



# St. John's Lutheran Church

Called to Fill the Hungry with Good Things

## The Messenger

(Monthly publication)

MAY 2020



When this chapter of the History of St. John's is written, what will it say? I have looked back and can not find any written testimonies about what this congregation did or did not do in 1918-1919 during the Flu Pandemic. I don't know, but I suspect that Pr. E. C. Hess canceled worship for a time. I suspect that people in town were encouraged to stay away from each other. I suspect that things may have been a lot like they are for us today.

Up to this point, St. John's began canceling in person worship on March 22<sup>nd</sup>. All program activities were suspended, and decisions made to cancel or postpone all other in person activities, including the Palm Sunday breakfast and Rummage Sale. St. John's focused on what we already do well. Worship continues through the Radio Broadcast on AM 600 KSJB at 9 am each Sunday. Ten to twelve worship leaders assemble each week for music, song, proclamation, and liturgy. Child In Our Hands continues to operate as a licensed child care center and is considered an essential service. The Daily Bread freezers continue to be available, but the sources of donations have all nearly dried up as restaurants and convenience stores have shut down. In the midst of this, St. John's began offering the Sandwich Project, under the leadership of Pr. Lucas. A grab and go bag lunch is available for anyone in the community that wants one at lunch time on weekdays.

Holy Week and Easter were different this year. The Pastors produced some online worship options for Maundy Thursday and Good Friday. Easter Sunday was celebrated with just a few lilies and worship leaders for the Radio Broadcast. Throughout the suspension of in-person worship, St. John's invited our neighbors at United Presbyterian Church and First Congregational United Church of Christ to participate together on the radio worship. This made it a true community effort with our ecumenical partners. The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) is in full communion with each of these denominations. Decades of prayer and preparation have led to formal agreements that allow ELCA congregations like St. John's to officiate at the services of our full communion denominations, join together in partnership, and respect each others unique faith traditions.

It is generally understood, even now just a month into this pandemic, that things will never return to exactly the way that they were a few months ago. Some restaurants and businesses will not reopen the way we knew them. We are in the midst of change, and we don't know what things will look like when we are able to worship together again. There are times when I crave the familiar and the traditions that have supported me in the past. Familiar sights, sounds, and gatherings comfort us. Even when this pandemic wanes, things will not be the same. There will come a day when 400-500 people cram into St. John's for special services and people are pressed together tightly. But it is more likely that for a period of time, we will gather in smaller groups. It is more likely that the trend of declining worship attendance will continue and possibly accelerate even after national and community guidance allows for gathering.

Times of great change are also times of opportunity to reimagine the future. We have the chance, right now, to imagine something new in the community. As plans are being made to reopen the St. John's campus to worship and service activities, we know that we can't just put back on the schedule everything that was there before, but will be discerning and listening to the way in which God is leading us to new life. Maybe we will be able to gather at Pentecost

Pr. Erik.



### Doing Ministry in the Midst of Social Distancing:

These are unprecedented times we are living in this world. Moving Easter Services primarily to the radio was a surreal experience. There was a piece of what "church" is that I

was missing. We were able to hear the words and music of a typical worship service, but we were missing the community aspect of what church creates. Yet, in society, we are all missing being in relational with one another now, while acknowledging that social distancing is vital of the health of our community.

Fortunately, technology has allowed most of us to be connected and given churches in our community and abroad tools to continue to teach, pray, worship, and uplift one another. One way my wife and I are continuing family Sunday School lessons is through Faith5: share, read, talk, pray, and bless in a segment we call, "Devotions with the Holsten's," found on our church Facebook page.

Confirmation has also been taught through recording our last lessons about the Ten Commandments utilizing Youtube. These new ways of teaching has created exciting opportunities that we continue to long for as we reach out to different demographics.

Continue



We are trying to stay connected through technology and are continuing to learn about other methods, but how do we continue ministries at the church? This is a question which all churches are asking and yet God is calling us to lean into our strengths as a congregation.

At St Johns, we are very good at making food in the community. Starting in March we have been making free grab and go bag lunches for people to take. The majority of people who take bag lunches are people whose jobs were lost or their hours were significantly reduced due to the virus.

Just like using technology and thinking outside of the box in order to provide education, the same goes with providing ministry and if you are feeling like you aren't doing good ministry; I invite you to pray for the church, the world and all those in need. During this time as a pastor and being at home more than usual, I am constantly thinking if I am doing enough. Yet more than ever we have to lean on God. That we aren't in control of the situation that is around us, but reminding us that we are all connected under the same body of Christ. When Jesus was about to be betrayed in the garden, what was Jesus doing? He was praying. Praying during this time of fear, during the time we have no control or the time we don't feel enough, we pray. Prayer is the most impactful ministry we can provide to our neighbor because showing love to each other during this time of quarantine can help pass God's love which is stronger than anything else.

