



St. John's Lutheran Church
September, 2019 *Fortress*

ALL THE TIME IN THE WORLD

1 Corinthians 7:29-31 What I mean, brothers, is that the time is short. From now on those who have wives should live as if they had none; ³⁰ those who mourn, as if they did not; those who are happy, as if they were not; those who buy something, as if it were not theirs to keep; ³¹ those who use the things of the world, as if not engrossed in them. For this world in its present form is passing away.

Where did the summer go? Wow, how time flies! The older I get the faster the days seem to pass by.

Did you ever find yourself saying things like this? We all have, maybe even in the past few weeks or days. Time does fly by, and as the old adage goes, time waits for no one. It sometimes almost seems cruel that it passes by so quickly that we don't have enough time to enjoy the things we'd like to or even have enough time to accomplish everything we wish we could.

St. Paul reminds us that time not only flies by quickly, but that the time we have on this earth is short. In fact, the existence of this world, in the whole scheme of things, will be short, according to God's Word. The time will come when God will call all people to account on the last day.

Although we can rightly say, I have all the time in the world, St. Paul says:

What I mean, brothers, is that the time is short. All the time in the world is not really that much time, since the day will come when we will have to leave this world, whether it is because the Lord should tarry or because we will be called home before his return.

Therefore Paul says: **From now on those who have wives should live as if they had none; those who mourn, as if they did not; those who are happy, as if they were not; those who buy something, as if it were not theirs to keep; those who use the things of the world, as if not engrossed in them. For this world in its present form is passing away.**

In other words, nothing here is permanent, and in the end, we really don't own anything; it all belongs to God. Therefore we need to conduct our lives in such a way that we live for Christ. Let us put God first by being immersed in his Word, by spending time in prayer, and by taking advantage of worshiping with our fellow Christians.

In the end, when all is said and done, only what Jesus did for us will be left. It is only because he lived a perfect life in our place and died on the cross to pay the debt for our sins that the forgiveness of sins, peace with God, and eternal life in heaven are the treasures that will give us lasting contentment and joy.

Where did the summer go? The day is coming sooner than we think when we will ask the question,

where did time on earth go? All the time in the world is but a blink of an eye in God's sight. Therefore let us live to God's glory every day. Spend some time, every day, in the Bible. Set aside time for prayer. Meditate on God's Word throughout the day. Put Jesus first. As St. Paul exhorts us: **Be very careful, then, how you live-- not as unwise but as wise, making the most of every opportunity, because the days are evil.** (Ephesians 5:15-16) May we then use every opportunity to hear God's

Word and tell others what he has done. The time is short after all.

In Christ,
Pastor Bovee

September Sermon Texts

Sep 1	Luke 12:32-40	Invest in Eternity
Sep 8	Luke 12:49-53	Know Jesus; No Peace
Sep 15	Judges 7:1-8	"I Will Save You"
Sep 22	Luke 14:1, 7-14	Highs and Lows of Being a Christian
Sep 29	Luke 10:17-20	"Nothing Will Harm You"

Upcoming Bible Classes

Sundays at 9:30 am	A Simple Way to Pray	Pastor Jeff Bovee
Thursdays at 10:30 am	2 Kings	Pastor Rob Guenther
Thursdays at 7:00 pm	James / Colossians	Pastor Jeff Bovee
Fridays at 6:30 am	"On Giving Advice to God Part 2"	Pastor Rob Guenther
Fridays at 9:30 am	Ecclesiastes	Pastor Jeff Bovee

Staff Minister

The school year is starting again which means that St. John's adds more worship and Bible study opportunities to the schedule. Bible Class and Sunday School start on September 8. Thursday Bible Classes start on September 5 and Women's Bible Study begins on September 6 and Bible Breakfast Study begins on September 6. Catechism for the St. Paul's School 7th and 8th grades begins on September 11. Public School Catechism begins on September 4. Also, Women of St. John's starts again on September 3 at 7 pm. Please check your calendar to see in which of these opportunities you can participate!

