



The Informer

September 2022

St. John's Lutheran Church

Volume 66 Issue 9



From Pastor's Pen:

"Do you not know that friendship with the world is enmity with God? Therefore whoever wishes to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God." James 4:4

My dear family in Christ,

As I near the end of my years as a full-time minister of the Gospel, I am astonished by the changes I have seen in the world, and more importantly in the Church. When it comes matters of the Church some of these changes are reflected in recent statistics reported by the Barna Research Group.

- In 1971 90% of U.S. adults identified themselves as Christian, but in 2021 that figure dropped to 69%.
- In 1958 49% of U.S. adults had attended worship in the last week, but in 2021 it dropped to 29%.
- In 1965 70% considered their faith life to be important, but in 2021 it dropped to 49%.

The last of these statistics is the one that concerns me the most, because it involves you, the flock under my care. You profess to be Christian. You may even be somewhat faithful in worship. But is your faith life important to you in the way you view the world and in the life-choices you make?

According to recent research, and from my observation, I am afraid the answer is no.

Jesus taught that Christians would be recognizable by their distinctive behavior – specifically, by the way they love others and how their lives reflect their spiritual values and beliefs. But when measuring world-views, popular philosophies, lifestyles and moral issues the research has found that there is very little difference between those who claim to be Christian and the rest of the population. When I began in the ministry couples professing to be Christians, living together outside of marriage, was quite the exception- now it seems to be the rule. As a young pastor I never dreamed that I would have members who would reject their God created male or female sex and attempt to be something else. I never would have imagined that "Bible-believing" Christians would support abortion-on-demand. In addition there are so many "woke agenda" items that self-identified Christians seem to be embracing in clear violation of God's Word. Obviously, we are not living as people who have been consecrated to the Lord, people who are recognized by a distinctively Christian behavior or people who impact the world with our spiritual values and beliefs.

Too many of us, by seeking friendship with the world, are at risk of becoming enemies of God. Perhaps this failure on our part to be salt and light has led to the decline in worship and in the number of people who even claim to be Christian at all. Many theologians are saying that the world we live in today is very much like the world in which the first century Christians lived. If that is the case, then the only way to be faithful and to serve Christ is to think and live differently. We must no longer conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of our minds through God's Word. No matter what the prevailing culture may believe or value we must remain steadfast and immovable; willing to face rejection, suffering and even death for our convictions. Then, like those martyrs before us, we will be the light that leads others to Christ and salvation.

My admonition to you, my brothers and sisters, is to take your stand upon God's Word and stand up, stand up for Jesus!

In Christ,

Pastor Umbarger

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See The Informer
IN COLOR
On Our Website

Vicar's View

The Habit of Prayer

One of the things that most shapes who we are and what we love is our habits: the things we do so much that they become second nature. That's why I believe one of the most fundamental ways for us to learn how to live our lives as Christians is to develop a habit of prayer. We believe that we have a gracious Father in heaven who wants to hear about our needs, our hurts, and our joys. We believe we also have a Brother, Jesus Christ, and a Helper, the Holy Spirit, who are constantly praying to the Father on our behalf. The best way to make that belief the foundation for our lives is to get used to being in conversation with our loving God. That's what St. Paul means when he tells the Thessalonians to "pray without ceasing." (1 Thess. 5:17) I don't claim to be nearly as good at this as I'd like to be. But I'd like to offer a few practical tips that I think are a good starting point for developing that habit.

A nice way to begin is by listening to Luther's advice on evening and morning prayer: make it the first thing you do when you wake up and the last thing you do before you go to bed to make the sign of the cross and say the Apostle's Creed and the Lord's Prayer. That will frame your whole day with confessing the faith you're baptized into and asking God for everything you need. Then if you want, talk to God about whatever concerns or joys happen to be on your heart at the time. Once you get used to that habit, maybe consider doing the same thing at noon or at your lunch break.

