

The Epistle

JULY 2023

**St. John's Lutheran
Red Bud, Illinois**

**Church: 508 Bloom Street
618/282-2394**

**School: 808 South Main Street
618/282-3873
618-282-4087 (fax)**

**office@stjohnsredbud.org
www.stjohnsredbud.org**

**Worship: Saturdays at 5 p.m.
Sundays at 8 and 10:30 a.m.
Christian Education Hour:
Sundays from 9:30-10:15 a.m.**

We preach the Gospel of Jesus Christ, administer the sacraments and provide Christian education in service to all people.

Rev. Mark A. Nebel, Senior Pastor

Rev. Brian Nowak, Associate Pastor

Mrs. Lindsey Hudak, Director of Parish Music

Mr. Justin Palm, Principal

Mr. William Becker, Director of Christian Education

Mrs. Amanda Falkenhain, Daycare Director

From Lutheran Hour Ministries

"Say What?!" by Dr. Kari Vo

Matthew 10:40-42 - [Jesus said] "Whoever receives you receives Me, and whoever receives Me receives Him who sent Me. The one who receives a prophet because he is a prophet will receive a prophet's reward, and the one who receives a righteous person because he is a righteous person will receive a righteous person's reward. And whoever gives one of these little ones even a cup of cold water because he is a disciple, truly, I say to you, he will by no means lose his reward."

This is one of those things Jesus says that makes my jaw drop in disbelief. That's all you have to do to get a righteous person's reward—to receive the righteous person himself? To get a prophet's reward, just receive the prophet? It sounds too good to be true.

So I think to myself, fine. What does it mean to "receive" someone? Maybe that's the catch. Maybe it's some huge undertaking, some major sacrifice that means you really deserve that great reward. But then Jesus blows up that theory by saying, "Whoever gives one of these little ones even a cup of cold water because he is a disciple, truly, I say to you, he will by no means lose his reward." What! A cup of cold water? God considers

something that minor to be "receiving" the disciple—and God rewards it? Wow! Clearly nobody is actually *earning* the reward in all these scenarios. The action is too tiny, and the reward is too great. No, these rewards come as *gifts*—as amazing generosity, running over and flooding the receiver's life. What is going on?

The key is in the first sentence: "Whoever receives you, My disciples, receives Me, Jesus. And whoever receives Me, also receives God who sent Me." Whether he knows it or not, a man or woman who opens the door to a Christian believer out of hospitality also opens the door to Jesus who sent him—and therefore to God the Father, who sent Jesus to be the Savior of the world. To open the door to God's messenger is to open the door to God's message—that God has come into our world as the Man Jesus Christ, who has given His life to rescue us from the power of evil and make us beloved, forgiven children of God. And what is the reward of receiving Him? Endless joy, healing and mercy, and everlasting life.

This passage also gives me hope for the non-Christians in my life whom I love. I have seen them welcome me—and I pray that this grows, whether they know it or not, into a welcome to Jesus their Savior, and God who sent Him. Because God is both generous and sneaky, and He will use any pretext to get the Gospel into someone's life—to make them His beloved children. **WE PRAY:** Dear Lord, I pray for those I love who don't know You yet. Give them the same gift You have given me—salvation and life and joy in Jesus Your Son. Amen.

Your Pastors' Ponderings

The passage in the above devotion struck me as it is the one I use at the ordination of a new pastor. All the pastors present gather around the kneeling newly-ordained servant of God's Word and individually share a biblical blessing with him. I pray that these words of Jesus to His first disciples will come true for him in his own ministry to God's people in Jesus' name.

I will have the opportunity to not only take part, but to officiate at the ordination of the new pastor for Christ Lutheran Church in Jacob. Rev. Gunnar Campbell, a recent graduate of our seminary in Fort Wayne, Indiana, will be ordained and installed as pastor there on Sunday, July 16. Since our district president, Rev. Timothy Scharr, will be officiating at an ordination and installation at Zion in Belleville at that exact same time, he has asked me, as First Vice-President, to serve in that way at Christ-Jacob.