"Oh, the depth of the riches of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable his judgments, and his paths beyond tracing out! Who has known the mind of the Lord? Or who has been his counselor? Who has ever given to God, that God should repay him? For from him and through him and to him are all things. To him be the glory forever! Amen."
(Ro 11:33-36)

Kelly Emde, Staff Minister

Wish List

St. John's maintains a wish list of items that are not funded through the church budget, but which could still benefit our ministry. The current list of items and cost estimates that follows has received approval through the Church Council:

- Organ registration memory upgrade (~\$16,000) – This upgrade will help to accommodate our multiple organists in storing registration presets in a digital memory system.
- Handbells, Handchimes, and Accessories (~\$13,000) – This equipment is essential for establishing a handbell choir.
- Timpani (~\$8,000) – Three timpani (also called kettledrums) will eliminate the need to borrow and transport these instruments when needed.

The Stewardship Board encourages members to continue with their regular, proportionate, and joyful support of our ministry plan. We maintain and promote this wish list to provide direction for those who desire to make a special contribution beyond their planned offerings, and to provide suggestions for designation of memorial funds. Anyone who would like to propose an addition to the wish list can obtain a submission form at the church office.

Church Library

School bells are now ringing. Are the kids ready? Have a good year!

We have 2 new books in our church library. The first one is God's Word for You—The Gospel According to John. It is written by Pastor Timothy Smith of St. Paul's. It was published by the MLC Graphic Arts Dept. in 2019. Pastor Smith explains each verse or part of a verse, with background and insight, occasionally quoting Martin Luther. Pastor Tim has written other Bible Studies, such as Romans and is currently working on other books of the Bible. A good Bible Study!

The second book is Poems and Passages—A Bible Study by Moods by Victoria Rahn, published in 2018. The author is the daughter of Rev. and Mrs. Kenneth Rahn, of St. John's. Miss Rahn has studied moods, and emotions and found Bible passages that back up the ones listed. She wrote a poem about the emotion and added points to ponder, and a prayer. The emotions, such as angry, bereaved, cranky, determined, lonely, sad, or weary, as well as needs such as answers, forgiveness, and patience are arranged alphabetically.

Both books will be on the rolling bookcase in the church library. Other good books are also there.

LeiLani Rahn
Church Librarian

Council Digest

The Church Council met on August 20. A summary of reports and action from the meeting not reported elsewhere in the *Fortress* follows:

- Membership changes approved

Transfers In

Heidi Hagberg; (Nathan, Nash, Nolan) from St. Paul's, New Ulm, MN

Ted and Kirstie Klug; (Anastasia, Elliana) from Faith, Tacoma, WA

Tim and Tammy Koestler from Good Shepherd, Burnsville, MN

Transfers Out

Christian and Sasha Kuether to Grace, St. John's, MI

Andrew Wagner; (Amelia, Alena) to Beautiful Savior, West Des Moines, IA

Adult Confirmations

Dane Hoffman

Ross and Val Martin; (Kayla, Emma, Ella)

