



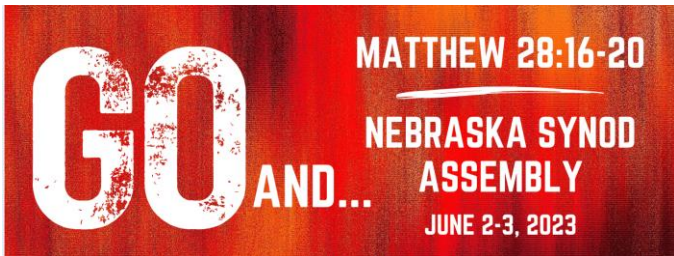
VOLUME 51

July 2023

NUMBER 7

July Chatterbox Newsletter

If you were in church on Sunday June 11, you heard my explanation of the new, year-long, initiative that the Nebraska Synod kicked off at the Synod Assembly in Kearney on June 2-3 to help us in our efforts to be church with one another across Nebraska. The overall theme is **“Go And...”** and welcomes us to be intentional about how we are disciples to our own communities. This initiative will provide resources for us in answer to questions like: What does it look like to be a disciple of God’s Kingdom in the 21st century? What specific practices might we use in order to build our own witness to what God is doing among us?



Each month, over the next year, the Synod will introduce an intentional theme, inviting us to a specific practice of the Spirit for us to utilize. The 12 themes are: **pray; listen; share our story; serve with neighbors; ask; be honest; be present; rest; have the conversation; be intentional; tell the story; and be the church.**

The Synod Staff will provide an introduction to each of the monthly themes, and provide reflection questions, a prayer, and a suggested hymn or worship songs. I introduced their materials on “Go And... Pray” for the month of June, and their theme for July is “Go And... Listen.” We will provide space each month in this newsletter for these theme resources and hope that you might use them as personal devotions, small group discussions, evangelism tools, or in any way you feel that might be most helpful.



Being church together, **For** one another is the goal. And practicing our witness to the activity of God all around, and among, us is what we are all called to participate in as God’s children in the world. I hope you will find these resources helpful. If you would like any further information about this initiative, or need any additional resources or activities for your groups, please give me a call and we can work on it together. Or you can visit the Synod’s website for more information <https://nebraskasynod.org/go-and/>

I look forward to **being the church** together with you through this initiative over the next year. Please know that I have been praying for all of you throughout the Month of June, and though we are starting a new intentional theme for July, I will continue to keep you all in my prayers throughout the year, and beyond. ☺

Peace to you – Pastor Chris

The resource summary for the Month of June “Go And... Pray” and July “Go And... Listen” are listed below:

JUNE 2023



Prayer is the grounding for our relationship with God. From formal prayers offered in worship, prayers at meals, and fleeting moments of prayer, our lives are enveloped in prayer. In prayer, we both listen and share what is in our hearts and on our minds. We move, live, and serve in and out of our prayers.

Questions to consider:

- What is your big prayer at this time?
- What is going on in the lives of your neighbor? How can you pray for them?
- Where will you *GO and...* grow your prayer life this month?

Prayer: Holy One, help me pause and engage in conversation with you this month and always. Amen.

Suggested Song: Lord, Listen to Your Children Praying (ELW 752)

JULY 2023:



How do we listen with our full selves? In reality, all of our senses are used when we listen – with our ears, our eyes, our mouths, and our bodies. As disciples, we listen to ourselves, our neighbors, and God. When we listen, we find new perspectives, shared history, and common ground.

Questions to consider:

- What is something you learned from listening to your heart?
- What is something you learned from listening to a stranger?
- In a year of GOING, how will you listen to those around you?

Prayer:

Listening God, help me stay open to the surprises you provide while on the road this summer. Amen.

Suggested Song: Listen, God is Calling (ELW 513)



St. John's Lutheran Congregational Council
June 19th, Meeting 2023 Minutes

Opening

St. John's Lutheran Congregational Council met with Tracy Moore, Brian Bunkers, Denise Stevenson, Dave Groteluschen, Larry Wennekamp, Bethany Wilke and Pastor Chris. President Tracy Moore called the meeting to order and Pastor Chris led the opening prayer.

