



VOLUME 55

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NUMBER 11

November Chatterbox Newsletter



Go And... Be Honest

I have been a part of many quarrels and misunderstandings in my life, both personally and professionally. Much of this conflict stems from people not willing to be truthful about what was really going on around them, or even within themselves. I wonder at all the pain and isolation caused by this. It seemed to me, that if people could just open up and be honest with one another about how they were really feeling, or if they could just speak truthfully about how they are treated in our culture, then maybe we could get to the heart of all our disagreements a lot faster, and concentrate on finding ways to work through our differences toward reconciliation and unity.

I get frustrated when I see families and communities relating to one another as if they have just met each other, rather than how you might receive an old friend or relative you have known your whole life. It's like our everyday living has become one big situational comedy where we keep talking past each other, and never fully trusting the people who we claim to love. Do you remember "Three's Company?" How about "Friends?" How about a more current television series like "Game of Thrones?" or "Yellowstone?" Every episode seems to portray our inability to be open and honest in our relationships. Everyone seems to have something they are ashamed of and want to keep hidden from public scrutiny. And the one thing I did learn from "Three's Company" regarding relationships, is that secrets are never good. Just like in the show, people seem to do almost anything to keep them from coming out. Lives are turned inside out, and relationships ruined through the lies we tell each other in order to keep our secrets.



Why do we do this? Whenever I watch television shows or movies whose entire plotline are based on the unfolding drama of keeping secrets, I find myself saying, "*This is ridiculous! If they would just go directly to the people involved and have an honest conversation about whatever the issue is, the show would be over in 5 minutes, and all the hurt, blame and shame would never happen!*" But we don't do this in our real lives either. Often, we hold our hurts and our resentments inside, never letting anyone see our pain, and we tolerate the loneliness and isolation that inevitably follows.

As a gathering of faithful people, how are we to build the community Jesus calls us to become if we are too afraid to face one another with who we truly are? How are we able to reach out to others, expecting them to be honest with us, when we refuse to offer the same to them?

Honesty, makes us vulnerable, and it is scary to open up with others about who we are and what we feel. But it is **within** the honesty between us, that we are able to break down the barriers that keep us apart. In our honesty we learn to forgive one another, trust and support one another, and hold each other accountable for the life we are called, by God, to live. This is the whole point of community – creating, and being, a safe place where we can all be honest with one another,

without judgement or chastisement. A place we can reach out and ask for help when we need it, and be there to offer help to others whenever they experience pain or need.

As we focus on *honesty* this month, let us look back on our life experiences. and think of those times when an honest conversation, at the start of a difficult situation, would have changed the outcome... what could you have done differently then, and how can you learn from that experience in order to reshape your current relationships?

Look for opportunities to be honest and vulnerable with those closest to you, and invite them to be vulnerable with you. Then, watch and see how the relationships around you grow deeper, and provide more meaning in your life, as honesty becomes a more common practice. When you experience a deeper trust with those around you, say a prayer of thanks for all those people in your life who show you the same unconditional love that God offers, and return the gift! Honesty is a huge relief, and a sign of great courage and love. Let's learn to lead with that.

Peace to you – Pastor Chris



GO AND...

BE HONEST

Honesty requires vulnerability, awareness, and a willingness to really listen. Assumptions and half-truths can lead us to misunderstand the situation and story. What does reconciliation mean as we strive to move from places of misunderstanding? God calls us to be honest. Sometimes, that may look like lament and confession, and other times hymns of praise and gratitude.

Questions to Consider:

- What is a time you didn't tell the whole truth... or were not honest?
- What piece of history should you/could you explore with a lens of honesty?
- In what way are you being dishonest in your life?
- *GO and* express gratitude by saying thank you to someone who deserves it.

Prayer: Reconciling God, we ask for forgiveness for the times we have not reconciled our differences and acknowledged the hurts and wounds we have caused. Amen.

