



CONNECTIONS

May 2025

St. John's Lutheran Newsletter

REMINDER:

The rooms and hallway on the office side of the building from the narthex to room 103 as well as room 108 will be closed for renovation starting 5/3!

LOOK!

**OUTDOOR
SUNDAY SERVICES
BEGIN MAY 25TH**



Ponderings From Pastor Caleb...

Good things are happening here at St. John's! I'm excited to share that our building renovation is officially underway—a major step Forward-in-Faith as we work to create an even more welcoming and functional space for all. Throughout the project, we'll be looking for volunteers to lend a hand at key points, so stay tuned for opportunities to get involved.

Beginning Memorial Day weekend (May 25 at 9:30 am) and continuing through the summer, join us for our special outdoor Worship & Tailgate Fellowship as we journey through the book of Romans in a relaxed and engaging setting. And don't forget—Upward Soccer is in full swing, offering kids a fun, faith-filled environment to grow in both skill and spirit. There's so much to look forward to! Thank you for being part of our church family—where you belong, and you are loved. I give thanks to God for all His blessings, and that most certainly includes you!



**Summer Sermon Series:
"A Walk Through Romans"**

Join us:
Saturday nights at 5:30
or
Sunday mornings at 9:30
outside in the pavilion

**SERVE
THE LORD
WITH
GLADNESS!**

Palm Sunday



*Mosanna
in the highest!*

EASTER



He is Risen!

Confirmation Sunday

April 27, 2025



Jackson Brady

"Faith means relying on Christ's gift of eternal life and everlasting peace. I rely on my faith daily whether at school, playing sports, with my family or in unfamiliar situations. When I step on the court, I am honoring God our Father. I put effort into my performance not just for personal success but as an act of worship by centering Christ in everything I do."



Nathan Szaflarski

"When I am faced with challenges, I can feel God giving me the power to push past it. Faith helps guide me through my life. It helps me make decisions and affects how I interact with others. Each time God helps me, or when I can feel him guiding me, it reassures me knowing I am doing the right thing by following God's will. In times of doubt or uncertainty, God is the source of my hope, showing the way and reminding me that I am never alone. My strong faith helps me to believe I can achieve things that mean a lot to me."



Cody Thackwray

"The Bible verse I picked is 2 Chronicles 15:7. 'But as for you, be strong and do not give up, for your work will be rewarded.' So what this means to me is never give up. During my time in life, I have had difficult obstacles throughout time, but I want to keep going on that journey no matter what. God can help us with what we want to accomplish in life because we believe in Him so if we ever need help in life then we can show support to God and tell us that you should never give up and keep on trying in life."



operation christmas child

It sounds a little crazy to be touting a Christmas thing in May, but did you know that items for the shoe boxes are collected and can be donated all year round? It's true! The organizer for this mission collects school supplies, toys and clothes all year round, especially when things go on clearance after the holidays and are highly reduced at the beginning of the school year. In fact, for the first time ever, there will be a "Christmas in July" event to collect items for shoe boxes this year at St. John's!

Operation Christmas Child is not just a box of toys going to an underprivileged child, but, in fact, is a worldwide mission that reaches children with the truth of the gospel that otherwise cannot be reached through normal mission avenues. The box gives the child an invitation to local classes provided in their native language on the truth of the Gospel. Thousands of children and families have been saved through the distribution of these boxes to unreachable parts of the earth. Please keep this mission in your prayers and watch for ways that you can help in the upcoming months. Any questions, contact Laurie Mathiesen.



"Every box is an opportunity to reach a child with the Gospel of Jesus Christ."

LERT

We had one LERT member attend the chainsaw training classes at Walcamp April 25th-26th and he officially became a certified chainsaw operator! Congratulations to Nick Miletta!



On May 3rd, the LERT members will descend on a congregational member's property to participate in a much needed servant event to spruce up the house and yard as the residents are unable to do it as this time. All available LERT members should contact Dave Voelker for more information if they are willing to help.

Missions

We love because He first loved us.

REDEEMING LIFE

Redeeming Life Outreach Ministries (RLOM), a pro-life ministry that we support, has a maternity home located in East Dundee and is a Recognized Service Organization (RSO) of the Lutheran Church Missouri Synod. This location provides housing and programming for pregnant women, whether they choose to parent or share their baby through the gift of adoption.

All programming is focused on helping residents to live full and independent lives, providing them with a family-style community while giving them an opportunity to gain skills in infant care, job readiness, financial literacy, and more. The home welcomes up to four women at a time and features a live-in residential manager, as daily family-style meals and weekly worship helps foster a strong community. Residents also find help securing pre and post-natal healthcare as well as behavioral health support.

