

August 2024 Newsletter

Pastor's Message:

Dear Church,

When things are chaotic in the world (*actually, when are they not?*) I am often drawn to the words and images of Psalm 46. It starts out *God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble.* And then it pictures some of those "troubles", like 'mountains toppling into the sea...waters raging and foaming...the nations making much ado...kingdoms shaking'. Sounds like this Psalm-writer lived in the same world that we live in!

And then Psalm 46 also pictures what God is doing, besides being our *refuge and strength*. God *"is with us...makes wars to cease...breaks the bow (and arrow) and shatters the spear."* And God does one more thing: calls on us to **Be still and know that I am God!**

This Psalm (which inspired Martin Luther to write the great hymn "A Mighty Fortress Is Our God") is just as relevant as ever, and just as much needed as ever! The "be still" part reminds us that we don't have to get all upset or worried about every little thing some news pundit or some politician mouths off about. Plenty of people and internet sites 'troll' us to stir up anger or fear or outrage.

At the same time the "be still" part doesn't mean we just hunker down and cover our heads and say "God's got this!" There is always the call of scripture and the call of Jesus to calmly and courageously go about our calling: to bring good news, to heal, to forgive, to give a hungry person something to eat, or a thirsty soul something to drink.

And this is why we continue to be a "Church Together", a "Learning Church", a "Church of Stewards", and "Church for the Community". Thank you for all the ways you help us be that and do that! And keep your eyes and ears and imaginations open for new ways to be and do "church"!
-Pastor Paul

Sunday Worship continues at 9am (one service) through Labor Day weekend. Saturday's 5pm service continues to be "Drive-in" when the weather allows, and indoors when it doesn't! Invite a friend or new or old neighbor to join us!

Mark your calendar for our Church Picnic on September 8. Special guests will be our missionaries Dr. Steve & Bethany Friberg, who are on 'furlough' from their work in Tanzania! (We'll appreciate teams to handle food/games/raffle baskets as well!)

Our Annual Outreach for Hope Bike Ride/Run/Walk is Saturday September 21 starting at Grace/Grafton. We'll welcome riders, walkers, runners, donors! You can sign up online at outreachforhope.org or talk to Kutzoras, Johnsons, or Kiernans. Families: can you bring kids and ride? We go on the Interurban trail! (Outreach for Hope is our Synod's ministry supporting 19 congregations who work with persons living in poverty.)

A Big THANK YOU from Brian, the Food Dude at All Peoples' Church for your food pantry donations! (Also to Scott Kinter for delivering the 'goods' there!)

Year to Date as of June

+YTD General Fund

Receipts: \$ 103,760

Expenses: \$ 109,180

+YTD Building & Grounds Fund:

Receipts: \$ 12,898 Expenses: \$ 1,588

+YTD Missionary Sponsorship:

Receipts: \$ 4,650 Goal for 2024 \$ 8,000

+YTD ELCA Benevolence:

Receipts: \$ 6273 Goal for 2024 \$ 14,000

+YTD Good Samaritan

Receipts \$ 8,827 Goal for 2024 \$ 8,000

What's Happening at St. John's

Monday Study at 9am meets outdoors, weather-permitting, or in the Upper Room. Try it out!

Our Grief Support Group meets the 1st and 3rd Monday of the month at 6:30pm, and you will find a sense of welcome and understanding, plus encouragement from others who are also on a journey through grief. We gather together confident that Jesus knows our sorrows and our tears, and journeys with us!

Wanted! Your extra white Damask or patterned table cloths are needed to be cut into Baptism cloths. Please leave any you have to donate in the church office.



I baptize you in the name
of the Father and of the Son
and of the Holy Spirit



The next Wednesday evening Cookout & Campfire is August 14st at 6pm and is a good time for fellowship and simple worship (especially for those of you who are away on weekends in the summer!) Come on over, and bring a side-item to add to the brats/burgers/hot dogs we'll provide!

The August Veterans meeting will be at 9:00am on Tuesday August 13th at St. John's. All Veterans are welcome, so come join the group and meet some new friends.