Pr. Lucas Holsten

**POWER** of **PRAYER**



Dear friends in Christ,

Many of us are familiar with the Bible's Old Testament book of Job. Job was a very wealthy man who lived in the land of Uz. He worshiped God sincerely and regularly, and most importantly, was a truly righteous person in the sight of God. During a debate between God and Satan, Satan accuses Job of being loyal to God only because of the blessings he continues to receive from God. If God were to take away what Job has, Satan insists, Job would "curse You to Your face" (Job 1:11). God allows Satan to take away Job's wealth, then his family and finally his health. But, through all his pain and suffering, Job does not curse God. In fact, Job says "Naked I came out of my mother's womb, and naked shall I return: Lord has given, and Lord has taken away; blessed be the name of Lord" (Job 1:20). What you may not be aware of is that Job is also mentioned in the Quran. Although the story in the Quran is considerably shorter, there are many similarities. So much so that we can assume that they are the same person. The Quran describes Job as a righteous servant of Allah (God), who was afflicted by suffering for a lengthy period of time. The Quran is not clear as to the cause of Job's great distress, but it is described as unrelenting. When Job calls out to God for relief, God responds with an action plan. Job is given a task to complete that will relieve his suffering.

As I contemplate these stories, I can't deny the correlation between the plight of Job in both of these texts and the plight we're experiencing with the COVID-19 virus. As many around the world see their wealth, families and health being taken from them it might seem easy to turn our backs to God. But the faithful know that God is with us and will see us through this crisis, he always has and always will. We need to remain strong in our faith. In the Bible version, Job never understands why he suffered. He felt bitter but he never rejected God and remained righteous and faithful because he knew that one day God would rescue him.

Just as the story is told in the Quran, we have been given an action plan that if we follow, our suffering will be relieved. We would all like to have the hand of God wave over us and end our suffering. However, that's not the way it works. The action plan that we have been given calls for us to shelter in place, practice social distancing and pay extensive attention to cleaning and hygiene. If you consider it, these are pretty mild sacrifices compared

to those experienced by Job. But we have become a society unaccustomed to making sacrifices. Thus, many feel more strain on their faith than is necessary.

My advice to all in this trying time is to remain righteous and faithful to God and continue to pray even though we are not able to gather for worship. And, follow the action plan we've been given. Just as Job found out in either the Bible or Quran stories, in the end everything will work out for us as well.

God's Peace to All,  
Be safe and be well

Gary Staab  
Congregation President

**BAPTISM CLASS**  
*please contact one of the pastors*



**April 2020**

March	29	12
April	5	10
April	12	13
April	19	15
April	26	10

**Fit for the Journey**

**FROM**

**FOR**

Gerhard & Gayl Lange  
Pam & Tom Heck

LaVerne Hunt  
LaVerne Hunt



## ***Kitchen Project Update***

Kitchen remodel updates: All plans for construction are on hold at this time. Since the cancelation of the March 22<sup>nd</sup> congregational forum, the council is suspending further action until such time as a time of conversation and sharing can be held. That does not mean that all action has stopped. St. John's has raised about \$41,000 for the project and the council moving forward with some equipment items (such as the stove) that can be used now and after major renovation. This programming shut down is a very good time to do things that would disrupt normal congregational operations.



## ***Sunday Morning Bingo***

Beginning May 3<sup>rd</sup>. Zoom Bingo live at 10:45AM

Stop by and sign out a bingo card or print your own online and sign in and play along.

We will play a couple games each week, just for fun and community.

The link will be posted each Sunday on the St. John's website home page.



***For update regarding  
church activities  
Visit the website***

***www.st-johnslutheran.org  
or all the Church  
252-1198***



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## ***QUILTERS BINGO***



## CALENDAR HIGHLIGHTS – MAY

For current and update calendar  
<http://www.st-johnslutheran.org/#/calendar>

### Sunday Worship

9:00 am and 10:45 am - worship  
10:00 am Sunday School/coffee and fellowship

### Daily

10:00 am Staff coffee and planning and follow up

### Tuesday

9:30 am Staff Meeting

### May 2020

5/2 2:00 pm To be Determined - Ave Maria Nursing Home Worship  
5/3 9:00 am Worship on the Radio KJBS 600 AM  
5/7 5:30 pm Executive Meeting - Watch for an email from Pr. Erik Weber  
5/10 Mother's Day  
5/12 5:00 pm Evangelism Meeting  
6:30 pm Council Meeting - Watch for an email from Pr. Erik Weber  
5/14 10:00 am TBD Eventide Communion and worship  
5/16 10:00 am TBD Eventide Assisted Living Bible Study  
5/25 **CHURCH OFFICES CLOSED MEMORIAL DAY**

**Call the church office for more updates 252-1198**



## Council Recap

-The council met three times via Zoom since the last regular council meeting. The council reviewed the financial health of the congregation through the first 3 months of the year. We are doing ok, but are slightly behind last year, and it is too soon to assess the full impact of the covid-19 shut down on giving. The congregation has applied for the Paycheck Protection Program, but has not received funding yet. If we are funded in a timely manner, we will be able to avoid difficult cuts to our adopted mission and ministry plan.

