has served the Quad Cities for 50+ years? Mark your calendars and come join us for fun and fellowship. All skill levels are welcome!

There will be an Organizational Meeting/Fun Bowl on Monday, August 28th at 6:00pm at Highland Park Bowl.

2 short, twelve week seasons:

Highland Park Bowl-Ave of the Cities- 6:30pm

Season 1: Begins September 11th (tentative)

Season 2: Begins December 11th (tentative)

Sign up on the library counter. You do not have to commit to the whole season. You may sign up as a substitute, or ask for a sub if you need.

Questions? Call Carrie, or contact Michael Wagner (309)453-7206 or Jim Pearson (563)293-6456



### From the CID

#### Your Faith Journey

If Judeo-Christian ethics can be summed up in a twitter tweet, verse 8 of Micah 6 say it well; ***“Do justice, love kindness, and walk humbly with your God?”*** Go ahead and put a meme with that. As the tabernacled Word, Jesus proclaims and demonstrates His faithfulness to our forefathers, fulfills all justice, kindness and humbleness for us. He gives us His Good Friday death and Easter Sunday thereby atoning for our sin. He places His saving name upon us at the font of Holy Baptism and gifts us with the Holy Spirit so that our heart, mind and soul are renewed toward the true goal of discipleship – to live justly, love kindness, and walk humbly. Daily raised with Christ, through repentance and Absolution, we walk in the newness of life - peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control (Gal 5:22-23). Against these things, there is no law. So, go ahead, daily live as walking, talking, breathing, depictions of God's presence in the world by living justly, loving kindness, and walking humbly.

Rev. Bruce Scarbeary

## Church News

### Birthdays

**1st:** Jen Belzer, Nolan Johnson & Rhonda VanDamme  
**2nd:** Debby Weidenbach  
**3rd:** Adam Lack & Steve LaCroix  
**5th:** Larry Dodge  
**6th:** Matthew Dosch & Allison Overton  
**7th:** Dean Bull, Hillary Ekin, & Pam Fisher  
**8th:** Sheena Johnson, Kathy Petosky, Troy & Trace Shryack  
**9th:** Brenda Hanerhoff  
**10th:** Nancy Cartwright  
**11th:** Chris Heller & Keith Schnabel  
**12th:** Thomas Weathers  
**13th:** Jim Beswick & Kaitlyn McMillin  
**14th:** Ann Churchill, Ann Engebrecht, 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  
**29th:** Susan Busch & Carlie Schofield  
**30th:** Lori Hopkins & Glen McMillin



### Weekly Attendance Offerings

<u>DATE</u>	<u>THIS YEAR</u>	<u>LAST YEAR</u>
7/30	159	140
8/6	145	152
8/13	122	171
8/20	209	127

Average monthly attendance of St. John's membership: 30 %

### Membership Report

New Members:

Paige Beale

Baptisms:

Palmer Beale

Penelope Parker

New Address:

Janet Wachs

143 Kinsley Ct.

East Moline, IL 61244

**NOTICE  
OF  
BOARD  
MEETING**

**DON'T FORGET-**  
**ALL BOARDS MEET ON SEPTEMBER 7th at 6:30pm.**  
**There is a Parish Planning meeting on Thursday, September 14th, and**  
**a Voter's meeting on Sunday, September 17th during the Sunday**  
**school/ Bible study hour!!!**



## Church News

### LWML

#### Rock Island Zone LWML Fall Rally

**Tuesday, September 19th**

**"Abound in Love for One Another"**

The Rock Island Zone Fall Rally will be held on Tuesday, September 19<sup>th</sup> at Holy Cross Lutheran Church in Moline.

Coffee and registration begins at 8:30 am.

Join us for a day of inspiration, bible study and mission information with special speaker Rev. Wayne Knolhoff, Orphan Grain Train representative.

Cost is \$12.00 (includes lunch).

Registration and payment is due by September 3<sup>rd</sup>.

To register please contact Diana Lackey, phone 309-373-1862.

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We will be collecting items for the Pregnancy Resources as our project.

Beginning August 26th we will have a box in the concourse to collect the following items for them:

- \* Diapers– larger sizes please
- \* Clothes from 12months-3T, especially for boys
- \* Receiving blankets
- \* Bottles
- \* Rattles
- \* Teethers
- \* Anything that would fit in a baby gift bag

We will also be collecting:

- \* Pillowcase Dresses
- \* Cloth Diapers
- \* Portals of Prayers
- \* Used Postage Stamps



**The next LWML meeting will be on Thursday, September 24th, at 1:00.**

## Church News

### NEW BIBLE STUDIES ARE STARTING!

#### Midweek Bible Study

##### Beginning Wednesday, September 6th, 10am

“Responding in Grace on Divisive Issues” Many of us have never experienced such division in our lifetime as we are today. Living in a society that is rejecting, even vilifying, traditional Judeo-Christian ideology, and devolving into something unrecognizable to us, it is important that we prepare ourselves to respond in a god-pleasing way which will benefit our neighbor. In this one session study, a panel discussion from “Focus of the Family” will lead us to discover ways in which we can respond in grace to some of the more divisive issues of our day. Following this study, the class will determine what is wished to study next.

