

# THE ST. JOHN NEWS

St. John Lutheran Church

September 2011

Do Christians Ever Break the Fifth Commandment?

## *You shall not murder*

Sinners have always had a very superficial way of reading the Ten Commandments. As sinners we like to read the commandments in a self-righteous way that makes us feel like we are keeping them. Take for example the Fifth Commandment, "You shall not murder." **Many of us read this commandment and think to ourselves, "I've never broken this commandment because I've never taken another person's life."** If we assign such shallow meanings to the keeping of each of the commandments then we can read through the Ten Commandments and quickly convince ourselves that we have kept them all.

This is the way in which the Pharisees of Jesus' day understood the commandments. The Pharisees considered themselves good people while they imagined that the commandments were written only for bad people. **Then Jesus came along one day and upset this easy way of interpreting the commandments that allows us to maintain the myth of our moral innocence.** For Jesus explains how keeping this commandment -- not to murder -- has a substantially deeper meaning than the Jewish people had previously thought, or had been taught. Our Lord said, "You have heard that it was said to those of old, 'You shall not murder; and whoever murders will be liable to judgment. **But I say to you that everyone who is angry with his brother will be liable to judgment; whoever insults his brother will be liable to the council; and whoever says, 'You fool!' will be liable to the hell of fire**" (MT 5:21-22).

Jesus isn't adding something new to the Fifth Commandment which wasn't already there when Moses received God's Law on two tablets of stone atop Mt. Sinai. **Jesus was explaining what the Lord had always intended by the commandment, "You shall not murder."** Jesus was reminding His hearers that we not only break this commandment when we raise our hand in murderous violence against another human being. **But what the Lord was getting at is that our hateful thoughts about**

**another person or our hurtful words against them are also a violation of this commandment. This understanding that we are capable of sinning against this commandment in our thoughts and in our words as well as in our actions makes the First Commandment far more difficult to keep.** For our Lord says that if you have ever wished harm or death on another person that you have violated this commandment. And if you have ever used hateful words to express your desire to see this happen to another person, this too is a real sin, and a breach of what God commands in this commandment. **For anger is but the prelude to murder when our anger grows to full strength and becomes full blown.**

Jesus says that just being angry with our brother in our heart and insulting him in anger with our sharp words puts us in eternal peril and places our salvation in jeopardy. **From what Jesus says -- not only hurting our neighbor — but also hating him is enough for God to cast us into the fires of hell.** Luther drew his own teaching on this commandment from what the Lord Jesus says about murder in chapter 5 of Matthew's Gospel. **Luther says that anything that we do that might shorten or embitter our neighbor's life is murder in God's eyes.** You should be able to feel the noose getting tighter around your neck as you begin to understand the true divinely intended meaning of the Fifth Commandment. The only people who have a right to be righteously angry are those whom God sets in positions of authority, that is parents, and government who function in God's stead to punish evil.

Listen to Luther's explanation to the Fifth Commandment found in his Small Catechism. Luther asks the meaning of the Fifth Commandment and then provides this answer, "We should fear and love God so that we do not hurt or harm our neighbor in his body, but help and support him in every physical need." Luther understood that we do not only keep this

commandment by doing no mortal harm to our neighbor. **But we also keep this commandment by giving our help and support to our neighbor in ways that would sustain and improve his health and happiness.** And so we have not kept this commandment simply by not raising our hand to end our neighbor's life. **But we also fail to keep this commandment when we know that our neighbor is in physical danger and yet do nothing to help save him, or extend his life.** These things that we omit – by not lifting a finger to help our neighbor protect his life -- are every bit as much sins as those sins we commit against our neighbor. **So for example, if our neighbor is being assaulted by others verbally or physically, it's a sin if we do not to come to his defense of body and life.** For to keep this commandment requires that we help our neighbor protect and preserve his life, as is the point of the parable of the Good Samaritan.