Releases

Samantha Hagen Laury Knoll

Gregg Juhnke Robert Knoll

Catherine Knoll Roxanne Nuetzman

Emily Knoll Joel Willems

Jeff Knoll

- Ministrations

Funeral

26 Jul Sharon Karstens

Baptism

16 Aug Melly Verna Kay Watson

- Staff Minister Kelly Emde reported that he is organizing MLC pre-seminary students who are willing to serve periodically as lectors at St. John's.
- Treasurer Paul Gunderson will lead the process of developing the proposed congregational budget for fiscal year 2020 over the next two months with input from the various boards and committees. The completed budget will be presented for approval at the October voters' meeting.
- President Thiesfeldt organized a Nominating Committee to come up with a slate of candidates to fill various elective positions on the council and appointive positions on congregational boards for three year terms of service beginning on January 1, 2020. The first meeting of the committee will be held prior to the September council meeting on the 17th. Voting members of the congregation who are willing to have their names placed in nomination for a position are invited to contact President Thiesfeldt prior to the date of the meeting.
- President Thiesfeldt continues to seek a new congregational archivist to replace Prof. emeritus Robert Krueger when he retires from the work at the end of the year. The formation of a support committee is also being considered. Please contact President Thiesfeldt if you have interest in this work.
- Since teacher Jean Schroeder has announced her retirement at the end of the 2019-20 school year, the Board of Elders and the Board of Youth and Education are working together to develop a plan for her replacement. St. Paul's Principal Peter Markgraf will be invited to the next meeting of the Board of Youth and Education in early September to provide input on the staffing needs at the school. A recommendation will be brought first to the council and then to the voters' assembly for consideration. Once the voters have approved extension of a call, a call list of local candidates will be requested of District President Dennis Klatt. The earliest a call can be extended is October 15. Assuming approval is granted, the voters' assembly will extend the first call for Jean's replacement sometime later in the month of October.
- Council members received an update on the health of Administrative Teacher James Dretske as he recovers from numerous pelvic fractures incurred some time ago in a fall on the school playground. A recent medical visit showed that while the upper structure of the pelvic girdle is solid, the fractures in the lower portion remain. Although Jim has been able to increase the amount of weight the pelvis can bear, it is uncertain whether the lower fractures will heal without surgery. He is currently on full medical disability for the upcoming school year and is not expected to be in the classroom on a regular basis. Please pray that this absence from the classroom will provide an adequate time for healing. In the meantime, Jim will continue to serve the congregation in an administrative role as he attends meetings and provides reports on the operation of the school. The council will review the situation again before the beginning of the second semester.
- Representing the Trustees, Scott Deters reported that he has gotten three bids for replacement of the church carpeting. He was encouraged to share the information with the Campus Facilities Task Force. Although the carpeting is in need of replacement, the project should be coordinated and prioritized in the context of other facility needs.
- Board of Evangelism Chair Bill Pekrul provided a detailed report, noting the following highlights:
- Eighty-three students attended Vacation Bible School this past summer. In a related activity, 170 individuals attended the Sleepy Eye swimming party.
- The first Sunday of August was mission festival with Missionary Paul Nitz as guest preacher and presenter on his work in Africa. The accompanying congregational potluck was well-attended.
- A fellowship Sunday was held the last Sunday of August. One of its purposes was to welcome MLC students, invite them to join us for worship, and solicit their help and participation in congregational activities like teaching Sunday School, singing in the choir, etc.

- Discussions are being held among representatives of St. John's, St. Paul's and MLC to investigate more formal opportunities for outreach at the MLC Early Childhood Learning Center as a way of modeling gospel outreach in a school setting for college students preparing for ministry.
- Watch for an opportunity to update your contact information through the church office in the coming weeks. A special effort is being made to gather current email addresses.
- The next Church Council meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, September 17, at 7:00 p.m.
- The next quarterly voters' meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, October 22, at 7:00 p.m.

Steven R. Thiesfeldt,
Congregational Chairman

Archives

School Days Then

It's time again to review our commitment to Christian education and our relationship with **St. Paul's School**. Hope the names and numbers bring back some memories. That relationship has been a significant part of St. John's history. Selected dates reflect the school year beginning in August. St. John's first year was 1949 and the financial arrangement with St. Paul's Congregation was less formal during the early years. Total enrollment reports note both increases and declines over the years.

1959-60, Pastor was Rollin Reim. St. Paul's School principal was Arthur Glende. Other faculty: Theodore Pelzl, Edwin Nolte, Adolph Gerlach, Margaret Gamm, Esther Buenger and Ruth Otterstatter. The school was then located across the street from St. Paul's church. Total enrollment was 417; no specific figures were given for children from St. John's but 120 were from other Synodical Conference congregations. A January 1957 Special Bulletin notes a proposal for budget increase for St. Paul's School support from \$2,400 per year to \$3,600. It also notes that the estimated cost for the St. John's members' children is about \$8,000 per year.

1969-70, Pastor was Frederic Nitz. Henry Krenz was the principal. Other faculty: Mrs. Robert Kolb, David Schweppe, Mrs. Arthur Glende, Miss Norma Duesterhoeft; Mr. Gene Hoyord was the college supervisor for the DMLC student teachers. Total enrollment was 435; 82 from St. John's. Special support for the school as listed in the 1968 annual report was \$8,610.

