St. John's Lutheran School
Alumni News

Newsletter 13

The Principal's Perspective

From Generation to Generation, I Love to Tell the Story

Our school theme for this year is "I Love to tell the Story..." Recently, I led Chapel at school and talked about stories and where stories come from. We share many stories and the students were right, we talk about our experiences in stories. Many stories the children mentioned came from books and were read to them at bedtime or on their parents' lap. Stories were shared about events in life. The students also said that not all stories were true.

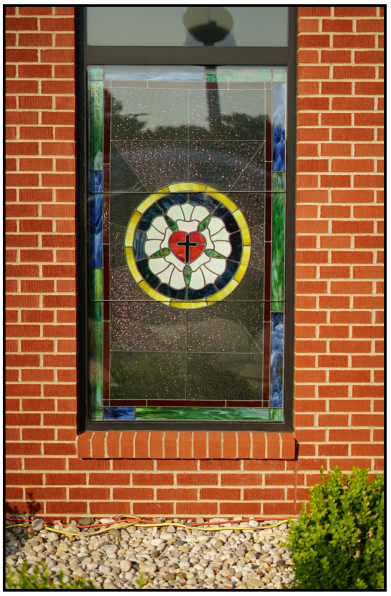


St. John's 2020/2021 Teachers and Staff

When looking for true stories, we turn to the Bible. All the stories in the Bible are true, and the students knew them to be true. Some of the favorites were Noah and the Ark, the Birth of Jesus, the Feeding of the Five Thousand, and the Easter Story. We share these stories first by hearing them, seeing pictures, and then reading them as we grow.

Looking back at our Christian heritage, our early churches in Europe depicted Bible stories in the artwork of church windows. They did this because many people were not able to read and they could hear the Bible stories and be reminded of them in the pictures. Our present-day churches often continue this practice.

Recently, a new stained-glass window was added to our school lobby. The artwork is of the Luther seal. Martin Luther was asked to symbolize our faith in a visible means. The seal is explained in this way; "The first thing expressed in my seal is a cross, black, with the red heart, to put me in mind that faith in Christ crucified saves us. 'For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness.' Now, although the **cross** is black, shameful, and intended to cause pain, yet it does not change the color of the heart, does not destroy nature. In other words, it does not kill but keeps alive. 'For the just shall live by faith' by faith in the Savior. But this **heart** is fixed on the center of a white rose to show that faith causes joy, comfort, and peace. The rose is white, not red, because white is the ideal color of all angels and blessed spirits. The **rose**, moreover, is fixed in a sky-colored background, to show that such joy of faith in the spirit is but a promise and beginning of heavenly joy to come. This joy, though not yet revealed, is looked forward to and held by hope which we have. Around this background is a **ring**, to show that such bliss in heaven is endless. And since the ring is made of gold, the best and most precious metal, it also shows that the bliss of heaven is more precious than all the joys and treasures." Martin Luther



Recently installed stain glass window in school lobby.

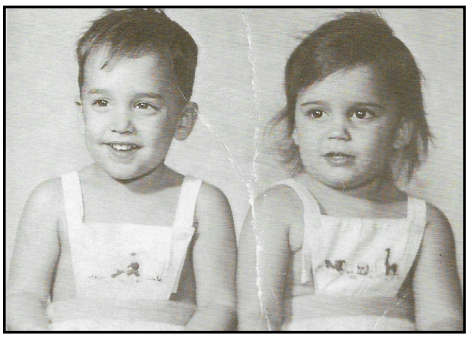
I am thankful that the stories of the Bible and the Christian faith were passed on from generation to generation going back to the time of the Reformation. I was raised with strong ties to the church and my faith was nurtured by weekly church attendance, Sunday School, Vacation Bible School, and Bible study. I have been surrounded by a strong faith family with family and friends. I am able to share the verses of the Bible daily with students through devotions. I pray that as the stories have been shared with me, they may continue to future generations as they are shared with children, grandchildren, and many more future generations.



God's blessings,
Deitt Schneider

A Visit With Alumni: 'A Tale Two of Twins'–Mary and John Preston

We were very pleased to be asked to write an article regarding our childhood experiences at St. John's Lutheran School (1952-1960). We both have added our individual recollections of this important time in our lives, and the great memories we have enjoyed over the last 57 years.