BTW, we will hear these words of our Lord Jesus as part of the Gospel reading for the first weekend in July.

Your servant in Christ, Pastor Mark Nebel

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To my fellow brothers and sisters in Christ,

As I contemplated what to discuss in this month's newsletter, I came across an article that helped me. Not only did it help me write this article, but it also helped remind me that I am not alone. I pray that this article benefits you as well. One of my favorite scripture verses. Jeremiah 29:11 (I prefer the NIV version). Look it up.

We all have times when we face trials and tribulations, when things get us down and get the best of us. These things make us worry about the future such as a worldwide pandemic, high rates of unemployment, low stock prices, and rising food and gas prices.

These trials and tribulations may even cause us to think, "Where is God?" But such times are when God is with us the most. Maybe He is trying to get our attention. Maybe He is trying to get us to listen and be aware of what is going on around us. Maybe He is trying to show us how He is working in our lives.

We need to be careful in our thinking. It can cause us to drift away from God. Our thinking can allow us to think we do not need God, that we can handle things on our own. This is the time when we need to look for God acting in our lives, the time when we need to look for God's guidance. He is trying to get our attention and help us realize that we cannot do it alone. We need Him in our lives.

God's Word comes to us just as it came to Jeremiah. Hope was lost for Judah. They had been called to repentance but did not feel the need to do so. They thought they could handle things on their own. God raised up the nation of Babylon which came and took them captive, destroyed the temple, and dragged them away into slavery. The things they so relied on were gone. Hope was lost.

Yet, God raised up His prophet Jeremiah to share His message, when God's people were at their lowest in Babylon. Through Jeremiah, God shared His Good News. God had plans for His people, Israel. He would give them hope and a future. He would be their God and they would be His people.

So, in life's trials and tribulations, "**Keep pushing forward!**" Remember that the life we endure here is just temporary. Remember what He does for us. What He has done for us. That He has a plan to give us hope and a future. Remember in good and bad times that we can take

heart for He has overcome the world. I pray that we all continue to remember this in good and bad times. Maybe thinking and contemplating on this can provide us with some peace and comfort.

God's blessings to you, Associate Pastor Brian Nowak

Welcome to Our Family of Faith

June 25 Baptism of Lily Grace Liefer

We Bid a Fond Farewell

June 12 Death of Loren Harms

June 20 Death of Rick Horrell

July Servers

Flowers: Pam Miller and Kourtney Moll

Paraments: Virginia Moeller Cloths: Lynn Langrehr

Free Piano!

St. John's Lutheran School currently has a piano that is not in use and looking for a new home. It is a tall, brown, antique upright piano in good condition and in tune! Best of all, it is free for the taking!! If you are interested, please contact Lindsey Hudak at 618-340-6055 (call or text) to make arrangements. Thank you!

A Musical Moment

So far this summer, we've been blessed to have several different people enhance our weekend worship services through their musical gifts! There are more opportunities for this in July. For July 9th and 30th, I've scheduled the Summer Singers to sing in the 8 a.m. services those Sundays. If you're looking for a "low-key" opportunity to sing one song with a group to enhance a worship service, come join us! We'll meet at 7:30 a.m. those mornings to practice.

In addition to the Summer Singers, I'm inviting anyone with musical talent to share their gifts with the congregation during worship this summer! If you are interested, contact me and we can set something up! Thank you to those who have already done so! Look (and listen) for more musicians sharing their talents in worship services this July and August.

There is nothing I enjoy more than playing a worship service with many people in attendance singing and praising God to the best of their ability! God doesn't call us to be professional musicians, He simply calls us to worship Him. Our congregation is blessed to have many people lifting their voices in praise to Him! Let's keep that going, in the summer months, and beyond! I look forward to serving you musically in worship! *Mrs. Lindsey Hudak*

Cookout at Concordia Seminary

Every Friday during the summer Concordia Seminary holds an evening cookout (5 p.m.) for student families in the married student housing complex. Our Estate Fund Committee is sponsoring this meal on Friday July 14. St. John's members are invited to join them on this occasion! Please RSVP to our office if you would like to attend. Also, if you want to go early for a tour of the seminary campus, let Pastor know so he can make that arrangement.