Minutes/Financial Reports

Brian made a motion to approve the last meeting minutes. Dave seconded. Motion carried. The May financial reports were reviewed. Dave made a motion to approve them. Bethany seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Emma Moore-YouTube Channel

Emma Moore joined the first part of our meeting to discuss her Youtube channel.

Our policy is to have a media release at the beginning of the new Sunday School year as well as for the choir. We are going to go forward with the Youtube Channel. We will continue with our facebook posts. We will have our disclaimer on the weekly slides for our congregation. Emma plans to set up her new camera in the back of the church to do her recordings. Brian made a motion to approve. Denise seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Beginning Monthly Balance-\$33,035.50

Monthly General Income-\$11,015.56

Monthly General Expenses-\$11,582.34

Ending General Balance-\$32,511.27

YTD Income required to meet budget-\$65,632.75

2023 Budget Balance-\$1,705.37

Memorial Fund-\$2,090.45

Old Business

-Video Recording Update-A meeting is going to take place on Wednesday, June 28th. The Evangelism committee will be asking Kara Allbaugh from Rival Designs some follow up questions.

-Basement Painting-Brian Bunkers & Sam Welch plan to start on this after the 4th of July.

New Business

-Roster Updates-We are reviewing our church roster and discussing updates. We will finalize this at our next meeting.

-Columbus Days Booth-Jackson will be needing help with our Columbus Days booth again. Columbus Days is August 10th-13th. We will have pens & bottled water available. A signup sheet will be put up for this.

-Semi annual meeting-Tracey Moore will get this finalized. The meeting is Sunday, July 23rd after the worship service.

-God's Work Our Hands-SAVE THE DATE (September 10th) This is going to build a sense of community. We would like other committees to get involved with this and help. We are going to have spaghetti, bread, and desserts.

-Education for next year-Discussion was had about ordering Bibles for our up-and-coming third grade kids.

-Adult Bible Study-Pastor Chris is thinking about possible days and what would be best for everyone.

Pastor's Report

The month began with 38 kids, over 20 volunteer helpers and leaders, as well as several other contributors, all coming together to make our week of Vacation Bible School a truly meaningful and memorable experience for all. A special "Thank You" goes out to Chris Luchsinger and Bethany Wilke for directing the program this year, and to Pat Cuda for providing all the printed materials and media for the week, as well as team teaching the Safari Craft center! Everyone did an exceptional job in making sure the kids had fun while actively engaging with God's Word.

Denise Stevenson and I traveled to Kearney at the end of VBS to attend the Nebraska Synod Assembly on June 2. Due to weather, many of the workshop leaders and participants were unable to attend so much of the scheduling had to be adjusted, but overall, it was a chance to gather for worship and conversation about being church together. The congregations of the Synod were invited to participate in a year-long initiative of spiritual practices that will help us live into our callings as disciples of Christ in the world. Based on the scripture from Matthew 28, the initiative focuses on "The Great Commission" to "Go And..." Each of the next 12 months will highlight a specific theme for practicing together ways of being church. The 12 practices are: pray; listen; share our story; serve with neighbors; ask; be honest; be present; rest; have the conversation; be intentional; tell the story; and be the church. We plan on participating with the rest of the Nebraska Synod congregations by publishing the monthly resources for each theme in our newsletter as well as encouraging our folks in small groups to take advantage of the activities and discussion starters for each theme, that can be found online at the Synod's Website. It should be a nice way to focus our conversations together as we engage and explore our callings, both individually and as faith communities.