John and Mary Preston

1st & 2nd grade

Mary – I remember Ms. Neva Luebkemann always reminding us to "lay our heads down" for a 20-minute nap and ensuring that "the twins" spoke perfect English.

John - Ms. Neva Luebkemann always reminded me of that grade school teacher in "Leave it to Beaver." Yes, she saw to it that my speech problem (pronouncing certain syllables) was corrected. I'll never forget when she announced to the class that she was leaving to get married to Mr. Omer Liefer.

3rd grade

Mary - Ms. Jo Ann Schaefer was always "on time" for the start of class and made sure "the twins" were also there on time. What a wonderful lady and great role model!

John - My age is showing itself, as I can't remember Ms. Schaefer, so I'll need to fall back with Mary's recollection of her.

4th grade

Mary - Mr. Cliff Lochhaas encouraged both of us to "learn as much as we could," as we would always benefit from diligent study.

John - Mr. Lochhaas definitely encouraged us and stressed the benefits of learning. I recall during 5th grade, the lunch money turned up missing and Mr. Lochhaas was the teacher assigned to pat down the boys in the coat room. Lunch money was later found as it had just been misplaced.

5th and 6th grades

Mary - Mrs. Odes Stellhorn was like a second mother to both of us, and always made sure we had enough homework each evening.

John - Mrs. Odes Stellhorn impressed on me the ability to write letters and short stories. To this day, I recall one of my writings (about my dog) coming back covered in RED ink. I should have used the word "dirtied the yard." Luckily, I was not called upon to read my story in class that day. Mrs. Stellhorn was definitely a mother figure for me.

7th and 8th grades

Mary - Mr. Ron Snyder not only taught us about world history but made us into "great athletes" along the way. I was always in the track meets and became a great outfielder on the girls' softball team.

John - Mr. Snyder was definitely the teacher who had the most impact on me regarding my Christian faith. To this day when I think of St. John's Lutheran School, I think of Mr. Snyder who treated all his students like his own children and impressed on them the Lutheran faith, especially John 3:16 (KJV) and the words "only begotten son." We lost our father in the 5th grade, so Mr. Snyder was like a father figure to me. And I believe it was Mr. Snyder who selected me as one of the school's "crossing guards," something I recall each day when I pass by the school during dismissal.

Custodian

John – I can't overlook our custodian, Otto Renner, who I considered the gatekeeper. School doors were NOT unlocked until a specified time, so the children could not get in. And he stuck to the rules, rain or shine. Also, his name is easily remembered as it could be spelled backwards and still come out as Otto Renner.

Cooks

John – I can't recall their names, but they always prepared a very good lunch, except the one day of the week when they made liver (ugh). Because of these cooks, I learned to like chili.

Regarding Confirmation in May 1960, we both fondly remember Pastor Gross, who was very strict; however, he

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1960 Confirmation Class: Left to Right 1st Row: Curtis Hartmann, John Preston, Dennis Voss, David Guebert, Glenn Schnepel, Omar Koester, Richard Liefer, Richard Loesche, Dennis van Buren. 2nd Row: Jo Ann Warren, Carol Stellhorn, Mary Preston, Wanda Behnken. 3rd Row: Barbara Stamm, Judith Schettler, Donald Carroll, Robert Liefer, Ruth Ann Heinemeyer, Sherry Lowry, Rev. M. H. Gross.

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made certain all of the 8th graders would remember their Bible verses and instilled in us the stories of the Bible. To this day, we remember the hard work we put in and how Confirmation was the beginning of a lifelong lesson which has meant so much to us as adults.

Fast forward to 2020 - John and Mary have always been close to one another, and even today, we reminisce about the many times we were competitive, fought for each other, and were always there for each other. What wonderful memories of years gone by!

Blessings to all,
John Preston & Mary (Preston) Wallace (pictured at right)
Class of 1960



A Visit With an Alumnus: Norman Reagan

Hello from Mark Twain land, Hannibal, Missouri, where I have called home for over 20 years. My name is Norman Reagan, and I am a 1968 graduate of St. John's, Red Bud (pictured at left with my family).



