



# St. John Lutheran Church

CONNECTING PEOPLE IN THE HEART OF JESUS

July 2024

## Worship with Us

Chapel- Wednesday 8:30 am

Traditional Worship:

Saturday 5:00 pm

Blended Worship:

Sunday 9:00 am

## What We Believe

God accomplishes this mission in us and through us in weekly worship, Bible Study and other fellowship opportunities. God comes to us in the Word and the Sacraments to show us the love and new life he has for us in Jesus Christ. He gives us the opportunity to serve others and reach out with his love.

## Contact Us:

St. John Lutheran Church  
308 S. 2nd St.

Battle Creek NE 68715

Church- 402-675-3155

School -402-675-3605

Early Learning Center- 402-675-4039

Email: churchsecretary@stjohnbc.net

Facebook: St. John Lutheran Church

Web Page: stjohNBC.net

## Who We Are:

Vacancy Pastor: Rev. Lee Weander

Associate Pastor: Rev. Joseph Leech

Director of Music & Worship:

Mr. Steven Whitney

Interim Church Administrator:

Katie Schnitzler

Administrative Assistant:

Diane Stoural

## True Freedom in Christ

*<sup>31</sup> To the Jews who had believed him, Jesus said, "If you hold to my teaching, you are really my disciples. <sup>32</sup> Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free." <sup>33</sup> They answered him, "We are Abraham's descendants and have never been slaves of anyone. How can you say that we shall be set free?" <sup>34</sup> Jesus replied, "I tell you the truth, everyone who sins is a slave to sin. <sup>35</sup> Now a slave has no permanent place in the family, but a son belongs to it forever. <sup>36</sup> So if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed." (John 8:31-36)*

It's Independence Day—the day we celebrate how free we are in the U.S.! But I'm going to say something strange for the 4<sup>th</sup> of July: People in America aren't really free. Just look around: Bitter partisanship and anger and bitterness—is that freedom? The constant struggle to have more money and stuff—is that freedom?



The fear of death that leads people to spend whatever possible just to stay alive a little longer—is that freedom? Pride over sin parading through the streets—is that freedom? Here's something we need to understand: You can live in the U.S. and still not be free. You can be free and still not be free.

At least that's what Jesus says. The Jews of his day were proud of their freedom too, just as you and I are to be Americans. They said, "*We are Abraham's descendants and have never been slaves of anyone.*" Sounds very American, doesn't it? Listen to Jesus' response: "*Very truly I tell you, everyone who sins is a slave to sin.*" Those Jews were wrong about freedom. The real master in our world isn't a foreign country, it's sin. "*Everyone who sins is a slave to sin.*" Would you agree? When greed grabs your heart and controls your life, you're not free. When bitterness fills your mind and guides your tongue, you're not free. When alcohol or lust control your body, you're not free. "*Everyone who sins is a slave to sin.*" Can we argue with that?

Here's the irony: We think that the more we can do what we want, the freer we are. We say: "It's a free country, so I can do whatever I want!" Do you know where that thought started? In the Garden of Eden. With a snake. "If you do what you want, if you eat this fruit, then you will be free, then you will have the knowledge of good and evil. The more you get to do what you want, the freer you are!" What's the truth? Having the freedom to do what I want makes me even more a slave to sin. In the U.S., we are free to drink as much as we want. Free to commit adultery as much as we want. Free to hoard as much money as we want. Free to hate and despise and boast as much as we want. But remember, you can be free and still not be free. The more you get what you want, the more a slave you are. "*Very truly I tell you, everyone who sins is a slave to sin.*"

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Do you want to be really free? Listen to Jesus: *“To the Jews who had believed him, Jesus said, ‘If you hold to my teaching, you are really my disciples. Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free.’”* Getting my way isn’t freedom—not in Jesus’ eyes. Freedom doesn’t come from a country or a political party. It comes from the truth. *“The truth will set you free.”* The devil’s lie is that freedom is doing what you want. The truth is that real freedom is trusting in what Jesus did for you.

*“If the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed.”*

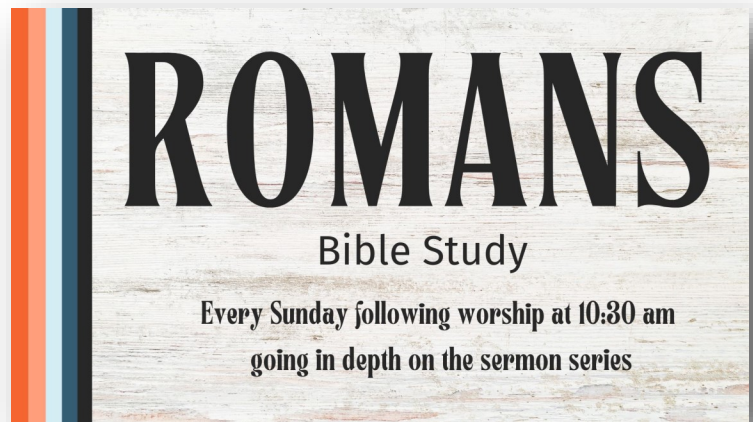
*A fourth of July Devotion Published by Nathan Nass for LHM*



*“Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free.”*  
John 8:32

## Why Join a Bible Study?

- 1. Community and Fellowship:** Bible study groups provide a sense of community and fellowship. You can connect with others who share your faith, build meaningful relationships, and support one another.
- 2. Deeper Understanding:** Studying the Bible in a group allows for diverse perspectives and insights. You’ll gain a deeper understanding of scripture through discussions, questions, and shared experiences.
- 3. Accountability:** Being part of a group encourages consistency in Bible reading and reflection. You’re more likely to stay committed when you have others to share your journey with.
- 4. Spiritual Growth:** Regular study and discussion help you grow spiritually. You’ll learn practical applications of biblical principles and how to live out your faith in daily life.
- 5. Prayer Support:** Bible study groups often pray together. Having others pray for you and with you strengthens your faith and provides emotional support.



Bible Studies are important to start your faith walk and the verse a day keeps you in the Word and in the community of fellow believers.

A Facebook advertisement for a Bible Reading Group. It features the Facebook logo, the text 'BIBLE READING GROUP', and a QR code. The text says 'Starting Sunday, June 2' and 'Receive a daily reading from Romans, read it, and comment your thoughts with others!'. At the bottom, it says 'Scan the code to join!'. The logo for 'ST. JOHN'S Ministries' is in the top right corner.

**GET**  
Wisdom

*Do not forsake wisdom, and she will protect you; love her, and she will watch over you. Proverbs 4:6-7.*

Pre- Call Meeting On Monday, June 24, a Congregational Pre-Call Meeting was held in the parish hall with District President Richard Snow. The purpose of the meeting was to review the information from the congregational self-study document, address any questions, and receive guidance on the next steps in the call process. Church members are encouraged to nominate candidates for the senior pastor position at St. John Lutheran Church. Nomination forms can be found in the Narthex and by the church office door, as well as on the church website at [www.stjohnbc.net/church](http://www.stjohnbc.net/church). All nomination forms can be turned into the church office no later than July 14. The church office will then forward them to the District Office.