Midweek Bible Classes

Our midweek Bible classes are Wednesday Morning (9:30 a.m.) Women ("Be Still and Know"); Wednesday 7:30 p.m. (2nd Chronicles) and Thursday **7:30 a.m.** (Hosea). Men's Bible Breakfast will meet on the first and third Saturdays (1st and 15th) this month at 7 a.m. We are studying the Old Testament book of Proverbs, "God's Ancient Wisdom for Our Modern Living."

Thank You from Lutheran Heritage Foundation

Our \$500 Sunday School mission gift provided 100 Bible books for children in Ukraine. "Thank you for supporting LHF as we share God's Word in 96 countries and more than 150 languages. Thank you so much, children of St. John's Lutheran Sunday School, for your mission hearts to the Ukrainians! I and my wife, a native of Ukraine, are truly grateful. God bless you! *Rev. Dr. Matthew Heise, Executive Director of the Lutheran Heritage Foundation*

Vacation Bible School Report

The week of June 12-16 Vacation Bible School was held under the leadership of Bill Becker, Patty Schnepel, Laurie Wright, and Christy Palm. There were a total of 37 helpers throughout the week. There were a total of 86 students registered. Information from registered students was shared with Pastor Nebel in regards to church membership and contact information.

Attendance was: Monday- 80 students; Tuesday- 79 students; Wednesday- 77 students; Thursday- 79 students; and Friday- 72 students, making our average attendance 77 students. The offerings to support this evangelism outreach of St. John's totaled \$1,486.04. Expenses totaled \$1,544.17. This made a net difference of -\$58.13.

A closing service was held Friday, June 16 at 11 a.m. with a full sanctuary of students and guests. A lunch was served to those student and adult helpers who took down decorations and returned the sanctuary and Fellowship Hall to its normal arrangements.

On behalf of the leadership committee we want to thank all that helped, attended, decorated, and made this event such a success. To God be all the glory and honor.



Vacation Bible School students at opening on the first day of VBS (above) while students and family gather in the sanctuary for the closing service (below).



From Your Director of Christian Education

"For one who has died has been set free from sin. Now if we have died with Christ, we believe that we will also live with him. We know that Christ, having been raised from the dead, will never die again; death no longer has dominion over him." Romans 6:7-9.

The United States of America will celebrate 247 years of freedom on July 4. The freedom Christ won for us with His death on the cross has earned us an eternal freedom from sin, death, and the devil.

The VBS held in June was a success thanks to so many helpers, organizers, and attendees. A complete report will be given at the Voter's meeting later this month. I am offering a Lego/STEAM camp for those students who will be entering grades five-eight. This will be held July 10-14 and limited to the first 30 students that register. The \$10 cost will go towards snacks, batteries, and supplies. We will meet in the science/art room 9:00-10:30 a.m. Please RSVP to 618-282-2958. Summer Sunday school continues from the library at school from 9:30 a.m. to 10:00 a.m.

I am pictured below receiving my certificate after completing a 31-hour seminar through the Colonial Williamsburg Foundation *STEAM to the Past, Design for the Future* which was held from June 18-22.

I am attending the LCMS Convention in Milwaukee, Wisconsin from July 28-August 3 as an Advisory Commissioned delegate for the Southern Illinois District.

God bless our native land: firm may she ever stand through storm and night. When the wild tempest rave, Ruler of wind and wave, Do thou our country save by thy great might. LSB # 965

Have a blessed month! In His service, DCE Bill Becker



From the Principal's Pen

June proved to be a very busy month as we are working to get the school ready for the upcoming school year. We were able to finally to move the dirt and make it more presentable than the mounds. The dirt was used to raise areas on the softball and baseball fields and backfill around the new pavilion; thank you to Dustin Liefer and Nathan Salger for the movement of the dirt and the finishing work. Thank you also to Jeremy Voss for removing the base pins from the fields so we could add more dirt and also to Scott Voss for preparing the fields after the dirt was added to the diamonds.