Memories are too numerous to cite here; that would take a book. My memories of teachers to name a few, Mr. Snyder, Mrs. Stellhorn, Mr. Tetting, and Pastors Gross and Holstein, all of whom made an impact on me. I give credit for my success to my parents, Cletus and Thelma Reagan. My mother's name was synonymous with St. John's Sunday School for years.

I've had the good fortune to have experienced a number of careers, one of which was as a chiropractic physician, a career path taken because of my mother, who experienced the benefits of chiropractic. I married the love of my life, Judy, in 1991, in a small Lutheran congregation in Cottage Hills, Illinois, by a young pastor by the name of Pastor Mark Nebel. When we moved to Hannibal, we were members of St. John's there. How fitting!



Norman Reagan (top left) with his family.

After 27 years of marriage, my wife was taken to be with her Lord, and she rests in St. John's Red Bud cemetery, where my parents are buried. How special that the ceremony was officiated by Pastor Nebel!

My wife and I opened a bed and breakfast, Reagan's Queen Anne, which we ran together for 20 years in Hannibal. I continue to operate it today in her loving memory. (Inside our bed and breakfast is pictured below.)



My life at St. John's started in the old school, but soon the new school was ready for us. Recently, Pastor Nebel gave me a tour of St. John's Lutheran which completely overwhelmed me by its growth. I can see the education received at St. John's Lutheran School more than prepares students for moving on to high school and beyond.

I moved away from Red Bud, but it and St. John's will always be in my heart.



1968 Confirmation Class: Left to Right 1st Row: Debra Deterding, Donna Schmitz, Orville Heller, Kevin Liefer, David Schnepel, Kenneth Wehrenberg. 2nd Row: Howard Mehner, Katherine Hanebutt, Donald Dannenberg, Barbara Deterding, Norman Reagan, Steven Budde, Ella Schoenbeck, Elva Schoenbeck, Michael Guebert. 3rd Row: Douglas Mehring, Brenda Wolters, Nadine Muench, Byron Ehlers, Mr. Ron Snyder, Rev. Robert Holstein, Keith Koester, Carleen Seders, Sharon Rowold, Timothy Lowry

Meet the New Director of Christian Education, Mr. Bill Becker

I bring greetings to you from the new Director of Christian Education (DCE) at St. John's Lutheran Church and School. I have been on the staff at St. John's for the past 22 years. I have been privileged to serve God for my entire LCMS ministry of 26 years in many and various positions. When I attended college at Concordia University River Forest, I was originally enrolled in the DCE program with elementary teaching certification emphasis. I have taught grades K-8 various subjects and have been a homeroom teacher for several grades. I have also taught adult confirmation classes, 8th grade confirmation, Bible classes for parents, Sunday School, VBS, and helped or led youth groups. I have served in all three districts of Illinois with my time here in Southern Illinois being the longest at 22 years.

With the retirement of Pastor Koen, it was the decision of the elders and Board of Parish Education to seek a DCE to assist in the educational ministry here at St. John's rather than calling another pastor.

What is a DCE? *Lutheran Witness*: August 4, 2009 *by* Dean Nadasdy

On its Web site, Concordia University Texas (www.concordia.edu) offers a helpful description of a DCE. Here is an abbreviated version:

A director of Christian education (DCE) is a synodically certified, called, and commissioned life-span educational leader prepared for team ministry in a congregational setting. In this setting, a DCE is called minister of the Gospel; a trained parish-education specialist; a team minister who works with the pastor, staff, and lay leaders of the congregation; a teacher of the faith; and a trainer of the laity for service.

I am married to Diana Stellhorn of Baldwin, IL. My wife and I were blessed with two children, Briana and Bryce (pictured below). Both of our children attended St. John's Lutheran from daycare through eighth grade. Briana was one of the first students to use the daycare when it first opened. As a Called worker to St. John's, I am truly blessed to have been able to watch my children grow up here. The teacher's love shown to my children and the nurturing of their faith from little on has always held a special place in my heart. We have made many friendships throughout the years because of events like the Fall Festival, sporting events, and the 8th grade trips. Both of our children remained active in the Sr. Youth upon graduating from High School. Briana was able to attend two Youth gatherings as a student and a third as a Young Adult volunteer. Bryce also has attended two of the youth gatherings and will apply as a Young Adult volunteer for the next gathering. Bryce also has been attending Concordia Mequon. He is pursuing a Lutheran diploma for middle school/high school teaching certificate in History. His firm foundation of a Lutheran school education from here at St. John's has guided him to hear God's call in this worthy vocation. Briana is pursuing a degree in nursing from SWIC and helps in the Before and After Care School Program here at St. John's. St. John's has been a major part of my family's life. I am thankful to God for His blessings provided to our family of faith here at St. John's!