What about the rest of the day though? I think having short prayers in your back pocket is a huge help. Never forget that "Lord, have mercy" is one of the best prayers out there and applies to any situation. Or you can say the Jesus Prayer, "Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on me a sinner," and meditate on all the ways you want God to show you mercy and kindness. Throughout the day, if you see or hear about someone who has a need, just say, "Lord Jesus, remember *(insert person's name)*." *If you want to say more, go for it! If something good happens to you or someone else, you can say "Thanks be to God" or "Glory be to Jesus Christ." Pretty soon, you'll probably find that conversation with your Heavenly Father becomes a part of your everyday life.*

Finally, don't forget about the Psalms! They are the first prayer book of God's chosen people, and the prayer book of Christ himself. Try reading a Psalm a day and praying it out loud. You'll probably run into some Psalms that you don't feel like apply to your situation at the time; it's okay to skip to one that does. Or, even better, imagine Jesus praying that Psalm and ponder how it applies to his life and work for you.

Above all, remember that these are just tips to start with, not rules. Prayer is an invitation to lay your burdens on God, not a burden for you. If you want to modify or add to these ideas, great! Remember, God is always more eager to hear than we are to pray, and ready to give more than we either desire or deserve.

Vicar Moellenhoff



Serving the Lord this Month

Ushers

Sat, Sept 3: Chuck Brokaw, Todd Miller, Rick Newlon, & Larry Ripka
Sun, Sept 4: Esther Cashion, Scott Mattly, Rex Newman, & Steve Sullivan
Sat, Sept 10: Chuck Brokaw, Todd Miller, Rick Newlon, & Larry Ripka
Sun, Sept 11: Esther Cashion, Scott Mattly, Rex Newman, & Steve Sullivan
Sat, Sept 17: Chuck Brokaw, Todd Miller, Rick Newlon, & Larry Ripka
Sun, Sept 18: Esther Cashion, Scott Mattly, & Steve Sullivan
Sat, Sept 24: Chuck Brokaw, Todd Miller, Rick Newlon, & Larry Ripka
Sun, Sept 25: Esther Cashion, Scott Mattly, Rex Newman, & Steve Sullivan

Greeters

Sat, Sept 3: Larry & Sharon Ripka
Sun, Sept 4: Steve & Rose Sullivan
Sat, Sept 10: Norm & Orene Antolik
Sun, Sept 11: The Churchill family
Sat, Sept 17: Larry & Sharon Ripka
Sun, Sept 18: Marsha Boarts & Diana Lackey
Sat, Sept 24: George & Marlene Fellows
Sun, Sept 25: Jennifer, Grace, & Alice Schmidt

Acolytes

Sun, Sept 4: Sloane Churchill
Sun, Sept 11: Bentley Orton
Sun, Sept 18: Joel Duffy
Sun, Sept 25: Alice Schmidt



Altar Guild

Wendy Rossmiller
 Cori Rossmiller
 Brandi Erickson



Eternal Candle

Sept 4: Gail Massey
Sept 11: Pastor Umbarger, in memory of Judi
Sept 18: Karen Schmidt, in honor of her 85th birthday
Sept 25: Gail Massey



Flowers

Sept 4: Bill & Becky Johnson, in honor of their 55th Anniversary
Sept 11: In honor of Brenda & Brittney Hanerhoff's birthdays
Sept 18: Karen Schmidt, in honor of her birthday, and in Glory to God
Sept 25: In honor of Noreen's birthday



Church News

Birthdays

- | | |
|--|--|
| <p>1st: Jen Belzer, Nolan Johnson, Amber McMillin, & Rhonda VanDamme</p> <p>2nd: Debby Weidenback</p> <p>3rd: Adam Lack & Steve LaCroix</p> <p>5th: Larry Dodge</p> <p>6th: Matthew Dosch Amanda Overton</p> <p>7th: Dean Bull, Hillary Ekin, & Pam Fisher</p> <p>8th: Sheena Johnson, Kathy Petosky, Troy & Trace Shryack</p> <p>9th: Brenda Hanerhoff</p> <p>10th: Nancy Cartwright</p> <p>11th: Chris Heller & Keith Schnabel</p> <p>12th: Thomas Weathers</p> | <p>13th: Jim Beswick & Kaitlyn McMillin</p> <p>14th: Ann Churchill, Ann Engebrecht, Otto Hartweg, Rick Newlon, & Demetrius Williams</p> <p>15th: Alan Ahrens & Martha Merritt</p> <p>21st: Beth Burmahl & Karen Schmidt</p> <p>23rd: Parker Myers & Addison Rowe</p> <p>25th: Steven Lackey, Brian & Tom Hart</p> <p>26th: Noreen Hopkins</p> <p>27th: Tara Hawkins</p> <p>28th: Tammy Cady</p> <p>29th: Susan Busch & Carlie Schofield</p> <p>30th: Lori Hopkins & Glen McMillin</p> |
|--|--|