The month of June also saw the delivery of a load of mulch for the playground areas. I would like to say thank you very mu(1)ch to the many helpers (Bart Miller, Kenny Langrehr, Leonard Salger, Austin Kiefer, Dustin Liefer, Kristen Maschoff, Justin Palm, Fred Salger, and Nathan Salger). Bob Schamm, Will Krick, and the many teachers and daycare workers that have moved items out and then back into classrooms to prepare the school for waxing which we hope to finish by July 2nd. Finally, a thank you to all the helpers (Deitt Schneider, Martha Krick, Betty Schmitz, Lisa Quinn, Amanda Falkenheim, Kathy Liefer, Bob Schramm, and Justin Palm) who have helped to maintain the landscaping at church and school. We welcome any and all helpers to maintain the landscaping which is a huge cost savings to the church and school. Our school would not be able to be what it is without the help

of so many volunteers and/or workers who go above and beyond their called duties.

The Firemen's Parade was a great success this year. We were blessed to have a presence in the parade and spread the word about St. John's Lutheran Church, School and Daycare. We hope to reach out to over 500 people through stress balls and shirts that we distributed along the parade route. Thank you to the many walkers, riders, and drivers who represented our church and school. All members are welcome to join us for the parade.

Registration/Book night will take place on July 12 from 4-7 p.m. in the school's new gym lobby. The secretaries have worked to prepare items to get you all the needed financial and information items you will need for the year. New this year we will accept credit card payments. We hope to see many families that evening. Should you be out of town that week, please call the school office or come in during regular school office hours, 8 a.m.-4 p.m., Monday-Friday.

Mr. Becker will host a Lego/ Stem Camp the week of July 10-14 which is a returning favorite this year and has proven to be fun! He still has spots available so be sure to sign up for this great opportunity! A group has been and will be continuing to work on technical improvements to our WiFi system to we can more fully utilize the bandwidth our church and school are paying for each month. This expense will be covered by the PTL Dinner Auction. We are thankful for those who are helping to make these improvements: Ron Breier, Mike DeRousse, Andrew Stellhorn, and Josh Voss. We are thankful for this great blessing as many of the upper grade students utilize the internet for homework, research, and so much more.

The Board of Parish Education will look at some policies for the handbook as we move into July and look to have the possible changes highlighted on or around book night. Several people have asked about our calendar for next year. The link below is from the Red Bud District #132. Our schedule will have an additional day of attendance on March 4. Our school day will be full time as in all normal years with dismissal being at 2:45 p.m. [Distric #132 Calendar for 2023-2024](#)

Enjoy the rest of your summer, stay safe and take some time for yourself and your family!

May the Lord bless and strengthen you, Mr. Justin Palm

***May God Bless America and
May America Praise God for His
Blessings!***

School Registration

Registration night will be held on Wednesday, July 12th from 4-7 p.m. in the new gym lobby at school. Parents of students in Kindergarten-8th grade should attend to complete paperwork and pay applicable fees. Be on the lookout for a post to our school Facebook page in the coming days with more information. If you have any questions or will not be able to attend that evening, please call Sara in the office at 618-282-3873 to make arrangements to register.

Evening Guild News

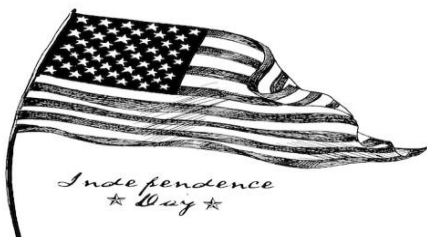
Evening Guild does not meet in July. Our LWML Quarterly Summer 2023 is ready for pickup on the tables in the church entrance. The LWML Milwaukee Convention is online at www.lwml.org for you to watch at your convenience and feel like you attended with the 3,500 ladies who were there.