Quite often people will suggest that war is murder as well as when the government carries out the death penalty. However God gave the government the power of the sword to execute murderers who kill the innocent. **God has also given soldiers and the police the right to defend the citizenry from such attacks and assaults by using deadly force** Such taking of life is ordained by God for our protection. It is killing, but it is not murder. Luther says, "Therefore, God and government are not included in this commandment. Nor is the power to kill taken away, which God and government have [the right to do]."

Nor is the Fifth Commandment, "You shall not murder" ammunition for P.E.T.A. (people for the ethical treatment of animals). **Animals are often slaughtered and killed, but they can never be murdered. For you cannot murder an animal, you can only commit murder by taking the life of another human being when God has given you no authority or right to do so.** While you are certainly free to make your case that animals should not be hunted out in the woods or slaughtered at meat packing houses, you cannot base your argument on this commandment.

**For unlike evolution which sees man as only a more highly evolved animal, Christianity views people we way God's views humans, as uniquely higher, different, and set apart from the animal kingdom.** While the Bible says that the godly know how to treat their animals, there is

absolutely no comparison when you speak up for protecting baby seals versus speaking up to protect innocent unborn children in the womb. Unborn children are the most helpless members of society. **If we do not speak up for the unborn, and do nothing to save them from being aborted — which is the worst kind of murder — then we have committed a great and glaring sin of omission against the Fifth Commandment.**

In American society the growing acceptance of Euthanasia should also be of grave concern to the Christian church as well. For in other societies historically the elderly were honored and revered among their people. Gray hair was once a sign of wisdom and was valued by all cultures. However in our youth-crazed culture where youthfulness is worshipped, the elderly are not appreciated as they once were. **For in our society which has come to measure a person's worth by his or her productivity, more and more the elderly are being viewed as an unnecessary drain on the economy.** One wonders how long it will be before serious consideration is given to ending human life that goes beyond a certain predetermined age set by our government? Christians need to champion the high moral position that aged life is not useless life. **For Christianity values people for who they are – children of God – and not simply for what they can do for society.**

Euthanasia means "good death" which is a euphemism to make helping another person end his or her life sound like something good or noble. But there is nothing good about causing another person's death. **Euthanasia then is merely code for assisted suicide.** For we should leave such weighty matters of who lives and who dies up to God, who alone determines the length of our days. When medicine attempts to save life medicine is a noble thing and a tool used by God. We believe that God works through medicine to bring about healing and recovery.

**But men play God when they decide based on their own cultural biases when life is no longer worth living.** People justify Euthanasia by saying that they do not want their loved ones to linger and to suffer any longer in pain. **But one wonders if their motives are actually so selfless. Perhaps they are actually doing this to spare themselves, so that they won't have to watch their loved one suffer.** When God doesn't end a loved one's life as

promptly as people think God should, people grow angry at God for allowing that person's suffering to continue.

Yet people forget that God often works eternal good from such suffering. **Living on for a while in pain may give the dying person important time to repent, to be strengthened on God's grace in Christ, and so to be saved.** It may give others a realistic view of death so that they too repent. A dying Christian who lingers may give a great Christian witness to those at his or her bedside. For those who visit the dying are often able to see the way that believing in Jesus allows a person to face death with peace, and joy, and confidence. **A longer than usual death may give that Christian who is clinging tightly to this life the will to leave this life in exchange for the life that is to come. We do not know all that God's grace in Christ accomplishes in these last days and hours of a person's life who undergoes suffering.** We do know that God promises that our present suffering is nothing compared to the eternal glory that our loved one experiences just beyond this life. Whatever we suffer while dying, God says that the joy of the next life is so wonderful that all previous pain is immediately forgotten.

**In the same way that assisting someone else to die is murder, so taking our own life is also a sin against the Fifth Commandment.** God has promised us that He will never allow us to be tempted beyond our limits, but in every temptation the Lord will provide a way of escape so that we can bear up under suffering. Granted, God often pushes us well past what we think are the limits of our endurance. But the Lord does not do this to punish us, but to increase the perseverance of our faith. **Suffering can be like hell on earth. And yet we should never give up on God and take our own life in order to attempt to escape our cross or to end our own suffering.** It's a demonic myth that suicide releases a person from his suffering. Suicide is a sinful act that may introduce a person to an eternity of suffering far worse than anything that a person could ever experience in this life.