## Neighborhood Initiative

### NEIGHBOR2NEIGHBOR

St. John Ministry is partnering with Our Savior Lutheran Church in community outreach. The goal is to have a backyard party with the people in your neighborhood, or rural area. If you wish to hear more scan the QR code below and sign up for the newsletter. You are also invited to a meeting at Our Savior on July 15, at 6:30 pm, to hear and share ideas. The goal is to build relationships with those in your area and beyond and to shine the light of your faith in Christ with others through fellowship.



## JOIN THE NEIGHBOR 2 NEIGHBOR TEAM

SIGN UP HERE  
TO GET THE  
NEWSLETTER





Learn more about how to host a block party.

Connect with a neighbor to host and plan with.

Hear stories and get ideas from other hosts!

MEETING  
JULY 15  
6:30PM  
@ OUR SAVIOR

## NEIGHBORHOOD BINGO

Get to know your neighbors and write their names on the bingo card. Keep it on the fridge, involve your kids, pray for your neighbors, and start building relationships.

 _____ _____ _____	 _____ _____ _____	 _____ _____ _____
 _____ _____ _____	 <b>HOME</b> _____ _____ _____	 _____ _____ _____
 _____ _____ _____	 _____ _____ _____	 _____ _____ _____



Stewardship starts with acknowledging God's role in providing for us. We praise, honor, and worship God, the Giver of every good and perfect gift. God asks us to use these gifts to serve and give back to His church. Thank you for blessing St. John Ministries with your time, talents, and treasures!!

### WHAT IS STEWARDSHIP?

The Missouri Synod defines stewardship as follows: "Christian stewardship is the free and joyous activity of the child of God and God's Family, the church, in managing all of life and life's resources for God's purposes."

*"For where you treasure is, there your heart will be also."*

*Matthew 6:21*

*Thank You*

FOR YOUR SUPPORT

## Let's Talk Money...

St. John Ministries has 216 regular giving units.

If every giving unit gave an extra \$5 each week there would be an increase of \$56,160 in annual tithes and offerings!!

Prayerfully consider how you can impact St. John Ministries through the gifts God has given you.



Scan the QR Code to Give Electronically



### Other Opportunities to Give Back to St. John Ministries

- ⇒ Gift mutual funds or stock shares      ⇨ Gift grain through the co-op
- ⇒ Request a Qualified Charitable Distribution (QCD) be made directly from your IRA
- ⇒ Nebraska Child Care Tax Credit (<https://revenue.nebraska.gov/businesses/child-care-tax-credit-act>)
- ⇒ Opportunity Scholarship of Nebraska (<https://www.nebraskaopportunity.org/>)

*These are all great opportunities for St. John Ministries to receive the benefit of your donation while you benefit from the tax liability savings. Please see Katie in the church office for questions on any of these.*

### Thank you for serving St. John Ministries!

*Time*

*Talents*



## St. John Lutheran Church, Battle Creek, NE

### Voters Meeting-Monday, June 3, 2024

**In attendance:** Robin Whitney, Kelsey Schnoor, Bryan Whitney, Dennis Roewert, Helen Baumgartel, Mark Baumgartel, Jason Schmidt, Neal Acklie, Gerry Preusker, Gary Volk, Deb Borgelt, Gary Borgelt, David Werner, Lisa Ehrisman, Matt Unkel, Todd Roberts, Ronald L. Buckendahl, Scott Miller, Suzanne Buckendahl, Robert Buckendahl, Curt Wragge, Nancy Wragge, Joleen Zohner, Kevin Zohner, Rod Zohner, Arlene Zohner, Cherie Werner, Caleb Zohner, Derek Zohner, Colby Kolm, Shelley Borchers, Jeff Borchers, Pastor Joe Leech, Tiffany Pokorny, Dane Prauner, Tresa Prauner, Jeremy Grant, Ann Grant, Brett Freudenburg, Nick Onnen, Steven Whitney, Vincent Hoehne, Cara Hoehne, Christy Schmidt, Allen Knapp, Nickii Volk, Brad Prauner, Bruce Grant, Karen Grant, Katie Schnitzler, Deanna Anderson, Bryon Anderson, Reid Ehrisman, Sara Anderson, Kevin Wedekind, Pastor Lee Weander

1. Call to Order/Opening Devotion and Prayer by Reid Ehrisman at 7:03 pm
2. Admission of New Voting Members- Karen Grant motioned to approve Nickii Volk and Tiffany Pokorny as new voting members. Second by Brett Freudenburg. Motion carried.
3. Approval of Minutes –Christy Schmidt motioned to approve the February 26, 2024, meeting minutes. Second by Deanna Anderson. Motion carried.
4. Board Reports
  - a. **Treasurer’s Report** by Katie Schnitzler: Income continues to increase, but not at the same rate as the cost to operate. The operating debt balance is \$335,000+. The Stewardship Board continues to work closely with Tara from Elkhorn Valley Bank. Tara’s recommendation is not to let the operating line of credit exceed a \$500,000 balance. The Stewardship Board has discussed different options for St. John’s debt structure going forward. Current estimations project the operating debt to be at \$430,000 by the end of the fiscal year. Last June St. John qualified for the Employee Retention Credit (ERC), to be received in two different payments. The first payment was received in August of 2023. The second payment should be coming around October for \$39,000 plus interest. Karen Grant motioned to accept the treasurer’s report. Second by Robin Whitney. Motion carried.
  - b. **Trustees Report** by Todd Roberts: The new lawn mowing crew is doing a good job and stays in close communication with the trustees with any concerns. The trustees are assessing and planning accordingly for updates to the parsonage. The lighting project for the parking lot continues to go unfinished. Trustees are considering changing to a different business to complete the project.
  - c. **Elders Report** by Dane Prauner: Transfers Out: Levi, Jaime, Miles, and Sterling Stueve to Our Savior Lutheran Church, Norfolk, NE; Aaron, Jenny, Alexis, Dylan, and Parker Anderson to Our Savior Lutheran Church, Norfolk, NE; Andrew Warneke to Holy Cross Lutheran Church in Dakota Dunes, SD; Jason, Lauren, Augustus, Hazel, and Griffen Freudenburg to Christ Lutheran Church in Norfolk, NE. Transfers In: Shellea and Chase “Joce” Olsufka from Zion Lutheran Church in Pierce, NE. Kevin Wedekind made a motion to accept the transfers in and out. Second by Gary Borgelt. Motion carried.
  - d. **Evangelism Report** by Sara Anderson: One person has agreed to serve on the Evangelism board, and they have one other name as a possibility. Evangelism continues to work on planning details for a VBS rally at a home baseball event to encourage kids to sign up for VBS. They also continue to work on finalizing details for an Orphan Grain Train service opportunity during the last day of VBS.
  - e. **Parish Ed Report** by Christy Schmidt: Preparations for VBS on July 21-25 are in full swing. There are currently 79 kids signed up for VBS and advertising continues to recruit more. The new Sunday school curriculum for next year has been purchased. The Sunday school digital download is a 4-quarter curriculum that can be spread out over two years. The VBS and Sunday school curriculums are produced by the same company, and both are

doctrinally approved. David Werner will be stepping down from Parish Ed and Katey Huntley has been appointed by the chairman to complete his term. Deanna Anderson motioned to approve the appointment of Katey Huntley. Second by Kevin Wedekind. Motion carried.