1994-95, Pastors were David Kolander and Jeffrey Bovee; David Zabel was Director of Christian Education. Principal was Dale Markgraf. Other teachers called by St. John's were Jean Schroeder, Marlene Wendler and Wendy Ristow. Total enrollment was reported at 359 (pre-K-8) with 136 from St. John's. By way of a new arrangement: 7th and 8th grades were departmentalized and teachers moved from room to room. Additional support was listed at \$72,360 in the 1992 annual financial report.

2009-10, Pastors were Jeffrey Bovee and Wayne Laitinen; Administrative Teacher was James Dretske. Principal was Mike Koestler. The 2007 budget lists \$4,214 by way of additional support besides the salaries of 5 teachers called by St. John's—total educational support \$232,436. Students from St. John's numbered 63 of 237 (K-8). The September 2007 Fortress reported the availability of laptop computers for use by students for research and other learning aspects.

2018-19, Pastors were Jeffrey Bovee and Rob Guenther; Administrative Teacher was James Dretske. Principal was Peter Markgraf. Continued emphasis on “A Time to Build” anticipating remodeling and expansion. School start was delayed as a result. Mr. Nick Kressin was installed to teach grades 5 and 6 and to serve as Athletic Director. Of the 272 students (K-8) 92 were from St. John’s. Students from St. John’s continued to benefit from tuition offsets of \$530/\$430/\$330 (depending on family number) per child. Parents paid tuition totaling \$38,900. The budgeted amount for special support, in addition to the salaries of four teachers, for 2017 was \$135,000.

Obviously there were many changes but an unchanged commitment to Christian education.

Bob Krueger
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St. Paul’s Lutheran School

Registration School registration was held Thursday, August 1st in the SP Parish Center. Although the attendance numbers won’t actually be finalized until the school is in session, it appears that our enrollment will be quite a bit higher than last year. We ended the year with 274 (93 SJ) students and looks to begin the new school year with about 288 in grades K-8. Our enrollment at St. John’s looks to be similar to last year (93-32.3%). A more accurate report will be reported in the Annual Report in January. May God be praised to have each of these children in the school to hear the Gospel on a daily basis. There are presently 58 - PreK students enrolled – up from 55 last year.

School Opening The start of school was changed due to some material delays and will start on Monday, September 9th with an opening service at 8:10 am. Pastor Nate Scharf will be presenting the message based on the theme for the school year verse from Romans 5:8 *“But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.”* Grades 1-8 will have a full day of classes following the service. Kindergarten begins the next day. Kindergarten will not meet on Fridays until the second quarter. PreK will have its sessions in an upper hallway classroom to start the year. They anticipate getting into the new Early Childhood Wing after Christmas.

Changes in Staff Mr. Peter Markgraf had accepted the call to permanently be the school administrator during the last school year. Mr. Markgraf has been busy with the building project as well as getting everything ready for the new school year.

There will be a couple changes to the faculty:

Mrs. Holle Rodriguez will be teaching a 5th/6th grade classroom while Mr. Dretske continues to recover. Mrs. Becky Guenther will be the PreK paraprofessional in the mornings and will also teach two afternoon PreK sessions that continue to be added to the schedule this year to accommodate the larger numbers.

Mrs. Emily Stoering, who started helping out in a 5th grade math class in the middle of last year will continue to help in math and also in a religion class for 5th and 6th grade.

There will be a couple changes in those serving in the Lunch Program.

Installation for Mr. Markgraf, Mrs. Holle Rodriguez, and Mrs. Becky Guenther was on Sunday, August 25. Please continue to pray for all our staff. God continues to bless us with faithful workers.

School Building Project Delays in obtaining classroom carpeting caused a delay in the start of school. A new color was ordered to get installed before classroom furnishings could get moved back into the classrooms. Although there are many updates completed in the refurbishing and construction phases, there will be a few things that will not be completed at the beginning of school. It was felt that school

can start as construction continues in the following areas: Main entryway, Administration Area, Nurse's office, STEM / Art Room, Fundamentals Room, Preschool Wing, Cafeteria flooring, and the Parking Lot. With construction in these areas continuing, the Drop-off and Pick-up procedures will remain the same as last year. The only entrance into the school parking lot will be on Garden Street coming in using the exit lane on the left and proceeding through the parking lot and exiting on Payne Street. Pick up will involve various zones in the neighborhood for the different grade levels.