We'll have a Sunday School Movie Night before school starts on Thursday August 29 at 6:30!
Bring your sleeping bag, and a friend!

We're having a Brat Fry at Piggly Wiggly on Saturday August 31, for fun and for service to the community! **Workers and borrowed grills are also needed** at this Outreach Committee fundraiser. All proceeds will go to the Full Shelf Food Pantry in West Bend. To donate some time for this good cause contact Leanne Ports at Lpbelieve85@icloud.com to volunteer.



Happy August Birthdays!

August 2	Keith Heidtke
August 3	Kevin Gierach Bristol Prost
August 4	John Hein
August 5	Marlene Blank Heather Boesch Amber Cefalu Austin Garbade Carl Krueger Diane Thomas
August 6	Joann Berholz Michelle Jones
August 7	Marcia Earl
August 8	Liam Anders Dale Reisinger
August 9	Reuben Heidtke
August 11	Greg Holt
August 12	Emily Kraus
August 13	Amy Hein
August 14	Kathy Hauser
August 15	Austin Prost
August 16	Gary Hainer Kevin Reidy
August 17	Karen Keel Dean Klotz Erma Meyerpeter Scott Novotny
August 20	Lucas Frank
August 22	Nicole Lemberger Dawson Young
August 23	Dawn Artz Sylvia Fields Dominic Reidy Wendy Wolf
August 25	Rod Legate
August 26	William Goodman
August 27	Kenna Lisko
August 28	John Chowhan McKenzie Staver
August 29	Vernon Prost Tanner Toll
August 30	Henry Ayers Bill Berholtz Angel Bialk Rose Hamlin Keri Kraus
August 31	Sharon Counard Dorene Rudd

August Anniversaries



Happy Anniversary!

Don & Erma Meyerpeter	August 4, 1962	62 years
Ken & Pat Ziegelbauer	August 5, 1972	52 years
Ray & Viola Fischer	August 6, 1955	69 years
Kevin & Mary Bukovic	August 12, 1995	29 years
Joel & Wendy Heidtke	August 12, 1989	35 years
Travis & Stefanie Prost	August 12, 2017	7 years
Lucas & Katie Nelsen	August 17, 2018	6 years
Austin & Kara Prost	August 18, 2018	6 years
Scott & Mary Moschea	August 19, 1978	46 years
Steve & Judy Henrichs	August 21, 1982	42 years
Don & Cindy Dribel	August 22, 1987	37 years
Alan & Charlotte Schwieger	August 24, 2012	12 years
Joel & Wendy Wolf	August 26, 1989	35 years
Ryan & Kimberly Byrne	August 27, 2005	19 years
Don & Dawn Artz	August 28, 1993	31 years
Garry & Shelly Basing	August 28, 1976	48 years
Mitchell & Karen Cook	August 29, 2020	4 years
Scott & Jenny Trick	August 31, 2013	11 years

Those Serving In August

9:00	8/4/2024	8/11/2024	8/18/2024	8/25/2024
Reader	Sue Heidtke	Reuben Heidtke	Brennans	Kim Guslick
Communion	Darlene Wanta	George Liberatore	Brennans	Darleen Wanta
Assistants	Peter Uhlig	Diane Liberatore	Brennans	Joel Wolf
Ushers	Keith Heidtke	George Liberatore	Brennans	Kelly Strnad
	Joel Heidtke	Joe Liberatore	Brennans	Will Strnad
Greeter		Diane Liberatore	Brennans	Wendy Wolf
Power Point	Wendy Heidtke	Wendy Wolf	Scott DeChant	Sam/Ed
Facebook	Sharon K,	Scott K	Jenny	Sam/Ed

A serious and thoughtful note from ELCA Bishop Elizabeth Eaton about Christian Nationalism. This appeared in The Lutheran in August 2023. It's entitled: "Who Is a Real American?"