- f. **Parochial Ed Report** by Nick Onnen: All current school staff are returning next year. The school theme for the 2024-2025 school year will be “Rooted in Christ.” Student enrollment is up with 129 students (K-8) enrolled for the upcoming school year. Preschool enrollment is still not full. Our amazing preschool teacher, Miss Rave, would love to have a full classroom, so refer any preschoolers you may know to St. John. Currently, the congregation is supporting 52% of the school’s cost which equates to approximately \$454,000. This number is down \$100,000 from 2 years ago. With the 2024-2025 tuition increase, IGNITE proceeds, and seeking outside churches to support their student at St. John, the cost to the congregation will continue to decrease. Our Savior and Grace Lutheran have already agreed to provide a financial contribution for their students at St. John. The Nebraska tax credits are another great opportunity to help support the school and the ELC. The gym floor situation is in a waiting period. The installation company continues to claim the broken downspouts were the cause of the floor issues. The downspouts have remained unchanged to monitor if weather conditions will create similar issues a year later. The gym floor is currently usable and no additional payments to the attorney are necessary at this time.
- g. **Early Learning Center** (ELC) Report by Deanna Anderson: The ELC board has 2 people who agreed to serve starting in the new fiscal year. A private donation was received to purchase items for a Jesus time box. The ELC lost a total of 19 kids due to rate increases. Recently thirteen staff attended an early childhood conference in Seward.
- h. **Stewardship Report** by Karen Grant: The Stewardship Board is very thankful to the congregation for the increase in giving during this time of debt. Thank you to the ELC board for all of the time they spent trying to make the best decision for the budget. Many thanks to Vince and Nick for putting in the extra leg work to reach out to other home churches of current students to help find financial support for tuition and for providing education for the available tax credit that can be beneficial to St. John Ministries. The Stewardship Board is very thankful for those who serve in all areas of St. John Ministries.

**5. Old Business**

**6. New Business**

- a. 2024-2025 Proposed Budget by Katie Schnitzler: This current fiscal year’s estimated budget deficit is almost -\$268,000. The actual current deficit is -\$67,000+ with four weeks left in the fiscal year. There was a lot of time spent planning for the 2024-2025 fiscal year budget. After publishing the new childcare rates effective July 2024, there were a total of 19 children withdrawn from the ELC. With the lost income, this left the estimated budget deficit for the 2024-2025 fiscal year at almost -\$159,000. The Council is proposing three options for the Voters to consider: 1) Leave the proposed budget as it is, 2) Agree to support \$100,000 of the ELC budget and then work backward to get to that number by making cuts, 3) Research the feasibility forming the ELC into its own 501(c)(3). Option #3 would allow different benefit packages to be offered to ELC staff, which has a big impact on the budget. The religious component of the ELC will remain a top priority even if it forms into a separate entity. Per recommendation from Pastor Weander, an ELC task force has been formed to research and obtain all information needed to determine the feasibility of ELC independence. If the Voters wish to pursue option #3, the Council is asking them to approve one-quarter of the budget to allow ample time for the ELC task force to study the feasibility of ELC independence. During this quarter, no raises will be awarded for all staff from July 1 to Sept. 30. The budget, ELC separation, and staff raises will be re-evaluated in September at a special Voters

meeting. Ronald Buckendahl motioned to approve one quarter of the proposed budget and to research the feasibility of ELC independence. Second by Mark Baumgartel. Motion carried.

- b. Election of Officers – A copy of the ballot with the names of elected officers is enclosed with a copy of the official minutes.
- c. Request to Extend Call to Tia Eriksen by Nick Onnen: Tia Eriksen has been teaching at St. John Lutheran School since August 2020. She recently completed the Lutheran teacher colloquy program making her eligible to receive a call for placement into the LCMS. Mark Baumgartel motioned that a Divine Call be extended to Tia Eriksen. Second by Deanna Anderson. Motion carried.
- d. Amendment to Name Filed with Secretary of State by Katie Schnitzler: The name filed with the Secretary of State reads “ST. JOHN’S LUTHERAN CHURCH, BATTLE CREEK, NEBRASKA” when it should be “ST. JOHN LUTHERAN CHURCH, BATTLE CREEK, NEBRASKA” with no “S”. A motion is needed to file an amendment with the Secretary of State to remove the apostrophe “S” from the legal name. This change is necessary to accommodate any changes that may need to be made to the church’s by-laws in the future. Brett Freudenburg made a motion to file the name amendment as stated above. Second by Robin Whitney. Motion carried.

## 7. Other

- a. Call Process Update by Reid Ehrisman: There were a total of 64 congregational member survey responses received. The responses were reviewed and compiled to send to the district office. District President Rev. Richard Snow will review the information and schedule a pre-call meeting with our congregation to discuss the results and the next steps of the call process. That meeting time and date are to be determined.
8. Council Meeting Sunday, July 7, 2024, at 10:15 am (following worship)
9. Gary Borgelt motioned to adjourn the meeting. Second by Ronald Buckendahl. Motion carried.
10. Closing Prayer at 9:05 pm by Pastor Weander.

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## Happening Now and a Future Look at St. John

This summer, St. John is offering two concurrent Bible studies. We are currently studying the book of Romans alongside our preaching series, delving deeper into the sermon message of the week. We usually have 20-30 attendees and we welcome you to join us after the worship service and fellowship every Sunday.

Additionally, we have started a New Members class with five participants, which is open to anyone interested in learning more about the Lutheran faith. John, Preston, and Pastor Joe lead this informative study in the parish hall classroom on Sunday at 10:30 am. The weekly lessons are also shared on YouTube for those that can't attend in person. Contact the church office for the link to the classes.

Stephen Ministries classes have begun with five participants in the first class. These people will then minister to those in need of God's guidance. Looking ahead to the fall, we plan on holding another teaching class for Stephen's Ministry. For those interested, contact Ginger Howser or Pastor Joe.

In addition, this fall we will begin a preaching series titled "Let's Go," which will align with our ministry planning and vision for the next two years. Watch for more information in the future on how you can be a part of shaping the vision at St. John Ministries.

Even though we have challenges ahead of us, this is also an exciting time for the ministry. Pastor Snow reminded us on Monday that “Although we all have concerns about how to fix us, this is God's church, and He loves her, and He will take care of her.” More importantly, we can all play an integral role in shaping the vision of St. John for the next generation by staying in prayer and supporting His church by attending worship and giving of your time and talents.