Suggested Songs: Amazing Grace (ELW 779) & Be Present at Our Table Lord

St. John's Lutheran Congregational Church October 16, 2023 Meeting Minutes

Opening

St. John's Lutheran Congregational Council met with Pastor Chris, Tracey Moore, Brian Bunkers, Larry Wennkamp, Dave Groteluschen, and Bethany Wilke. Denise Stevenson was absent. President Tracey 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. Larry seconded it. Motion carried. The September financial reports were reviewed. Dave made a motion to approve them. Bethany seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Beginning Monthly Balance \$22,068.99
Monthly General Income \$9,347.92
Monthly General Expenses \$12,514.12
Ending General Balance \$18,929.53
YTD Income required to meet budget \$118,138.95
YTD Behind 2023 Budget (-\$18,688.97)
Memorial Fund \$940.43

Old Business

Church sign-The church sign will be put up after harvest by the property committee. The sign will still fit the frame of the post that is already there.

Birthdays/Anniversaries/Bio Discussion-We are going to leave this as is due to privacy issues.

Church Video-The committee met on October 8th to view the video. The committee would still like to get some pictures of our congregation taking communion. The committee just recently added in some Baptism pictures.

New Business

Christmas Day Service-With two services on Sunday we are considering not doing a Christmas Day Service. We will be making some announcements in Church regarding this.

Pastor's Report

I could really feel the fall in the air up in the mountains of Breckenridge during my vacation, and I want to thank you all for providing me the vacation time to enjoy some rest and relaxation, and a special thanks to Rev. Dr. Inba Inbarasu who filled in as supply pastor in my absence.

We continue with our faith formation at St Johns through our Sunday School, Confirmation, Adult Bible Study and our Women's Circles, all of us opening ourselves to listen for God's voice and activity in our midst.

We have special celebrations coming up in the weeks ahead as we are coming up on the end of our church year, and begin our preparations for Advent and Christmas. October 22 we are blessing the fabulous quilts made by our creative and gifted Quilting Community for Lutheran

World Relief; October 29 we celebrate Reformation Sunday decking the sanctuary out in all our Red Paraments and Banners; followed by All Saints Sunday on November 5. Our Stewardship Committee is also planning a Stewardship Celebration on Nov 5 by providing lunch for the congregation following our worship service.

We will also be the host congregation for our Ecumenical Thanksgiving Service coming up on Sunday November 19 at 4:00pm. We should plan on having lots of great desserts to share with our brothers and sisters in Christ from our partner churches in Columbus.

I continue to bring communion and visit with folks who are homebound or in senior residential communities, as well as visiting with those who are ill or recovering from surgery. Please send up extra prayers for the Ernesti Family during this difficult time.

Hope you all are having some fun along with the work of harvest season. Thank you to all who work together in this season to accomplish the effort needed to finish a strong growing season for our community.

Committee Reports

-Christian Ed-The Sunday school kids are so happy to be back!

-Worship & Music-no updates

Evangelism-There is still time to get your T-shirt orders in. Please contact Jackson Moore if you would like to order one!

Finance Committee-Meets in November.

Stewardship Committee-On November 5th we will be celebrating Stewardship Sunday. Sloppy Joes will be served.

Social Ministry-On November 20th at 7:00 we will be at Church sacking candy for the Christmas Program! We would love to have some extra help that night. Come if you can! 😊

Adjournment

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

November Council Reps-Brian Bunkers & Bethany Wilke. Next Meeting-November 20th at 7:30.

Respectfully submitted by Bethany Wilke

Angel Tree Ministry

The St. John's Social Ministry Committee has our church registered again for the Angel Tree project. It is a Prison Fellowship program that connects parents in prison with their children through the delivery of Christmas gifts for them. It begins Sunday, November 12th thru Sunday December 3rd.

We will be serving area children.

The Angel Tree with the children's information will be up by

November 12th. Please select a child from the tree and purchase the requested gift item(item) by spending a minimum of \$25. Each gift must be brand new. Place the gift in a Gift Bag only. DO NOT wrap. Be sure to attach the Angel Tree tag to the gift and place the gift under the tree. The gifts will be distributed to their caregiver on behalf of the parent.