We are looking forward to another chance to celebrate together with other congregations throughout the ELCA in September when we participate in "God's Work. Our Hands" Sunday on September 10. This is the 10-year anniversary of the start of this designated Sunday in the ELCA, and it has become a great way to come together and show love for our neighbors through a designated day of service across the nation. Our Social Ministry committee here at St John's is already beginning to explore possible events for this special day and would welcome anyone who would like to be in on the planning process. Just reach out and let us know if you would like to be involved. Otherwise, more information about how to be a part of the celebration in September will be made available soon.

The "Go And..." monthly theme for June is "Go and Pray." And I invite all of us to consider taking on a daily prayer time where you can be in conversation with God. Whether you pray for the weather, say thanks for all the gifts of friendship you have received, or pray for the health of yourself or someone else you know, it's a great way to recognize our relationship to God and to one another, and helps ground us in God's grace. We have several folks in our congregation that are unable to worship with us on Sunday mornings who could use some extra support through prayer, as well as other friends and family who have

asked you to keep them in your prayers. Maybe make a list of these folks and specifically name them in your daily devotions. You might even send them a quick note to let them know you are lifting them up and thinking about them. Or maybe pray for the Synod Staff and all the congregations throughout the Nebraska Synod as we all embark on this 12-month initiative together. Whatever works for you, I hope all of us will be intentional this month in somehow expanding our prayer practice. If I can be of any help in this, please let me know.

I hope you all are enjoying our longer days and the warmth of the sun. Summer is in full swing!
Peace to you - Pastor Chris

Committee Reports

- Christian Ed-Discussion on up-and-coming Sunday School students. The first day of Sunday School will be September 10th.
- Worship & Music-no updates
- Evangelism-Working on God's Work Our Hands & finalizing what needs to be done.
- Property Committee-Working with Lakefront Sprinklers.
- Finance Committee-Brian Bunkers gave an update on the CDs.
- Social Ministry-September 10th is the spaghetti feed. More information will be coming out soon for volunteers and donations.

Adjournment

June Council Reps-Larry Wennekamp and Denise Stevenson. Next Meeting-July 10th @7:00.

Brian made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Bethany seconded. Motion carried. We closed with the Lord's Prayer.

Respectfully submitted by Bethany Wilke, Council Secretary

Semi-Annual Meeting

Semi-Annual Meeting will be held after
the service on
Sunday, July 23rd.



Vacation Bible School 2023



Directors Chris Luchsinger and Bethany Wilke led 38 “trekkers” and 18 volunteers on a trip to Africa for our week of VBS. Each day they met at Base Camp at the bottom of Mt. Kilimanjaro for opening assembly that was a high-energy gathering that included learning some Swahili, songs, mission moment, puppet show, animal of the day, and prayer. After assembly, they grabbed their gear and laced up their hiking boots and set off for rotations. There was “High Adventure Lesson Time” with Pastor Chris who taught the daily lessons and bible verses. Then on to “Grassland Games” where there were some challenges that provided thrills and chills. Next was “Rockin’ Songs” with Pam Goering and Sharon Hartman.

They continued on their trek to “Summit Snacks” where top-of-the-world treats were waiting for them each day. After a short recess, it was onto the drama of the day, where a news crew trekking to Mt. Kilimanjaro learned about God’s Word.

Then it was on to “Safari Science and Crafts” where their guides had a wide variety of science experiments and crafts that were explored. Next, they gathered for closing assembly which included more songs, safari sillies, terrific trivia tidbits, announcements, and prayer.

Each day featured an animal with our lesson focus. On Tuesday, they met Tembo (elephant in Swahili), who reminded them that they need ears to hear God’s word. Wednesday, they met Twiga (giraffe) and found that they need to take God’s word to heart. Thursday, they didn’t “monkey around” as they found out with Tumbuli (monkey). Tumbuli reminded them to use their hands to do God’s work. Then on Friday, they met Duma (cheetah) that told them to have feet that walk with the wise-in other words, be careful with who you hang out with and run away from bad situations.

The offering that was collected went to ELCA Good Gifts, and a little over \$400 was collected and will go toward purchasing 5 chicks, 1 goat, 1 piglet, 1 fish farm, and honeybees to be sent to Africa.