**Suicide is also a selfish act that causes pain and suffering for generations to come.** And when a person despairs of God's love in Christ and ends his own life that person may well end up suffering forever in hell without any means of escape. **And**

**so suicide is a form of self-murder that often leaves the person without time to repent, and leaves the family in doubt about their loved one's salvation.** Even though this sounds harsh, when a Christian is contemplating suicide telling them the boundaries set forth by the Fifth Commandment may actually be what God uses to keep them from committing the act.

There are times when Satan drives a depressed and despairing Christian to take his life impulsively without giving sufficient thought to the eternal implications behind his violent action against himself. **There are also times when mental confusion and emotional pain in combination with powerful anti-psychotic drugs so impair a Christian's judgment that the suicidal person honestly believes that that they are doing God's will, and helping their family by removing themselves from the picture.** And so we should never say dogmatically that every person who commits suicide is not a Christian. For Satan can introduce so much evil, pain, and distress into a Christian's life that even a person with saving faith can be driven to a kind of insanity — and along with this -- suicide. **And yet we can say definitively that suicide is never God's intended will for any person, especially for a believing child of God, and that suicide carries with it the great risk of losing our eternal life with Christ.**

Even though life can be dark and dismal, and feel empty and beyond repair, still we must assure the person contemplating suicide that God is merciful, that God can make their life new again in Christ, and that living by Christ's words and promises makes life worth living. Life is always valuable to God. Therefore as we reflect the image of our Creator all human life should also be valuable to us. And doubly so when you consider that God not only created all human life, but that God also forfeited His own life on the cross in order to redeem our lives with His own blood which makes our new life in Christ even more valuable.

Life in Christ is always worth living,  
Pastor Mark Elliott

An Addendum to the Third Commandment  
***Remember the Sabbath Day by keeping it holy***

In our daily life we set aside few moments as sacred and holy. We set aside little time that is exclusively reserved just for God. **Christians should however set aside every Sunday morning or Wednesday evening in order to worship the true God -- Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.** There are legitimate reasons why we must sometimes miss church. Your pastors understand this, and so does God. **But you should still strive for every Sunday attendance. God is worthy of much more than these few hours a week of your time. And so you need to make time to come to the Divine Service, Sunday School, and Adult Bible Class.** After all, finding time for regular weekly worship is one of God's Ten Commandments for human conduct. Far too many Christians these days seem to be satisfied with once or twice a month worship attendance. But we should constantly be growing in our Christian faith and in our sanctified new life in Christ.

**If you presently only make it to church once a month, try making it twice a month as a start in the right direction. If you tend to make it to worship no more than twice a month, ask God to give you the strength to improve your worship attendance to three or even four Sundays a month.** Even those of you who already come every Sunday can make your goal to also attend every Advent or Lenten midweek service as well. **Having said this, church attendance actually benefits you far more than it benefits God. For the more often you hear the Gospel preached and the more regularly you receive the Sacrament, the stronger your Christian faith becomes.** For we have this promise from God, that God works faith where and when He pleases in those who hear the gospel.

More families would make it to church more often if their children didn't put up such resistance against going to church. **Don't let your child or children decide whether or not you come to church on any given Sunday or Wednesday.** You are the parent. As a parent you make them do other things that are in their best interest. It is also in their best interest to be raised in the Christian faith. It's your duty to make this decision for them. In the Bible St. Paul gives parents, explicitly fathers, the solemn charge to see to the Christian instruction of their children. Now that I am an adult, I wish my parents would've forced me to continue to take piano lessons. **In the same way, someday your children will thank you that you insisted that they go to church and raised them in the Christian faith. Especially at the final judgment when we must all give an account of our faith and life to God.**

