



St. John's Lutheran Church, New Ulm, MN  
August, 2022 *Fortress*

## SUMMER IS ALMOST GONE

### **2 Timothy 4:21 Do your best to get here before winter.**

It will soon be August. August was designated “American Adventures Month,” celebrating vacationing in the Americas. That is because in the Northern Hemisphere, August takes place toward the end of summer. Everyone is attempting to get in those last days of vacation and accomplish everything they hoped to be able to do before winter comes and puts the kibosh on all such activities that require good weather and a less busy schedule.

Exactly what time of year it was when St. Paul wrote to Timothy for the last time from a prison cell in Rome, we are not completely sure, but since the seasons in Italy are comparable to ours, it may have been late summer or fall when Paul wrote to explain to Timothy that the time was short. Paul was going to be put to death for preaching the gospel. He explained to Timothy that even though the time had come for his departure, and that he was being poured out like a drink offering to the Lord, he was looking ahead to the victory that was his in Jesus Christ his Lord and Savior. He would soon be wearing a victory crown of righteousness, glorified in the presence of God himself in heaven. In fact, Paul explained that not only he, but all who trusted in Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior could look forward to this blessing. It is ours, because Jesus, who lived a perfect life in our place, and died on the cross to pay the debt for our sin, has given it to us as a free gift of his grace. We did not earn it or deserve it. It is ours through faith in him.

But as Paul awaited that blessed event, he knew that he had to live out the rest of his life on earth. He was in jail. He no doubt was anxious about the pain of the executioner's axe. He thought about friends and loved ones. He was lonely. He explained to Timothy that many of his close friends had deserted him – some perhaps because they had noble things to do; others, such as Demas because they were led astray by worldly things. But Paul desired Christian company. He said to Timothy: **“Do your best to get here before winter.”** However, we are never told whether Timothy made it there or not before Paul's death.

Brothers and sisters, summer is almost over. There are a lot of things we may want to accomplish before the hectic days of fall and winter come upon us. But on our list of important things to do, make God your top priority. Don't neglect worship. Remember those who need your prayers and support. Don't substitute time in God's Word with other trivial things. Spend time in prayer.

Yes, the time is short. Summer is almost gone. But in a larger perspective, time on earth is short. We are in the autumn of the existence of this world, for even St. Paul spoke of the times in which he lived as “the ends of the world.” How much closer is the winter season of this world for us?

**Do your best to get here before winter.** We are stewards of the time God gives us. Do your best to serve Christ every day until the day comes when he shall return, and the victory crown shall be ours.

In Christ, Pastor Jeffrey A. Bovee

## August Sermon Texts

August 7	Hebrews 11:1-3, 8-16	Wait For It ...
August 14	Jeremiah 23:23-29	Near and Far, God is God
August 21	Luke 13:22-30	Struggle Through the Narrow Door
August 28	Proverbs 25:6-7a	Lord, Give Me Humility

**Bible Classes meet in the Church Basement**  
**The class can also be found online at [bit.ly/SJBibleClass](http://bit.ly/SJBibleClass)**

Sundays at 11 am	Book of Mark	Pastor Guenther
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## Fall Schedule

Begins: Saturday, August 20 at 6:30  
 Sunday, August 21 at 8, 9:30 & 11 am

# Council Digest

## Council Digest

The St. John's Church Council met on July 19. A summary of reports and actions not reported elsewhere in the *Fortress* follows:

### Ministrations

#### Transfers In

Jakob Casper from Shepherd of the Hills,  
West Bend, WI  
Sam and Christine Hunter; Nolan, Olive, Emmitt  
from Trinity, Caledonia, WI  
Haley White; Evelynne, Stephen  
from St. John's, Redwood Falls, MN

#### Transfers Out

Jim and Karen Grunwald to  
First German, Manitowoc, WI  
Alex Gutzke to Mt. Olive, Mankato, MN  
Steve and Jeneane Thiesfeldt to St. Paul's, Saginaw, MI

### Adult Confirmations

Taya Johnson  
Ellie Stevenson

### Pastoral Acts

#### Baptisms

25 June      Ellie Stevensen  
   Waylen Thompson  
   Scarlett Thompson

Deacon Brad Price reported 868 baptized and 717 communicant members. The report highlighted the joy of gathering around the Word of God and the fellowship of believers for Easter and Karen Grunwald's retirement service this last quarter.

