

Office Hours

Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday
8:30 a.m.-2:30 p.m.

Church Staff

Pastor Karla Leiby
pastorkarla@stjohnslutherannorry.org
570-854-3919

William Jacavage
Director of Music

Sue Billman
Office Manager
sjelc300@ptd.net

Tina Pontius
Treasurer

Joyce Shearer
Payroll Treasurer

Barb Moyer
Restricted Fund Treasurer

Congregation Officers

Mike Erdley, President
Holly Bedisky, Vice President
Eric Shearer, Secretary

Congregation Council

Mike McWilliams
Teresa Meisinger
Pam Miller
Teresa Miller
Tom Propst
Karen Smeltz
Randy Stine
Craig Treacher

Church phone: 570-473-3770

Email: sjelc300@ptd.net

Website:
<https://stjohnslutherannorry.org>



***Be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another,
as God in Christ has forgiven you.
Ephesians 4:32***

Over the past few weeks, the theme of forgiveness appeared in several separate places in my life. My daily journal had a prompt to think about forgiveness, a counseling session with a member revolved around forgiveness, and forgiveness was one of the themes of the day while at Camp Mount Luther. We may not think about forgiveness often, but it is a daily part of our lives whether we are offering it or withholding it.

Forgiveness is a gift we've been freely given by God through Christ Jesus. This forgiveness that we have been offered through Christ Jesus also gives us the ability to forgive as we have been forgiven. This gift of forgiveness restores what has been broken and allows healing to take place.

When I talk to people about forgiveness, the one thing they are always surprised about is that forgiveness does not include forgetting or pretending the hurt did not happen. What it does include is not allowing the hurt, anger, despair, or resentment to control us any longer. Forgiveness releases the pain that was created by the hurt. Without forgiveness, the hurt lingers within you and resurfaces over and over again, bringing along other emotions that impact our state of wellbeing. It can sometimes impact our relationships with others and be a barrier to living an abundant life. All of this keeps us living in the past and prevents us from moving forward in life.

Sometimes forgiveness comes with reconciliation of relationships. Forgiveness has the power to restore two or more people, not just one. When this happens, the relationship between them may have changed, but it can continue to move forward. However, there are times when the other is physically, emotionally, or mentally unavailable to receive or offer forgiveness. When this is the case, often forgiveness can be satisfied through letter writing, talking it out, or returning to the place of the hurt. This often provides the healing needed without the participation of the other because it allows us to let go of the hurt.