Don't wait until your child is six or seven to teach them to worship the Lord in church. Start young, when they are but a few months old. **Bringing something to occupy a young child is fine, but children can and should learn to follow the liturgy long before they can read.** I can remember singing the liturgy from memory when I was 3 or 4 years old. Open the hymnal and explain it to your young son or daughter before the service. **Reinforce with them what we do on Sunday morning by repeating parts of the liturgy at home with them during the week. Sit in a pew up in the front of the sanctuary on Sunday mornings where they are not distracted and can see everything that is going on.**

Mom's will often apologize to me after the service for their child being noisy when they sit up front, but after having had four children

of my own it never bothers me. I would far prefer that parents sit up front and teach their children how to worship, even if they make a little noise at first. **I am realistic enough to know that there is going to be some noise since this is a learning process for both parent and child.** There are always going to be certain noises associated with having children in the divine service. God and your pastors think that the sound of children in the divine service is a wonderful thing. Remember Jesus who said, "Let the little children come to me and do not forbid them..."

Teach your child that God is sacred, and so is the time and the place we choose to worship God. **Our world has become very casual and cavalier about everything so that most people no longer understand things that are sacred and solemn. It's important to teach your child however to be reverent towards God and respectful in God's house.** Even when the sanctuary is empty it's good to explain to your child not to run in the sanctuary, not to enter the chancel area around the altar, and never to shout. **But more importantly, during the divine worship never let your child dart in and out of the pews to play in the aisles, or leave to go to get a drink or go to the restroom as soon as the sermon begins.** Instead, train them to go to the restroom and to get a drink before the service begins. Unless they are sick they need to learn to give God their full attention for the sermon and for the entire service. If you stay in the pew and pay complete attention to everything we do in worship, it will reinforce this positive behavior in them and they will stay in the pew.

As a pastor I have looked into the congregation from the pulpit on occasion only to see people carrying on a conversation with the person beside them, people looking down while texting on their cell phones, and in one case I even saw a person with their bank statement open on the pew beside them balancing their checkbook. I have seen people doing forms of stretching and yoga in the side aisles. I have seen people casually coming in late and chronically leaving early during the sermon and the sacrament. **I realize that in some such cases there may be very legitimate excuses for this, and yet it still leaves me puzzled at times. I ask myself how God looks at worshippers who for various reasons come to church yet aren't worshipping?** If worship is boring it is your fault. Hearts of faith centered on Christ do not find God's Word and Sacrament boring. Worship is a time to be still and listen, in order to let God be God. Let God lavish upon you the gifts of His grace made known in the gospel. **Receive forgiveness, life, and salvation from Christ in the divine service.** Let the gospel of Jesus Christ soak into every nook and cranny of your soul. Put your whole heart into worship. Listen actively to the sermon. Pray fervently the prayers. Think about the gifts you are receiving in the Sacrament. Sing the hymns with joy to the Lord in your heart. Meditate on the lessons being read from the Bible. **And teach your children to do the same. For there is no greater blessing than to know that your heart -- and their hearts -- are right with God.** And this is what the divine service is intended to do — to put you in a right relationship with God through faith in your Lord Jesus Christ. For it is through Christ that we have access to God and to His grace.

## **YOU NEED TO EAT!**

### **YOUR INVITATION TO SUNDAY SCHOOL AND BIBLE CLASS**

**Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,**

I am delaying my final article on heaven to address a concern that has been expressed by members of St. John Lutheran Church and which her pastors feel is very important. The concern is over the lighter attendance seen in Sunday School classes and the adult Bible classes in recent months and years. So, I would like to talk a bit about the importance of ongoing Christian education for all members of our church.

**The** illustration that most often comes to my mind is that of food! While I do love to eat, the importance of this illustration lies in the fact that we, as Christians of all ages, need food, not just for the benefits of our physical bodies, but for the well-being of the spiritual body in us made alive in Christ in Baptism. Just as our physical bodies need food, so do our spiritual bodies need food.