-The council granted Pr. Erik's request to postpone his planned sabbatical until 2021 due to the pandemic.

-The council appointed the Financial Review Committee. Work will not begin before May.

-The Council authorized President Gary Staab to sign documents for Interstate Engineering related to city construction of the bulb out at the corner of 1<sup>st</sup> Ave. S and 5<sup>th</sup> St. as part of the upcoming lane diet project.

-The council encouraged Shelley Mack and Tom Enderle to get price quotes for a new stove as part of the Kitchen Project. The Congregation has the designated funds in hand to replace the old stove as part of the larger kitchen project.

-Pr. Erik updated the council on the conversations between St. John's and First Congregational United Church of Christ regarding the joint bible study and possibilities for future collaboration.

-Pr. Erik updated the council on the draft of the Domestic Hunger Grant application that is due on May 8<sup>th</sup>. A special council meeting will be called when the draft is ready.

-Pr. Lucas shared preliminary plans for closing out this program year and wrapping up Sunday School and Confirmation. Vacation Bible School dates in June are being kept, but a decision will be made on May 15<sup>th</sup> about postponing until August.

-Discussions were held about how St. John's will reopen when the time comes and what things can be done now to make that welcome feel like a new beginning.

-St. John's will host the Jamestown Conference Assembly on April 26<sup>th</sup> at 4 pm. The plan is for multiple sites linked by Zoom and some individual participants.





***We miss our gathering and worship together. Soon we will be able to get together and worship, create new memories, and share laughs.***





**Pianist:** Rachel Williams, Connie Wells, and Mark Wolf

**Acolyte:** Bennett Goehner, Anya Bostan, Jackson Seckerson, Chloe and Maddie Holstad, Braxton Perkins, Ty Kapp, Maddie Ede, McKenna Miller, Jaeger Roemmich, Nate Walz, Marissa Molten

**Readers:** Jim Ritter, Ann Ede, Tonya Perkins, Shelly Moltzen, Gavin Kutz,

**Communion Assistant:** Joan Enderle, Jim and Paulette Ritter, Carl and Sandy Franke, Char Freeberg, Cindy Wolff, Ann Ede,

**Ushers:** Bill Ebele, Jolene Baltrusch, Tom and Gale Scherbenske, Joyce Wilkinson, Jerry and Darlene Michel, Gary Lauf, Lloyd Landscoot, John Mayer, Arlene Bitterman

**Communion Prep:** Altar Guild, John and Cindy Kleven, Cindy Wolff, Joan Enderle, Mary Klundt and DeLanda Kollman, Jim and Paulette Ritter

**Projector:** Lynn Krueger, Char Perleberg, Connor Ede, Bobby Landscoot, Hannah Sjostrom, Aaron Kleven, Andrew Walz, Jaxon Miller

**Van Drivers:** Dan Dockter, Tom Enderle, John Kleven, Don Walz, Howard Weispenning Jr.

**Sunday School:** Teachers, Parents, Jennifer, and teenagers.

**Special Volunteer:** Lynn K. for sanitizing the sanctuary.

Special thanks to those who decorate the church, insure the children bags have books and activities, individuals that are always available to lend a hand to shovel the snow, keep the front of the church clean, help with mailing. There are many that quietly go about doing what needs to be done and get it done when no one is watching. Thank you so much to all.



## Sponsorships

### Radio May

May 3	John Meyer
May 10	Gladys Ley
May 17	United Presbyterian Church
May 24	First Congregation Church UCC
May 31	Rinalde Diede



**If you would like to sponsor a Radio Broadcast or Altar Flowers please contact the church 252-1198**

### Flowers May

May 3	Kathy Burkle
May 10	Gladys Ley
May 17	Open
May 24	Pr. Erik and Pr. Kristi Weber
May 31	Rinalde Diede



*Sponsorships Available for Radio and Altar Flowers - June: 6/28*

## CHURCH MINISTRY

### Deaths

None

### BAPTISM

None





Greetings and God's blessing to all,

What a month it has been. I can tell you that nothing around the center seems right. It's quiet, there is no preschoolers in session, kid counts are super low, and staff has had quite a bit of time off. It has been a month of seeing problems, tackling them, and in some shape way or form overcoming them. Due to COVID-19 our operating practices have had to slow down significantly. Lucky for us and thanks to our amazing governor he has deemed childcare to be essential work. We are able to remain open and provide care for our essential families. We have also been able to open up and offer care to other essential families who are in need of care.