If you would like to take a more active role in this mission, you can contact the program manager, Sarah Rusche, who is a member of Zion, at: dessarah@rlom.org to find out how you can help.

BELIZE MISSION TRIP

We are about six weeks away from sending our first mission team to Belize! This is exciting stuff for our church body as it paves the way for future trips to occur. The team is asking for prayers for safe travel as well as safety while staying and traveling in Belize, that solid connections can be made with the rest of the team and the people they are serving, and that they can accomplish the tasks at hand. If you are able to support the backpack program, please do so. To God be the glory!



**BELIZE
MISSION
SOCIETY**

"Joining Jesus to transform lives through mercy, compassion and life together."



SPOTLIGHT ON MISSIONS: QUILTERS



Do you quilt? Can you sew, use a scissors or a rotary cutter, iron fabric or tie a knot? Maybe you could provide treats, layer quilts, talk, or eat? If any of these sound appealing to you, you might just be able to join our Quilters' Group. This dynamic dozen of do-gooders meets every Monday morning from 9:00 to 12:00 in order to, well, make and provide quilts for the needy, including the homeless, new single moms and their babies, veterans and even our furry friends at the animal shelter.

Organizations that benefit from their time and talents include: The MORE Center, Redeeming Life Outreach Mission, the veterans in Hebron, the Grafton Food Pantry, The Vineyard Homeless facility in Elgin, families that have lost everything in a fire or have experienced another type of emergency, and those that were affected by the tent city fires in Elgin. Two animal shelters, Baseline Humane Society in Genoa and Animal House Shelter in Huntley, also benefit from the quilters in the form of dog beds and pillows. In addition, through the Christmas Tree Project in Chili, Wisconsin, numerous quilts are donated to children who live in single parent households or have a parent that is incarcerated. Occasionally they have a quilt sale at church to raise money to buy more supplies and are always on the hunt for fabric. Donations are always welcome.

This mission team consists of Liz Ziemer, Karen and Dan Tuttle, Marie Nikitovich, Sandy Haber, Sally Rendell, Sara Dittrich, Galen and Sue Sollie, Lorraine Rosset, Denise Kawa and Suzanne Carnehl. They break for the summer after May 19 and resume in the fall. For more information, contact Sally Rendell.

WHAT: QUILTERS

WHEN: EVERY MONDAY MORNING



IN THE KNOW: BUILDING RENOVATION IMPORTANT UPDATE!

**STARTING DATE
IS NOW MAY 3RD!**

Proposed Timeline for May:

- **May 3: Official start day**
- **May 8-9: Move front entrance out**
- **May 12: Erect temporary walls in gym, narthex & hallway by room 103**
- **May 20: Start removing walls and ceiling in new fellowship area**

These areas will be open and accessible:

- **Room 103, the entire kitchen and the gym**
- **All doors on the west end of the building**
- **Restroom entrances closest to Jenny's office**
- **The main entrance doors**

These areas will off limits/unaccessible:

- **Room 108 (used for storage)**
- **Library and music room(s)**
- **Hallway leading from the narthex to room 103**
- **Restroom and gym entrances closest to the main office**
- **Shower area in restrooms**

FAQS:

1. What happened to plans for a bathroom by the kitchen?

Answer: At this time, it was found to be not cost effective to put a bathroom in that area. It was decided to use the funds to focus on completing the fellowship/coffee area first and foremost and then to revisit plans for a bathroom in that area at a later date.