**While** our earthly bodies can benefit from a variety of foods from all over the world, our spiritual bodies truly only have one food that is beneficial: the Word of God. Any other word from the world that tries to teach us about eternal life, forgiveness of sins, and peace with God without teaching that these things are only possible because of Jesus Christ and by faith in him, such a word is poison for our spiritual bodies.

**If** we are honest with ourselves and acknowledge the reality of our lives, we know that the majority of the hours of every week is spent without hearing the Gospel of Jesus Christ. While no one needs to devote themselves only to attending church and reading God's Word, we can certainly benefit from the opportunities that are presented to us to come to church and study the Word of God. In that same vein of honesty, we all can improve in this regard. None of us are immune to the tendencies of putting other wants and needs of our lives before the hearing and study of God's Word, to the extent that we rarely do just that.

**What** this is describing is our own neglect of feeding our spiritual bodies. In the parable of the Sower, Jesus teaches that faith can spring up where the Word of God is sown, but if it does not have firm root, that faith can fade away and die (Matthew 13:1–9). God does not want this for any of his creation. He wants the faith planted by his Word to live and grow. That life and growth come also from the Word of God. St. Peter teaches that like babies we are to crave pure, spiritual milk so that, by it, we can grow up into salvation (1 Peter 2:2). The pure spiritual milk is the Gospel of Jesus Christ. That same Gospel is also the meat that we as Christians continue to feed on throughout our lives.

**God** has richly blessed his Church throughout the centuries with the ample food of his Word. The Gospel of Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior by his death on the cross and his resurrection continues to be preached in the Divine Service. That same Gospel is given in Jesus himself as we receive his body and blood in the Lord's Supper. And God has blessed his Church with the gifts of Sunday School and Bible classes, so that his baptized children can eat and grow strong in the faith that he so graciously has given them. Being strong in the faith, we will endure through whatever comes our way to life everlasting with our Lord Jesus Christ. And we will be strengthened to tell others the Gospel that is so firmly rooted in us.

**I** now encourage you to consider these words for yourself. And I invite you, personally, to come to Sunday School and Bible Class and make those times a part of your Sunday morning at church. If you and your family already come regularly, I thank the Lord and pray that you continue to do so! If you and your family's attendance has tapered a bit, we would love to see your attendance rise back up. And if you have never come before, then give Sunday School and Bible Class a try. I can guarantee you it will not hurt your faith, but it will only help it grow. And I invite all of our members to pray for yourselves and for each other that our attendance in church, Sunday School, and Bible class would increase, to the glory of God and for the strengthening of our faith.

**If** you have any questions about Sunday School, Bible class, ongoing Christian education, catechesis, or anything else, you are more than welcome to email or call me. I look forward to seeing you soon and often!

In Christ, and service to you,

Pastor Caithamer

**Let Us Pray**



**For Peace and Comfort:** the family of Matthew Nerlien at his death on August 21st

**Hospitalized:** Doris

**Healing and Recovery:** Dr. Frank, Leo , Betty, Bob, Robin, Mary, Jean -mother of Bonnie , Harriet -Aunt of Joan

**For Favorable Test Results and Healing:** Larry

**For Successful Treatment:** Joan, Juleigh, Pam, Rolph

**Military:** John, Jimmy, Brandon, Keidi, Christopher, Taylor, Suzzanna, Robert

**Missionaries:** Pastor David Rakotonirina and the Madagascar Lutheran Seminary, Pastor Magnus Bengston and Lielsalaca Lutheran Church in Latvia, Pastor Obot Ite and the Lutheran Mission in Kingston, Jamaica

**Men's Prayer Breakfast**



The men of the congregation are invited the second Thursday of each month to Original Pancake House for prayers, devotion, food and fellowship. Please join us this month on Thursday, September 8th, at 6:30am.

