



VOLUME 53

September 2023

NUMBER 9

September Chatterbox Newsletter

This is a **HUGE** month for St John's! There is so much going on... both inside and outside of our church walls! All of the programs for the congregation start up again the week of September 10 – Sunday School, Confirmation, all the Choirs, and a new Adult Bible Study on Monday nights. And, to top everything off – It is our annual “God’s Work. Our Hands.” Sunday. Our Event this year is to host a huge, community-wide spaghetti dinner to gather all of our neighbors for some fun and fellowship.

We have several committees working on this project to involve the whole congregation, in serving one another and serve our community. The Social Ministry committee is heading planning the event, providing for all the resources needed, and us together in service. Stewardship and Evangelism are working promotion and media announcements to get the word out, and Education is providing for children’s entertainment to keep things fun!

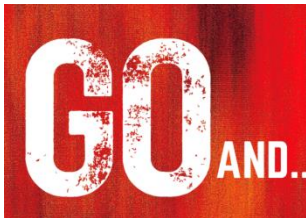


together, hoping reaching out to things up, connecting all of on the

We believe that being neighbors with one another is an essential part of the nature of God’s Kingdom, and serving one another is how we most boldly express our calling to participate with God in that Kingdom. So this is our purpose and goal for this event.

Dinner is served from 5:00-7:00pm on Sunday, September 10, and we are hoping that each of our members will invite their friends, families and neighbors to come. Dinner is free, and there is no purpose or agenda for the event, other than just Food, Fellowship, and Fun! People of all faiths, ages, genders, races, and ethnic backgrounds are welcome to join voices in conversation! Being in conversation is how we build community and get to know our neighbors.

We hope this event will become a “*much-talked-about*” community-wide annual event that all of the folks in and around the Columbus area look forward to attending every year. We hope to add new things each year to grow it bigger and brighter from year to year. We invite you to join in on the fun by volunteering in some way to help us pull it altogether. There is a signup sheet on the bulletin board in the church near the kitchen, or call the church office or anyone on the planning committees for more information.



The “Go And...” theme this month is “*Serve with Neighbors.*” It’s the perfect theme to explore alongside our “God’s Work. Our Hands.” Service event. Please notice this is serving **WITH** your neighbors, which I think is awesome! Often we think our Christian duty is to a sacrificial type service **TO** or **FOR** our neighbors, rather than just enjoying getting to know our neighbors as we serve together with them, and God, for the fullest expression of life in creation. In this sense, service is a celebration, not a duty. It’s fun and fellowship, laughter and community. And I can’t wait to be a part of it!

See you there! ☺

Peace – Pastor Chris

September 2023



GO AND...

SERVE WITH NEIGHBOR

As Mr. Rogers asked us – “Who is your neighbor?” Love grounds us as we engage with our neighbors living next door, the people in surrounding communities, and those living beyond our own horizons. Accompaniment calls us to use our God-given gifts and talents as we collaborate, learn from each other, and together walk in agape love.

Questions to Consider:

- Who is your neighbor? How do you know?
- What did you discover in walking with your neighbor?
- As you GO with your neighbors, how do you describe your vocation?

Prayer: God of Accompaniment, you meet us where we are at. Help us meet our neighbors wherever they might be and walk with them. Amen.

Suggested Songs: Jesu, Jesu, Fill Us With Your Love (ELW 708) & God’s Work, Our Hands (ACS 1000)

St. John’s Lutheran Congregational Council

August 21, 2023 Meeting Minutes

Opening

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

Minutes/Financial Reports

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

Beginning Monthly Balance-\$28,781.09
Monthly General Income\$8,333.00
Monthly General Expenses-\$11,915.84
Ending General Balance-\$25,232.80
YTD Income required to meet budget-\$91,885.85
2023 Budget Balance-\$9,660.73
Memorial Fund-\$2,095.51

Old Business

-God's Work Our Hands-Chris Luchsinger will have RSVP Designs make a banner that will get put up along the road at church. A few smaller yard signs will also be made to place around town to get the word out about our spaghetti feed.

-Basement Painting Update-The basement will be painted before Sunday School starts up again. Larry Wennkamp made a motion to approve the painting of the basement for 2,000 to 2,500 coming out of the property/memorial fund. We will split in half. Brian Bunkers seconded the motion. Motion carried.

-Face Painting-Rainbow Trout the Clown will be coming the night of our spaghetti feed to paint kids' faces. We are excited to add this addition to the night. Brian made a motion to approve the face painting of 400 and for it to come out of Evangelism/Christian Ed. Bethany seconded the motion. Motion carried.

