



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

CELEBRATE THE ASCENSION OF OUR LORD

He who descended is the very one who ascended higher than all the heavens, in order to fill the whole universe. (Ephesians 4:10)

On Thursday, May 26th this year, we will celebrate the Ascension of Jesus. Sadly, it is a celebration that sometimes gets lost somewhere between Easter and Pentecost, and if truth be told, there are many congregations, even in our synod, that do not celebrate it.

However, it is a noteworthy festival. It marks the fortieth day from the time that Jesus rose from death to prove that he was alive. During that forty-day period he appeared, disappeared, and reappeared to his followers on many different occasions. St. Paul records the fact that he appeared alive to over five-hundred people at once. St. John reminds us that Jesus also demonstrated he was really alive with many infallible proofs, which included offering his wounded hands and side to be touched by them, showing them he had flesh and bones, and by eating in front of his disciples to prove he was not merely a ghost or apparition.

But then, on the fortieth day, Jesus took his apostles to the Mount of Olives, and there he ascended into heaven before their eyes. Clouds of glory covered him from their sight. And as they stood there gawking at the sky, we are told in **Acts 1:10-11: Suddenly two men dressed in white stood beside them. "Men of Galilee," they said, "why do you stand here looking into the sky? This same Jesus, who has been taken from you into heaven, will come back in the same way you have seen him go into heaven."**

The apostles were wondering what would happen next. They were sinners, just as we are. Perhaps in a brief moment of wonder and forgetfulness, they might have thought Jesus was deserting them. We've had those kinds of doubtful thoughts cross our sinful minds at times when the devil or the sinful world around us or the Old Adam within us whisper disparaging things about God, and try to make us think he's forsaken us, too.

But no, he had not forsaken the apostles, nor has he forsaken us. Jesus Christ who had died on the

cross bearing the sins of every sinner had risen from death. He proved that he was alive to show us that his sacrifice on our behalf was acceptable to God and that he paid the debt incurred by sin for all of us.

Jesus who had risen had now ascended into heaven in clouds of glory to prove that he was exalted to the throne of God. He was returning to the place from whence he'd come.

Now the angels had come with the promise that Jesus who had ascended into heaven to be exalted would return in glory, just as he'd left. He would return to take his people home. For it is he who promised in **John 14:2-3: "In my Father's house are many rooms; if it were not so, I would have told you. I am going there to prepare a place for you. ³ And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to be with me that you also may be where I am."**

**St. John's invites you to come to our
Ascension Day Worship Service
on Thursday, May 26.
Services will be at 11:00 a.m. and 6:30 p.m.**

It is a good opportunity to bring a friend to hear the Good News of Jesus' redemption and to share that message with others.

In Christ, Pastor Bovee

June Sermon Texts

Jun 5	Genesis 11:1-9	God, What Did You Say?
Jun 12	Numbers 6:22-27	"God Bless You!"
Jun 19	Luke 8:26-39	Freedom from the Devil's Legions
Jun 26	Luke 9:51-62	We Should Be Committed

Bible Classes meet in the Church Basement
The class can also be found online at bit.ly/SJBibleClass

Sundays at 11 am	Book of Mark	Pastor Guenther
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Council Digest

The St. John's Church Council met on May 18. The council hosted the members of the St. Paul's Church Council for a joint council meeting, held semi-annually between the two congregations. The historic purposes of these meetings include mutual communication, encouragement, and cooperation. Pastor Bovee of St. John's led the opening devotions. Attendees heard reports from Pastor Nate Scharf of St. Paul's and Pastor Rob Guenther of St. John's. A summary of topics addressed follows:

In addition to the partnership we share in the operation of St. Paul's Lutheran School, the two congregations cooperate in a variety of activities. Those activities are organized under the name John and Paul Ministries (see website for updates at www.johnandpaulministries.com.) The group's goal is to host a variety of events with a primary focus on outreach. As reported by St. John's Board of Evangelism chair Jesse Zahrt, here is a brief list of targeted activities for the coming summer:

- July 13-16 - Soccer Camp
- July 17 - Participate in Bavarian Blast Parade
- September 10 - Summer Send-off Community Outreach Event at St. Paul's School
- October 29 - Trunk or Treat at St. Paul's School
- November 25 - Participate in the Parade of Lights

The second major topic discussed was the two congregations' St. Paul's Lutheran School (SPLS) Agreement. The two councils highlighted the blessings of the partnership when it comes to the ministry impact and "cost-efficiency" of tuition. Communication between the two has been improved and both councils began to look at guidelines that will keep communication channels open. The big challenge the group assessed was a few guidelines for how best to structure and fund continuous maintenance and improvements at SPLS.