Weekly Attendance Offerings

<u>DATE</u>	<u>THIS YEAR</u>	<u>LAST YEAR</u>
7/31	140	no 5th Sunday in July last year
8/7	152	160
8/14	171	129
8/21	127	155

Simply Giving July 2022: Average monthly attendance of St. John's membership: 24%

Membership Report

Death:
Helen Carter (8/16/22)



DON'T FORGET-
ALL BOARDS MEET ON SEPTEMBER 1ST at 6:30pm.
There is a Parish Planning meeting on Thursday, September 8th, and
a Voter's meeting on Sunday, September 11th during the Sunday
school/ Bible study hour!!!

Church News

LWML

Rock Island Zone LWML Fall Rally Tuesday, September 20th

The 2022 Rock Island Zone LWML Fall Rally will be held Tuesday, September 20th at Faith Lutheran Church in Kewanee. The meeting starts at 9:15. This year's speaker is Rev. Rodney G. Blomquist, CID Prison/Jail Coordinator and a member of the District's Human Care Committee. Lunch will be provided and the registration fee is \$12.00. The deadline to register is August 31st. If you are interested in attending please contact Diana Lackey 309-373-1862. We will carpool. As is customary we collect Ingathering gifts and donations for organizations with the needs in the community. This year's gifts are going to **Abilities Plus** and **East Moline Correctional Center**.

Abilities Plus is a not-for-profit organization serving individuals of all ages with disabilities. The organization was founded in 1959 and now serves approximately 250 children and adults from Henry, Stark and western Bureau Counties. All items should be complete and in good condition. Items need:

Baby books (soft pages)
Receiving blankets
Large Duplo Lego blocks
Board Games (both adult and young children)
Small items for Bingo prizes
Adult and simple puzzles
Colored pencils
Adult coloring books
Art and craft supplies
Paper plates
Plastic silverware
Napkins
Plastic tablecloths



If you wish to give a monetary donation please place in the offering box or turn into the church office.

For Abilities Plus please make checks payable to: Abilities Plus.

For the East Moline Correctional Center for Portals of Prayers please make checks payable to: Women of Faith.

LWML is also collecting cancelled stamps, Portals of Prayer, gently used bibles, empty prescription bottles with labels removed, pillowcase dresses, and tee shirt diapers.

There will be a donation box in the concourse for the Fall Rally from August 27th to September 19th.

Next LWML Meeting : Thursday, September 22nd at 6:30pm in the Janssen rooms. Watch the bulletin for more information.

Church News

CID Pastors Conference

This year, St. John's will be hosting the Pastors Conference. It will take place Monday, October 3rd-Wednesday, October 5th. We are in need of volunteers to set up, serve a dinner on Monday, a lunch on Tuesday, snacks both days, and tear down afterwards. We will also need Usher volunteers for the services each day. If you would be interested in helping, please come to the office and talk with Pastor or Annie.



New Bible Studies are Starting!

Saturdays @ 8:00a, beginning September 10th - Men's Bible Study - Nurturing Your Faith: Forgiveness is a four-part Bible study looks at forgiveness. It considers how our first sin required God's pardon in order to re-establish the broken God-man relationship caused by our original rebellion. Along the way, it looks at how God works through the forgiveness we seek and offer in our lives, and it reminds us that where there is love mercy can triumph.

Wednesdays @ 10:00a, beginning September 14th - The Chosen is the greatest story ever told in a multi-season format. Come and dig deeper into the backstories and context of the people and events of the Gospel.

NEW!!