## 2024-2025 Congregational Officers

**President:** Colby Kolm

**Vice President:** Jeff Borchers

**Secretary:** Mandy Lewis

**Treasurer:** Katie Schnitzler

**Childcare:** Nikki Houlden, Tresa Prauner, Tiffany Pokorny, Chanda Wurdeman, Laura Loftis, Kari Hamer

**Elders:** Dane Prauner, Kevin Wedekind, Randy Kossmann, Gary Borgelt, Derek Zohner, Ron Buckendahl, Kevin Zohner, Randy Sunderman, Randy Howser

**Evangelism:** Sarah Anderson, Tia Eriksen, Staci Kolm, Erin Wragge, Lexi Stueve, Vacant

**Parish Education:** Stephanie Kollbaum, Katey Huntley, Cherie Werner, Rachel Zohner, Christy Schmidt, Jerrica Tietz

**Parochial Education:** Cara Hoehne, Erin Wolf, Tony Anderson, Scott Henery, Deborah Sunderman, Doug Huttman

**Stewardship:** Vince Hoehne, Barb Preusker, Neal Acklie, Gary Volk, Bruce Grant, Lisa Ehrisman

**Trustees:** Caleb Zohner, Russ Hamer, Arvid Warneke, Travis Humphrey, Paul Renner, Todd Roberts, Jeremy Grant, Fred Tiedgen, Vacant

### Prayer for our Board Members

Give them clear vision to see the will of God.

Their responsibilities may be many, and they often need to make difficult and important decisions. I pray that You would help them through the challenges, and that You would grow them in perseverance and endurance.

## Installation

Installation of 2024-25  
Ministry Board Members will be held in worship July 6 & 7.  
Board Members are encouraged to attend one of these services.

## Notice

St. John Ministries Council will meet on Sunday, July 7 following worship and fellowship. Meet in the school conference room.



***The church office will be closed Thursday, July 4 for the holiday.***



### Missed a Church Bulletin?

Summer is a busy time, you can now stay connected by viewing the weekly church bulletin on our website at [stjohnbc.net/church](http://stjohnbc.net/church) located by the Monthly Newsletter tab. You can also view it on the church Facebook page, St. John Lutheran Church Battle Creek. Follow us ministry events.



## Reading / Prayer Calendar - July 2024

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
<b>July 1, 2024</b>	<b>July 2, 2024</b>	<b>July 3, 2024</b>	<b>July 4, 2024</b>	<b>July 5, 2024</b>
Proverbs 12	Proverbs 13	Proverbs 14	Proverbs 15	Proverbs 16
Pray for Schools	Pray for the Armed Forces	Pray for your children or nieces/nephews	Pray for your Pastor	Pray for blessings in worship
<b>July 8, 2024</b>	<b>July 9, 2024</b>	<b>July 10, 2024</b>	<b>July 11, 2024</b>	<b>July 12, 2024</b>
Proverbs 17	Proverbs 18	Proverbs 19	Proverbs 20	Proverbs 21
Pray for Teachers	Pray for the Government	Pray for your friends	Pray for Church staff	Pray for outreach in our community
<b>July 15, 2024</b>	<b>July 16, 2024</b>	<b>July 17, 2024</b>	<b>July 18, 2024</b>	<b>July 19, 2024</b>
Proverbs 22	Proverbs 23	Proverbs 24	Proverbs 25	Proverbs 26
Pray for School Administrators	Pray for the President	Pray for the Family	Pray for the lay leaders of the church	Pray for missionaries
<b>July 22, 2024</b>	<b>July 23, 2024</b>	<b>July 24, 2024</b>	<b>July 25, 2024</b>	<b>July 26, 2024</b>
Proverbs 27	Proverbs 28	Proverbs 29	Proverbs 30	Proverbs 31
Pray for VBS Leaders	Pray for VBS Students	Pray for VBS Volunteers	Pray for VBS Families	Pray for VBS Offering



### Community Invited!

Join Mr. Whitney at CPCC on Wednesday, July 3 at 2:00 pm for a Patriotic Song Fest!

Song sheets will be provided. No need to RSVP, just show up and sing along with the CPCC residents to some of your favorite patriotic songs!

## OUR MISSION

The mission of the Lutheran Women's Missionary League is to assist each woman of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod in affirming her relationship with the Triune God so that she is enabled to use her gifts in ministry to the people of the world.

On May 30, WINGS had a salad and dessert luncheon at the Battle Creek Park Community Building. We were delighted to have Ginger Howser from the Battle Creek Heritage Park as our guest speaker. After her presentation, Ginger gave us a tour of the Heritage Park. We were joined by 8 guests, making it a fun and informative day. Thank you, Ginger.

We're grateful for the greeting card donations. They will be used at the LWML District Convention to create crosses for missionaries. During the summer, we will be collecting new or gently worn adult t-shirts to make diapers for donation to Orphan Grain Train. A donation tote is placed at the Fellowship Hall entrance. We will schedule a date in the fall to assemble the diapers. We welcome anyone to join this servant project.

Our next meeting is on Thursday, July 25, at 1:30 pm in the Fellowship Hall. We invite everyone to join us as we serve God by serving others.

## Recipe

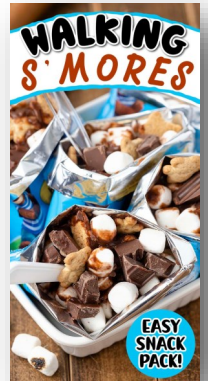
### S'mores in a Bag

#### Ingredients

- 2 snack-sized bags of cookies, such as Nutter Butter®, Teddy Grahams®, Mini Oreos® or Nilla Wafers®
- 1 1/2 ounces chocolate candy bar, broken into pieces, such as Reese's® Peanut Butter Cups or Hershey's® chocolate bar
- 3 jumbo marshmallows or a handful of mini-marshmallows.

#### Directions

1. Open snack bags and add chocolate candy pieces.
2. Roast 3 large marshmallows over a campfire, grill, or microwave according to desired degree of doneness.
3. Add marshmallows to bag. Allow the warmth of the marshmallows to melt the chocolate, mix cookie-marshmallow mixture around slightly, and serve immediately.



The Battle Creek Community Blood Drive will be at St. John Parish Hall Tuesday, July 16, from 12:00 to 6:00 pm. Walk-ins are welcome.

#### Contact

Marlene Bomar—402-992-1561  
or 1-800-733-2767

or go to

[www.redcrossblood.org](http://www.redcrossblood.org).

Appointments may be made the day of the drive.



#### Do you know someone who could benefit?

Community Pride Care Center provides meals through the Meals-On-Wheels program for our community. Delivery begins at 11:30 am on Monday-Friday. For more information please call 402-675-2955.