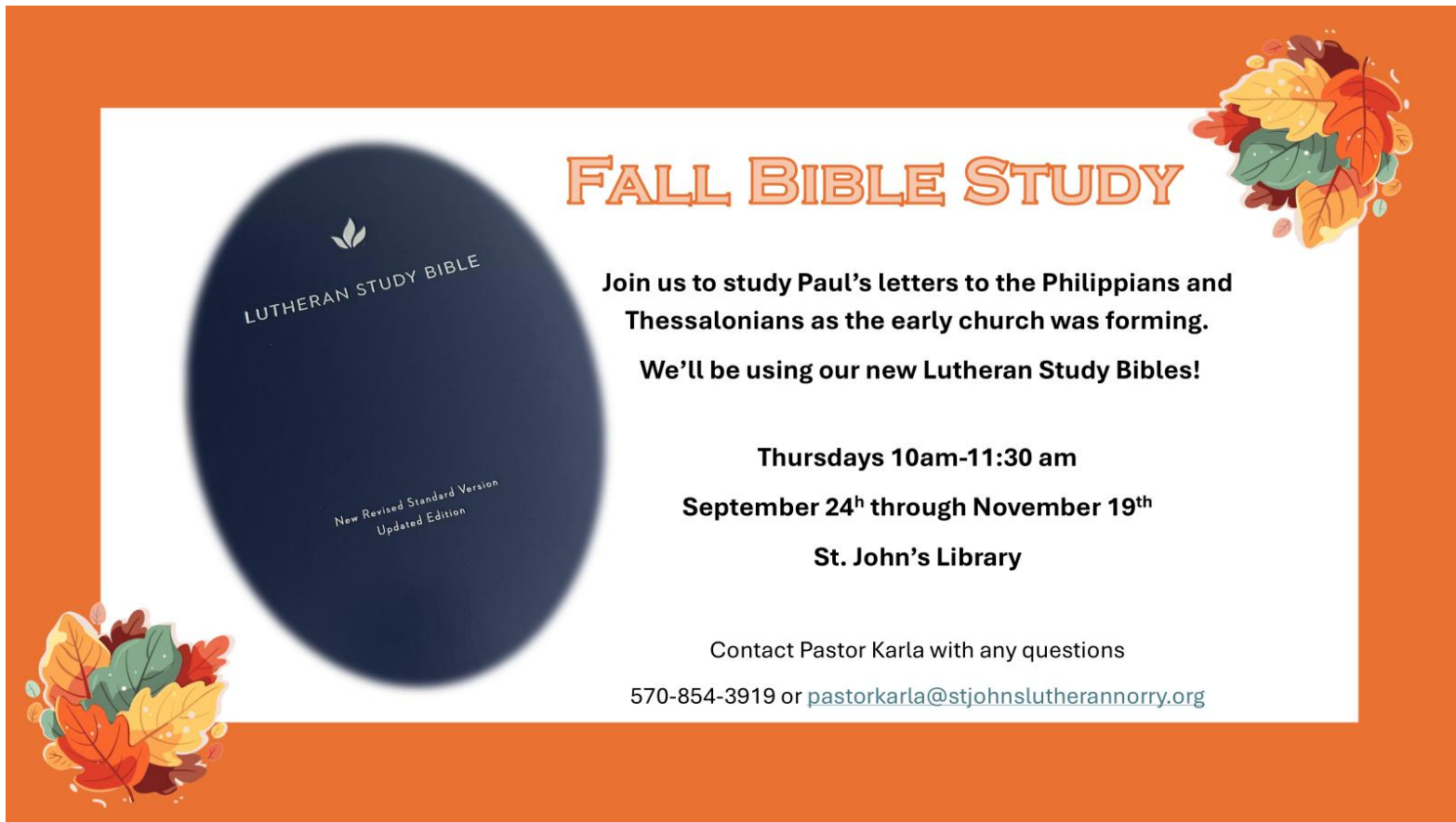
Another aspect of forgiveness is that we can forgive the person who hurt us without placing ourselves in a position that allows us to be harmed again. There are times when restoration of the former relationship is just not in the best interest of our wellbeing. But the forgiveness part is needed for the healing to take place. Instead, we allow forgiveness, healing, and then set boundaries around the relationship that safeguards us from repetitive harm.

Forgiveness is not easy, but it is an important part of who God calls us to be so that we can live a life of wholeness and abundance from a place of love and peace. And remember, it is ok to need help working through forgiveness, whether that is forgiveness for others or ourselves!

Jesus said, "Forgive, and you will be forgiven" (Luke 6:37). May we all live into the forgiveness of our own wrongs and forgive others as we have been forgiven.

Blessings,

Pastor Karla



FALL BIBLE STUDY

Join us to study Paul's letters to the Philippians and Thessalonians as the early church was forming.

We'll be using our new Lutheran Study Bibles!

Thursdays 10am-11:30 am

September 24^h through November 19th

St. John's Library

Contact Pastor Karla with any questions

570-854-3919 or pastorkarla@stjohnslutherannorrey.org

LUTHERAN STUDY BIBLE

New Revised Standard Version
Updated Edition



Sunday, September 27 we will be celebrating Pastor Karla's 5th Anniversary Year of her Ordination. More information will be forthcoming in the September newsletter.



Notes From the Director of Music



The Message Behind "All Are Welcome"

Written by liturgical composer Marty Haugen in 1994, "*All Are Welcome*" has become a beloved contemporary hymn across many Christian denominations. At its heart, the hymn is a vibrant celebration of radical hospitality, Christian fellowship, and God's limitless grace. I am hoping you do recognize the lyrics and have heard this hymn sung at St. John's several times.