2. Will the kitchen be available for use?

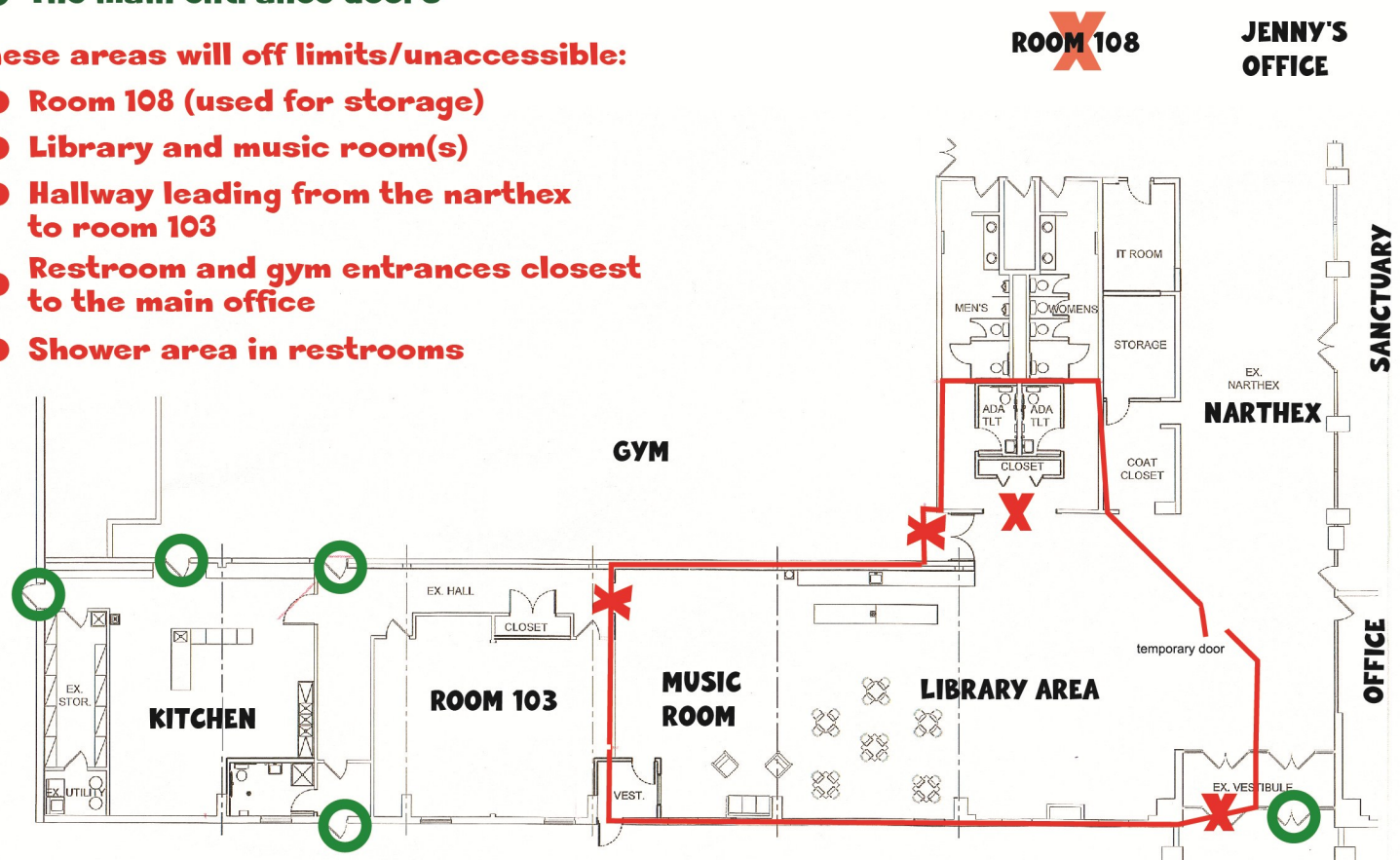
Answer: The kitchen will be accessible and usable during the renovation, as the bathroom addition has been postponed.

3. How do I access the bathroom facilities?

Answer: Bathrooms will be accessible through the bathroom doors closest to Jenny's office.

4. What entrance(s) can I use to get into the building?

Answer: All outside entrances to the church will now be usable.



Spring Clean-Up

On Saturday, April 12th, several members of our congregation gathered together to help clean-up the church property both inside and out. They planted trees, spread mulch and trimmed bushes and plants outside. Inside the building, windows were washed and the sanctuary was completely dusted! A big shout out to Doug & Lori Borhart, Coy Szaflarski, Howard Hughes, Nick Miletta, Jim Johnson, Rose Boyd, Dave Voelker and members of the 4-H Eagles.



FMSC FIELD TRIP!

On April 10th, several members of the Thursday Morning Women's Bible Class took a field trip to Feed My Starving Children (FMSC) in Libertyville. If you are not familiar with FMSC, they are a Christian non-profit organization that provides food for the hungry. The process is fairly simple: donations given by people fund the meal ingredients, volunteers hand-pack the meals, the meals are donated to food partners around the world, kids are fed and lives are saved!

Anyone can volunteer at FMSC and there are anywhere from 50-100 people packing on any given day. On this particular day, the ladies were there with several other groups and together they packed 36,864 meals which was enough food to feed 101 kids for a year! Great job, ladies!



ST. JOHN'S SPIRIT WEAR!

St. John's official "I LOVE MY CHURCH" spirit wear will be available for purchase through Sunday, May 25th. We will be offering the following in black: short-sleeve t-shirts, long-sleeve t-shirts and hoodies. Order forms can be picked up in the narthex and dropped off in the office. Payment is due at time of order.