**“See, I have Inscribed you on the palms of my hands . . .  
“(Isaiah 49:16).**

Faith Regional Health Services cordially invites those who have experienced the loss of a baby or child to attend this year's Butterfly Release Memorial Service. The gathering will begin at 11:00 a.m. on Saturday, July 20 in the Bradford Spirituality Garden on our West Campus.

If you are interested in participating or if you have any questions, please call Jim Wonnacott at 402-992-2468. Please RSVP by July 8.





1 Wayne Borchers	8 Ron Buckendahl	16 Bill Klein	23 Megan Eckert
1 Aiden Buckendahl	8 Elaine Murphy	16 Kyle Praeuner	23 Robin Whitney
1 Bonnie Lehmann	8 Alison Obst	16 Jim Ridder	24 Jade Henery
2 Richard Erickson	8 Nick Onnen	17 Greg Young	25 Donald Geyer
2 Jon Klug	8 Josh Tillman	19 Marlene Bomar	25 Janet Spulak
2 Amy Trowbridge	8 Dayton LeComte	19 Vickie Thomas	25 Adrianna Miller
2 Darren Grant	9 Camron Anderson	19 Anthony Warneke	26 Shawn Anderson
2 Luke Grant	9 Austin Erickson	19 Arlene Zohner	26 Tony Anderson
3 Betty Hofmann	9 Jenny Lyon	20 Nathanael Fouts	26 Kaison Voelker
3 Kim Schaffer	9 Hannah Tillman	20 Dennis Aldag	28 Mitzi Bredehoft
3 Bostin Uecker	10 Kyle Klug	20 Jim Bierman	28 Melissa Klug
4 David John Werner	10 Jacob Rakowsky	20 Kennedy Heller	28 Maddie Kuchar
5 Ella Allen	10 Erika Geyer	21 Ryan Heller	28 Emma Petersen
5 Katas Huntley	11 Weston Walker	21 Kathy Humphrey	28 Carolyn Prauner
6 Natalie Long	11 Jami Frederick	22 Elisabeth Fouts	29 Deanna Beck
6 Diane Lyon	11 Jodi Stueve	22 Robin Otjen	30 Luke Huntley
6 Royal Tiedtke	12 Lauren Lutt	22 Graysen Gauer	30 Diann Acklie
6 James Voelker	12 Josh Spulak	22 Will Hamer	30 Kristy Lutt
6 Joleen Zohner	12 Brooklynn Tegeler	23 Stetson Unkel	31 Phyllis Haase
6 Kaine Ruppert	13 Westyn Patefield	23 Baron Buckendahl	31 Randi Jessen
7 Jim Wolf	13 Riley Rakowsky	23 Bailyn Hitz	31 Bruce Haack
8 Karley Prauner	14 Cejay Dahlberg	23 Michael Lauritsen	
	15 Stacey Aldag	23 Colby Kolm	

### *Celebrating July Wedding Anniversaries*

July 3-Wyatt& Tia Eriksen

July 7-Colby & Staci Kolm

July 9- Derek &Jenny Zohner

July 10-Nathan & Erika Geyer

July 10- Richard & Jane Beltz

July 13- Dan & Deb Schott

July 13- Travis & Morgan Patefield

July 15- Ron & Kim Potter

July 16 Jerry & Vickie Thomas

July 18- Justin & Hannah Uecker

July 20-Casey & Kayla Petersen

July 20- Ron & Phyllis Haase

July 24- Troy & Becci Koopman

July 28- Gary & Nickii Volk

July 30-Ryan & Casey Heller

July 31- Kelly & Kelly Griffith



May God bless you on  
your special day!

# Christmas in July!



Over the past five years, we have sent 7,921 Christmas boxes to children worldwide who rarely receive gifts. This year we have the unique opportunity to send our largest amount ever! Thanks to a generous donation at the end of last season, we are starting this summer with 3,428 pairs of socks and 2,466 pairs of underwear. Because of this, we are requesting donations of monetary gifts, t-shirts, and toys to help us finish these boxes. This summer we are collecting:

*Dolls, Barbies, Blocks (Legos, Duplo's, wooden), Baseball gloves, Small cars (Matchbox, Hot Wheels), Pony Beads, Embroidery Floss, Scissors, Decks of playing cards, Hair barrettes, Hair ties, Hair bows, Play food, Jump Ropes, Stuffed Animals, and T-shirts (Sizes 2T – Youth L)*

Take a tag from the Christmas in July tree located in the parish hall and return the items to the tree. These items may be either new or gently used. Additional items may be placed under the tree as well. Monetary donations will be used to purchase other items to fill the boxes and can be sent (marked "Grace Lutheran Christmas Box Project") to Grace Lutheran Church or Orphan Grain Train, Norfolk, NE. We are collecting donations through July 31. If you have any questions or would like to help pack the boxes, contact Kelly Asbury at 402-371-3521. You can help these children know they are precious and that Jesus is the greatest gift of all!



## Connecting people in the heart of Jesus. Serving the Lord's House in July 2024

If you are unable to serve, please find a substitute and call the church office (675-3155) to correct the bulletin.

Date	Time	Elders	Ushers	Sound Booth
July 6 July 7	5:00 9:00	Borgelt/Kossmann Howser/R. Sunderman	Schwede/Volk Zohner/Tillman	Volk Borchers/ Kirby
July 13 July 14	5:00 9:00	Borgelt/Wedekind K. Zohner /D. Zohner	Acklie/Volk Borchers/Wolf	Volk Andersons
July 20 July 21	5:00 9:00	Prauner/ D. Zohner K. Zohner/R. Sunderman	Schwede/Volk Werner/Volk	Volk Brauer/Schnoor
July 27 July 28	5:00 9:00	Kossmann/Wedekind Howser/Prauner	Knull/Volk Ridder/Tillman	Volk Huntley/Kuchar



Thank you to all of our volunteers for all you do for the ministry and the work of the Lord's house.

## From the Principal

"Dad, did you know I'm going on allergy medicine that might make me hyper? I don't think anyone will be able to tell the difference because I'm already hyper."

"You're not hyper, you're energetic."

"Aren't they the same?"

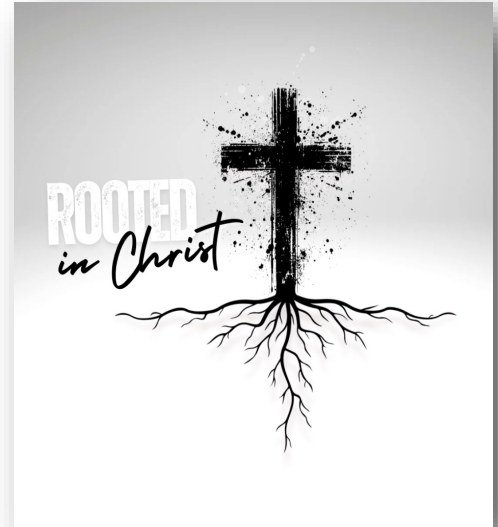
"No, hyper is energy out of control. You have a lot of energy but you can control it."

"Thanks, Dad."