Greg Diersen reported for the Board of Youth and Education as the new St. John's Representative to the St. Paul's Lutheran School Board for Child Discipleship (BOCD). St Paul's school leaders and St. John's leaders continued to work on clarifying how and what school budgeting numbers are shared.

The council recommended to the St. John's Voters that "an additional \$17,000.00 school support payment be made in July to St. Paul's Church as well as the regular July payment."

Evangelism Board chair Jesse Zahrt updated the council members on St. John's initial steps into using the Bavarian Blast Parade for outreach. Next year St. John's is looking to include more members in these outreach efforts.

Upcoming evangelism opportunities for congregation members:

- John & Paul Ministries will have a table set up at MLC orientation. It's a laid-back meet-and-greet where we share information about both our churches.
- Hosting an MLC "Welcome Back" Sunday at St. John's. This Sunday will be a fellowship Sunday geared towards welcoming students.
- Fellowship at Flandrau. Work is being done to lock in a date to coordinate a joint St. John's and St. Paul's fellowship gathering. It's merely an agreed-upon time for member families to picnic at Flandrau, swim, and visit. It's a bring-your-own food and beverage event.

The St. John's childcare sub-committee submitted their comprehensive study of the childcare ministry opportunities in New Ulm. The council decided not to pursue childcare plans any further at this time. The council highlighted the need to clarify the congregation's vision for why and how we do outreach and in-reach so that St. John's can better understand how opportunities in the community, like childcare, fit into St. John's Gospel ministry.

Future meetings:

Next regular council meeting - Tuesday, August 16, 7 pm

Next voters' meeting - Tuesday, October 25, 7 pm

Submitted by Jon Schaefer,  
Congregational president

## Summer Devotions in the Park

The Friday morning women's Bible study group invites all parents and their children to join them during the summer months for Christian fellowship in the park.

We meet at 9 am at the listed park for free play and a picnic lunch (optional). Feel free to bring a friend!

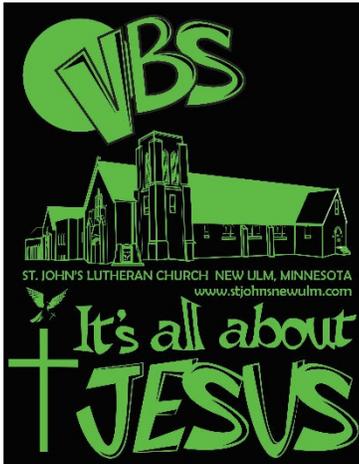
If you have any questions, please contact Erika Grundmeier at (989) 529-8729.

Aug. 5	North Park: 1801 N. State St.
Aug. 12	Harman Park: 101 N. Garden St.
Aug. 19	Highland Park: 1627 5th North St.
Aug. 26	Hermann Heights Park: 14 Monument St.

# Art Camp and Vacation Bible School

There will be two separate events for Vacation Bible School (VBS) and Art Camp due to limited space in the church.

Art Camp will be for students 3rd - 8th grade on Tuesday, August 9 - Thursday, August 11 and will include painting, drawing, and pottery. The cost is \$25.



Vacation Bible School will be Monday, August 15 - Wednesday, August 17 for ages PreK4 - 2nd grade. The theme of this year's Vacation Bible School will be "Raindrops to Rainbows," and will include lessons based on storms and putting our faith in Jesus even in the midst of them. Please note that registration is for children 4 years and older by August 15. The cost is \$5.

Registration is available online for both events.



## Our Synod at Work

### Grace of Giving Pamphlet

Earlier this summer the Wisconsin Synod sent out a pamphlet entitled "Grace of Giving." They stated that there are many ways you can support WELS and its mission to spread the gospel of Jesus Christ, but it looked mainly at two areas: the Charitable Remainder Trust and the Donor Advised Fund. We will feature a few highlights from this edition of the pamphlet at look at these two options.