The next joint meeting will be hosted by St. Paul's and was tentatively scheduled for Tuesday, November 15.

After the St. Paul's council was dismissed for the evening, the St. John's council continued with its regular meeting. A summary of reports and actions not reported elsewhere in the Fortress follows:

Membership changes approved

Transfers In: Shawn Bjerke from St. Paul, Tomah, WI

Releases: Jeff Brandes; Kayla
Ross Gieseke

Principal Markgraf reported on staffing and enrollment numbers for next year. We are thankful to Jesus for a full faculty for next year. Enrollment numbers are increasing. It is important to enroll early to ensure seats are available.

Date	PreK Total	K-8 Total
4/7	52	80
4/19	56	133
5/16	58	267

Jason Mohror, reporting for the Elders, noted that the board voted on two worship practices and reviewed employee review procedures. The board voted to make no changes to the current

procedures for offerings and communion. Elders Chairman will take on the role of St. John's employee reviews to include the custodian, secretary, bookkeeper, pastors, and staff minister. Employee files will be kept in a secure location for future Elders Chairman to use.

Evangelism Board chair Jesse Zahrt noted they are currently reviewing our church's website to see what changes we might like to make to freshen it up, make it more useful to visitors, and better blend our various apps together for a more seamless user experience. Feel free to share your thoughts with him. Some summer events being planned that include the following in addition to the John and Paul Ministry events:

- June 12: Church picnic at Hermann Heights park.
- June 18: Joint service in the park. (Spearheaded by the Worship Committee and a great opportunity for outreach letting our lights shine in the community.)
- June 24-26: St. John's 2nd annual campout at Sleepy Eye campground.

The Stewardship Board's recommendation was adopted to use the Netgiver platform for online and mobile contributions and promote it to our members as an optional method for remitting offerings. It is fee-free for both donors and nonprofit recipients.

Scott Deters, Trustee's Chairman, organized an outdoor cleanup has been scheduled for May 21st with a secondary date of June 4th if bad weather on the first date.

The following schedule was set for future meetings:

Next regular council meeting - Tuesday, June 21, 7 pm

Next voters' meeting - Tuesday, July 26, 7 pm

Submitted by Jon Schaefer,
Congregational president

Women of St. John's

Women of St. John's will meet on Tuesday, June 7th at 6 pm at Lincoln Park. Individuals should plan on bringing their own sack lunches and a lawn chair. Beverages and desserts will be provided.



Staff Minister

Online Church Directory

If you have not picked one of our January 2022 editions of our church directory, feel free to fill out a order slip available in the new narthex and place in my mailbox or email me at sm.dretske@stjohnsnewulm.com and I can print the size you want and place it in your church mailbox.

Try out the online **Instant Church Directory App**. It is secure and our directory is available to only our members and can be updated easily by our members who are signed into the App. Download the App for your Android or iPhone by visiting instantchurchdirectory.com and downloading the app. I believe you can also visit the Apple or Google Store to download the free app. Just type in Instant Church Directory. I have found it to be very easy to access. Identify St. John's, New Ulm, Minnesota as your church and sign in with your name and email address. Once you are signed in on your phone it only takes a second to open and use to find the members of St. John's.

Visiting the Homebound

I continue to have the privilege of joining the pastors in visits to members who are homebound—sharing the Gospel in Word and Sacrament. If you are not on our list to be visited but would like to be included, please call the church office or me at 507-217-7604 to get on the list.

Streamed/Recorded Services

Please **hit SUBSCRIBE** when watching St. John's YouTube "channel". You will not need to pay a monthly fee. It only means that our St. John's New Ulm "Channel" will show up under your Subscribed Channels in the YouTube App in order to access it easily. If you choose to accept notifications, you will receive a notification on your computer or phone whenever St. John's New Ulm uploads or streams a new video. Thanks for watching our services and subscribing to the St. John's New Ulm YouTube channel.

