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October Chatterbox Newsletter



Go And...Ask

I remember watching a documentary type of a show that included a panel of folks from the Smithsonian Institute and other guest consultants. I can't remember the title or the main topic of discussion, but I stopped to watch because Elizabeth Warren, the senator from Massachusetts, was talking about Education, and how its only possible if you are able to admit that you are either wrong, or unsure about something. And that is precisely what we, as humans have the most problem doing. Maybe it's more noticeable in our American idealism than it is in other places, but I believe it's a human problem, everywhere. We don't like to admit we don't know something, or that what we thought we knew, isn't actually the way it really is. We have been trained that "knowledge is power" idea (Remember those Saturday Morning animations about how a bill becomes a law?).

It is true that knowledge is power, and learning stuff is a good thing. That's not really the issue – the issue is admitting you don't know **everything**, and that someone, somewhere, might actually know something **DIFFERENTLY** than you know things. It's not that another person knows **MORE** than you... but rather, they know something about things that they deal with every day, but things you have never needed to know. For instance, I have a Doctor of Ministry in Congregational Leadership and Mission, a couple of degrees in Theology, and a Bachelor's degree in Political Science. I know a lot of things about a fair amount of stuff. But I had no idea how corn grows in the fields. I had to look that up so I could have a decent conversation with most of you. And even after reading a bunch of stuff on growing corn, I still have all kinds of questions about the practical stuff of growing corn... Like, what do you do with it once its grown? How do you know when and where to sell it? How does the difference in seed types matter (or does it matter)? On and on...

There is soooooo much I DON'T know about agriculture, and don't even get me started on the things I don't know about ranching and raising animals! The only way to actually learn anything, is to first admit that you don't know something. And the best way to do that, is to ask questions. You don't need to degrade yourself, or fall prostate on the floor begging forgiveness for your ignorance. You simply need to ask... Acknowledge that someone else might actually know something you don't, and that's ok. It is ok to seek help from others, be dependent on others for the things that you either don't know, or can't do yourself. That's why God made so many of us in so many varieties, so we can all learn different things and share our knowledge with one another. It's not actually the knowledge that is the power here... It's the sharing of knowledge.

Remember St. Paul's letter to the community at Corinth? He writes, *"Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit; and there are varieties of services, but the same Lord; and there are varieties of activities, but it is the same God who activates all of them in everyone. To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good. To one is given through the Spirit the utterance of wisdom, and to another the utterance of knowledge according to the same Spirit, to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healing by the one Spirit, to another the working of miracles, to another prophecy, to another the discernment of spirits, to another various kinds of tongues, to another the interpretation of*



tongues. All these are activated by one and the same Spirit, who allots to each one individually just as the Spirit chooses.” (1 Corinthians 12:4-11)

It is not a sin to be “wrong,” or to change your thinking when you learn a new thing about something you thought you knew. The sin is not to seek wisdom, not learning to share your knowledge with others and allow them to share theirs with you. The goal is the common good – always. So, ask away... Learn something new – as much as you can – something someone tells you might be exactly the key bit of information you need to unlock something in your life that was otherwise doomed to failure. Then, once you have learned something, take the time to share the fascination you have discovered with others. It might be just an interesting piece of information to you, but it may change the entire world of the of the person to whom you are talking to. That’s how discovery and creation work... we share with one another – creating so much more through collaboration than we could have ever created on our own. Be bold! Be Brave! **ASK!**

Peace – Pastor Chris

October 2023:



GO AND...

ASK

In a world that is shifting come to recognize the questions. Good questions listening and a willingness unknown. God, Jesus, prophets, disciples, crowds, and Martin Luther all asked questions. As followers of Jesus, we are called to wrestle with questions, which do not always result in clear answers.

and changing, we have importance of asking good come from intentional to engage with the

Questions to Consider:

- What big questions are on your heart and mind?
- What is a question you are afraid to ask?
- What would you add to Martin Luther’s 95 Theses?
- What is a ‘GO to’ question as you engage in conversation?

Prayer: Knowing God, what are you asking of me? Amen.