New Business

-Church Sign-Brian Bunkers has been in contact with Christ Lutheran Church and Schieffer signs to hopefully get the sign up before our September 10th event.

-Ecumenical Thanksgiving-St. John's will be hosting the worship on November 19th at 4:00. This involves St. Luke's, UCC, 1st United Methodist Federated and Grace Episcopal Churches.

Pastor's Report

The visit to the Tri-Faith Commons and attending the Shabbat Service at Temple Israel was a huge success! 13 of us traveled into Omaha, walked the big circle path, called Abraham's Bridge, saw the Tri-Faith Garden and orchard, and saw the 4 buildings connected by that bridge that establishes an intentional interfaith neighborhood of Jews, Christians, and Muslims. We heard from many of the leaders of the Temple concerning the coming together of this community as well as some of the specific practices and beliefs of their Reformed Jewish Tradition. Service consisted of lots of songs, prayers and thoughts from the Senior Rabbi (sound familiar?). What was different was that many of the songs and prayers were sung and spoken in Hebrew, but for those of us who aren't proficient, there were English translations as well.

All who attended enjoyed themselves and learned a lot! We have a second trip planned on Friday October 13, if you missed the first trip or would like to go again. Look for the announcement on the bulletin board.

Plans are well underway for our big Spaghetti Feed on Sept 10 as our project for "God's Work. Our Hands." Sunday. We are excited for this, as well as all the other fun stuff starting this same day (Sunday School, Confirmation, Adult Bible Study, Choirs, etc.).

A Big Thank You to Jackson Moore and all those who volunteered to share the Story of St John's Lutheran at the Columbus Days event on August 12! It is always fun to be in conversation with our neighbors. ☺

Letters went out on August 5 to those who have not been active at St John's for more than two years, asking if they still would like to remain on our membership roster. We are hoping these letters will help us re-connect with many of these folks and see how we might help them become more active in our community once again. If we do not hear from them by September 5th, their names will come before our September Council meeting to be formally dismissed from the membership roster.

Communion visits with our members who are unable to attend on Sunday mornings continue, as well as hospital visits and coffee conversations with others of our membership.

I will be taking the week of August 16-24 off for my continuing education leave. I will be available for emergencies, but I will be concentrating on writing sermons for Advent and Lent, as well as doing research for the Adult Bible Study that will run throughout the program year. I will also be taking a two-week vacation break from September 24 through October 8, to officiate the wedding of my niece in Chicago and to spend some extended time with my family.

Fall is coming quickly, and we are gaining speed! Everyone is gearing up and we are jumping right in! Happy "Back to School" for all of our Students, Parents and Teachers. And a huge thank you to all those who are stepping up for our Church programs this year, as well as all those who are working to make our "God's Work. Our Hands." Sunday such a fun event!

Peace - Pastor Chris

Committee Reports

-Christian Ed-On July 24th we held a great meeting and selected programs for our upcoming VBS and Christmas programs.

-Worship & Music-no updates

Evangelism-Thank you to those who volunteered their time to help work the booth for Columbus Days!
Working with Social Ministry for spaghetti feed.

Finance Committee-no updates

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

Social Ministry-September 10th is the spaghetti feed.

Adjournment

September Council Reps-Brian Bunkers & Bethany Wilke. Next Meeting-September 18th @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.

Church One-Liners-

People are funny; they want the front of the bus, the middle of the road, and the back of the church. 😊

St. John's Church-Shell Creek
Semi-Annual Meeting Minutes
July 23, 2023

The Semi-annual meeting of St. John's was held following church services on July, 23rd 2023. Vice President Brian Bunkers called the meeting to order, and Pastor Chris Alexander led an opening prayer. A quorum was declared present. Brad Luchsinger and Sam Welch were appointed tellers.

The minutes of the January 2023 minutes were read. Sharon Hartman moved and Susan Klug seconded approval of the minutes. Motion passed. The minutes will be placed on file.

The Financial Secretary's report was reviewed. There were no questions on the report. Chris Luchsinger moved to accept the financial secretary's report and Pat Cuda seconded the motion. Motion passed.

Old Business-

-Rose Runge gave an update from the call committee. Rose expressed how there are several other churches looking right now but not enough candidates at this time to fill the request. Our church profile is still active and a discussion on partnerships is being had. We are going to keep praying.

~Bill Luckey asked what the percentage is right now of churches looking for a Pastor. Pastor Chris addressed how important it is to find creative ways to be with each other and sharing worship with one another. Brian Bunkers discussed how as a council we are very open to ideas to partner with other churches. We have hired Rival Design to help promote our church and we are on Facebook now. Open Communication is a BIG component right now moving forward.