Sunday Morning Bible Study: Coffee with Christ, beginning September 18th

Beginning Sunday, September 18th after worship, drop your children off at Sunday School and join us in the new Coffee Lounge (yellow room in the Ed Wing) for a time of fellowship and topical Bible study. We will have a variety of beverages and treats to share as we fellowship together and have a time of devotion. The first week we will discuss some topics we might want to explore this year and what format you want to use. Because we are all filled with too much information as it is, we hope to keep the studies light and easy to follow. We are even looking at using some Christian films as jumping points for the Bible studies. We will start off with a 2-week study from "A Little Book on Joy". Together, we will rediscover the joys of being Christian. This short session will allow time for us to order the materials you want to use this fall. Questions: Cris Braddy 309-235-7984 Carrie Homann 309-737-5511



Rock Island Circuit Youth Group

Mark your calendars - regular meetings resume on Sunday, September 11th. All youth (7th grade thru High School) from all churches in the Rock Island Circuit are welcome to attend. Meetings are every Sunday from 6:30 - 8:30 p.m. at Immanuel Lutheran Church, 3300 24th Street, Rock Island. First hour - youth meet with Pastor Astrowski for a devotion followed by a discussion on Apologetics (learning to defend the faith). Second hour - youth gather in the fellowship hall and gymnasium with our Youth Leaders for activities, games and snacks. Make sure to bring your friends. Remember to wear comfortable clothes and shoes and for the activity hour. Please park and enter the church building on the west side. Continue to watch the newsletter and bulletin for upcoming fall events. For any questions, please contact Kathy Welch at 309-714-5491.

Sunday School Rally Day

Join us on Sunday, September 11th as we kick off an exciting new year of Sunday school. We will be doing a Grandparents themed activity.

If anyone is willing and able to teach this year, please let Cris Braddy know. The curriculum is all planned out, you just need to lead the kiddos!



Church News



Life After Roe

By the Rev. Dr. Gregory Seltz, Executive Director of the Lutheran Center for Religious Liberty

LIFE AFTER ROE is something that most people didn't even dream would happen in the DOBB's case. But it did. And I believe that June 24, 2022, is an opportunity, a second chance, given to America by God Himself. It's not just the practice of abortion that needs our attention. It's the way we teach our children about the sanctity of their own lives and the preciousness of the lives of others as well. It's time to recognize the brokenness, disease, heartache, and death that the sexual revolution and its hookup culture has

brought to our nation. Over 62 million abortions have resulted from failure to "lead a sexually pure and decent life in what we say and do" (6th Commandment, Small Catechism). It's time to think of the intimacy of sex as something that follows marriage where the possibility of a child is viewed as a blessing to be cherished, not a "disease" to be medicated. It's also time to look upon those who, cherishing all of these things, still find themselves in tough circumstances. We should help them see the Church and the humane pro-life society as a place where they can go for many life-affirming answers to their difficulties. LIFE AFTER ROE means that in all of life's difficulties life is the solution, not death. Moving forward, we have a great opportunity to re-instill in our culture a culture of life that is pro-child, pro-woman, pro-family, pro-science, pro-civility, and ultimately pro-faith in the God who created us, redeemed us, and loved us as His own. Here's to LIFE AFTER ROE

THE LCRL'S MISSION is to ignite and fuel a uniquely Lutheran response to increasing intrusions, limitations and challenges by the government in the life of the church, while educating, encouraging and equipping LCMS members and organizations to take informed action in support of marriage, life and religious freedom.

TO SUBSCRIBE visit LCRLLFreedom.org, email info@lcrllfreedom.org or text "LCRL" to 833-821-5329.

KEEP UP TO DATE on what's happening with the Lutheran Center for Religious Liberty (LCRL) at LCRLLFreedom.org or on the "Lutheran Center for Religious Liberty" Facebook page.

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Sign language classes are here again! Word of God Lutheran Church for the Deaf will offer free beginning sign language classes on Tuesday evenings, 7:30-8:30 pm, at St. Matthew Lutheran Church, 115 W. 12th Ave., Milan, Illinois. The emphasis will be on conversational sign language. Classes will run ten weeks, from Sept. 13 – Nov. 15, and are open to the entire community. Pre-registration is not required. For more information, please call Rev. Tim Eckert, 563-359-7105, or e-mail him at DeafLutheran@q.com.

Camp Cilca Upcoming Events

Chicken Fry & Auction: September 4, 2022

The meal is served 11:30 a.m.-2:30 p.m. Meals are \$10 for adults and \$8 for children 4-12. The menu includes fresh fried chicken, mashed potatoes & gravy, green beans, a roll, homemade desserts, and drinks.

