

# *The Messenger*

*August 2024 Edition*



*A Monthly Newsletter from St. John Lutheran Church and School*

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## **St. John Lutheran Church and School**

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***Gather. Grow. Go. To the Glory of God!***

## Short Stories that Speak Volumes for Our Lives

### Devotional Corner: Keep Alert! Watch!

*Jesus said, "Be on guard! Be alert! You do not know when that time will come. It's like a man going away: He leaves his house and puts his servants in charge, each with his assigned task, and tells the one at the door to keep watch. Therefore keep watch because you do not know when the owner of the house will come back . . . If he comes suddenly, do not let him find you sleeping. What I say to you, I say to everyone: 'Watch!'"*

*Mark 13:33-37*

It's a hot time of the year, so ice cream trucks are out. Maybe you've heard their familiar jingle coming down your street.

If you have young children, ice cream trucks pose a couple of challenges. First, you must watch for the truck in your neighborhood, so you don't miss it and disappoint your kids. Second, you have to keep alert for the danger that the truck poses. If your child runs out into the street after an ice cream truck, the results could be deadly. Keep alert! Watch!

God also tells us to keep watch. Once, Jesus told a story that explained the meaning of God's command to stay alert. He described a wealthy man heading away from his home on a journey. He has an order for the doorkeeper, "Stay alert!" The man at the gate must keep

watching because he doesn't know when the owner of the house will return.

In the same way, we don't know when Jesus will come back from heaven. When he does, he is going to welcome those who are prepared for him. How do we prepare for his return? The one thing that prepares us for Jesus is faith. And faith comes by hearing and learning the good news of the salvation that Jesus accomplished for us.

Jesus came to die for the sinful things we have done. If you saw a neighbor's child zooming heedlessly into the street, would you send your son into the street to get in the way of the oncoming ice cream truck—dooming your son to save the other child?

What if that child had regularly disrespected you? Would you give up your own son for such a defiant one?

God did. He had his holy Son die in place of those who have disobeyed him—all of us. When he successfully completed the work of salvation, Jesus returned to heaven. He promised that one day he will return to take all of his believers home with him.

Watch! Jesus is coming. To ignore his Word and live in unbelief will result in a horrid separation from God.

Keep alert! Waiting for him in faith brings a luscious treat that couldn't be cooler or sweeter.



## Worship With Us!

**Service: Sundays at 9:00 am**

**Bible Class: Sundays at 10:15 am**

# Christian Parenting Today

## Christian Parenting Today: Children's Faith Can Shine Bright in Dark Times a post by Rev. Stephen Kuehl

Editor's Note: On June 30th, a house fire in Necedah took the lives of 6 people, including a WELS pastor, Steve Witte, who formerly served in New London and Green Bay and was on furlough from his work as a missionary in Thailand. The other 5 killed included two of his daughters and 3 of his granddaughters. The extended family had gathered for a vacation and family get-together when the fire broke out. St. John joins with others in extending their sympathies to the family and friends. In the days following the fire, Pastor Stephen Kuehl, who lost his wife and a daughter in the fire, posted the message below, urging parents to consider the importance of shaping children's faith when they are young and the blessing his own children's faith has been to him in this difficult time.

I am humbled that so many people have found my previous posts so encouraging and instructive. I must admit, though, that I myself have been encouraged and instructed in the faith quite a bit lately by my two daughters, Norah and Vera. Based on my experience since June 30th, the best advice I can give fellow parents is this: Take your children to church and make sure they are exposed to God's Word. Not only is it your God-given responsibility (Mark 10:12-16, Ephesians 6:4), but when trial and tempest come into your life, your children will very likely remind you - or even teach you - some key attitudes and truths of the Christian faith. Let me share just a couple examples.

The first full night after the fire I was hugging my oldest daughter in our hotel room (generously paid for by the Salvation Army), and we were both emotionally trying to come to grips with what had happened, but also finding comfort in God's promises. Then out of the complete blue she said, "I'm so glad that God gave me ten years with mom, because some kids only get two or three years." Boom. I was utterly amazed at how, amidst one of the deepest hardships a person can experience (i.e. losing your mother at age 10) Norah expressed a grateful spirit instead of a spirit of being unfairly cheated out of something - and that could only be a product of the Holy Spirit's working in her heart.

That moment early on in our experience has helped me approach this whole ordeal for a different perspective - one of gratefulness instead of covetousness. I am grateful for the 15 years of marriage I had with Charis, and the 17 years total of having her in my life. I humbly encourage you to take the same approach. "Every good and perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of the heavenly lights, who does not change like shifting shadows" (James 1:17)

Another story. In the days following the fire, many thoughtful people purchased games, activities, and crafts to keep the kids in our families busy. One of the things that was bought (and sorry, but I can't remember by whom) was a kit for making bracelets. My second daughter, Vera, carefully counted out an equal number of blue pieces and white pieces, and then picked out a big red piece with a smiley face on both sides, and used them to make me a bracelet. When she gave it to me, my heart melted. What a great testimony from an 8-year-old girl that even amidst the profound loss we have experienced, there is still reason to rejoice and give thanks. "Rejoice always, pray continually, give thanks in all circumstances, for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus" (1 Thessalonians 5:16-18).