Rather than viewing the church merely as a physical structure, the song frames the house of God as a dynamic, living sanctuary. Each stanza envisions a community grounded in safety, forgiveness, and mutual care—a place where people from all walks of life, backgrounds, and personal journeys find a seat at Christ's table. It reminds us that our faith is made visible when we break down walls of division and extend open arms to our neighbors, reflecting the inclusive love of Jesus.

"Let us build a house where love can dwell
and all can safely live,
a place where saints and children tell
how hearts learn to forgive."

— Marty Haugen

As our congregation continues to seek ways to serve and embrace our surrounding community, "*All Are Welcome*" serves as both a joyful prayer and an inspiring mission statement for our journey together.

God's Peace,

William Jacavage (Bill)

Director of Music

Do you have what it takes? Can you count from 1 to 4?

Then you can become a member of the Bell Choir! You don't need to be intimidated at the thought of ringing or reading music. No experience is necessary.

On **Sundays, September 13th and 20th**, the Director of Music, aka Bill, will be having an Intro to Bell Ringing following worship service at 10:15 a.m. You will learn about the different notes that we play, the counts, and music annotations. This is for all interested in joining Bell Choir and for our current ringers it is a refresher.



Please join us as we praise God through music. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact Bill. We hope to see you there !

Our regular weekly practices will resume on Thursday evenings at 6:30 p.m. beginning on September 24th.

Blessing of Backpacks

All students, young and old, are asked to bring their backpacks to church on **Sunday, August 23rd** for a special back-to-school blessing.



Christmas Items Wanted

Summer cleaning?? Attic cleaning??

WELCA is looking for Christmas decorations and good, gently loved sellable gift items for our next Christmas Bazaar. Items may be dropped off at the church during normal office hours.

PLEASE NO RUMMAGE!!



Twenty-five youth gathered in Fellowship Hall July 19-23 for this year's Vacation Bible School. The theme was Rainforest Falls.

Thank you to all the volunteers that helped, and to those who donated food snack items and craft items.



WELCA is collecting items for school kits for **Lutheran World Relief**. There are many back-to-

school sales going on right now. Items can be dropped off at the church office or on the table in the rear of the sanctuary **no later than Sunday, September 20th**. *Please only get the specific items listed.*

~ **Four 70-sheet notebooks of wide or college ruled paper, approximately 8x10 1/2 no loose-leaf paper**

~**One blunt scissors (safety scissors with embedded steel blades work well)**

~**Ballpoint pens (no gel ink)**

~**One box of 16 or 24 crayons**

NEWS FROM KATE'S KUPBOARD

Kate's Kupboard was open on **July 18, 2026**.

We helped **518** people by distributing **173** household/personal care bags, **173** produce boxes, **173** packs of meat, and **284** bags of groceries. We helped **54** babies and provided adult care products to **24** people.

The total cost was **\$3,871.68**

Thank you to **ALL** the volunteers who helped with this Kate's Kupboard in any way.

We helped one adult between our June and July Kate's Kupboard. We continue to help people through NEIGHBORLYPA. Com.

We were able to donate some extra items to the Blessing Shed.

Thank You

A big thank you to the S. Luther Savidge Charitable Foundation for their recent donation of \$5,000.00 to Kate's Kupboard. This donation will help us to replenish our shelves after helping 518 people and 55 babies in July. We greatly appreciate the continued support of this charitable foundation.

Worship Supply Sponsorship

The following items are available for Sunday sponsorship. If you are Interested in any of the dates below, please contact the church office.

