St. John's Lutheran School
Alumni News

Newsletter No. 7

Greetings!

We have had a great start to the 2017-2018 school year! Our theme is centered on the celebration of the 500th anniversary of the Reformation, "Grace Alone, Faith Alone, Scripture Alone, Christ Alone." The Bible reference verse is Ephesians 2:8, *"For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God."*

Our enrollment is very good! We have 70 students in daycare who are not in Preschool, 41 in 3 and 4-year-old Preschool and 177 in K-8 for a total of 288! We are very blessed to have all these children in our school who get to share the love of Jesus each and every day.

As a parent, you know how much fun it is to experience new things through the eyes of a child. Imagine experiencing God's handiwork with 400 or more children! The Aug. 21, 2017, Total Solar Eclipse was awesome! The eclipse was fantastic to see and experience with the students, parents, and guests that day. We were blessed to have two other schools experience the day with us, Zion Lutheran School in Staunton, grades 7 and 8, and Zion Lutheran School in Bethalto, grades K-8. The students received special painted eclipse rocks in grades K-3, t-shirts in 4-8, and we had a special lunch, Rocket Dogs, Sun Chips, sun slices (oranges), cosmic brownies or star crunches, and milk. All of our students also received cookies and a special bottle of Darkest Night Black Cherry soda from Excel Bottling Company in Breese. We gathered together in the new gym for Bible readings, a song, and a science demonstration. We were able to be outside with a perfect view of the total solar eclipse. The cheers and shouts were awesome! I was told that people in Red Bud were able to hear us several blocks away! The day was truly special and one I hope the students remember for a long time. Thanks to the committee who helped organize our school event. We will be blessed to experience this same event in 2024 as the path of the Total Solar Eclipse will once again cross over Red Bud. Yes, the traffic was a bit of a problem, even in Red Bud, but well worth the wait!



Our eighth graders enjoying the eclipse.

The 500th anniversary of the Reformation will be celebrated all over the world on Oct. 31. Bruce and I were privileged to travel to Germany with 46 other people this past summer to walk in the footsteps of Martin Luther. We visited Eisleben, the city of his birth and death, Erfurt and the Augustinian Monastery where he attended the University and became a monk, Wittenberg where he lived for 40 years, taught, preached, and raised his family in the Black Cloister, Eisenach, and the Wartburg Castle where he translated the New Testament into German, Leipzig and Torgau where his dear wife Katie was buried. We also visited Dresden along the Elbe River on our way to Prague in the Czech Republic and Krakow, Poland. One highlight of the trip was to worship in Wittenberg on July 16 in the Old Latin School. Rev. Robert Kolb led the service with Mr. Ted Boettcher serving as the organist. Ted and Karen, both previous teachers at St. John's, were in Europe at that time and were able to join us on that day which was a great experience. Our group also purchased a tree for the Luther garden. Our tree is #416 out of 500 and is labeled St. John's Lutheran Church, Red Bud, Illinois, USA. Any person making the trip to Wittenberg will be able to see the tree in the Luther Garden. The school students will also plant a tree this fall as a remembrance of the 500th Anniversary of the Reformation.



In Eisleben, Germany, outside the birthplace of Martin Luther.

God's continued Blessings to you, Deitt Schneider

Truly, Fully, and Eternally: "I Am Content"

On Wednesday, June 21 (the summer solstice), Mr. Ronald Snyder suddenly died in the Lord to enjoy the never-ending view of the Risen Son of God, Jesus Christ, in all His heavenly glory. Ron was a long-time beloved teacher and principal at St. John's. Most of you reading this newsletter had him for an instructor. We celebrated his life in Christ with a funeral service on June 27. The following is the sermon I preached for that service:

RON SNYDER FUNERAL-June 27, 2017 Romans 1:16 and 1 John 5:4 *(KJV)*

Eunice, Tim and Kate, Paula and Dean, Joe and Lori, Mark and Susan, Dave and Kim, Rachel and Randy, Mary and Eric, and the many other family and friends of Ron Snyder; grace, mercy, and peace be yours from God our heavenly Father and our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. It is a precious privilege to preach for you today. The old saying goes, "you can't go wrong when you have good material." When it comes to living the Christian life and sharing the Christian faith, Ron gave us great material.