Suggested Song: Ask the Complicated Questions (ACS 1005)

St. John’s Lutheran Congregational Church September 18, 2023 Meeting Minutes

Opening

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

Minutes/Financial Reports

Brian Bunkers made a motion to approve the August financial report and Larry Wennekamp seconded. Motion carried.

Beginning Monthly Balance \$25,232.80

Monthly General Income \$8,824.00

Monthly General Expenses \$12,017.16

Ending General Balance \$22,068.99
YTD Income required to meet budget \$105,012.40
YTD Behind 2023 Budget (-\$13,963.28)
Memorial Fund \$940.43

Old Business

Church sign-The church is finished and a representative from Christ Lutheran will get it to the Property Committee. The Property Committee will get it installed.

Birthdays/Anniversaries/Bio Discussion-This will be revisited at a later date.

New Business

Roster Update-Brian Bunkers made a motion to release those listed from the roster per the responses to the membership update letters that were received. Larry Wennkamp seconded the motion. Motion carried. Twenty individuals/families were released from our membership roster by request, transfer, or no response. These statistics will be reflected in the annual report.

Outgoing Council Members-Tracey Moore and Bethany Wilke will be going off of Council. Replacements will be found. Contact a Council member if you are interested!

Spaghetti Dinner-SUCCESS! Pastor Chris thanked the Council for approving the face painting cost. It was the highlight of the evening with many positive comments about how awesome the artist's talent was. It was a great investment in our children's ministry. The Council also wanted to thank the committees who worked together to make it so successful. There were 145 people served.

New Office Chair-Brian Bunkers made a motion to let Pat Cuda pick out an office chair at her discretion and Denise Stevenson seconded the motion. Motion passed.

Pastor's Vacation and Supply Pastor-Pastor Inba will be the supply pastor while Pastor Chris is on vacation.

Downstairs Painting -Property Committee will inspect and make recommendations to do any touch up work.

Website-Brian Bunkers made a motion to approve upgrading the website to be able to upload videos. Larry Wennkamp seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Cleaning-Denise Stevenson will no longer be cleaning after September due to her teaching schedule. Council will be contacting an interested party who would like to take over cleaning beginning in November.

Discussion was held on Pastor's contract, which is good until March 2024.

Pastor's Report to Church Council - September 2023

Wow this is a busy month for us! We kicked off our program year with a ton of fun! September 10 was the beginning of Sunday School, Confirmation, and Adult Education. Our Worship that day included presenting a bible to Lennox Martin, blessing school backpacks for the kids, blessing the Teachers of both our Sunday School and Public schools, and singing songs throughout worship that we all learned when we were all in Sunday School! There was also a very tasty reception of Lemonade and donut holes following the service.

September 10 was also our annual “God’s Work. Our Hands.” Sunday, and the theme for the service was all about serving God’s Kingdom through intentionally building community. To express this theme St John’s hosted an All-Community Spaghetti Dinner. We had over 135 people show up to share in the fun and the fellowship. Even though we had to cancel the Bouncy Houses and the Kiddie Train, we still had great food and truly wonderful Face painting! It was a terrific event that we hope to continue to build on in the coming years. Thanks to the Social Ministries, Evangelism, and Education Committees, for planning all of this, and to all of the Volunteers who helped to make it all happen!

Last Month I took a week of leave for Continuing Education to concentrate on planning and developing our Advent and Lenten Seasons for the coming year. I managed to get many of the pieces needed for this outlined, and even a couple of the sermons written, so I can be a step ahead during the busy days of December and March. Thank you for allowing me this time and thanks to Dr. Scott Frederickson for preaching that week for me in Worship!

I am spending my present time preparing my sermons, newsletter articles, and council reports that are due during, and just after, my 2-week vacation at the end of September. I will be traveling to Chicago to officiate my Niece’s wedding and spending some fun time with my family. I will be gone from September 24 – October 7. Thank you for this time away for a little rest and relaxation.

Also, I would like to extend a special Thank you to the Church Council, and to Pat Cuda, our church secretary for helping to update our church membership roster so that we can begin developing a current pictorial directory that will help all of our community to stay connected to one another! Look for more information on this project in the upcoming months!