Sometimes we all need a little reminder of who we are and who we are created to be. As Christians, it's refreshing to be reminded that we are loved, redeemed, and called people of God. All of our identities, actions, and choices should flow from that truth.

This next school year, our school theme is "Rooted in Christ." How blessed we are to be able to help our children establish spiritual roots and remind them of who they have been created to be. On behalf of the St. John School Ministry, thank you for supporting our efforts.

*Growing Together in Christ,  
Nicholas Onnen– Principal*



**Thank you to our St. John Trustees for the new ball pit in the school playground area!**

***Caleb Zohner, Todd Roberts & Mr. Onnen***



## Lutheran Hour Ministries for Kids



Gospel Adventures is a free, five-day curriculum for Grade School and Middle School aged youth. Watch videos each day that open kids' eyes to another place on the globe! Use the printable curriculum to walk kids through the experience of meeting kids just like them from another part of the world. Play games, do crafts, and taste snacks of this new culture. Sing about God's love and discuss the God sightings you see throughout the week.

# School Historical Cost to the Congregation

We deeply appreciate our committed leaders, volunteers, and supportive congregation who consistently meet challenges head-on. In response to mounting financial pressures, every facet of St. John Ministry's finances has undergone careful scrutiny. Transparency in our financial management is essential as we seek sustainable solutions for our ministry's future. Here's an overview of our school's financial outlook:

## Where We Have Been

St. John's congregation has consistently risen to the challenge of funding the school ministry. Historically, the school remained "tuition free" up until the last two decades, meaning the congregation funded nearly 100% of the costs. In 2011, enrollment hit an all-time low, dating back to 1978, with 87 students in K-8. The focus then shifted to reviving the school and maintaining a healthy enrollment. As enrollment grew, so did expenses. Despite aggressive tuition increases, the congregation's cost for the school rose due to increased staffing, benefits, and inflation.

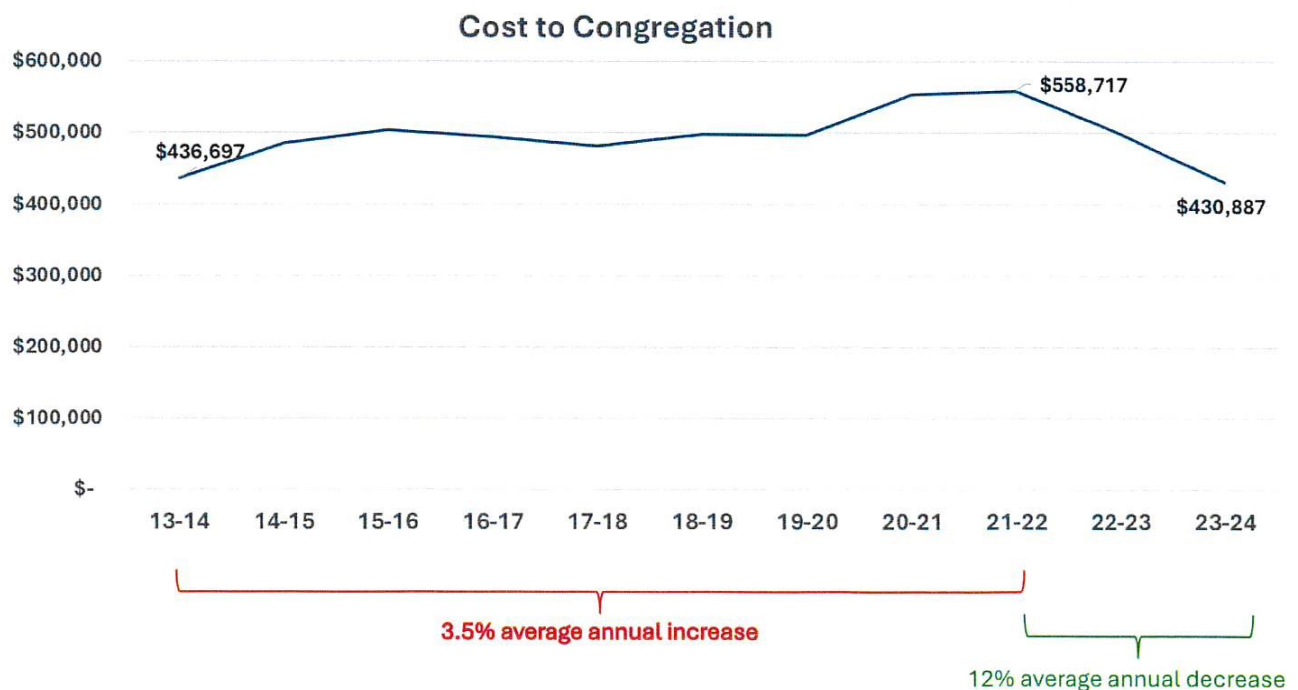
## Recent History

Looking back, there is reason to be optimistic! In the 2013-14 school year, the school cost the congregation \$436,697. This cost peaked in 2021-22 at \$558,717, leaving an average annual increase of 3.5% between those years.

Over the last two years, we have seen a decrease in the cost to the congregation. Several factors contributed to this change:

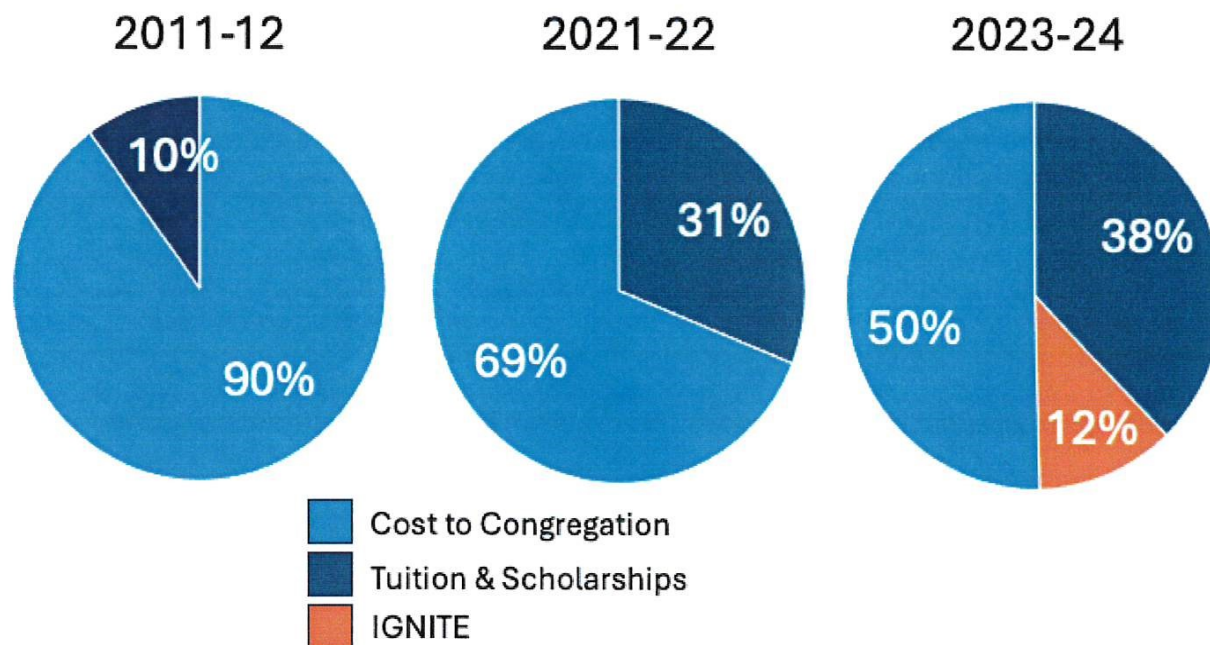
- Tuition fees increased by nearly \$500 per child from 2022-23 to 2023-24.
- In 2023-24, the 3rd and 4th grades were temporarily combined, eliminating a salary.
- IGNITE provided alternate funding for the school in 2023-24.