One last story. While we were staying at my parent's house in Hartford, WI we went out (like many others do) for a fish fry at the Mineshaft Restaurant. The adults were excited about the fish fry, but the kids were more stoked about visiting the Mineshaft Game Room. Norah happened to have an especially fortunate day with "the claw game" and grabbing rolls of valuable tickets.

Later at the ticket redemption counter it was interesting watching her select her prizes. She got a bunch of candy, some tasty Sprecher Root Beer, and a few other things as well. I stood by her as she scanned the glass cabinet for things to use her remaining tickets on, and suddenly pointed to a bin with small stuffed animal butterflies in it, and politely said, "two please." I must admit, my initial thought when I saw her do this was: "Oh, great... more junk I'll just have to throw away in a few days." But later as she was explaining her prizes to me, she said, "And look, dad! I also picked these two butterflies, because butterflies are symbols of the resurrection. I got one for Mom, one for Stella."

*Article continues on page 6.*

# Upcoming Events

## School Cleaning Days

Time for our annual school cleaning days! Help us to prepare for the upcoming school year by removing the past year's dust, dirt, and fingerprints. While we have had an awesome cleaning crew working daily to clean up after us, this is the time of the year that we look to get everything deep cleaned in preparation for a new school year. Lists of things to be cleaned will be posted on each room and cleaning supplies will be available. Come and help us get the campus looking brand new again! Cleaning dates and times will be: Saturday, August 10<sup>th</sup> from 9:00 am to 5:00 pm, Sunday, August 11<sup>th</sup> from 12:00 noon to 5:00 pm, and Monday, August 12<sup>th</sup> from 9:00 am to 7:00 pm.

## School Orientation Nights

Orientation will be on Wednesday and Thursday, August 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup>. It will be held at from 5:30-7:00pm. The first hour each night will be dedicated to a parent presentation, at which families will receive information and be given a checklist of things to sign off on for the year. Each family is required to have at least one parent present on one of the two evenings for this presentation. Activities, games, and free childcare will be provided by our PTO during the presentation. Children can be dropped off in the gym while parents assemble in the worship space.

The half-hour following the presentation will give families an opportunity to connect with their teacher, drop off school supplies, and receive locker or cubby assignments as well as any classroom information the teachers wish to share.

Please make every effort to attend one of these evenings. If you are completely unable to attend, be sure to contact Mr. Raddatz for information and forms necessary before students begin classes.

Our Admin Assistant, Ms. Dierdra Stary will also be reaching out to each of you individually to set up a time to come in prior to our orientation nights to finalize anything pertaining to tuition or other payments. Please look for her email or contact. If you do not receive one, please call the office to schedule a time to stop in and visit with her.

If you are interested in helping with the children's activities area, please contact Courtney Schisel.

## Pastoral Call Voter's Meeting

With our last call once again returned, we are in need of another pastoral call voter's meeting. In order to facilitate the fastest possible turn around time, the meeting has been set for Tuesday, August 6<sup>th</sup>, at 6:30pm. Voting members are urged to join us as we vote from a new list of potential full-time pastors.



## Village Trail Open Forum

A second upcoming church meetings is an open forum regarding a pedestrian and snowmobile trail that the village would like to put in on our property. A map showing the potential trail is available for viewing in the church hallway. The trail would need a 12 foot wide area along our south and west borders and will initially be made with gravel with potential for paving in the future. In addition to ceding the land to the village's use, there would be the need to relocate the pond—at the expense of the village—and a need to redo drainage—possibly at our expense. The trail would still leave room for us to put in a soccer field and baseball diamond. There will be further information and a chance for discussion at the meeting on August 11<sup>th</sup> after the service.

## Mark Your Calendars!

- August 6- Pastoral Call Meeting
- August 7- Breakfast and Bible Study
- August 9- Last Day of Summer Program
- August 10-12 School Cleaning Days
- August 11- Trail Open Forum Meeting
- August 12- Church Council Meeting
- August 13- Monthly Fellowship Luncheon
- August 14- School Orientation Night
- August 15- School Orientation Night
- August 21- Breakfast and Bible Study
- August 26- First Day of School
- September 2- No School (Labor Day)

# News Highlights



LUTHERAN CHURCH & SCHOOL

## New St. John Logo

We have established a new logo, the color version of which is seen above, to represent the combined ministries of our church and school. Look for our logo to appear on materials all around town going forward!

## Sunday School Teachers Wanted

As we gear up for the coming school year, we are on the look out for one or two people who could serve as Sunday School teachers. Materials are available for the weekly lessons, and craft supplies would be available for any extra activities you may want to plan. Sunday School is held after the worship service, from 10:15 to 11:15 each week. Please contact Jeremy Uecker if you would be willing to teach or substitute when other teachers are unavailable.