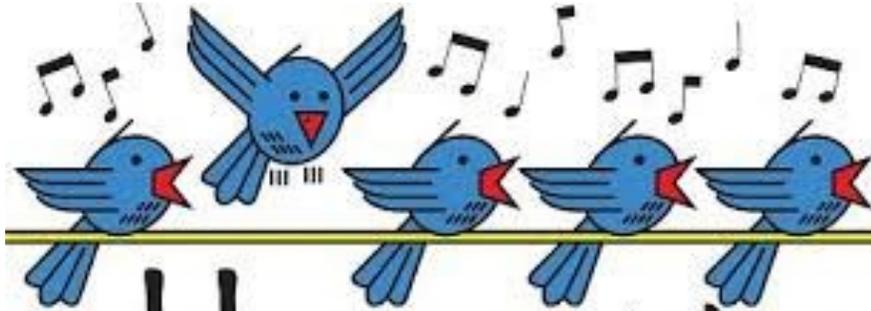
The live auction begins at 12:30!

Act Like Men Shooting Retreat: September 17, 2022

Men, bring your sons, grandsons, nephews, or friends along with your firearms and some ammo to take aim at Camp CILCA. Shooting provides a perfect opportunity for talk to men, young and old, about responsibility, strength, and discipline. Bible study will also focus on what it means to be a man in an increasingly confused society.

A range officer will be on hand for safety. Lunch will be served between morning and afternoon sessions. Total cost is \$15 per person. Camp CILCA will have some safety glasses and ear protection, but feel free to bring your own. Contact the camp office for more information or to register. **217-487-7497 / camp@cilca.org**

Notes from the Balcony



Add your voice

JOIN THE
CHOIR

The adult choir is looking for more members.
No experience necessary. We practice on
Saturdays at 9:30am starting on September
10th in the choir room. Hope to see you there!

Cherub Chimers is in need of at least 2 more youths to join us.
We practice on Wednesdays at 6:00pm. No music experience is
necessary. Please join us!



	Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	28	29	30	31	1	2	3
					All Boards Meet in Prep for 6:30pm - Board Meetings		5pm - Worship w/
9am - Worship w/ 10:15am - Bible Study /	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
	Pastor Taking Days Off 9am - Morning Prayer @		10am - Food Pantry 6:30pm - Guitar Jam	Pastor Orientation @ St Louis 9am - TOPS	6:30pm - Parish Planning		8am - Mens Bible Study 9:30am - Adult Choir 5pm - Worship
9am - Worship 10:15am - SS Rally Day 10:15am - Voters Meeting	11	12	13	14	15	16	17
	9am - Morning Prayer @ 1pm - Staff Mtg. 6:30pm - Heavenly Ringers	10am - Food Pantry 6:30pm - Guitar Jam	9am - TOPS 10am - Womens Bible Study 6pm - Chimes 6:30pm - Confirmation	11:30am - Ladies Luncheon		9am - Blackhawk Choir Event 9:30am - Adult Choir 5pm - Worship/ Communion	
9am - Worship w/ 10:15am - Bible Study /	18	19	20	21	22	23	24
	Informer Deadline 9am - Morning Prayer @ 1pm - Staff Mtg.		10am - Food Pantry 6:30pm - Guitar Jam	9am - TOPS 10am - Womens Bible Study 6pm - Chimes 6:30pm - Confirmation	6:30pm - LWML	4:30pm - Wedding Rehearsal	9:30am - Adult Choir 3pm - Wedding 5pm - Worship
9am - Worship 10:15am - Bible Study /	25	26	27	28	29	30	1
	9am - Morning Prayer @ 1pm - Staff Mtg.	10am - Food Pantry 6:30pm - Guitar Jam	9am - TOPS 10am - Womens Bible Study 6pm - Chimes 6:30pm - Confirmation			Pastor on Vacation	

St. John's
Lutheran
Church



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We're On the Web!!
www.stjohnsem.org

Walking in the Light of Christ!



Office Hours:

Monday – Thursday 8:30am– 2:00pm
Closed for lunch from 12-1pm

Worship Schedule:

Saturday worship– 5:00pm
Sunday worship- 9:00am
Sunday School
& Bible Study-10:15am



Inside our Sanctuary.