Civil War Day with the class of 2000.

But this is also an overwhelming assignment. How can I do justice to Ron's life in the few minutes we have? (Eunice told me to keep it short.) Ron was a family patriarch, the devoted husband of his forever friend and hometown sweetheart, Eunice, for going on 62 years of marriage. Ron was a loving father who provided for his large family on a Lutheran teacher's salary. You soon will gather in the Fellowship Hall for our funeral luncheon on the very spot where Ron and Eunice raised you. Ron was a proud grandfather who along with all their other accomplishments wanted his grandchildren to know and live with Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior. Ron was an upstanding citizen of Red Bud. He managed our town's pool for years. Not only was it a place for kids to swim but also the first job for many local teenagers. Ron was a conscientious churchman. He called us to faithfulness in doctrine and practice. He reminded us to get Scripture straight. Ron used his spiritual gifts for the good of our congregation as a Bible class teacher, choir member, and historian of the past 60 years. He also was a fine musician playing both organ and piano. How appropriate is it that he passed away next to his piano! I can see Ron entering into heaven giving the pitch for the angel choir.

But ask Ron what he was and his answer would be O.A.T "only a teacher." We know better. He was a teacher and then some. Ron taught many school subjects over years, but his specialty was educating his students for life itself. He would surprise me when telling me whom he had taught because some of you are getting kinda old. He obviously was not much older than you were when he was your teacher. Ron retired from teaching as well as farmers retire from farming (that is, not). He continued to educate students as a substitute both in high school and our grade school. Being with Ron always was a teachable moment. He had information on history, science, literature, gardening, Cardinals baseball, the Bible, and theology. Trying to swap tidbits of knowledge and pieces of trivia with Ron was like playing tennis against him. You could volley with him for awhile, but he always got the last shot in. It is sad to say that we live in a culture which highly values the worst of influences upon our children. Entertainers, athletes, and singers are very well paid while the people who are so critical to the formation of our next generation, our teachers, are underpaid, and underappreciated.



Ron with kindergarten in 2015.

Ron came to St. John's at a time when the parish teacher still was expected to do everything that the pastor didn't do: coach sports, play the organ, direct the choir, lead the Walther League,



Washington D.C. Trip with the class of 1987.

and probably even sweep and mop the floor. Ron's influence upon our school continues. Under his guidance, the building was constructed in 1961 and added onto in 1970. Our school's mascot, the Cougar, comes from his college alma mater, Concordia-River Forest. He started our yearbook, the Discipulog, in the early 1960s.

There are two things that I could do today that might make this casket start shaking: one, use something other than the King James Version for the Bible readings; and two, spend all this time telling you what a great person Ron was. He would be the first one to tell me that this is not about him, it is all about Jesus. So we come to the first of our sermon passages, Romans 1:16, *For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek.* Ron was a scholar of Martin Luther and the Reformation (we will observe its 500th anniversary soon). This was a passage that turned the switch on for Luther and gave light to the Reformation of the church that he began.

"I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ"- The gospel is God's love, grace, and favor to us in the life, death, and resurrection of the only-begotten Son of God Jesus Christ. "For it is power of God"- God's almighty power is used not against us but for us in Jesus. Armed with this power of God, Ron entered a junior high classroom for 43 years. Armed with this power of God, Ron talked about Jesus with believers and unbelievers alike. Armed with this power of God, Ron challenged skeptics of the faith and doubters of the Bible. "Unto salvation for everyone who believes"- God's offer of new and eternal life in Jesus is for all. Jesus is the Savior of the entire world. But that offer is only good for those who give up on themselves as the agents of their salvation and receive Jesus as the Holy Spirit gives Him to us in God's Word and Sacraments.



State capital visit with the class of 1998.