## In Search of Friendly Faces

We are currently looking for rotating volunteers to serve as greeters/receptionists on school mornings. The people who take on this spot would serve to provide a friendly face for people coming and going in the morning and answer as many simple inquiries as they can, allowing Dierdra to focus on other administrative duties with less pauses.

Duties would include greeting people, answering the phone, taking messages and payments, and buzzing people in once the doors are locked. Additionally, volunteers could be taught how to make copies and do basic filing. They may be asked to assemble printed bulletins or cut out materials for teachers. There would be plenty of downtime in between duties, so helpers could also read, craft, or bring other items with to occupy themselves.

Ideally, volunteers would be available for one or more days a week from 7:30 am until 12:00 noon to cover when school families first arrive and when families return for their half-day students. We have people lined up for Mondays and Tuesdays. We are looking to also fill in Wednesdays, Thursdays, and Fridays. Please contact Dierdra Stary at the office if you would like more information or would be willing to take on one or more mornings each week.

## Church Birthdays

### Happy birthday to our church members celebrating in August!

Aug 2 Ari Vickman  
Aug 3 Dale Laabs  
Aug 4 Bekah Kraus  
Aug 5 Owen Raddatz  
Aug 6 Lyle Schmidt  
Aug 7 Judy Rotzenberg  
Aug 9 Jake Bowers  
Aug 9 Claire DeMerritt  
Aug 9 Amanda Wingo-Barrett  
Aug 12 Adam Kussow  
Aug 12 Charlene Lemke  
Aug 14 Matthew Van Schyndel  
Aug 16 Mitchell Herlache  
Aug 16 Oliver Olp  
Aug 23 Charlotte Theunis

Aug 24 Paige Gilson  
Aug 24 Kristin Pohlman  
Aug 25 Diane Laabs  
Aug 26 Rozanne Bohrtz  
Aug 27 Grace Bauer  
Aug 27 Joshua Verbeten  
Aug 30 Rosella Laabs  
Aug 31 Marna Johns



## School Birthdays

### Happy Birthday to our August student celebrants!

Jovie S.- Aug 1  
Ari V.- Aug 2  
Ariana R.- Aug 3  
Louie T.- Aug 3  
Graham T.- Aug 4  
Bekah K.- Aug 5  
Owen R.- Aug 5  
Jake B.- Aug 9  
Owen D.- Aug 12  
Ellie S.- Aug 18  
Annette A.- Aug 31  
Barrett A.- Aug 31  
Willa B.- Aug 31

## Children's Faith Shines

*Christian parenting article continues from page 3*

Boom. Amidst the grief of the whole week, and all the distractions of the Mineshaft Gameroom, Norah saw a symbol of the resurrection and, in sure faith, had to have two of them to remind her of God's gracious promise that all who die in Christ will not die, but live. "Brothers and sisters, we do not want you to be uninformed about those who sleep in death, so that you do not grieve like the rest of mankind, who have no hope. For we believe that Jesus died and rose again, and so we believe that God will bring with Jesus those who have fallen asleep in him" (1 Thessalonians 4:13-14).

There are other stories I could share, but let this be enough for now. I hope they impact you as much as they have impacted me.

Charis and I worked hard ourselves at planting the Word in our children's hearts, but we intentionally partnered with others in this monumental task. I want to publicly thank all the Sunday School teachers at Shepherd of Peace Evangelical Lutheran Church - WELS (past and present) – and especially Shanda Seiltz, who has taught each one of my children (and many others) so faithfully and giftedly for many years. I also want to thank the wonderful teachers and staff (past and present) of

Beautiful Savior Lutheran School in Grove City, OH – as well as the congregation members who so faithfully support their school ministry – for the wonderful job they have done instilling the Word of God into all the children in their care, including mine. Wherever you live, consider partnering with WELS (Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod) schools for your child's education. You won't regret it; in fact, you'll probably find that (like me) your investment and effort will pay off in life and in eternity.

"Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these. Truly I tell you, anyone who will not receive the kingdom of God like a little child will never enter it" (Mark 12:14b-15).



## Contact Us

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<b>Tim Raddatz, principal and 4<sup>th</sup>-5<sup>th</sup> grade teacher</b>	<b>920-636-5007</b>	<b>tim.raddatz@stjohnwrightstown.com</b>
<b>Dillon Solomon, dean of students and 6<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> grade teacher</b>	<b>248-525-3700</b>	<b>dillon.solomon@stjohnwrightstown.com</b>
<b>Rebecca Wicks, 2<sup>nd</sup>-3<sup>rd</sup> grade teacher</b>	<b>920-809-8648</b>	<b>rebecca.wicks@stjohnwrightstown.com</b>
<b>McKenze Crowley, kindergarten and 1<sup>st</sup> grade teacher</b>	<b>605-390-6827</b>	<b>mckenze.crowley@stjohnwrightstown.com</b>
<b>Jamie Buss, early childhood director and EC 3 teacher</b>	<b>920-538-0470</b>	<b>jamie.buss@stjohnwrightstown.com</b>
<b>Leah Gamboa, EC 2 teacher</b>	<b>920-309-5037</b>	<b>leah.gamboa@stjohnwrightstown.com</b>
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