Quilting schedule for July begins on the 11th on Tuesdays from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. and Wednesdays from 9 a.m. to noon in the quilting room.

Baldwin Sight Center: The Sight Ministries in Baldwin has closed. They have operated there since 2010 and have assembled over 46,000 books in many languages. They purchased the paper, printed with the large print, then collated and bound them into books for the sight impaired. Lutheran Braille Workers wanted the Baldwin Center to purchase a braille printer and produce braille books. The Center chose not to do this due to the cost and the need for volunteers. They will reevaluate their decision if other options are offered. The Sight Ministries of Baldwin want to thank the volunteers who contributed many hours each month to this work and those who generously contributed to support this work.

Mission Project Day: Mark your calendar for Monday, August 7th. to assemble and tie quilts for our mission projects. We invite everyone to help with this worthwhile project, young and old, from 9:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m. Plan to work an hour or at your convenience.

Desserts: Our Evening Guild has been asked to make desserts for our Southern Illinois District's annual Spiritual Day of Renewal to be held here at St. John's on Thursday, August 10th.



Senior Youth

Our July meeting will be on Sunday the 9th with swimming at the lake of Mike and Marilyn Kuhn with food provided (weather permitting).

Our Senior Youth is selling greeting cards (all occasions) for \$1. Cards are on display in the Fellowship Hall. We are using an honor system for payment. A money box is next to the card display. We also have full boxes of greeting cards for sale. They cost \$30 for 30 cards and a lovely storage box. *Stephanie & Kirk Liefer*

Adopt A Flower Bed

Dear school and church families, we are looking for individuals small groups who wish to "adopt" a section of our landscaping at school or church. There is no cost to this except the sweat effort of keeping that section of landscaping free of weeds. If you are interested, please call the school office between 8 a.m. and 4 p.m. any weekday. We will recognize your efforts with a sign within that landscape section naming your group or family. Thank you to the five groups that already have claimed a spot. *Mr. Justin Palm*

Christ Our Savior Lutheran High School

Make a difference today for a better tomorrow!

Help Christ Our Savior Lutheran High School by filling out a brief survey. No strings attached! Totally confidential! Click on the link below or scan the QR code. Thank you for your time!

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/FRNWXHL>



Casey's Rewards

Cash for Classrooms- When you shop at Casey's using its rewards program you can donate your points to our St. John's school. Thank you!

Synodical Convention Delegates

Representing our circuit at the LCMS Convention in Milwaukee July 28-August 3 will be voting delegates Rev. Lyle Buettner (New Athens/Darmstadt; 618/696-2649; lylebuettner@yahoo.com) and Mike DeRousse (St. John's, Red Bud; derousse@gmail.com) and advisory delegate Bill Becker (St. John's, Red Bud; 618/282-2958; becker@stjohnsredbud.org). Rev. Matthew Harrison has been elected to his fifth term as LCMS President in pre-convention online balloting.

National Mission Offering

The national mission offering for our synodical convention this summer will “support high-priority translation of essential teaching materials into other languages. Your gift of financial resources will help bring the clarity of the Gospel to others in languages they can understand” *President Matthew Harrison*. This will be another way of doing what our Sunday School and day school mission projects supported this last year through Lutheran Heritage Foundation. Please bring your gift to our church office or put it in an envelope marked “National Mission Offering” and put it in an offering plate at church. Thank you!

Hosts Needed For International Students At RBHS

Several exchange students coming to the area have requested to be placed with Lutheran families. Please consider hosting a boy or girl from Finland or South Korea. Host families provide room & board. Students cover all other expenses. For information, contact Tisha LaNae Daech at tdaech@icesusa.org or 618-447-5915.