My husband and I live in Skokie, Ill., a diverse community. Our neighbors to the west are an octogenarian Taiwanese Evangelical couple who regularly order meals from Kosher to Go. Our neighbors to the east are a Ukrainian and Russian multigenerational family. Our grocery stores have both kosher and halal departments. As I drive past the elementary school on my way to work, I see moms and dads in jeans along with women in saris or hijabs and men in thobes or yarmulkes. More than 90 languages are spoken in the homes of our school district. We pay our taxes, mow our (tiny) lawns, worship, raise our children and pretty much get along in our little village of Skokie.

Late one afternoon a few years ago I was finishing up yard work. I had been weeding and trimming all day. I was tired and grass-stained. Just one more pile of leaves needed to be swept up. I noticed a woman walking toward me so I hurried to get the sidewalk cleared. She stopped and told me that she had seen me working all day and thought I might be too tired to prepare supper. She had made a meal for me and my husband. It was during Ramadan—the month when Muslims fast from food and water during the day and engage in prayer and acts of charity. This was her act of charity and generosity. She smiled and walked away. I was stunned.

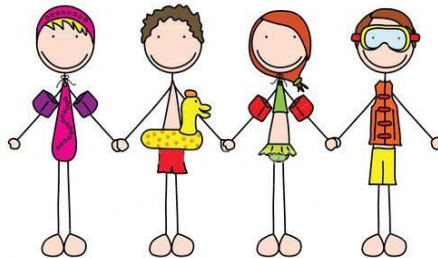
There has been an alarming rise in hate speech and violence against religious and ethnic minorities in this country. At the same time, we've seen an increased polarization among us, even in our dear church. There is a movement to define what it means to be a "real American." Some would define this as white, Christian and native born. When Lutheran immigrants first came to this country in the 18th and 19th centuries, they weren't considered real Americans. They didn't speak English or fit in with the Deist, Calvinist religious majority. They were "other" and therefore suspect. German Lutheran immigrants weren't considered white when they settled here. Neither were Irish, Italians or Poles. Catholics and Jews were considered an alien threat.

It's ironic that the Puritans fled religious persecution and that the First Amendment states "Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free expression thereof," yet an element in our country wants to legislate that the United States is a Christian nation where Christianity should be privileged and only Christians should hold office. This is Christian Nationalism, which is neither Christian nor patriotic. There is no doubt that the Founders were Christian and that a majority of Americans identify as Christian. That is different from declaring Christianity as the established religion of the United States. And, dear church, let's be clear, a Christian Nationalist does not define Lutherans as "Christian."

God knows I love my country. This beautiful, fragile, yet surprisingly resilient experiment in democracy and nationhood that's not predicated on shared ethnicity is unique among nations. My grandfather, father and uncles all served during World War I and World War II. I had the honor of placing a wreath on behalf of the ELCA at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier in Arlington National Cemetery. I won't have my patriotism questioned. Christian Nationalism is a perversion of the gospel and a threat to our democracy. It's precisely because I love my country that I warn against it.

Who is a "real American"? I say that my Muslim neighbor walking freely down the street in a hijab to offer a meal to her Christian neighbor during Ramadan is a real American. Motivated by her Muslim faith she acted as neighbor to me. She is not less American because she is Muslim. Because she is an American, she can be her authentic self and participate in building our community and country. What binds us together is not ethnicity but shared participation in our civic life springing out of our cultural heritages and working for the common good.

St. John's Lutheran Church
2881 Division Road
Jackson, WI 53037



At St. John's we're privileged and challenged to *Welcome, Worship, and Witness* in Christ's name. Thank you for being part of this faith community and for the serving you do to the glory of God!

Visit us at www.stjohnsjackson.net
Like us on Facebook www.facebook.com/stjohnsjackson
Pastor Paul Mittermaier – pastorcarguy@gmail.com
Office hours: M-F 9:00am-1:00pm 262-677-3176
officestjohnsjackson@gmail.com
Worship Services: Saturday 5:00 pm
Sunday 8 & 9:45 am With Holy Communion
Facebook Live at 9:45 am on Sunday