#### Charitable Remainder Trust

Charitable Remainder Trusts are "used to convert appreciated property into a gift to advance the gospel while providing an income to the donor for life or for a term of years." They use the example of a WELS member who purchased an asset (stock, real estate, rental property, etc.) that has grown in value so much that rebalancing the portfolio or reducing the holdings would become financially prudent. By giving the appreciated asset to the WELS Foundation to be put into a charitable remainder trust (CRT), the Foundation can sell the asset within the CRT and create a balanced portfolio that pays an income to the beneficiaries for life or a term of years. The member

receives an income tax deduction and spreads out the capital gains over the term of the trust. These deductions can eliminate tax on a significant portion of income for up to six years. They may also make it possible for the individual to itemize where it would otherwise not be feasible.

One additional benefit that may apply is that the trust remainder that distributes to ministry is excluded from any potential estate taxes. WELS Foundation has established a minimum gift for such an arrangement at \$200,000 in fair market value. Most importantly, the gospel is advanced because of the gift.

### **Donor Advised Fund**

The pamphlet states that from time to time, a WELS member may be faced with a larger than expected financial blessing that opens the door for giving to the Lord's work without enough time to distribute the extra blessing nor the desire to engage in multiple transactions to help several charities. The donor advised fund (DAF) permits one to make charitable gifts to those organization one cares about most, at the time you choose, often with expert advice and assistance.

A DAF is like a charitable investment account for the purpose of supporting the WELS ministries you care about. When you contribute cash, securities, or other assets to a DAF, you are generally able to take an immediate income tax deduction as well as avoid capital gain taxes from the gift of appreciated property. Those funds may then be invested for tax-free growth, and you have the flexibility to recommend distributions from time to time to qualified WELS ministries.

With recent tax and economic changes, many people no longer itemize their deductions. With a DAF, an individual can bunch several years of charitable gifts in to a single year, allowing them to itemize in that year.

For more information contact the WELS Ministry of Christian Giving, N16W23377 Stone Ridge Drive in Waukesha, WI 53188-1108.

Gerald Woodley

## *In Loving Memory*

<i>Elmer Rolloff</i>	Undesignated	\$395
<i>Judy Zenk</i>	Undesignated	\$20



## Church Library

August is leading us into the end of vacations and summer. Now we introduce two fiction books, one non-fiction, and a DVD set.

The first fiction book is by the author of the “Plain” trilogy that was introduced in May. Beth Wiseman wrote another Amish romance called “The Wonder of Your Love”, about a man who has raised his children as a widower, and helps a widow who at age 40 is raising her first baby. It would never work, right? The second Amish fiction book is by Ruth Reid. In “A Miracle of Hope”, the woman was raped and is now pregnant. But her brother found a man willing to marry her if she can care for the man’s deaf daughter. Will this work?

The DVD is part of a series that Dave Stotts has made. He drives through the areas in his Land Rover and calls them “A Drive Through History”. We already have 4 of this series: Greece, Rome, Turkey, and Asia Minor. The new one is called “The Gospels, the Extraordinary Life of Jesus of Nazareth.”. This set contains 3 discs in which he covers the 4 gospels, telling the story of Jesus, the most significant person who has ever lived, using pictures and words. A most learning experience.

Another learning experience is a non-fiction book written by the late retired history professor Theodore Hartwig, that has been donated to our library. It is a collection of 198 documents concerning Western Civilization from 2000 B.C. to 1400 A.D. It was used as a college history textbook, called “The Past Speaks for Itself.” History buffs will love it.

Have a good rest of the summer!  
LeiLani Rahn, church librarian

## St. Paul’s School

What is Normal?

For the past two years we have wondered how the school year would start. Would we be face to face or distance learning? Would we wear masks or not? Would we have to quarantine and isolate ourselves? All of this started a year earlier when we left empty seats in school for a quarter of the school year as we worked our way through while learning how to utilize the advantages of the Internet to meet with and teach. We learned a lot, and we have been wondering what normal looks like ever since.