Now for Ron's confirmation verse from 1 John 5:4: *For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith.* Ron was born of God when his Christian parents brought him to the water and word of holy baptism at St. Peter's Lutheran Church in Columbus, Indiana. Ron was nourished then in his family, congregation, and school for his life of faith in Jesus through an education in God's word, the Holy Bible. "Overcomes the world"- this is God's promise, it is His gift. But this world would not see it that way. Where is the fame? Ron's passing did not make CNN Headline News. Where is the fortune? There will not be a Brink's armored car in Ron's funeral procession. But the evidence of Ron's victory in Jesus Christ over the world is here yesterday and today with the many family and friends whose lives he touched gathering together and sharing their memories.

I witnessed this last Wednesday evening in the Emergency Room of Red Bud Hospital as Ron's family gathered in sorrow but not in grief. Instead it was a time of joy and thankfulness. Yes, they were sad when they first saw for themselves the bad news that they had heard on the phone. But this mood quickly turned to stories and laughter. The husband, father, and grandfather who had shared peace in Jesus with them for many years was now at peace with Jesus for eternity. "This is the victory that overcomes the world, even our faith"- this faith is our trust placed in Jesus as our only Savior from sin and our only hope for life now and forever. It is ours not that we came up with it, but it has been given to us by the Holy Spirit in baptism, the Bible, and the Lord's Supper.

(Continued on back page.)



Ron and Eunice with their family.

(Continued from inside…)

This faith overcomes the world because it lasts beyond the life we live in this world, and it will last beyond the time of this world itself. We sang an Easter hymn before the message. I think that it is always good to include one in a funeral, but this one is especially appropriate today. Whenever Ron was asked how he was, he would say, "I am content." If that was the case while he was here with us in this life, it is even more so now that he is in the heavenly, visible and glorious presence of our Triune God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit for eternal life. AMEN.

The Snyder Family of Ron and Eunice who attended St. John's:
Children: Tim Snyder (Class of 1970), Paula Snyder Wiley (Class of 1971), Joe Snyder (Class of 1973), Mark Snyder (Class of 1974), James Snyder (Class of 1976), David Snyder (Class of 1977), Rachel Snyder Miller (Class of 1979), and Mary Snyder Schnelle (Class of 1982).
Grandchildren: Jessica Snyder Nehrt (Class of 2006), Joshua Snyder (Class of 2010), Jacob Miller (Class of 2009), Maria Miller (Class of 2010).

Direct Payments

We are excited to announce that routine payments to our church and school now can be made by direct electronic withdrawal. If you so choose, payments for items such as worship offerings, school lunches, preschool tuition, and daycare can be automatically withdrawn securely from the bank account you designate at either bi-weekly or monthly intervals. To set up this option, simply fill out a form (in the school office) and select each payment account you would like to have automatically withdrawn (e.g. school lunches, offerings, etc). It is free to set up, and you can make changes or cancel at any time at no cost. If there are insufficient funds in the specified account at the time of payment, no funds will be withdrawn and the user will be notified. Our hope is that this option will offer convenience to users and will result in a greater level of efficiency for our congregation. Please note that this is completely optional--no one is required to sign up. If you feel more comfortable continuing to use cash or check, please do so! Kara Wagner, Treasurer

$100,000 FOR THE 500TH:

During November, we will have the opportunity to raise $100,000 to be matched by $100,000 for our congregation's debt reduction in celebration of the 500th anniversary of the Reformation. Please use the envelope enclosed.

Jesus sat down opposite the place where the offerings were put and watched the crowd putting their money into the temple treasury. Many rich people threw in large amounts. But a poor widow came and put in two very small copper coins, worth only a few cents. Calling His disciples to Him, Jesus said, "Truly I tell you, this poor widow has put more into the treasury than all the others. They all gave out of their wealth; but she, out of her poverty, put in everything-all she had to live on." Mark 12:41-44

A Visit With an Alumnus: Adam Guebert

I have been a proud alumnus of St. John's Lutheran School for 17 years. For many of you reading this, I am sure that does not seem like a long time. In those 17 years, St. John's has changed quite a bit. We have been through two additions to the current building and multiple additions to the staff. My class was the last to graduate from St. John's with just one hallway.

Being an abnormally tall and newly graduated St. John's alumnus, Pastor Schultz chose me to hold the crucifix for the 2001 addition's groundbreaking (pictured at right.) I remember at the time, while I was very appreciative that Pastor had chosen me, I was not prepared for how hot it would be in a white robe and how heavy that crucifix would become as the ceremony went on. I didn't think much more about that moment until I was asked to write this article. I began to wonder who was there when the first ground was broken for St. John's.