Prices:

Altar Flowers	\$45
Bulletins	\$15
Candles	\$ 6

September 13	Bulletins	November 1	Flowers, bulletins, candles
September 20	Flowers, bulletins, candles	November 8	Bulletins, candles
September 27	Flowers, bulletins, candles	November 15	Flowers, bulletins, candles
October 4	Flowers, bulletins, candles	November 22	Flowers, bulletins, candles
October 11	Flowers, bulletins, candles	November 29	Bulletins, candles
October 18	Flowers, bulletins	December 6	Candles
October 25	Candles	December 13	Flowers, bulletins, candles

Memorials Received

In memory of
Mary Rogers
By
Michael and Jan Zerbe



PRAYERS: Chris Eisely; Connie Freitsch; Kaye Wolfe; Jeanne Hafer; Cheryl Glavis; Stephen Stadnecke; Becky Weller, Marty Rafter

HOMEBOUND and CONTINUED PRAYERS: Barb Eisley; Jason Gulden; Doug Manning; Helen Snyder; June Diehl; Nevin Brungard; Nancy Hendricks; Betty Yerg; Jane Ressler; Bill Wagner; David Bartholomew; Marti Row

Christmas-at-Sea Seafarers International

WELCA invites you to participate.

Bring joy to seafarers who will not be home with their families for Christmas. Bags will available on the table in the rear of the sanctuary beginning August 23rd. Take a satchel bag (or more), pick the size you will be purchasing, M, L, XL or 2 XL.

- 1 sweatshirt – hooded or unhooded
- 3 pairs of socks – thermal or white gym, no ankle socks
- 1 t-shirt
- 1 knitted winter cap (matching scarf optional)
- 1 can of nuts or large bar of chocolate
- A Holiday or Christmas Card from YOU!



You pick the colors, styles, and brands, but please no substitutions from the list – the Christmas-at-Sea satchels are to be comparable for each member of the crew. Please remove all store tags from clothing.

Please assemble the satchel with sweatshirts and t-shirts of the same size and label the satchel with a M, L, XL or 2XL.

Satchels need to be returned to the church no later than October 25th in order to be shipped to the Seafarers International House in New York.

What might otherwise have been another lonely night at sea becomes a joyous occasion, because complete strangers ashore have taken the time to share the spirit of Christmas.



Points to Ponder

By Doug Manning

Corinthians 13:4-8

I've been pondering a lot lately on the subject of love. I do so because when we reached our 48th wedding anniversary I found myself in the hospital instead of home, or out celebrating with Cindy. She has truly borne my illnesses with a grace and compassion that would make Job see her as an example of faith.

Now on to thoughts of love. When asked by a young resident neurologist consulting on my care in the hospital he asked what vows could he and the love of his life exchange that could possibly encourage his new wife stay with him as long as Cindy has with me. Wedding vows often follow this general pattern; we vow to love, honor, and respect one another whether poor or in wealth, whether sick or in health until death separates us. Where do these concepts flow from on our own faith journey?

A New Testament passage often read during weddings comes from the 13th chapter of the first letter to the Corinthians beginning at the 4th verse:

⁴ Love is patient; love is kind; love is not envious or boastful or arrogant ⁵or rude. It does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable; it keeps no record of wrongs; ⁶it does not rejoice in wrongdoing but rejoices in the truth. ⁷It bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. ⁸Love never ends.

Two things jump to mind for me as I reread this beautiful passage, the gift of love is the greatest gift that can be given or received and should be cherished as the most precious of all gifts, also it is a most fitting passage for a wedding celebration. Reading the rest of the chapter it is clear that St. Paul didn't just have a wedding in mind. it was an exhortation to the community to remember the gifts of love!

So my advice was to that young resident was to open my Bible (in this case an App on my phone), and read aloud this passage to him. I smiled gently and suggested that if he and his future wife could say these things to one another then wouldn't these be wonderful vows! I wish that 48 years ago I would have had a better grasp of the Epistle's passage but now all these years later I hope that Cindy and I have given each other this gift of love. More than that, shouldn't we all heed St. Paul's exhortations recalling the final verse (1 Corinthians 13:13 NRSVUE)

¹³And now faith, hope, and love remain, these three, and the greatest of these is love.