Cost breakdown:

short sleeve t-shirts.....	\$15
long-sleeve t-shirts.....	\$22
hoodies.....	\$33



MINISTRIES

KIDS KREW!

Kids Krew sewed up this “school year” on April 30th. They had dinner, reviewed the “fruit of the spirit,” sang songs, were given certificates that best exemplified their personal “fruit,” showed appreciation for their teachers and other volunteers and played some games outside. Kids Krew expanded by leaps and bounds this year and we pray that it will continue to draw children in to hear the message of Jesus’ love in the fall. Great job to all involved!



VBS planning has been an ongoing process for several months now and the majority of the weeks’ activities have been established. Due to our summer building renovation, VBS will once again be held at Zion in Marengo this year and the chosen theme is “SCUBA.” Now all we need are children and volunteers!

The registration website went live last week, so skedaddle on over to www.myvbs.org/STJOHNZIONVBS to register your children and/or to volunteer to assist in some capacity. We are in need of crew leaders, preschool staff, craft people, snack preparers, and possibly even, some brave people to help out with skits. You need not have children to apply.

VBS is open to pre-K through those who have just completed the fourth grade. Children who have finished fifth grade and beyond can volunteer to help out in one of the areas or just be around to corral small children.

If you are looking to assist in some capacity but can’t take time off from work to help out during the week, eventually, we will also be needing supplies for the snack items, so watch for that in the bulletin.



JOIN THE FUN!

YOUTH GROUP!

The Youth Group engaged in a couple of servant events in the month of April, as well as hosting the fundraiser, Dinner & Tournament. At the beginning of the month, they traveled to Feed My Starving Children and helped pack an excessive amount of bags to not be outdone by the surrounding tables (because they are not competitive at all). A few things were learned on this trip: our youth can rock hairnets, they can belt out "Sweet Caroline" as good as anyone, they are very loud at cheering, and they actually are very competitive!

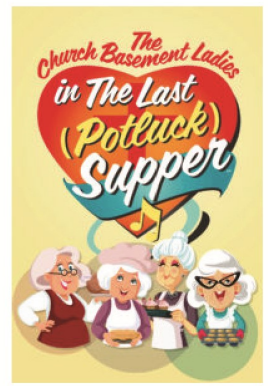


Dinner and Tournament was almost sold out and brought in a good amount of funds for the National Youth Gathering. Between the silent auction, ticket sales and the Chuck-a-Duck, a little over \$4200 was raised! In addition, the great race came to a close and almost \$3800 was raised in that endeavor! The Youth are ever so grateful for your continued support in their attempts to fully fund the upcoming trip this summer!

Despite the Gathering in Union being postponed until next year, the youth found other ways to occupy their time the last weekend of April. Some of the youth and their families spread mulch at the park in Union in the afternoon and then headed over to church for a treasure hunt and pizza in the evening. Over two hundred tiny bunnies, carrots and chicks were hidden throughout the building (except for the offices and sanctuary) and the youth scoured the place in search of them in order to win a prize. So, with that being said, if you happen to find a tiny bunny or carrot (the chicks were all located), please turn it into the office as the youth are looking for them... (ha, ha)



The Scoop ON JOY Group!



This past month, the JOY Group attended a concert at the Raue Center in Crystal Lake provided by The Jazz Ambassadors of the United States Army Field Band. This event was free of charge but required reserved tickets in advance, which were procured back in February, so fifteen lucky people were able to attend the fully packed theater. The program featured a wide variety of songs, both old and new, together with some short vignettes and photos from various past wars. Also stories were retold by veterans of these wars via the use of video footage. The program honored the multitude of veterans who were present for the show, as well. It was an extraordinary evening.

In May, the JOY Group will be attending the Woodstock Community Choir concert at the Opera House on Sunday, May 4th. Later in the month, on Friday, May 16th, the group will descend upon Jan Sherwin's house for a potluck planning meeting for the summer months. If you'd like to have input into future events, please come to lunch (the office can give you directions to Jan's) and after the planning is done, cards/games may ensue.

One big summer event has already been arranged as tickets have been reserved for *The Church Basement Ladies in The Last (Potluck) Supper* at the Fireside Theater. This will occur on Friday, July 11th, so clear your calendars and watch for tickets to go on sale. This one you don't want to miss!