#### Men’s Bible Study

##### Beginning: Saturday, September 9th, 8am

“What Christian’s in a Scientific Age Should Know About Theology” In this five session video study from the Lay Bible Institute, Dr. Joel Okamoto will explain science and how it developed over the ages and the relationship between theology [the study of God], and science [the study of God’s creation].



#### Coffee with Christ

##### Beginning: Sunday, September 10th, 10:15am

Topic to be determined at the first class.

### REFLECTIONS: DEVOTIONS FOR YOUTH AND TEENS

Two minutes. It takes two minutes to read a daily *Reflection* full of the Gospel of Christ crucified for you. Since 2005, Higher Things® has provided free daily devotions, called *Reflections*, for youth and families. Each day you get a reading, a devotion, and a prayer to help you confront the devil, the world, and your own sinful flesh with hope in your Lord’s victory over all of it. These *Reflections* are centered in the Gospel of Jesus Christ, and are based upon texts from the one-year lectionary and Luther’s *Small Catechism*.

*Reflections* are available in multiple formats! You can subscribe to the daily email, subscribe to the *Reflections* podcast, or download the entire season in booklet form.

Visit <https://higherthings.org/content/content-reflections/> for more information

### DRIVE IN MOVIE NIGHT

Saturday, September 16th

Join us for a family fun drive in movie night! We will begin around 6pm with outdoor games and snacks. When it gets dark enough (7:30?), we will project *The Sandlot* in the parking lot. Load up your tailgates and come have some fun!

There is a sign up on the library counter. Please help us plan food and games by letting us know you will be attending.



## Lutherans in Maui Assist with Fire Response

On Aug. 8, a wildfire near the village of Lāhainā on the island of Maui, Hawaii, rapidly spread out of control, part of a larger series of wildfires plaguing the island. The cause of the fire is under investigation, but like other recent fires on the island, it was fed by extremely dry conditions and high winds. A week later, the lives lost number more than a hundred, with hundreds more still unaccounted for. On Aug. 15, the Rev. Michael Lange, president of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod (LCMS) California-Nevada-Hawaii (CNH) District, sent an email update to the CNH District with the question: “What message do we bring to those so much in need of care and love?” Lange answered that they need to hear that they have a God “who is Emmanuel (God with us)! He is with you and for you! We are the body of Christ, walking, loving, living, and sharing with those in need.”

Lange reported that Emmanuel Lutheran Church and School in Kahului, Maui, was not directly impacted by the fire (one or two families from the school were minimally affected), but that Emmanuel members are serving “as God’s hands and feet to the people of Maui. They are Christ’s ambassadors and bear the presence of the Savior. Pray for their strength and care as they walk beside many in great need.”

The congregation of Emmanuel is currently in a pastoral vacancy, but Lange said pastoral presence, care and leadership are being planned for and provided onsite. Emmanuel members are responding to the disaster by helping provide for the immediate needs of those affected and by assisting those who are providing housing for the displaced. In the near future, CNH First Vice-President Rev. Mitch Gowen, who lives on the island of Oahu, will visit Maui to meet with those leading the response and to lead worship at Emmanuel. At this writing, the Rev. Chris Singer, the Rev. Rodney Hall and the Rev. Dr. Mark Hannemann are serving as organizational specialists and spiritual and counseling care providers for Emmanuel members, school families and the community.

In addition, Lutheran Early Response Team (LERT) training will be conducted on both Maui and Oahu in the next two weeks. The Rev. Dr. Ross Johnson, director of LCMS World Relief and Human Care Disaster Response, reported that three boxes of LERT volunteer materials have already arrived at Emmanuel for the training sessions. In addition, \$5,000 worth of \$100 Visa gift cards, along with a box of devotional materials, have been shipped to Emmanuel for distribution. The devotional materials include 50 copies of the Concordia Publishing House children’s book *I Will Not Be Afraid*. In addition, the CNH District has applied for a grant from LCMS Disaster Response to fund additional counselors and spiritual care providers in addition to those mentioned above.