Pictures continue to pour in as construction continues. Click on the Construction link on the church's webpage to see the most current pictures. Other links are listed within the Construction Website to encompass the whole summer project.

- **Back to School Night** Parents and students are invited to the school on Wednesday, Sep. 4 from 6-8pm to meet with teachers. This event replaces Home Visits for families not new to the school. Parents will be able to get classroom information from the teachers by attending the event. Those attending will also be able to look around the school to see the new renovations. More information was sent to school families.

- **PreK Open House** The new dates for PreK Open House will be Tue.-Fri, Sept 3-6 from 6:30 – 7:30 each night. PreK families should plan to attend one of the evening sessions.

- **Raider Kids Care-Summer Program** The summer program of Raider Kids Care (RKC) will be available at the church until school begins. The director, Tim Plocher, can be contacted by email: ascsummer@splnewulm.org for those in need of care.

Calendar

Sep 3-6 PreK Open House: 6:30-7:30 pm

Sep 4 “Back to School Night” Open House: 6-8 pm

Sep 9 Opening Service: 8:10 am

Sep 10 PreK and K sessions begin

splnewulm.org/school

Respectfully submitted,
James L. Dretske, Administrative Teacher
jdretske@splnewulm.org

Our Synod at Work

THE WELS SUPPORT COMMITTEE

Our Lord calls us to respect and honor our elders and in this way also reflect the love and honor we have for him. In the Wisconsin Synod, one small way we seek to show such honor to our elders is through the WELS Support Committee. This committee has the task of providing some financial assistance to retired called workers and/or surviving spouses who don't have adequate financial resources for everyday living expenses.

The committee is composed of five district first vice presidents of WELS. The first vice president in every district is the contact person for the Support Committee. Each year the district vice presidents reach out to local pastors, circuit pastors, and district officers to request their help in making sure the Support Committee is made aware of retired called workers and/or their surviving spouses who may need financial help.

If a possible recipient is identified, an application form is used to help determine the level of need. The Support Committee then reviews all the applications received and must approve them before assistance begins. The annual amount budgeted for this work is \$250,000. In 2018, there were 18 individuals or couples receiving support, which resulted in a monthly expenditure of \$14,315 and an annual expenditure of \$171,780.

At the beginning of 2019, 19 individuals and/or couples were receiving support, calling for a monthly expenditure of \$16,775. Subscriptions to *Forward in Christ*, *Meditations*, and *Wisconsin Lutheran Quarterly* are also provided to those recipients who request them.

The following factors guide the committee as they seek to carry out their calling:

1. The fund is not an entitlement program.
2. The fund is not an extension of the synod's pension plan.
3. The financial assistance received is a charitable gift from the synod to those in need.
4. The fund is not established to provide temporary assistance for those who resigned from the ministry.
5. The fund does not grant financial assistance to those who need assisted living and nursing home care.
6. The fund is not intended to be the main source of income.

What a blessing that our Lord has allowed our synod to take care of all those who sought assistance in 2018.

Gerald Woodley

Cards of Caring

Fall is coming and school is beginning, so it is time again for St. John's "Cards of Caring" volunteers to meet for fellowship and to make cards for Thanksgiving, Christmas, and birthdays for our "Homebound" and "Thinking of You" members.

We will meet on the following Saturdays: September 15, October 19, and November 16. You are welcome to join us any time between 9 am and noon as your schedule permits. We will again meet at 403 N. Minnesota St. (front door is on 4th North St.).

We welcome MLC students and members ages 12 and older. There are activities for everyone to do. No "card making skills" are required.

For information, contact Lois Willems at 507-676-1230.