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 \* **THE MARY MARTHA SOCIETY** will begin \*  
 \* their 2011-2012 year on Thursday, September 8 \*  
 \* at 1:30. We will have Installation of Officers and \*  
 \* a Topic by Pastor Elliott. We will also be talking \*  
 \* about our annual Bazaar and Bake Sale which \*  
 \* will be on Saturday, October 29. Any and all \*  
 \* donations of crafts, baked goods, and "white \*  
 \* elephants" are most appreciated. Our October 13 \*  
 \* meeting will be a program by Earl and Barbara \*  
 \* on their trip to the Holy Land. We would love to \*  
 \* have new members, which would enable us to do \*  
 \* more things and fund more projects. \*  
 \* Ladies, give us a try; we have good programs, \*  
 \* great fellowship and fine food. \*  
 \* \*  
 \* **See you September 8!** \*  
 \* \*  
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**Sunday School Classes will not meet on Sunday, September 4th.**

As requested at the July 2008 Voters Meeting, here is an update on 2011 offerings received through July 2011.

**Envelope Giving for Jul 2011**

<b>Unified Fund*</b>			
Needed Each Month**:	\$ 135,821.16		
Total Received Jul 2011:	\$ 96,727.39	-\$ 39,093.77	
Env./Plate/S Svc Jul 2011:	\$ 63,177.56		
Tuition Jul 2011:	\$ 33,549.17		
Needed YTD:	\$ 950,748.12		
Received YTD:	\$ 763,260.22	-\$ 187,487.90	
<b>Debt Retirement</b>			
Needed Each Month**:	\$ 5,000.00		
Received Jul 2011:	\$ 7,222.25	\$ 2,222.25	
Needed YTD:	\$ 35,000.00		
Received YTD:	\$ 48,854.52	\$ 13,854.52	

**Giving compared to 2010\*\*\***

<b>Jul 2011</b>	<b>Jul 2011</b>
Envelopes, Plate, Special Services	Envelopes, Plate, Special Services
\$ 437,559.40	\$ 451,979.05
Tuition	Tuition
\$ 324,210.58	\$ 311,281.17
Debt Retirement	Debt Retirement
\$ 53,887.48	\$ 48,854.52
=====	=====
\$ 815,657.46	\$ 812,114.74

\* Includes envelopes, plate offering, special services not designated for other purposes and school tuition.

\*\* NOTES: Needed values are based on year 2011 estimated budget figures **NOT** actual expenditures.

2011 Proposed Unified Budget: \$ 1,629,853.92  
 2011 Proposed Debt Retirement Budget: \$ 60,000.00



**LIFELIGHT** is back! Join us for “Creation/New Creation,” a 9-week Bible study of how God is at work in all His creation—including us. We’ll cover a wide range of topics, including creation and science to relations between men and women to a Christian view of ecology, to name just a few. You can join us Wednesday evenings at 5:45, Thursday mornings at 8:30, or Thursday evenings at 6:30. Classes start September 14. Look for our table in the overflow to sign up or contact Steve, Eunice, Cindy or Matt. We look forward to seeing both our veterans and newcomers!



Labor Day is quickly approaching. Please consider coming to our biggest fundraiser of the year on Sunday, September 4<sup>th</sup>, 2011. We will have a 10:30am Worship service at our indoor chapel. In our dining hall from 11:30 to 2:00 our famous fried chicken dinner will be served along with delicious desserts. Adults are \$7 and Children under the age of 12 are \$4. Auction begins at 1:30. All proceeds go to helping maintain the annual budget.

Labor Day Parade—The school and church will be walking in the annual Labor Day Parade on Monday, September 5. We will meet at Lincoln Square Mall. This event is a family event. Please either walk with your child or have another adult responsible for your child while we are walking in the parade. We are encouraging everyone to wear a St. John logo wear. More information will be in the church bulletin. If you have questions about this event, please talk to Faith .