Please have the gifts back to church by December 3rd.

Thank you in advance for giving the children the joy of Christmas.



2023 St. John's WEE SINGERS SCHEDULE

(KIDDOS AGE 4-GRADE 2)

SAVE THE DATES...

OUR SUNDAY SCHOOL KIDDOS, WHO ARE ALSO THE ST. JOHN'S WEE SINGERS, PRACTICE SINGING SONGS DURING SUNDAY SCHOOL DEVOTIONS EACH SUNDAY. WE WILL BE SHARING OUR VOICES SINGING SUNDAY SCHOOL SONGS

ONCE A MONTH IN CHURCH ON
THE 2ND SUNDAY OF EACH MONTH.

NOVEMBER 12

DECEMBER 10



WELCA Fall Business Meeting

Tuesday, November 14, 2023 at 7PM at church

Speaker: Lori Peters from Habitat for Humanity

Hostess: EVE Circle

All women of the church are welcome and bring a guest!

Save the Date!!



Children's Christmas Program.....
Sunday, December 17 at 10:00 A.M.

Christmas Children's Program Practice for all
children on....

Saturday, December 16 from 9:00-10:00 A.M. and
Sunday, December 17 from 8:45-9:45 A.M. in place of
Sunday School that Sunday



Advent / Christmas 2023 Christ Revealed in Carols 6 Parts

Pastor will be doing a study series on Carols in her sermons during Advent and Christmas. Come and find out about these carols:

“O Come, O Come Emmanuel”-Dec. 3rd

“O Morning Star”-Dec. 10th

“Mary’s Magnificat”-Dec. 24th-also special music by Donna Jaixen

“Joy to the World”-Christmas Eve

“Lo, How a Rose E’re Blooming”-Christmas Day-tentative

“A Stable Light is Lighted”-Dec. 31st

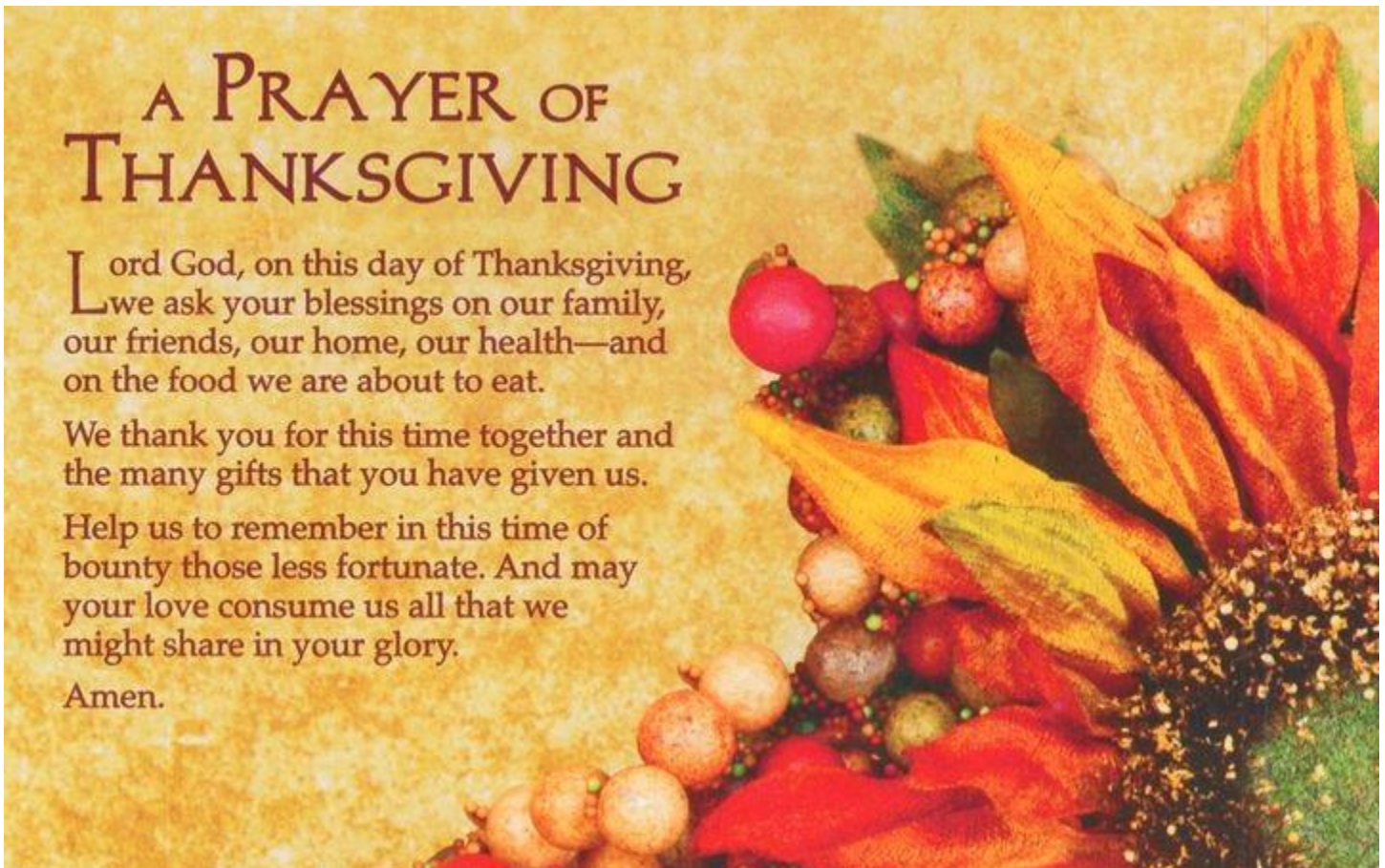


Medicine Bottles

Just a reminder that we continue to collect medicine bottles during the year for the Matthew 25 Ministries. Please make sure that the bottles are clean, stickers off, and bagged according to size.

Thanksgiving Riddles- (answers at the bottom of the page)

1. Why did the turkey cross the road?
2. Why do pilgrims' pants always fall down?
3. What's the best thing to put into a pumpkin pie?



Answers to the riddles-1-to prove he wasn't a chicken 2-because they wear the belt buckle on their hat 3- a fork



November



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<u>Office Hours</u> Tues. and Thurs 9:00 AM-1:00 PM Pastor is in Columbus on Sun. to Tues			1	2	3	4 Remember to "Fall Back" tonight! Daylight Savings Time Ends!!
5 8:50AM Sunday School 10:00 AM Worship Service All Saints Day Stewardship Sunday	6 Adult Bible Study 6:30PM	7	8 Rejoice Choir 6:30PM	9	10	11
12 8:50 AM Sunday School 10:00 AM Worship Service Wee Singers	13 Adult Bible Study 6:30PM	14 WELCA Fall Business Meeting 7:00PM	15	16 Eve Circle 1:30PM	17	18
19 8:50 AM Sunday School 10:00 AM Worship Service 4:00 PM-Ecumenical Service at St. John's	20 Adult Bible Study 6:30PM Council Meeting 7:30PM	21 Tabitha Circle 7:30PM	22	23 Happy Thanksgiving!!	24	25
26 8:50 AM No Sunday School 10:00 AM Worship Service	27 Adult Bible Study 6:30PM Ruth Circle 7:00PM	28	29	30		
		<u>Council Reps</u> Brian Bunkers Bethany Wilke	<u>Altar Guild</u> Diane Skiles	<u>Lectors</u> Nov. 5 th -Barb Welch Nov. 12 th -Karol Swan	<u>Lectors</u> Nov. 19 th -Jackson Moore Nov. 26 th -JoAnne Marxsen	<u>Cleaner</u> Deb Runge

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.