LWMS

Each month we get a snippet of what it is like to be the wife of a missionary at home and abroad. This month Heather Walther writes..."My name is Heather Walther and my husband is the pastor at Grace Ev. Lutheran Church in Minot, North Dakota. Our mission has been blessed in countless ways. One way we have seen growth in our congregation is by the increased number of children. By the summer of 2019 we will have 11 children under the age of 3 in our congregation, two of which are our own. This makes for a wonderful and interesting church service on Sundays. We have many moms and dads in the back of church rocking children to sleep and the occasional child making a dash up to the front of church to get a closer look of the altar. What a joy to see these children in church learning and growing physically, emotionally, and most of all, spiritually! It is amazing to see faith growing in the hearts of these young children.

"The Befriend A Mission (BAM) program has been helpful not only to our congregation, but also to my husband and me. Through the BAM program, LWMS women have provided us with children's bags to use during church services, complete with crayons, books, and quiet activities. Every Sunday almost every bag is used. What a wonderful gift they have been! The cards and letters LWMS women have sent to my husband and me give us encouragement. These cards always have a way of lifting us up during the hard days in our mission setting. We are grateful to know that there are people thinking about us and praying for us."

They request that we pray for growth of Grace Lutheran and that the Lord would provide a permanent church home for them.

We have no BAM birthdays or anniversaries this month, so focus your attention on the sign up sheets to help in some way with hosting the LWMS fall rally on Sept 21st. There will also be a sign up sheet for attendance, as usual. Our food committee needs to know how much food to have ready. I hope to see you all there to hear what our missionaries, Charles and Beth Flunker, share with us about Brazil.

Marley Kuckhahn, LWMS Reporter

MLC Ladies' Auxiliary

Reminder:. The Annual Fall Meeting will be held at MLC on October 5, 2019 from 8:00-3:30. Please consider attending all or part of the meeting. Bring a friend with you. Learn about new programs, select new projects, attend workshops, hear presentations and see a short preview of the musical. Enjoy Christian fellowship with many supporters of MLC, the WELS College of Ministry. Lunch may be purchased in the school cafeteria. A closing service in the Chapel of the Christ will wrap up the day.

Jeneane Thiesfeldt, contact person
thiesfjm@gmail.com/ 507-240-4523

Men of His Word

Is your house built on the rock or on the sand? Will your house survive the torrential storms of life or will it wash away when the waves of life come crashing in? The world attacks our Christian values from every direction on a daily basis. To counter these attacks, the MOHW Conference provides opportunities and resources for men to grow spiritually, using God's Word to empower and equip men to carry out their God-given mission in their homes, churches, communities and the world. This year's theme is "BUILT ON THE ROCK."

Whether you attend for the keynote speaker (*Jeremy Mattek, Christian Life Pastor at Immanuel Lutheran in Greenville, WI, and a contributor for Time of Grace Ministries*), the relevant, thought-provoking breakout sessions (*12 to choose from*), or the worship experience with 300 other men (with *Koine', the worship band*), God's Word will speak to you.

The 5th Annual MOHW Conference will be held at the Mayo Civic Center in Downtown Rochester MN on Saturday, October 26th, 2019. Additional details and online registration are available at menofhisword.org for the first 300 men. Adult registration fee is \$50 and youth registration fee is \$30 – These rates increase to \$60 for adults and \$40 for youth after October 13th. Please join us for a day of fellowship in God's Word that you will not soon forget!

Youth Group

The Youth Group had a fun time at the bonfire on August 20th. Thank you, Joel and Shari Black, for hosting!

The September event will be held at Martin Luther College and sponsored by Kingdom Workers MN Valley Regional Mission Team on Sunday, September 22, from 2 - 5:30 pm.

The teens will complete a service project by making Healthy Living Kits for infants to teens, meet new teens and enjoy current friendships, share and hear about mission trip experiences, have some entertainment and fun, learn about MLC, and enjoy supper in the MLC Cafeteria.

There is no charge, but they ask each teen to bring 5 to 8 items that will be divided and put into bags that will be shared with area organizations that help children in need. Possible items include: shampoo, bars of soap, small packages of Wet Ones, toothpaste, toothbrushes, hand sanitizer, First Aid to Go packs, lip balm, washcloths, small packages of tissues, hand lotion, dental floss, combs, or deodorant.

Contact Melanie Mohror at 507-217-7428 or mmohror@comcast.net or Karen Grunwald at 507-217-6229 or kmgrunwald@comcast.net with questions.