Financial Need For Medical Treatment

St. John’s member and recent Red Bud High School graduate Ashlynn Crafton is battling leukemia. We can provide some financial assistance for her treatments at her GoFundMe account <https://gofund.me/3579ba87> or at an account set up with Buena Vista National Bank Account #272745. Thanks for helping her during this trying time.

Website Bible Studies

Bible studies topics under the Media tab of our website www.stjohnsredbud.org are Amen, Angels, Antichrist, Apostles, Apostolic Preaching of the Resurrection, , Baptism Q & A, Church & Homosexuality, Communications Skills, Cremation, Christian Citizenship, Discussing Homosexuality, End of the World, Eternal Election and Predestination, Fear or Faith? Terror or Trust? Worldly Worry or Christian Living, God’s Will in the Lives of His People, Haggai, Having the Right Attitude, Heaven, The Justice of God, Justification and Sanctification, Islam, Live By the Spirit, Malachi, Meditation, Philemon, Purses, The Resurrection in Revelation, Was Jesus a Vegetarian?, and Word Dwellers.

Attention Coffee Drinkers

We are part of Community Coffee's program, "Cash for Schools." Clipping the proof of purchase off packages of ground coffee and/or K cups earns our school rewards. You can drop off proof of purchases at the school office. Thank you for using this program to benefit our school.

Acolyte Schedule

Sat. July 1	5 p.m. Blayton Sutton
Sun. July 2	8 a.m. Amelia Guebert 10:30 a.m. Macie Brown
Sat. July 8	5 p.m. Kendall Crafton
Sun. July 9	8 a.m. Emily Bowles 10:30 a.m. Olivia Candler
Sat. July 15	5 p.m. Olivia Valleroy
Sun. July 16	8 a.m. Brody Stellhorn 10:30 a.m. Kinley Macbeth
Sat. July 22	5 p.m. Addie Rahn
Sun. July 23	8 a.m. Jack Muench 10:30 a.m. Ian Moll
Sat. July 29	5 p.m. Joey Biffar
Sun. July 30	8 a.m. Eve Schwartzkopf 10:30 a.m. Ty Voss

If you are not able to serve when scheduled, please switch with another acolyte and contact our office with the change. Thanks!

Worship Greeters

Sat., July 1	5 p.m. Stanley and Lynn Langrehr
Sun. July 2	8 a.m. Roger and Peggy Hanebutt 10:30 a.m. Jim and Judy Guebert
Sat. July 8	5 p.m. Virginia and Mark Moeller
Sun. July 9	8 a.m. Kalin and Kathy Liefer 10:30 a.m. Ron and Diane Kunkelmann
Sat. July 15	5 p.m. Stanley and Lynn Langrehr
Sun. July 16	8 a.m. Cindy Steele and Olivia Schmitz 10:30 a.m. Gerald and Jill Hanebutt
Sat. July 22	5 p.m. Virginia and Mark Moeller
Sun. July 23	8 a.m. Clyde and Kathy Rowold 10:30 a.m. Ken and Karen Wetzel
Sat. July 29	5 p.m.
Sun. July 30	8 a.m. Lisa Quinn 10:30 a.m. Ron and Donna Burgdorf

We need a person or couple to serve as greeters in the 8 a.m. service and one or two people or one couple to serve as greeters for the 5th Saturday of the month (4x a year). The only qualifications, requirements, expectations and duties are to stand for about 15 minutes once a month, smile and say “Good evening/morning” to people as they enter the church. In other words, you can do this!

LCMS Foundation

Bernie and Helen created their first estate plan when they were 25, right after the birth of their first child. In the fifty years since that time, they have had three more children, and now have eight grandchildren. During those fifty years, they moved four times, to four different states. In each place, they engaged with their local church. Combined, there have been six congregations in their lives. Two of them have closed, located in urban areas that changed from the ethnic origins of the congregations. Two of the congregations have Lutheran schools, bursting at the seams with enrollment. One of the congregations has a vibrant caring ministry for battered women. One has an outreach to immigrants in their community. All four of these congregations and their ministries have had a place in Bernie's and Helen's lives. They want to reflect this connection with ministry and update their fifty-year-old wills, creating gifts for their children and grandchildren.