I continue to bring communion and visit with folks who are homebound or in senior residential communities. I also have begun teaching confirmation classes and leading the Adult Bible Study. All of these parts of my ministry bring me a great deal of joy and help to continue to build on our growing community here at St John’s. Thanks to all of you who help with this endeavor and for all of you who attend and make it fun!

Committee Reports

Christian Education-Sunday School and confirmation started and they are moving right along.

Worship and Music-no report

Evangelism-Thank you from Jackson Moore. The committee is working on t-shirts.

Property-A new fan was installed in the parsonage kitchen.

Finance-Brian Bunkers reported that the CD’s are going to make approximately \$8,000-\$10,000 in interest. This money will go into the general fund.

Stewardship-Stewardship Sunday is November 5th. Sloppy Joes will be served. The congregation will be asked to bring desserts.

Social Ministry-God’s Work our Hands was very Successful.

October representatives are Dave Groteluschen and Larry Wennekamp.

Next meeting-October 16, 2023 at 7:30PM

Motion to adjourn was made by Larry Wennekamp and seconded by Brian Bunkers. Motion carried. The meeting was closed with the Lord’s Prayer.

Respectfully Submitted,
Denise Stevenson

Fall Interior Cleaning



Hello October! That means it's time for Fall Interior Cleaning. The sign off sheets will be posted on the bulletin board on or about October 1, 2023. On October 29rd (4 weeks later) I will take down the sheets, hopefully all the jobs will have been completed. Please call or text me after signing off a job. I will notify my committee members of what has been finished. Thank you in advance for any help you choose to give!

JoAnne Marxsen – Cleaning Committee Chair, Cell Phone Number: 402-615-1819 - Call or Text

C S Lewis penned

“Stewardship isn't a subcategory of the Christian life. Stewardship IS the Christian life. After all, what is stewardship except that God has entrusted to us life, time, talents, money, possessions, family and his Grace?”

Also stated by the Apostle Peter in 1 Peter 4:10

“Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God's grace in its various forms.”

Stewardship within our church community comes naturally to us because the love of God, Christ and each other comes naturally to us. We know our responsibilities, we are proactive, we are generous, we practice Christ's teachings. We are Blessed with God's Grace.

The stewardship committee invites you to a meal of celebration and fellowship, Sunday, November 5, at church following services. We will prepare a sloppy Joe meal for all to enjoy.

Thank you all for your dedication and love to our Church and the Lord.

The Stewardship Committee



ST. JOHN'S PRESCHOOL-2nd GRADE 2023-24 SUNDAY SCHOOL NEWS

SPECIAL EVENT & NEW THIS YEAR...The 1st Sunday back to Sunday School was celebrated in church with THE BLESSING OF THE BACKPACKS, the kiddos received a tag to clip to their bookbag this school year to remember they are LOVED by their church family & and

that they are MORE THAN ENOUGH! After church, lemonade and donut holes were enjoyed as we celebrated and shared our support for our St. John's children and their faith.

LEARNING TO PRAY: Is one of our SUNDAY SCHOOL goals and we will be focusing on PRAYER a lot this year with different meaningful activities.

NEW PAINT IN THE BASEMENT: In August the church basement was painted with a fresh coat of light gray paint for a fresh new SS year. Come on down and sneak a peek.

THIS YEAR... WE continue to enjoy your child as we watch them grow in their FAITH each Sunday from 8:50 A.M.-9:50 A.M.

TEACHERS: Rose and Izzy Runge are the Age 4-Grade 2 teachers for this Sunday School year.

WEE SINGERS: Chris Luchsinger helps with WEE SINGERS and helps the children in learning new Sunday School songs.

VISITS: Pastor Chris visits class each Sunday to get to know your child and answer their questions and guide their curiosity about their FAITH.

BIRTHDAY CAKE: The Sunday before or after your child's birthday they are welcome to bring a coin for each year they are old. They put them in a plastic birthday cake as we count their age for each coin and then the children & teachers sing to them. It's a pretty BIG deal☺

OFFERING: Your child is welcome to bring offering each Sunday, as we have a cool offering plate for them to give to their church during beginning devotions. Plus they take turns each Sunday passing the offering plate, it's a BIG DEAL!