Next month the youth will be participating in a "May the Fourth Be with You" road rally/scavenger hunt, taking a break to honor their moms, and then welcoming summer with a cookout closeout complete with outdoor games. Summer youth activities will continue in the summer but on a more sporadic basis of once or twice a month depending on activity, desire and availability of the youth.

Then it's NOLA or BUST in July!

ENDURE
2025 LCMS YOUTH GATHERING
HEBREWS 12:1-3



Dinner & Tournament

The Youth Group's "Dinner & Tournament" was a smashing success! The evening started with a silent auction in the narthex with a variety of baskets and other items that were available for purchase. The king and queen were present, as well as our beef-eater, a pillory and a suit of armor for photo opportunities. The arena itself was decorated in the five colors of the knights and guests were able to choose their seats while simultaneously choosing the knight they would cheer on for the evening's events. There were also crowns, of course, for everyone.

Guests were served a dinner of shepherd's pie, salad and rolls by the youth and then presented with a wide variety of delicious desserts, too! During this time, guests were also entertained by a juggler on a unicycle and could continue to bid on the items in the narthex. Then, it was show time and the chaos ensued!

Our herald, Pastor Mark, announced the knights and their squires, who took a lap around the arena on their "horses" to screaming and adoring fans. They then competed in five events: the rings, the javelin throw, balance board challenge, the joust and sword fighting with a brief intermission halfway through. During intermission, for a small fee, guests could compete for a \$25 gift card in a Chuck-a-Duck game that required one to throw a rubber duck into a barrel (it was harder than it looked). Audience participation occurred during the ring event and as the evening's events unfolded, the audience became increasingly rowdy cheering on their respective knights. Paul Kuhn even found himself in the pillory!

The youth thanks Zion's Boar's Head and CAST Marengo for providing them with costumes, to everyone who donated time or or items and to their biggest fans - you!





MAY 2025 CALENDAR



WEEKLY RECURRING EVENTS:

SUNDAYS:

7:45 am Traditional Worship, Sanctuary
8:45 am Fellowship Breakfast, Gym
10:30 am Contemporary Worship, Sanctuary
3:00 pm Pickleball, Gym

MONDAYS:

8:00 am Pickleball, Gym
9:00 am Quilters, Room 110 (thru 5/19)

TUESDAYS:

8:00 am Pickleball, Gym
9:00 am Staff Huddle, Library
6:00 pm UPWARDS Soccer, fields
6:30 pm Pickleball, Gym
7:00 pm AA Meeting, Room 110

WEDNESDAYS:

8:00 am Pickleball, Gym

THURSDAYS:

8:00 am Pickleball, Gym
9:15 am Women's Bible Study, Room 103
6:00 pm UPWARDS Soccer, fields

FRIDAYS:

8:00 am Pickleball, Gym

SATURDAYS:

8:00 am Men's Bible Study, Room 110 (thru 5/17)
5:30 pm Traditional Worship, Sanctuary

OTHER EVENTS & MEETINGS:

MAY 1 (THURSDAY)

6:30 pm Interior Design Meeting, Library

MAY 3 (SATURDAY)

BUILDING RENOVATION BEGINS
ROOM 108 AND LIBRARY CLOSED UNTIL FALL
8:00 am LERT Servant Event, Brasile Property

MAY 4 (SUNDAY)

3:00 pm Joy Concert, Woodstock Opera House
4:00 pm Youth Group Road Rally

MAY 13 (TUESDAY)

6:30 pm Interior Design Meeting, Room 103

MAY 15 (THURSDAY)

6:30 pm Governing Board Meeting, Room 110

MAY 16 (FRIDAY)

11:30 am Joy Potluck Planning Meeting, Jan's

MAY 17 (SATURDAY)

10:00 am Youth Group Servant Event

MAY 18 (SUNDAY)

5:00 pm Youth Group, Pavilion & Fields

MAY 20 (TUESDAY)

10:00 am Food Prep for Homeless, Kitchen

MAY 21 (WEDNESDAY)

6:00 am Homeless Mission, Elgin

MAY 25 (SUNDAY)

8:00 am Tailgate Fellowship, Parking Lot
9:30 am Outdoor Worship begins, Pavilion

NOTE: KIDS KREW, SUNDAY SCHOOL, QUILTERS, & ADULT BIBLE STUDIES (EXCEPT THURSDAY LADIES) ALL TAKE A BRIEF RECESS DURING THE SUMMER MONTHS. THESE ACTIVITIES WILL RESUME IN THE FALL.
YOUTH GROUP WILL FOLLOW AN ABBREVIATED SCHEDULE IN THE SUMMER.

FYI:



JESUS LOVES YOU!



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