We have had to rethink about washing our hands for 20 seconds. Do we continue to use the dots on the floor indicating the 6 foot barrier to protect ourselves and our friends? Are we cleaning the desktops every chance we get? Wearing masks on public transportation was a requirement through much of last year. Students never being diagnosed with influenza when we kept everything so clean at school. Some sports were canceled while other sports had strict guidance for playing. For many years we were comfortable with our routines.

Now, we ask, what is normal? As teachers look forward to this school year, it appears that we will start as normal as we can remember, and we are all looking forward to that. School doors open, classrooms full of students, and welcoming volunteers!

If you would like to volunteer to be a reader for a small group of students or listen to students read. Please contact the school office, 354-2329 if you are ready to help us get back to normal. Volunteer to help students and receive smiles! God bless.

Pete Markgraf  
Principal

## Archives

### *Parsonage or Church - Which Comes First?*

1960 -1963

*From the Archives of St. John's Lutheran, New Ulm*

By 1963 St. John's Congregation had 443 souls, 295 of whom were communicant members. The Sunday services combined (8:30 and 10:00), averaged an attendance of 287. About two-thirds of those who worshipped in the basement church were members. One-third were students from Dr. Martin Luther College.

There were almost 70 children from St. John's who attended St. Paul's School. Whereas these Christian Day School students received Bible lessons five days per week, the Sunday School (held at 9:30) was mainly used as the Christian education supplement for parents of children who attended public schools. Sunday School enrollment was 35. VBS 66.

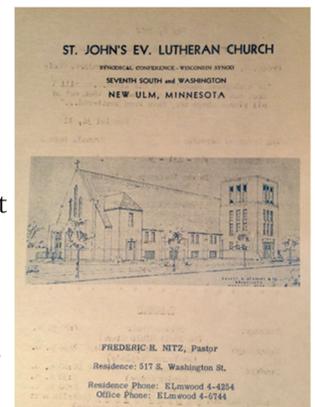
Pastor Nitz had declined three calls: one to Northern Rhodesia, Africa, in 1960 and two more in 1962. The first to Tappan, N. Dakota (April) and the other to Balaton, Minnesota (August). As a member of the Board for World Missions, he regularly visited the Apache missions in Arizona, where he once served.

The picture of the proposed sanctuary which would be built on top of the basement church ("the superstructure") was printed on the front of each bulletin. It was a constant reminder of the need to begin building as soon as possible.

Although, the pastor's family lived in a parsonage 1 1/2 blocks north of the church, the 517 S. Washington home was considered to be temporary. The congregation felt that the size and suitability of a custom built parsonage was necessary. Because there was no pastor's study in the 517 home, it could be included in the plan. A new parsonage would also avoid the constant repairs which the Trustees had to deal with in the current house.

The congregation had never taken a subsidy from the synod for building the basement church in 1949 or for any other endeavor. It did occasionally take out loans, but paid them back quickly. In February 1961, only \$1,000 remained of the Building Fund debt...probably from the purchase of the original parsonage. That seems like a relatively small amount in 2022. A half-century of inflation helps put those costs into perspective. There were Sundays when the total building debt offering was only 67 cents.

Nevertheless, by March 26, 1961 the members rallied to erase that debt. It was a red-letter day for St. John's. For the first time in their thirteen year history they were debt free!



The victory was sweet, but brief. The Building Debt Fund was immediately renamed The Building Fund and two committees were appointed. The first was The Church Building Committee and was comprised of

Prof. H. Birkholz (chairman), H. Plagge and R. Vogel. The other was the Parsonage Planning Committee. With a couple of substitutions, the members eventually shook down to: Norman Wieland (chairman), Elmer Kitzrow, Prof. Cornelius Trapp, Henry Wacker and Waldemar Wolf.