These factors made the 2023-24 school year the lowest cost to the congregation since we began tracking in 2013-14. While separating the 3rd and 4th grades is anticipated for 2025-26, other factors will continue to contribute to a more manageable financial trajectory.



## Projecting Forward

Over the last decade plus, the funding model of the school has changed. In 2011, the congregation funded roughly 90% of the costs. This past year, the congregation accounted for 50% of the cost, with IGNITE contributing a new, third piece of the pie.



Looking ahead to 2024-25, we'll add a fourth piece of the pie. A few neighboring churches have agreed to financially support their members who attend St. John, covering the "church portion" of their member families' costs. This could potentially contribute up to 4% of the cost.

Tuition fees for the first child have jumped, again, to nearly \$1,000 more than 2022-23. Pre-enrollment also indicates that there will likely be an increase in Preschool and K-8 enrollment. Enrollment increases multiplied by tuition increases yields more tuition income.

Lastly, with the passing of LB 1402, legislation at the state level has allowed school choice for the first time in Nebraska. The state has allocated \$10,000,000 for families in need to receive scholarships to the school of their choice. These scholarships could subsidize a greater portion of the cost to educate than what is currently charged for tuition, potentially decreasing the cost subsidized by the congregation for those families.

## Conclusion

The nuts and bolts of the ministry are constantly being reviewed. Though our focus is solely Jesus, ensuring we're being conscientious stewards of our resources is essential. The intentionality of many dedicated servants, the support from our congregation, and the faithfulness of our God to provide for our ministry have sustained our school for 142 years. With His continued provision and guidance, we are confident in where he will lead in the years ahead.

# Youth and Family Ministry

## St. John Ministries Vacation Bible School July 21-25!

Hey there! We're hosting a Sunday Sundae/VBS Kick-Off event for all the awesome volunteers and participants. First, join us for worship at 9:00 am, and afterwards, indulge in some delicious ice cream with all the toppings! In the evening, we'll kick off the VBS with a free family meal at 5:30 pm in the parish hall, followed by VBS at 6:00 pm at the school.

Don't forget to sign up by July 21. This event is open to kids ages 3 years to grade 6. Sign up on our events page at [stjohnbc.net/church](http://stjohnbc.net/church). We can't wait to see you there!



VBS Family Meals will begin each night at 5:15 pm for volunteers and 5:30 pm for families.

### **Serving:**

Sunday: Pancakes - Elders

Monday: Taco Night - Stewardship

Tuesday- Mexiburgers - WINGS

Wednesday- Chicken Nuggets - Evangelism

Thursday- Hot Dogs - LIGHT

**Thank you to all of our volunteers for making these family meals happen!**

### **Donations for Vacation Bible School**

A list of food & supplies have been posted on the table in the parish hall or visit [stjohnbc.net/church](http://stjohnbc.net/church) to sign up online.

We ask that you bring in perishable items such as buns, hamburger & hot dogs either frozen or closer to or on July 21 to prevent spoilage. If you would like to make a monetary donation mark your check for VBS and drop it in the collection plate or drop box outside the church office.



It's all about  
**Jesus**



Use the QR  
Code to view  
the  
list.



## Community Service Hours

### Information

LIGHT Youth will be serving the VBS family meal on Thursday, July 25



### AND

Helping with VBS with decorating, volunteering and serving meals counts towards High School community service hours.



Watch the REMIND APP for future updates

Better  
TOGETHER

There is still time to join the Cornhole Tournament at the Battle Creek Park Playing Thursday, July 11 & 18 -6:30 pm. If you don't play come for the fellowship!



**Get Excited! Watch for Information to come on student sign-up for the District Youth Gathering!**

**Hebrews 12: 1-3**



**ENDURE**

SEE YOU IN 2025

**NEW ORLEANS**



# EARLY LEARNING CONNECTION



## FAITH DEVELOPMENT IN INFANTS THROUGH PRESCHOOL AGE CHILDREN: THE ROLE OF FAMILIES & ST. JOHN ELC

Faith development in young children, spanning from infancy through preschool age, is a foundational process that shapes their spiritual understanding and identity. This critical period is marked by rapid cognitive, emotional, and social growth, making it an opportune time for nurturing faith. Families play a central role in guiding this early spiritual journey, as they provide the first and most influential context for faith experiences and teachings. Additionally, partnering with early learning centers, such as St. John Early Learning Center (ELC), can significantly enhance this developmental process by integrating developmentally appropriate practices into faith education.

Faith development begins even in infancy. During this stage, babies are not yet capable of understanding complex religious concepts, but they do start forming basic notions of trust, love, and security—core elements that underpin later faith experiences. The repetitive and nurturing interactions infants have with their caregivers lay the groundwork for their future spiritual outlook. When parents or guardians consistently respond to an infant's needs with love and care, it fosters a sense of safety and trust. This trust becomes a foundation upon which spiritual faith can be built. Families play a critical role by ensuring that infants feel loved and secure, modeling behaviors and attitudes that reflect their faith, such as kindness, patience, and reverence during daily activities. St. John ELC supports this by providing infants with sensory-rich environments that reflect aspects of faith, such as soft religious music, gentle prayer rituals, and visuals like pictures of religious figures, as well as infusing routine caregiving tasks with spiritual elements.

As children transition into toddlerhood, their cognitive and language skills begin to develop more rapidly. Toddlers are naturally curious and eager to explore their surroundings, imitating the behaviors and practices they observe in their family. This stage is crucial for introducing simple faith-related concepts and rituals. Families can incorporate faith-based routines, such as bedtime prayers, blessings before meals, and attending religious services, to help toddlers associate these practices with comfort and normalcy. Reading stories from religious texts or about moral lessons helps toddlers begin to understand basic concepts of their faith. St. John ELC enhances this by using play-based activities to introduce religious stories and concepts, such as reenacting parables with toys or using religious symbols in art projects, and establishing simple, consistent rituals within the classroom setting, like a morning prayer or singing religious songs.