I was a little scared at first when we were deemed essential. I thought we were maybe putting staff at risk, putting their families at risk, and our children, but let me tell you our amazing families have taken this pandemic seriously. A lot of our families have opted to work from home and keep their kids with them. The only kids we are taking care of are truly essential families. We went from having a center of 46 kids to only having to operate with 15 kids. This has allowed us to modify our practices and do everything we can do to remain healthy. We do health checks at the door, there is no more than 10 people in any room at one time, and we have ramped up our cleaning schedule. We are truly able to allow a safe and healthy environment to all of our kids.

As I have not been able to be around the center much due to a family emergency, I have to give my staff a super shout out for all of their hard work. These girls have without a doubt rocked this time period and held down the fort while I have been gone. They all fearlessly come to work everyday and provide great care, as well as going above and beyond their job descriptions to help out our families. I also have to thank the Child in Our Hands board for being there for last minute virtual board meetings, checking in on the center when I could not, and helping with tough decisions that have been made. Last, a shout out to our state for realizing that childcare is important and needs to be taken care so that we are all still here when this pandemic is over. Without the state grant that came through CIOH would have had a very tough time keeping doors open. This grant allowed a break for our families when they need one and tough decisions to become easier to make.

This past month and these next few are going to remain very tough for all. It is important that we stick together and help those around us who are in need of help. Do your part and stay home, reduce the amount of interaction you have with others. If we do these things, we will all find light during a very dark time and come out of this stronger.

CIOH is going to continue doing what we do best and offer love, education, and guidance to those in our care. Our goal is to make this time feel like any other day to our littles. Please keep our staff and our families in your prayers as we navigate through this time and wait for our center to return back to normal.

We will also be opening enrollment for our 2020/2021 preschool year. If you or anyone you know is in need of preschool during next year's school year, please send them our way. Please call (701) 252-1903 or email [director@st-johnspreschool.org](mailto:director@st-johnspreschool.org) for more information.

Thank you and God bless.

Torrey Herrington,  
CIOH Director





***Are you going to feed us or pause for the pictures***





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Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
26 9:00 AM Worship - Radio 4:00 PM Jamestown Conference - St. John's Lutheran Church	27	28 9:30 AM Staff Meeting	29 Confirmation - Video posted	30	1	2
3 9:00 AM Worship - Radio	4	5 9:30 AM Staff Meeting	6 Confirmation video post	7 5:30 PM Executive Meeting	8	9
10 Mothers' Day 9:00 AM Worship - Radio	11	12 9:30 AM Staff Meeting 5:00 PM Evangelism Meeting 6:30 PM Council Meeting	13	14 10:00 AM Eventide Communion and worship	15	16 10:00 AM Jamestown Community Prayer - <a href="https://zoom.us/">https://zoom.us/</a>
17 9:00 AM Worship - Radio	18	19 9:30 AM Staff Meeting	20	21	22	23
24 HS Graduation 9:00 AM Worship - Radio	25 Memorial Day Church Offices Closed	26 9:30 AM Staff Meeting 7:00 PM Altar Guild Meeting	27	28 Pr. Erik and Pr Lucas - Jamestown Conference Leadership - Montpelier	29	30
31 9:00 AM Worship - Radio	1	2 9:30 AM Staff Meeting	3	4 5:30 PM Executive Meeting	5	6



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**Worship Services**

Sundays

9:00 am  
 10:45 am

**Holy Communion**

***All*** Worship Services

Church Office                    701-252-1198

Preschool/Child Care    701-252-1903

Website: [www.st-johnslutheran.org](http://www.st-johnslutheran.org)

Email: [stjohns@st-johnslutheran.org](mailto:stjohns@st-johnslutheran.org)

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**STAFF OF  
 ST. JOHN'S LUTHERAN**

**Senior Pastor**  
 Erik Weber  
 701-320-3151

**Associate Pastor**  
 Lucas Holsten  
 651-334-4494

**Admin Secretary**  
 Gem Saied

**Custodian**  
 Frank Perleberg

**Child In Our Hands Director**  
 Torrey Herrington

**Choir Accompanist/Pianist**  
 Rachel Williams  
 Connie Wells

**Coronavirus Adjustments**

**Stay up to date by checking the St. John's Website  
 for daily updates and the most accurate  
 information.**

**St. John's will be following CDC guidelines for public  
 gatherings. Many Sunday School, Confirmation, and  
 worship events have been postponed or canceled.**

**We look forward to the time that we can  
 all gather together and worship.**

**Radio worship continue 9 am Sunday  
 on AM 600 KSJB  
 Bulletin available on the  
 Church website**