By June of 1961, the Building Fund swelled to almost \$1,200. Momentum was growing. The congregation was assured that the Fund would be used both for the superstructure and the new parsonage. If the Building Fund offerings continued to grow, the sale of the former parsonage could be used for the church superstructure.

Three months later, the bulletin announced that “a family of the congregation generously donated 2 lots to St. John’s for a parsonage.” Those two lots are located at 800 S. State Street, next to what were the tennis courts. The voters’ met and accepted the offer. It was becoming clear that the parsonage would be built before the sanctuary.

Bulletins requested that any ideas members had to enhance the plans for the parsonage should be given to the committee. The Parsonage Planning Committee was renamed The Parsonage Building Committee and Professor Trapp did an excellent job of incorporating many of the suggestions into the blueprint.

In the spring of 1962 the bids of various contractors were decided upon.

**General Contract - carpentry and all cabinet work** was awarded to The Kraus Brothers. Richard Kraus was a member of St. John’s until his death in 2001. A couple of years later Richard’s son, Doug Kraus, was taking out soffits during a kitchen renovation and remarked, “I recognize this as my father’s work.”

**Mason work** - Classen Construction

**Building Materials** - Lampert Lumber Co.

**Plumbing/Heating and Sheet Metal** - Schanus Plumbing and Heating

**Plastering** - Cordes Brothers

**Floor Covering** - Marvin Christensen’s Floorcraft

**Excavating and Trenching** - W. Schroeder Construction

**Carpeting** - J. H. Forster, Inc.

All things considered, the brick and frame “rambler” was estimated to cost about \$20,000 to build.

The footprint was slated for excavation during the first weeks of June. However, the skies opened and saturated the earth. Excavation would have to wait until June 19, 1962.

The excitement of the progress took its toll, though. By the end of April 1962, the Building Fund was in excess of \$5,400. Our annual promise to our synod for worldwide missions was \$5,000. With only a couple of months left, we were \$873 short. Similar difficulties arose with the local expenses of the church. These debts were no small matter in a climate where a \$150 deficit merited special mention in the bulletin, set off with an exclamation point. Bulletins regularly urged Gospel-motivated generosity. Occasionally, there was an admonition for those who, in light of all God had bestowed upon them, gave nothing in return. Then, as today, it is no small miracle that our Savior

places His saving proclamation into the care of mortals. But for His grace, our efforts would be fruitless.

As it turned out, St. John's members met their annual obligations both locally and worldwide. To God be the glory!

Respectfully Submitted,  
Pastor em. Wayne A. Laitinen, St. John's Archivist

## **MLC Ladies' Auxiliary**

St. John's is looking for someone to be the contact person for the MLC Ladies' Auxiliary.

### **Who We Are**

The Martin Luther College Ladies Auxiliary is composed of women who are communicant members of the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod and those in Synodical fellowship.

### **Our Mission**

The MLC Ladies Auxiliary exists to support and enhance student life at Martin Luther College in New Ulm, MN.

### **Our Purpose**

Our purpose is fourfold:

- To promote greater interest in Martin Luther College.
- To promote Christian fellowship among women of WELS and those in Synodical fellowship
- To give financial support to MLC by supplying funds for needed projects which are not included in the Synod budget.
- To support MLC and its students through prayer

The contact lady would be responsible for sharing information from the Auxiliary with her congregation.

### **The Auxiliary Board**

The Executive Committee along with the Pastoral Advisor, the Faculty Representative, a Representative from the Board of Control, Projects Committee members, Promotion Committee members, and two representatives from each conference make up the Auxiliary Board.

### **Committees**

- Program — The Faculty Representative assists in planning the program for the annual meeting.
- Promotion — Three elected conference representatives, the First and Second Vice Presidents, and the Faculty Representative coordinate all promotional activities of the Auxiliary.
- Projects — Three elected area representatives, along with the Faculty Representative, coordinate all activities related to the selection and funding of projects.

The fall MLC Ladies' Auxiliary Day is currently held in October on the campus of MLC.

To learn more, go to [mlc-wels.edu/ladies-auxiliary/](http://mlc-wels.edu/ladies-auxiliary/)