By the time children reach preschool age, they are capable of more sophisticated thought processes. They start to ask questions about the world around them, including questions about faith, existence, and morality. Preschoolers can understand simple religious teachings and begin to form their own early beliefs. Families should be prepared to answer questions about faith in a simple, honest, and age-appropriate manner, encouraging a child's natural curiosity and helping them feel comfortable exploring their beliefs. Encouraging preschoolers to participate in

### IMPORTANT DATES:

- July 4 - Closed for Independence Day
- July 26 - 3:30 pm Closure for staff development
- August 2 - Closed for all ministry training

## FAITH DEVELOPMENT (CONT.)

religious activities, such as singing, prayer, and community service, helps them feel included and reinforces the importance of faith in daily life. Teaching preschoolers about right and wrong through the lens of their faith helps them develop a moral compass guided by their spiritual beliefs. St. John ELC supports this stage by incorporating interactive learning activities that explore faith concepts, such as dramatizing Bible stories, creating faith-themed crafts, or participating in simple community service projects, and facilitating age-appropriate discussions about faith, encouraging preschoolers to ask questions and express their thoughts.

Partnering with St. John ELC can significantly enhance the faith development of young children by providing a cohesive and supportive environment that extends beyond the home. By collaborating with educators at St. John ELC, families can ensure that their children receive consistent faith-based education that is developmentally appropriate and engaging. Establishing regular communication between families and St. John ELC staff, aligning on shared goals for the child's spiritual growth, and coordinating consistent faith practices between home and the ELC are essential strategies for effective partnership. Encouraging family participation in ELC activities, such as volunteering for religious events, attending faith-based parent meetings, and participating in community service projects organized by St. John ELC, further strengthens this collaborative effort.

Faith development in infants through preschool age children is a multifaceted process that relies heavily on the influence of both families and early learning centers like St. John ELC. By integrating developmentally appropriate practices and fostering a strong partnership, families and St. John ELC can collaboratively nurture the spiritual growth of young children, laying a solid foundation for their lifelong faith journey. Through intentional practices, modeling, and open communication, both at home and in educational settings, children can develop a profound and enduring connection to their faith.



VBS is coming! There is still time to sign up to attend!

We still are in need of adult and teen volunteers! Please prayerfully consider signing up!

Visit the link below to sign up for both:  
<https://vbspro.events/p/stjscuba>

## MINISTRY CORNER

- Church Services:
  - Saturday, 5:00 pm
  - Sunday, 9:00 am
  - Education Hour, 10:30 am
- Scuba VBS - July 21-25

# SUMMER DAY CAMP

Summer camp alert! Calling all future scientists, artists, and adventurers entering kindergarten through 7th grade! Head over to [stjohnbc.net/elc](http://stjohnbc.net/elc) to sign up for the coolest summer fun ever!

## TEACHER SPOTLIGHT

Elissa Wright, Assistant Teacher



Elissa joined the St. John ELC team in 2022. She graduated from Elkhorn Valley in 2024 and will be attending Northeast for Early Childhood Education.

She has worked with several of our classrooms and currently is enjoying working with our infant classroom. Elissa enjoys spending her spare time with her friends and her baby sister, Sophia.

# GIVE TO ST. JOHN

AT ZERO COST TO YOU

DONATE UP TO 100% OF YOUR PROJECTED  
STATE INCOME TAX LIABILITY TO  
ST. JOHN EARLY LEARNING CENTER

RECEIVE A DOLLAR FOR DOLLAR TAX  
CREDIT FOR YOUR 2024 STATE TAXES

1. FILL OUT THE APPLICATION AT [WWW.STJOHNBC.NET/CREDIT](http://WWW.STJOHNBC.NET/CREDIT)
2. CONTRIBUTE & GET A RECEIPT FROM THE CHURCH OFFICE



- The St. John ELC operates at a subsidized rate for families.
- St. John Ministries covers the deficit incurred by the ELC.
- Contributions to the ELC relieve financial strain on the entire St. John community and indirectly impact all families by allowing reduced rates.

# LHNE NEWS

JULY 2024



2010 N. 37TH STREET  
NORFOLK, NE 68701  
(402) 379-3040  
[www.LHNE.org](http://www.LHNE.org)



@LHNEagles



lhneagles

## BEEF BLAST 2024

We hope to see you on Sunday, August 25th at LHNE for the annual Beef Blast fundraising event. If you would like to donate or if you have any questions, please contact Fred Aufdembrink at [faufdembrink@lhne.org](mailto:faufdembrink@lhne.org).

### UPCOMING

#### EVENTS

July 15 - Blood Drive  
July 15 - Booster Club Mtg

## LHNE SUMMER WEIGHTS

The summer weightlifting program at LHNE started on May 28th. This year we will have four sessions: HS Girls 6:00-7:15 AM, HS Boys 6:30-7:45AM, 7th/8th Boys 8:30-9:15AM, and 7th/8th Girls 9:15-10:00AM. If you have any questions, please contact our Activities Director, Preston Sunderman ([psunderman@lhne.org](mailto:psunderman@lhne.org)).

## SUMMER OFFICE HOURS

The LHNE office summer hours will be Monday-Thursday from 9:00 am-12:00 pm. Stop in and visit or give us a call!

## IMPORTANT DATES

The summer is going by quickly! Be sure to have these dates marked on your calendars.

August 1 - Registration Day  
August 8 - New Student Orientation  
August 8 - All Parent Meeting at 6:30 PM  
August 9 - First Day of School!



## THANK YOU

Thank you to everyone who participated in the golf outing! It was a success because of all of the sponsors, workers, and players. A special thank you to our title sponsor, Elkhorn Valley Bank. We appreciate your support!

~Educating for Life

Proclaiming the Faith~



# July 2024

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1	2 1:00 Senior Fun Day	3 2:00 Patriotic Sing Along CPCC	4 Church Office Closed	5 10:00- St John Orphan Grain Train Volunteer Day	6 Church Time Change Begins 5:00 Installation of Board Members
7 9:00 Installation of Board Members 10:30 Council Meeting	8	9	10	11 1:30 Staff Meeting 6:30 Cornhole In the Park	12	13
14	15 6:30 Neighbor2Neighbor Meeting OSL	16 12:00-6:00 pm Battle Creek Blood Drive	17	18 1:30 Staff Meeting 6:30 Cornhole In the Park	19	20
21 <b>Sundae Sunday</b> 5:30 Free VBS Family Meal Parish Hall 6-8:00 VBS—School	22	23	24	25 1:30 WINGS Meeting	26	27
28	29	30	31			

## Join us!

### Weekly Service times:

Saturday 5:00 pm

Sunday 9:00am

### Bible Studies:

Sunday 10:30 am:

Adult Bible Class

Tuesday 7:00 pm

308 S. 2nd Street

P.O. Box 87

Battle Creek, NE 68715

Phone: 402-675-3155

churchsecretary@gmail.com



Connecting People in the Heart of Jesus