BAPTISM: AGAIN THIS YEAR...We will be recognizing your child during Sunday School-the month (on church record) they were BAPTIZED and talk about the meaning of BAPTISM.

BULLETIN BOARDS: Lynsay Luchsinger kindly & creatively is decorating the bulletin boards again this year....Come Sneak a Peek!

THANK YOU FOR SHARING YOUR CHILD WITH US!

Jesus said, "Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these."

Matthew 19:14



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.

OCTOBER 8

NOVEMBER 12

DECEMBER 10

We look forward to working with our St. John's Wee Singers again this year!!

Chris, Rose, & Izzy

Youth Choir Schedule

Youth choir practice after church (15-20 min).

Oct. 1, 8, 15, 22, and 29.

Youth choir sings in church Oct. 8



All Saints Day



On All Saints Day (November 5), the Youth Choir will sing a tribute to those who have entered the Church triumphant. If you would like to have the name of a loved one read during the anthem, please tell Sharon Hartman (563-3499) by October 22. If you wish to include a photo in the slide show, please give it to Sharon or to Pat Cuda, church secretary.

WELCA Fall Business Meeting

7PM at church - Tuesday, November 14, 2023

Speaker: Growth Committee

Hostess: EVE Circle



COLLECTING USED T-SHIRTS AND PILLOWCASES

I'm collecting used T-shirts (no black) and pillow cases for a friend from Peace Lutheran Church, who is making diapers and dresses for missionary work that will go to children in Ethiopia. Please put in the box in the narthex. Thank you!

Colleen Lutjelusche

GOD'S WORK - OUR HANDS
SPAGHETTI FEED - THANK YOU

Thank you to **everyone** for helping make our spaghetti feed a success. The children certainly enjoyed the face painting and we served around 145 people. Several food items were donated to the Columbus/Schuyler food pantries, along with \$1,001. Many people (too numerous to mention) donated food, time and muscle for getting this community outreach accomplished.



Many Hands Make Light Work
Social Ministry, Evangelism, Stewardship, Christian Ed
& St. John's Members



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.

Military Address Updates

If you have someone on our list, or have someone you would like to add, that is active in the military, we would like to update addresses. The Social Ministry Committee sends out cards in November, and Pinnacle Bank does care packages at Christmas time and we send them our information. Please email the office or let Pat know of any changes.

Thanks!!



God-there are things I my life that I don't like,
Folks I can't bear;
But there are more things I would hate to change,
Friends I can't spare.
So, when you hear me complaining aloud,
Just turn away;
Deep inside my ungracious heart, I am
Grateful each day. Amen.



October



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1 8:50AM Sunday School 10:00 AM Worship Service With communion Youth Choir practice	2 No Adult Bible Study	3	4	5	6	7
8 8:50AM Sunday School 10:00 AM Worship Service Youth Choir sings Wee Singers	9 Adult Bible Study 6:30PM	10	11	12	13 Tri Faith Visit Meet at church 4:00PM	14
15 8:50 AM Sunday School 10:00 AM Worship Service Youth Choir practice	16 Adult Bible Study 6:30PM Council Meeting 7:30pm	17 Tabitha Circle 7:30PM	18	19 Eve Circle 1:30PM	20	21
22 8:50 AM Sunday School 10:00 AM Worship Service Youth Choir practice	23 Adult Bible Study 6:30PM Ruth Circle 7:00PM	24	25	26	27	28
29 8:50 AM Sunday School 10:00 AM Worship Service-Wear Red Youth Choir practice	30 Adult Bible Study 6:30PM	31				
Office Hours Tues. and Thurs 9:00 AM-1:00 PM Pastor is in Columbus on Sun. to Tues		Council Reps Dave Groteluschen Larry Wennekamp	Altar Guild Barb Welch	Cleaner 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
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From Hwy 30: 5 Miles North on 18th Ave 4 1/2 Miles east on 280th St.