2026	ACTUAL	BUDGET
July Income:	\$ 21,729.12	\$ 20,017.83
Year to Date Income:	\$148,252.13	\$ 157,693.81
July Expenses:	\$ 20,065.64	\$ 21,908.14
Year to Date Expenses:	\$159,657.90	\$ 159,237.03
	Income Less Expense – July	\$ 1,663.48
	Year to Date	-\$11,405.77

Refurbished Utility Shed

St. John's is the recipient of Scouting efforts once again in the form of a refurbished utility shed that houses our snow blower, mower, and gardening tools. William "Will" Leiby (no relation to our Pastor) contacted us in early June with a suggested Summit Award project, which after discussion with church council it was determined not to fit our ministry. However, we strive to support the scouts and proposed a repair project for our utility shed that was deteriorating. Ironically, the shed was originally an Eagle Scout project roughly 20 years ago. The suggested alternative would require the same skills as Will's original proposal and he accepted the project.

Summit Awards must be completed by the scout's 21st birthday which in Will's case was July 27th. His crew of fellow scout helpers were committed to scout camp for the first three weeks of July, putting Will in a time crunch. He presented two proposals: 1) replace the wood siding that was delaminating and repaint the structure; or 2) cut out the bad siding and replace the panels, and then install vinyl siding, which would result in a more maintenance free building. Option 2 was the agreed upon option. Will presented a budget and set out to find donations. We are awaiting the final accounting but believe that St. John's will have little to no financial responsibility. The crew finished on Friday, July 24th with 3 days to spare. The project looks great. Additionally, a ramp was even added to help make getting equipment in and out more easily.

Venture Scouting is a senior group of scouts from ages 14 to 21. Venture Scouts progress through the steps of Venturing, Discovery, Pathfinder, and ultimately The Summit Award, which is like the more familiar Eagle Award. The process teaches young adults to explore opportunities and set goals; plan a path to achieving the goal; lead a team while executing the plan; and finally reach the summit.

Will is a member of Crew 2307 chartered by St. John's and part of the Susquehanna Council. In signing off on the project, the crew asked if there are other projects at St. John's in which they may participate.





SEPTEMBER

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		1 Troop 325 6:30 p.m. AA 7:00 p.m.	2 Cub Scouts 6:30 p.m. MomCo 6:30 p.m.	3 Girl Scouts 6:00 p.m. Alanon 7:00 p.m.	4 	5
					Fellowship Hall Reserved	
			Pastor's Vacation			
6 Worship w/Comm. 9:00 a.m.	7 Labor Day	8 Troop 325 6:30 p.m. AA 7:00 p.m. Finance 7:00 p.m.	9 Cub Scouts 6:30 p.m. Council Meeting 7:00 p.m.	10 Messenger deadline 2:30 p.m. Girl Scouts 6:00 p.m. Scout District Comm. 6:30 p.m. Alanon 7:00 p.m.	11 	12
	Pastor's Vacation					
13 Worship w/Comm. 9:00 a.m. Intro to Bell Choir 10:15 a.m.	14 	15 Troop 325 6:30 p.m. AA 7:00 p.m.	16 Messenger Folding 9:00 a.m. Blood Drive 1-6:00 p.m. Cub Scouts 6:30 p.m. MomCo 6:30 p.m.	17 Girl Scouts 6:00 p.m. Scout Roundtable 6:30 p.m. Alanon 7:00 p.m.	18	19 Kate's Kupboard 9-11:00 a.m.
20 Worship w/Comm. 9:00 a.m. Sunday School 10:15 a.m. Catechism 10:15 a.m.-12:15 p.m. Intro to Bell Choir 10:15 a.m. School Kits due	21 WELCA 10:30 p.m.	22 Troop 325 6:30 p.m. AA 7:00 p.m.	23 Cub Scouts 6:30 p.m.	24 Bible Study 10-11:30 a.m. Bell Choir 6:30 p.m. Girl Scouts 6:00 p.m. Alanon 7:00 p.m.	25	26 Wedding 3:00 p.m. Bucher/Gemberling
27 Worship w/Comm. 9:00 a.m. 5 th Anniversary of Ordination Celebration for Pastor Karla 10:15 a.m.	28 	29 Troop 325 6:30 p.m. AA 7:00 p.m.	30 Cub Scouts 6:30 p.m.	OCTOBER 1 Bible Study 10-11:30 a.m. Bell Choir 6:30 p.m. Girl Scouts 6:00 p.m. Alanon 7:00 p.m.	2	3 