2nd grade class recently led chapel on the story of Abraham. Chapels are held in the new gym so students can be spread out. Chapels are also live-streamed on Facebook since no outside guests are allowed.



Inadvertently, the family picture of Ted Wiatr was left out of the last alumni newsletter. Ted is pictured here with his wife, Amanda, and their two children, Kayli (9), and Max (6).

The Pastor's Perspective: Rev. Mark Nebel

St. John's Lutheran Church in Red Bud continues to serve faithfully our Triune God and His people in Jesus' name with the good news of our life and salvation by His life, death, and resurrection. St. John's is in its 166th year of Word and Sacrament ministry offering worship, education, service, and outreach with the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. We conduct Holy Communion services for Lutheran residents at Red Bud Care Center and Garden Place Senior Living as well as monthly Holy Communion visits in other facilities and with those who are homebound. Our elementary school and daycare center serve about 300 students each year with education in Jesus' name. We continue to support Christ Our Savior Lutheran High School. Two future church professionals from our district who are attending Concordia Universities receive tuition support from our congregation. They are Clara Nebel and Bryce Becker. We support a Concordia Seminary student who works with us through the Field Education program.



Drive-in service held in the church parking lot.

When the COVID-19 shutdown took place in March of 2020, St. John's immediately went to online worship services live-streamed over Facebook and uploaded to YouTube. We then added a parking lot drive-in service for a month before returning to in-person worship at the beginning of June. The fourth quarter of the school year was done online through remote learning. Everyone (teachers, parents, and even students) was happy to begin the 2020-21 school year in person.

Mrs. Deitt Schneider continues as St. John's principal, now in her 45th year of Lutheran education. Rev. Russell Koen retired on July 31, 2020, after nearly 37 years of parish ministry. An Open House reception was held in his honor on September 13th (pictured at right). Mr. Bill Becker has transitioned from classroom teacher to St. John's newly-created position of Director of Christian Education. Rev. Clifford Adair, a Baldwin native, recently retired from parish ministry in Minnesota, has joined St. John's staff as a part-time Assistant to the Pastor in the areas of preaching and visitation. I am in my 14th year of serving St. John's as the Senior Pastor.



I expect that you have noticed how strange the year 2020 has been. We began this year with high hopes of having a clear year of perfect vision (20-20), but it has been anything but that. As Paul says about life in this sinful world, "For now we see in a mirror dimly, but then face to face" (1 Corinthians 13:12). God is good and will guide us through these difficult days, strengthening us in the faith, repositioning our priorities for life, and reminding us that this world "as we know it" is passing away. Our foundation for life now and forever is in our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ!

Save the Date!



We are celebrating Pastor Nebel's 30th anniversary of ordination to the Holy Ministry as a faithful servant of God and minister of the Word. To celebrate this milestone, we will hold an Open House for Pastor and Cindy Nebel on Sunday, October 25, from 9:00-10:15 a.m. Refreshments will be served. (Please wear masks and social distance during this time.) In appreciation for Pastor's service to our St. John's congregation these past 13+ years, we will include a card shower in this event. If you are unable to attend, you may send cards to Pastor's attention at St. John's Lutheran School, 808 S. Main Street, Red Bud, IL 62278. Thanks be to God for Pastor and Cindy Nebel and their work to proclaim the Good News of Jesus Christ!

School Happenings



Eighth grade recently held their Civil War Day. The students researched historical figures, dressed up as them, and made presentations in character to the other classrooms.





The Class of 2020 was able to hold their graduation ceremony on June 5 in an outdoor ceremony. Pictured at right are the four, co-valedictorians; Chase Lucht, Malayna Crafton, Addison Dilley, and Ryker Papenberg.

Attention!

If you would like to receive your newsletter by email,
please send your email address to alumni.stjohn@gmail.com,
and we will remove you from our mail list while adding you to our email list.

Save the Date!

DINNER AUCTION

Saturday, March 20, 2021