They met with their local LCMS Foundation Gift Planning Counselor and began organizing a survey of family, assets, and goals. They indicated that one of their goals is to build flexibility into their plans, as life has taught them that life changes. They were happy to see some of the flexible tools the LCMS Foundation offers. Now instead of putting off their planning, or dreading it, they are excited about leaning into the future which includes one day living face to face with Jesus.

Your LCMS Foundation Gift Planning Counselor Scott Radden can help you too. Contact him by email at Scott.Radden@LFND.org or cell phone at 618- 977-4049.

LCMS Stewardship: Go ... Sell All You Have?

"What must I do to inherit eternal life?" asked the rich young ruler. Jesus said, "You know the commandments." And he replied, "All these I have kept from my youth." And Jesus said to him, "One thing you still lack. Sell all that you have and distribute to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow Me" (Luke 18:18–22).

When we hear this story, this question comes to mind: is Jesus speaking to us also, or only to the rich young ruler? In other words, is Jesus telling us to sell all that we have and give it to the poor?

As good Lutherans, we answer, "No!" But why? Why should we not sell all that we have and distribute it to the poor? The simplest explanation is this: if we sold everything we have, our family would be neglected. In other words, to sell everything we have and give it to the poor would ignore, even abandon, those whom God has placed in our care. Our money, everything we have, is not

to be used solely for the church. But that doesn't excuse us from using our money for the purpose God intends.

Everyone has three stations in life, three spheres in which we live and are to be of service to our neighbors. These stations are the church, the family and society. We are members of all three of these by birth. We are born into the church by water and the Word of God, and our duties to others in the church arise from our Baptism into the church. We are born into a family, and our duties to others stem from our birth into that family. Finally, we are born into society, which is simply a further extension of our birth into our family. The duties we have toward other members of society come from either our own birth or the birth of others into the same society.

All that we have and all that we are ought to be pressed into service for the church, the family and society. If we were to sell all we have and give only to one, the other two would be neglected, and we would falter in fulfilling our duties. So, consider your life and all that you have in light of these three stations. You pay taxes to support and help those in society. You save for college for your children, and provide food, clothing and shelter for the members of your family.

But the station that is usually thought of last is the church. Since the needs of the family and society are more immediate, the church is often given what is left over. This is not how it should be. Rather, we are to give of our first fruits, from off the top, the best, even as Abel gave the best of his flock. This requires forethought. It means that you sit down and make a plan of what you will give from the beginning. It means sticking to it even when it seems that there are other more immediate and pressing things.

If we love God and His gifts of forgiveness given through the means of grace, which we receive at church and only at church, then we will support it, just as we love our country and our family. For all that we have and all that we are is given to us by our gracious God. He spared no expense for us and our salvation. He gave up His Son to death so that our sins are forgiven, and we will live. What's more, He provides for all that we need for this body and life. And our lives in this world, among these three spheres of church, family and society are to mirror the generosity of the one who gave us life in all three at birth.

Don't let the church, your divine family, be an afterthought or even ignored. It is nurturing you, bringing you up in salvation through God's Word and Sacrament.

July Church and School Calendar

Saturday, July 1-

7:00 a.m. Men's Bible Breakfast in Fellowship Hall

5:00 p.m. Divine Service with Holy Communion

SUNDAY, July 2-

8:00 a.m. Divine Service with Holy Communion

9:30 a.m. Sunday School and Adult Bible Classes

10:30 a.m. Divine Service

Monday, July 3- Justin Palm on vacation this week

Tuesday, July 4- Office Closed!