~Merle Mueller moved we leave the ELCA in January of 2024. Elaine Hake seconded this. Pastor Chris said we needed to check the constitution for the rules of the timing on when that motion can be made after the last vote...it might be like two years...it was checked and is acceptable...rules say it can be brought up six months after the last vote. The vote will need a 2/3 majority to pass. Then two votes six months apart...the whole process is 2.5 years.

~Doug Hartman addressed his concerns about already having this conversation discussion when we voted the first time to leave the ELCA.

~Denise Stevenson spoke on leaving the ELCA. The ELCA is very open, and she feels that we have many more options. We must get away from the mindset that people will come to us. We need to go out and be exposed. Her biggest take away was having those hard conversations with each other and being in communication with one another.

~After looking in the constitution it stated that we can vote for a termination again after six months.

~Sharon Hartman stated that philosophically should be the reason we should want to leave the ELCA. The ELCA is so much more welcoming and accepting.

~Bill Lucky stated that he is concerned about the youth. We do not have many opportunities to get our youth involved.

~Rose Runge talked about how she is the one with kids here. It's what your getting out of it. Doing plenty of good things here at St. John's. You make your church be whatever you want it to be. Bill Klug made a motion to end the motion on the floor. 2/3 called for a question to end the discussion. The congregation had a hand vote to end the discussion. All in favor of the congregation to end.

~Merle Mueller's proposal ballet to pursue leaving the ELCA (yes to leave, no to stay) The voting results: 27 no 10 yes-37 votes all together. We will not be pursuing leaving the ELCA at this time. Brian Bunkers stated that we may not always agree but we need to be in full communication with each other. We have stepped up as a congregation. Your giving and all of the behind the scenes things that are done have not gone unnoticed. The council appreciates what you do. Pastor Chris has been so helpful along the way and has done lots of pushing for us.

New Business



Sunday School, Confirmation,
and Adult Bible Study

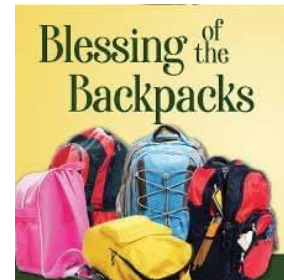
Sunday School and Confirmation begins on Sunday, September
10th beginning at

8:50 am to 9:50am!!

Join us for lemonade after the service!!

Adult Bible Study will begin on
Monday, Sept. 11th at 6:30pm.

Kids-Bring your backpacks
to be blessed on
Sunday, September 10th!!



Our Sincere Gratitude

*Thank you for your kind expressions of sympathy.
The love and kindness you have shown Candy's
family has given us great comfort
during this time of sadness. It
is deeply appreciated and
will be remembered
by the family of*

Candice 'Candy' Lee Thornam



June 2, 1952-July 17, 2023

Junior and Adult Choir Begins

Junior choir will sing during the service on Sept. 17th.
Adult choir will have practice on Sept. 13th & 27th.



Columbus Days Thank You

I just want to thank everyone who helped with the Columbus Days booth. We had a great group of helpers and gave away lots of stuff. Also has some good conversations with the public.

Jackson Moore

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

In this month's issue of the Chatterbox, we are including a calendar with events that are happening this year at St. John's from September '23 to August '24, so you can include them on your calendar. If you would like copies, they will be available on the altar in the narthex.



God's Work Our Hands Sunday

Join us on Sunday, Sept. 10th for a spaghetti dinner from 5-7:00pm. This day is an opportunity to celebrate who we are as the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America – one church, freed in Christ to serve and love our neighbor. There will be a free-will donation to Platte/Colfax County Food Pantries. There will be a bounce house, face painting, and kiddie train for the children. Invite friends and neighbors-everyone welcome.



September

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 10:00 AM Worship Service With communion	4	5	6	7	8	9
10 8:50 AM Sunday School 10:00 AM Worship Service 5:00-7:00 PM Spaghetti Dinner	11 Adult Bible Study 6:30PM	12	13 Rejoice Choir 7:00PM	14	15	16
17 8:50 AM Sunday School 10:00 AM Worship Service Junior Choir sings	18 Adult Bible Study 6:30PM Council Meeting 7:00PM	19	20	21	22	23
24 8:50 AM Sunday School 10:00 AM Worship Service	25 No Adult Bible Study	26	27 Rejoice Choir 7:00PM	28	29	30
		<u>Council Reps</u> Brian Bunkers Bethany Wilke	<u>Altar Guild</u> Sam Welch	<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.