Johnson said, “LCMS Disaster Response is committed to helping not only with the immediate needs of those affected by this fire but also with the long-term needs of the community as the island rebuilds from this historic disaster.” Lange added that Emmanuel’s presence for over 50 years on the island will serve the congregation well in responding to those in need. School families at Emmanuel have many relationships with those who were personally impacted.

Lange concluded his Aug. 15 email to the CNH District by asking for prayers for “those so horribly affected, those mourning, and strength for caregivers”; by inviting texts, cards and emails to let those in Maui “know you are remembering them and praying for them”; and by encouraging gifts “to support relief work and recovery.”

Mark Hofman, executive director of LCMS Mission Advancement, said, “The generosity of God’s people over the past two years has empowered — and continues to empower — the LCMS to respond appropriately and effectively in these situations. The gifts of God’s people are an outward expression of the faith they place in Jesus Christ and of their desire to share the Gospel with those who are experiencing trauma, loss and tremendous anxiety.”

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Anyone wishing to bolster the disaster-response capacity of the LCMS may send a gift to:

The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, PO Box 66861, St. Louis, MO 63166-6861.

Please make checks payable to The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod. To restrict the use of your gift, write “Wildfire Relief” or “Disaster Response” on the memo line.

To give electronically, visit [lcms.org/givenow/wildfires](https://lcms.org/givenow/wildfires) or [lcms.org/givenow/disaster](https://lcms.org/givenow/disaster), or send the keyword LCMSWILDFIRES or LCMSDIS-ASTERS to 41-444 on your text-enabled device.

To give by phone, or for more information, call 888-930-4438.

To directly strengthen the near-term localized disaster-response capacity of the CNH District, visit [cnh-lcms.org](https://cnh-lcms.org).



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
27	28	29	30	31	1	2
					5pm - Worship w/	
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
9am - Worship w/ 10:15am - Bible Study / 10:15am - Confirmation	Office Closed	10am - Food Pantry 6:30pm - Guitar Jam	9am - TOPS 10am - Midweek Bible	All Boards Meet in Prep 6:30pm - Board Meetings	8am - Men's Bible Study 9:30am - Adult Choir 5pm - Worship	
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
Pitman Missionaries to 9am - Worship 10:15am - Confirmation 10:15am - Pitmans	6:30pm - 7th Grade 6:30pm - Heavenly	10am - Food Pantry 6:30pm - Guitar Jam	9am - TOPS 10am - Midweek Bible	6:30pm - Parish Planning	8am - Men's Bible Study 9:30am - Adult Choir 5pm - Worship 6pm - Drive-In Movie	
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
9am - Worship w/ 10:15am - Confirmation 10:15am - Voter's	Informers Deadline 6:30pm - 7th Grade 6:30pm - Heavenly	9am - LWMML Rally @ St. 10am - Food Pantry 6:30pm - Guitar Jam	9am - TOPS 10am - Midweek Bible	11:30am - Ladies	8am - Men's Bible Study 9:30am - Adult Choir 5pm - Worship	
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
9am - Worship 10:15am - Bible Study / 10:15am - Confirmation	6:30pm - 7th Grade 6:30pm - Heavenly	10am - Food Pantry 6:30pm - Guitar Jam	9am - TOPS 10am - Midweek Bible	1pm - LWMML	Pastor Vacation	8am - NO MEN'S BIBLE 9:30am - Adult Choir 6pm - Class Reunion

# St. John's Lutheran Church



1450-30th Avenue  
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We're On the Web!!  
[www.stjohnsem.org](http://www.stjohnsem.org)

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*Walking in the Light of Christ!*

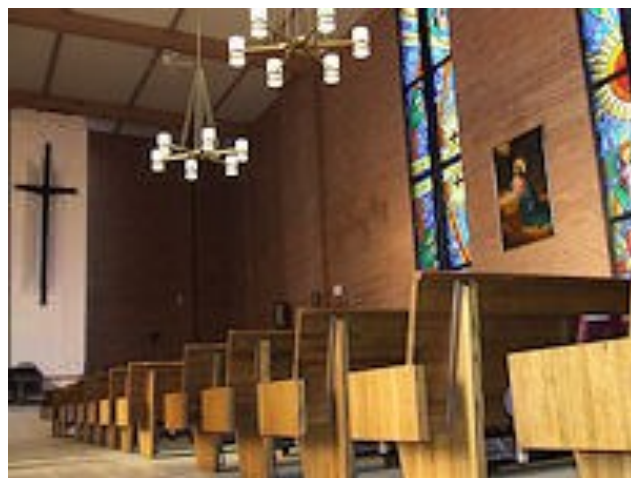


## Worship Schedule:

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

## Office Hours:

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



*Inside our Sanctuary.*