If they took a picture that day, I have not seen it. I can imagine though, if they had a ceremony, the school board was present. On the first school board were three men: George Goedelmann, Henry Kloepper, and my great great uncle,William Guebert. This was just the beginning of the long history of my family's involvement and attendance at St. John's. My great grandfather Henry attended the first school. While I never met him, the influence that St. John's had on him was made evident by the fact that he made sure his children also attended. He also contributed ground to build the third school building. My grandfather, Theodore, attended the second school that was north of the current church. He and my grandmother, Amelia, made sure that both of their "singles" (my aunt Ruby and my father), their twins (my aunt Marion and uncle Marvin), and their triplets (my uncle Eugene and aunts Eunice and Eula) all attended St. John's. My father and his siblings attended the third school building.

My father was not an overly ambitious student. He has always been hard working. I have often prayed that God would grant me even a partial share of my father's work ethic. He simply never enjoyed school. He does appreciate it though. He and my mother both made sure that my brother and I received the quality Christian education that they both knew, from their own experience, St. John's would provide.

My mother was a transfer student from St. John's in Ruma. She came in during her fifth grade year to the fourth school building which still stands today. While it may seem as though she has never left (you can see her there every Wednesday), she did graduate. She is one of the countless volunteers throughout the years of St. John's who have given of their time and talents to the students of St. John's. They give of themselves simply because they love the students and St. John's mission of spreading the Gospel. This publication itself is the work of volunteers who love current and former students and the continued mission of St. John's to spread the Gospel near and far.



My grandfather, Ted Guebert, and his brothers, sisters, and parents. First row top: Herbert (class of 1912), Rose (class of 1899), Louis (class of 1904), Albert (class of 1908), Frieda (class of 1902), Second Row: Minna (class of 1920) Adele (class of 1913), Edna (class of 1915), Edwin (class of 1906), Martha (class of 1910), Front: Mrs. Henry Guebert (class of 1877), Theodore (Ted) (class of 1919), Mr. Henry Guebert (class of 1870), Bertha (class of 1917).

Honestly, when I walk into St. John's today, I get a little lost. I don't think I will ever get used to more than one hallway. A lot of the staff has changed, and the faces we see around school will continue to change as time goes on. Thanks be to God that He continues to provide enthusiastic and Christ-filled servants to teach our children. Some teachers are still familiar. I don't think it is a coincidence that the two teachers who taught me twice (Mrs. Miller and Mrs. Schneider) are still there. If they could survive teaching me for two years, they can survive teaching anyone!

All joking aside, my time at St. John's prepared me well academically. I graduated high school and went on to the University of Illinois and then Purdue University. I now serve as the School Counselor at Chester High School. More importantly, my faith has also been nurtured and developed to withstand the trials of this world. I have been blessed with a strong Christian wife, and I sincerely hope to provide my future children with the excellent Christian education that my family has been blessed to receive generation after generation.

Adam Guebert is pictured below with his family. From left is Benjamin Guebert (Class of 1996), Adam (Class of 2000), Lisa Guebert, Sue Guebert (Class of 1966), and Willard Guebert (Class of 1947).



(Pictured above)My father, Willard Guebert, and his brothers, sisters, and parents. First row, top: Marian (class of 1948), Marvin (class of 1948), Willard (class of 1947) and Ruby (class of 1943). Sitting: Ted (class of 1919), Eula (class of 1955), Eugene (class of 1955), Eunice (class of 1955), and Mrs. Ted Guebert.



Save the Date

Second Annual

Alumni Dinner

Saturday, February 3, 2018
6:00 P.M.
St. John's Lutheran School's Old Gym

We will be celebrating the 500th Anniversary of the Reformation!
Several of our alumni and staff members will be giving
presentations on the Reformation.
Please look for more information coming soon!

We would also like to communicate with you via email!
Please send your email address to alumni.stjohn@gmail.com if you would like to receive emails.
For Ron Snyder's funeral, it was a great way to send a quick message.