It was a great week, and went quickly. We thank everyone who helped in any way—from giving us gift cards to décor and setting up and tearing down. We’ll be back next year about the same time, so mark your calendar! “Jambo, Let’s Go!!”



Thank You

Thank you to all the volunteers and anyone who contributed in any way for the benefit that was held for me. It was awesome that so many were able to help! Special thanks to the amazing auctioneer-Brad Luchsinger and helper Chris for the job that they did. Also, thanks to everyone that was able to donate. Everyone has been truly amazing to us during this difficult time. Please continue to keep me in your prayers as I continue with chemo treatments.

Renaë Ernesti

If anyone interested in videotaping the service on Sunday mornings when Jackson and Emma are not able to be at church, please let Jackson know.
Thanks for volunteering!



Pictures Wanted

The council is asking that if anyone has any pictures of church or church activities to please share them to be put in our video. Please send them to the church [email-
stjohnshellcreek@gmail.com](mailto:stjohnshellcreek@gmail.com)

Thank you!

Celebrating 10 years of “God’s work. Our hands.” Sunday



SAVE THE DATE

On Sunday, Sept. 10, congregations of the ELCA will join together for our 10th annual day of service. “God’s work. Our hands.”

“God’s Work. Our Hands.” Sunday began in 2013 in connection with the ELCA’s 25th anniversary and continues to be a day to celebrate who we are — one church, freed in Christ to serve and love our neighbor.

St. John’s will be hosting a community spaghetti feed on that day. More information to follow.

TAKE A TOUR OF THE TRI FAITH CAMPUS
AND ATTEND A
SHABBAT SERVICE AT TEMPLE ISRAEL




FRIDAY JULY 21, 2023
LEAVE ST JOHN’S AT 3:00 –
SHABBAT SERVICE AT 6:00PM

(Signup sheet is on the bulletin board or call the church office 402-564-8707.)



July



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<p><u>Office Hours</u> Tues. and Thurs 9:00 AM-1:00 PM</p> <p>Pastor is in Columbus on Sun. to Tues.</p>						1
2 10:00 AM Worship Service With communion	3	4 	5	6	7	8
9 10:00 AM Worship Service	10 Council Meeting 7:00PM	11	12	13	14	15
16 10:00 AM Worship Service	17	18 Tabitha Circle No Meeting this month.	19	20 Eve Circle 1:30PM	21 Tentative trip to the Tri-Faith Campus and Shabbat Service 3:00PM meet at church.	22
23 10:00 AM Worship Service Semi-annual Meeting	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31 Ruth Circle 7:00PM	<u>Council Reps</u> Larry Wennekamp Denise Stevenson	<u>Altar Guild</u> Sonia Schmid	<u>Cleaner</u> Denise Stevenson		

Congregation Officers 2022
 President: Tracey Moore
 Vice President: Brian Bunkers
 Secretary: Bethany Wilke
 Financial Secretary: Doug Hartman (income)
 Treasurer: Pam Goering (expenditures)

Council members: Denise Stevenson, Dave Groteluschen,
 Larry Wennekamp

Please put your committee and organization meetings on the
 calendar in the Narthex on the information desk or send to
 Pat Cuda at stjohnshellcreek@gmail.com



ST. JOHN'S LUTHERAN CHURCH
10785 280TH ST
COLUMBUS, NE 68601

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

"A COUNTRY CHURCH WITH A WORLDWIDE MISSION"

SUNDAY SCHOOL
School Year, Sunday at 8:50 A.M.

WORSHIP
Sunday 10:00 A.M.

Cell Phone 701-226-8140 Pastor Alexander
Office Phone 402-564-8707

Website: www.stjohnlutheranshellcreek.weebly.com
Email: stjohnshellcreek@gmail.com
10785 280th St.
Columbus, NE 68601-8745

From Hwy 30: 5 Miles North on 18th Ave 4 1/2 Miles east on 280th St.