Wednesday, July 5-

9:30 a.m. Women's Bible Study in the Fellowship Hall

7:30 p.m. Bible Class in the Fellowship Hall (2nd Chronicles)

Thursday, July 6-

7:30 a.m. Bible Class in the Fellowship Hall (Hosea)

9:00 a.m. Office Staff meeting

6:30 p.m. Adult Instruction Class in Pastor's Office

Saturday, July 8-

5:00 p.m. Divine Service

SUNDAY, July 9-

8:00 a.m. Divine Service

9:30 a.m. Sunday School and Adult Bible Classes

10:30 a.m. Divine Service with Holy Communion

Noon Senior Youth swimming at Mike/Marilyn Kuhn's lake

5:00 p.m. Sonshine Visitation meeting in Fellowship Hall

Monday, July 10-

9-10:30 a.m. Lego/STEAM camp at school

7:00 p.m. Board of Elders meeting in the Fellowship Hall

Tuesday, July 11-

9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Quilting in the Fellowship Hall

9-10:30 a.m. Lego/STEAM camp at school

6:30 p.m. Adult Instruction Class in Pastor's Office

Wednesday, July 12-

9 a.m. to Noon Quilting in the Fellowship Hall

9-10:30 a.m. Lego/STEAM camp at school

9:30 a.m. Women's Bible Study in the Fellowship Hall

4-7 p.m. School Registration in the new gym lobby

7:00 p.m. Board of Parish Education meeting

7:30 p.m. Bible Class in Fellowship Hall (2nd Chronicles)

Thursday, July 13-

7:30 a.m. Bible Class in the Fellowship Hall (Hosea)

9-10:30 a.m. Lego/STEAM camp at school

Time TBD Office Staff meeting

6:30 p.m. Worship Committee meeting in Fellowship Hall

Friday, July 14- Leslie Froemling on vacation thru the 24th

9-10:30 a.m. Lego/STEAM camp at school

Saturday, July 15-

7:00 a.m. Men's Bible Breakfast in the Fellowship Hall

5:00 p.m. Divine Service with Holy Communion

SUNDAY, July 16-

8:00 a.m. Divine Service with Holy Communion

9:30 a.m. Adult Bible Class and Sunday School

10:30 a.m. Divine Service (Alternative)

Monday, July 17- Pastor Nowak on vacation thru 23rd

Tuesday, July 18- Pastor Nebel is gone until Friday

9 a.m. - 3 p.m. Quilting in the Fellowship Hall

Wednesday, July 19-

9 a.m. to Noon Quilting in the Fellowship Hall

9:30 a.m. Women's Bible Study in the Fellowship Hall

Saturday, July 22-

9:00 a.m. Pastor at District Board of Directors' meeting

5:00 p.m. Divine Service

SUNDAY, July 23-

8:00 a.m. Divine Service

9:30 a.m. Adult Bible Classes and Sunday School

10:30 a.m. Divine Service with Holy Communion

Monday, July 24-

4:30 p.m. Estate Fund Committee in Pastor's office

7:00 p.m. Church Council meeting in the school library

Tuesday, July 25-

9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Quilting in the Fellowship Hall

1:30 p.m. Holy Communion service at Garden Place

Wednesday, July 26-

9 a.m. to Noon Quilting in the Fellowship Hall

9:30 a.m. Women's Bible Study in the Fellowship Hall

7:00 p.m. Voters Assembly meeting in the Fellowship Hall

Thursday, July 27-

7:30 a.m. Bible Class in the Fellowship Hall (Hosea)

9:00 a.m. Office Staff meeting

Saturday, July 29-

5:00 p.m. Divine Service with Holy Communion

SUNDAY, July 30-

8:00 a.m. Divine Service with Holy Communion

9:30 a.m. Adult Bible Class and Sunday School

10:30 a.m. Divine Service with Holy Communion

Music CDs Available

St. John's member Joan Voges offers music CDs from her Lilyfields Collection to us for a donation to our school's ministry. All of her Lilyfield CDs are available on the table in the Fellowship Hall for a \$10 donation to our school ministry.

Former St. John's member Bryan Perdue has made his latest CD of music, "Freely Given, Freely Received," available for us to purchase. The \$10 will be used for our congregation's Debt Reduction. They are on the table in the Fellowship Hall.