St. John's APP

Go to your App Store on your Phone and type in **St Johns New Ulm**. You can watch our streamed services live or recorded, listen to an archive of digital audio files of songs that have been sung in church, see a calendar of upcoming events, or even use an online contribution feature. There was a recent update in April. Current users can visit the app store to update to the latest version.

Member Care

There were a number of members who indicated on the Time & Talent Survey last fall under "**Member Care**" that they would be interested in helping others. The next step is to find out what is needed help with. I have placed **Member Care Cards** in the Narthex that are available to our members who could use some help around the house. Fill out with details about the work that is needed and place card in my church Mailbox (J/C Dretske). I will try to connect you with someone who is willing to help.

Respectfully submitted, Jim Dretske

Church Library

Last month we told you quickly about 2 new donations. Today I want to clarify them.

Pastor Tim Smith of St. Paul's, New Ulm writes daily devotions online. Lately he finished writing on the book of St. Luke. There was so much information that he had to print Luke in 4 volumes. Someone donated all 4 books that are available in the church library. Rev. Smith has written "John" which is also in our library, as well as "Job".

The other book mentioned last month is "Crucial Hours". It is a Northwestern Publishing House Classic that they reprinted. The pastors here used it as research for the Lenten services this year. William Lauterbach had studied many details of Jesus' passion and answered any questions you may have had.

A donation this month is of another Amish series written by Beverly Lewis. It is a 5 book series, but book 4 is missing. The characters are related, but the books can be read separately. The first book is "The Fiddler", #2 is "The Bridesmaid", #3 is "The Guardian" and #5 is "The Last Bride". One of the persons finding love could be Amish, or an Englisher. Sometimes the Amish person wants to become English, and sometimes an Englisher wants to be Amish.

Happy summer reading!

LeiLani Rahn,
Church librarian



UPCOMING EVENTS!

Church Picnic

This year the church picnic will be held on Sunday, June 12, from 4:30 - 8 pm at the Hermann Heights Pavilions. Brats, hot dogs (and all the fixings), water, juice and



paper products will all be provided.

We ask that those whose last names begin with

A - L to bring a side dish,
and those names that begin with
M-Z bring a dessert.

Feel free to bring any lawn games
or card/board games to play!



Service in the Park

Join us as we worship with St. Paul's Lutheran Church at German Park
on Saturday, June 18 at 6:30 pm.

There will not be a worship service at St. John's that evening.



Church Campout

Fun and Fellowship at the 2nd Annual St. John's Campout on Friday, June 24 - Sunday, June 26 at Sportsmen's Park in Sleepy Eye.

Register for one night or two at: bit.ly/Campout22
Please make your payment within a week to hold your spot.

There will be a church service and other fellowship activities at the campground over the weekend.

Contact the Evangelism Committee with questions at evangelism@stjohnsnewulm.com.



Our Synod at Work

WELS Annual Report: Called to Serve

We will continue to review highlights from the Synod's Annual Report to Our Members for 2022. This month our focus will be on the section entitled "Called to Serve." This section contains a number of topics and we will present information on a number of them.

WELS Christian Aid and Relief approved \$470,882 for humanitarian aid projects in WELS mission fields throughout the United States and worldwide for the fiscal year of 2021-22. The humanitarian aid granted through WELS Christian Aid and Relief takes many forms, including providing smokeless stoves to safely heat homes in South Asia, medical clinics, assistance for legal immigrants, vocational training, and backpacks and school supplies for underprivileged kids. It also offers disaster relief, which takes the form of monetary aid and volunteer efforts. For example, in December of last year, a crew of volunteers replaced roofs from two homes in New Orleans that were damaged to Hurricane Ida. Also, in 2021, WELS Christian Aid and Relief also offered a grant program to help congregations offer pandemic relief to their communities.

WELS Congregational Services serves congregations and schools and their leaders by providing resources, training, and personal assistance so that they may carry out gospel ministry in the most faithful way on the local level. For almost seven decades, at the end of each year, WELS has asked congregations to supply church statistics. Generally, over 95 percent of congregations participate. That data has been published each year in the WELS Statistical Report, which is over a hundred pages of numbers: membership, worship attendance, ministrations, and more.

WELS Commission on Evangelism offers Everyone Outreach workshops to congregations that want to build a culture of outreach so that every ministry and every member is thinking about and participating in outreach. They trained 21 facilitators to help lead the workshops.

Equip Women to Teach the Word provides online training to Christian women, enabling them to teach the Word of God in home and congregational settings. Resources include five online lessons with accompanying videos to build a biblical foundation and provide step-by-step instruction.

WELS Prison Ministry administers an extensive ministry-by-mail program. During the pandemic, demand for the Bible study books soared. A small staff utilizes the services of hundreds of volunteers to manage the ministry-by-mail program, which has reached more than 70,000 inmates. Eighty –three percent of the Bible study course books that are distributed produce a response from an inmate. Volunteers prepare regular mailings, correct Bible correspondence tests, and serve as pen pals to inmates.

There are 2,922 WELS teachers in WELS schools that teach more than 44,900 students (infant through high school seniors) in 423 schools. 68% of WELS schools had enrollment growth during the 2021022 school year.

Next month we will conclude our review of highlights from the WELS Annual Report by looking at the section entitled “Called to Support“.

Gerald Woodley

Volunteers Needed

St. John's members have an opportunity to volunteer at the New Ulm Emergency Food Shelf on the 3rd Monday of each month from 11:45 am - 3 pm. Two to three volunteers are needed for the following date:

November 21

Please consider signing up for a Monday or two. High school and college students are welcome.

Please contact Rita Walters via phone or text at 507-351-8603 or email at rmwalters@hotmail.com.



In Loving Memory

<i>Claus Sieh</i>	Building Fund	\$20
	Missions	\$100
	Undesignated	\$745
<i>Herman A. Selle, Jr.</i>	Undesignated	\$100



St. Paul's School

Year In Review

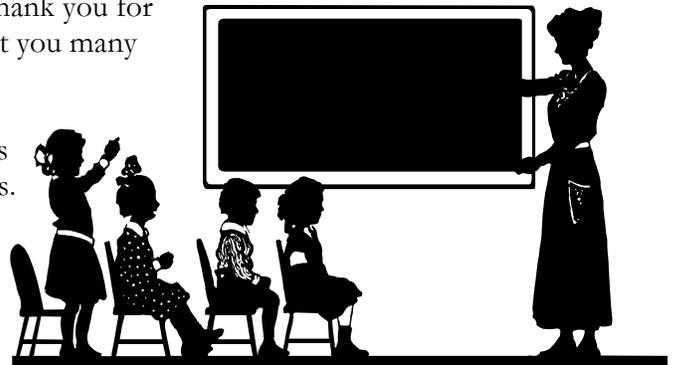
St. Paul's Lutheran School has completed another school year. We ended up gaining students through the school year. Our final enrollment in K-8 was 302 students. The increase in numbers has our attention. Do we need more teachers? More paras? More classrooms? It is fun to think of the many blessings we have received in the last few years as our enrollment continues to grow. It is the first time since the year 2000 that our school is above 300 students.

We graduated 45 students on May 25, 2022. They are taking several different paths in high school. We have students going to Minnesota Valley Lutheran, Luther Preparatory School, and our local public high school. We ask that God be with each of them.

We are entering the summer blessed with a full slate of teachers. There will be 3 Called Workers teaching in our Preschool. We have 14 Called Workers teaching in grades K-8. We also have a full time Student Learning Coordinator position filled. We will be welcoming new faculty next year. Mr. Phil Scriver in grades 5-6 and Mrs. Amber Brown as our Student Learning Coordinator. We say farewell to Mrs. Grunwald and Mrs. Enter! Thank you for your service and love for the children. May God grant you many blessings for many years in your retirement.

Finally, we will be hiring a para this summer as well as a teacher's assistant who has some administrative gifts. If you are interested, please, come to church or school for an application. Watch for more information in the bulletin or email.

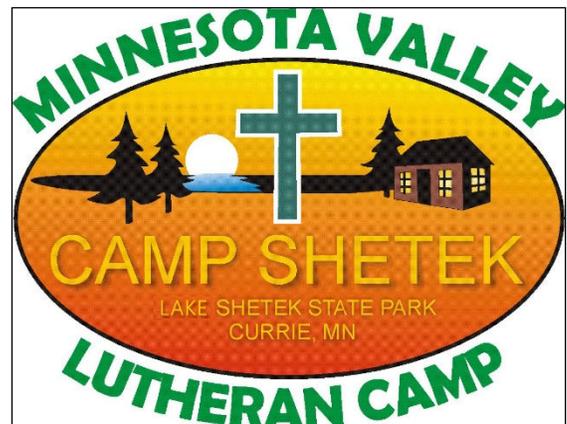
Pete Markgraf, Principal



Camp Shetek

After a two year pause from having a Camp (due to COVID) we are planning to hold Camp Shetek on Sunday, June 19 at 5 pm to Saturday, June 25 at 11 am.

This camp is held at Lake Shetek State Park (south of Tracy, near Currie). For information about this WELS Camp Shetek, go to "campshetek.org". Online registration is available.



Ice Cream Social and Grill Out at Oak Hills Living Center

This event will be on Wednesday, June 15, from 6 - 8 pm. The proceeds of a free will offering will benefit the Growing Our Tomorrow campaign.

Brats and hot dogs, chips and ice cream will be available. The New Ulm Municipal Band will also perform.



Central Africa Medical Mission

When Beth and I were living in Malawi back in the early 1980's polio was very real. In 1980 Malawi reported around 50,000 cases, and the devastating effects of the disease with its paralysis could be seen just about anywhere we travelled. Major vaccination efforts were already underway and gradually polio came under control, so that in 2005 Malawi was declared polio free.

Polio vaccination has been part of our under-five's vaccination schedule for many years. By the time children are 5 months old they will have received 4 oral doses and one injection. Vaccination rates in Malawi are believed to be over 90%. The fight against Polio was so successful that MAP -Malawi Against Polio, the organization that championed vaccination and provided support for Polio patients morphed into an agency called Malawi Against Physical Disabilities whose aim is to help people of all ages with disabilities towards independence. They focus particularly on those with mobility problems and those suffering from polio, paralysis, paraplegia, tetraplegia, hemiplegia and other disabilities.

You can imagine our surprise when in February this year the Malawian government announced an outbreak of Polio. Here are some excerpts from a local news article:

"Health authorities have declared an outbreak of wild poliovirus type 1 after a case was detected in a young child in the capital Lilongwe. This is the first case of wild poliovirus in Africa in more than five years."

"Laboratory analysis shows that the strain detected in Malawi is linked to the one that has been circulating in Sindh Province in Pakistan."

"Following the detection of wild polio in Malawi, we're taking urgent measures to forestall its potential spread. Thanks to a high level of polio surveillance in the continent and the capacity to quickly detect the virus, we can swiftly launch a rapid response and protect children from the debilitating impact of this disease."

"Any case of wild polio virus is a significant event, and we will mobilize all resources to support the country's response," said Dr Modjirom Ndoutabe, Polio Coordinator in the WHO Regional Office for Africa."

Malawi Government agencies are stepping up their efforts to vaccinate and revaccinate children. Government Health Surveillance Assistants have been going door to door with the polio vaccine and The United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF), has been providing solar powered refrigerators to clinics in rural areas to store polio vaccine, including one that was recently installed at our Msambo clinic. In Zambia the government declared poliomyelitis week as a precaution because of the Malawian case, and our Mwembezi staff have been going door to door as part of a polio vaccination program.

Most of our staff has never treated a polio patient. Today we were fortunate to have Dr John Podgore, from the University of North Texas Health Science Center where he is a professor who specializes in Pediatric infectious Diseases, provide an in-service to our staff in how to recognize the symptoms of polio and methods to limit the spread.

The Central Africa Medical Mission cooperates with government agencies to carry out preventative and treatment health initiatives. Our staff share monthly statistics and attend government review sessions to ensure our work is in line with the needs of the communities we serve. Our medical focus may change due to current initiatives, but our mission remains the same: to support the Gospel mission by communicating Christ's love as we show caring concern to the people we serve.



*“Heal the sick who are there and tell them the Kingdom of God has come near to you”
Luke 10:9*

Gary Evans
CAMM Field Director – LMC Clinic Administrator

Welcome to St. John's!

627 S. Washington St.

507-354-6744

www.stjohnsnewulm.com

Worship Times

Saturdays: 6:30 pm

Sundays: 8 & 9:30 am

and online at:

YouTube.com

Search: Saint John's New Ulm

Adult Bible Class

(In person and online at: bit.ly/SJBibleClass)

Sundays: 11 am

Staff

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