The staff and families of St. John Lutheran Little Lamb Preschool would like to thank the St. John Lutheran Church, Handymen, and Trustees for all of the improvements completed over the summer of 2011. Little Lamb now has a completely renovated kitchen area with new cabinets, counters, flooring, lighting, and fresh paint. Thank you especially to Steve , Terry , Chris, and Bill for their hours of contribution to the project. We are so grateful for the donation of flooring, a countertop, and a sink from Custom Flooring, and a big thank you to Terry and Trent for installing our new flooring. Finally, we must thank Signature Homes and Bill for the contribution of the cabinets and for coordinating this project. Little Lamb is truly blessed by the support of the church and membership. Thank you!



Campbell labels are still being collected by St. John Sunday School for Lutheran Special Education Ministries. The collected

labels are counted, boxed and mailed to the Special Education Ministries once a year during the month of February. **THE FRONT PANEL PRODUCT LABELS ARE NO LONGER ACCEPTED** as submissions for redemption and banking; therefore it is essential to save the UPC and joining Campbell Icon. You may wish to continue saving the entire eligible label with the UPC and the Campbell icon attached and place them in the designated box in the cloakroom. The latest eligible list which includes new products and what you should save has been placed on the bulletin board across from the church office.

MOPS stands for Mothers of Preschoolers and meets Monday mornings 15 times throughout the school year at St. John Lutheran Church and School. While moms attend meetings our preschool children enjoy playtime, Bible stories, songs and crafts. We are blessed to report that this ministry to moms is currently full, however we do have a waiting list we can add interested moms, too. Currently we are in need of helpers in our children’s classrooms. If you are someone you know would be willing to devote a few hours a month as a worker, or as a substitute with our young children, please call Megan or Abby. thank you for your ongoing support and prayers for MOPS.



If your child is a student away at college and you would like them to receive the church newsletter, please call the church office with their address.

**LWML** is collecting school supplies to make kits for *Lutheran World Relief*. Please consider purchasing extra school supplies to donate to this wonderful cause. Items can be placed in the LWML box across the church office. If you have any questions please contact Eleanor Dani. Supplies include 70-sheet notebooks of wide or college-ruled paper 8” X 10 ½”, 30-cm. rulers, pencil sharpeners, blunt scissors, unsharpened #2 pencils, ballpoint pens, 16 or 24 box crayons, and 2 ½” erasers.

### Mission Statement

United in faith, we serve the Kingdom of God by building lives that are rooted in the Word, centered on Christ, and motivated by Grace; to reflect Christ’s love and share His Gospel with all.



What's Happening at School  
this Month

Another school year is off to a great start. There are several exciting and important events planned for the month of September. Students will gather outside with others in their Chapel Family to have a brown bag lunch together on Friday, September 2. All congregation members are invited to our PTF Back to School Picnic and K-8 Open House on Friday, September 9. Our eighth grade students are looking forward to their trip to Gettysburg and Washington, D.C. which is September 18-23. Mr. Yagow's class will be at Camp CILCA on September 22 and 23, with Mrs. Milas's fourth graders joining them on Thursday. Come out and cheer for our soccer teams as they play St. John Mattoon at Dodd's Park at 4:30 and at 5:30 on Friday, September 23; and then watch them play Countryside at 4:30 on Wednesday, September 28. Volleyball games will be all day long, starting at 9:00, on Saturday, September 24. Students do not have school on September 29 & 30 since teachers will be attending a CID/SID Teachers' Conference in Springfield. It will be a busy month!

Regular rehearsals resume the week of August 28 as follows:

Handbells      Wednesdays, 6:00 – 7:00 pm  
Men's Choir    Thursdays, 6:00 – 6:45 pm—no rehearsal September 8  
Mixed Choir    Thursdays, 6:45 – 7:30 pm—no rehearsal September 8



- Men's Choir will be singing on September 11 at the 10:45 am service – 10:15 warm-up
- Brass Choir will be playing on September 18 at the 10:45 am service – 9:45 am warm-up
- Mixed Choir will be singing on September 25 at the 8:00 service – 7:30 am warm-up
- Alleluia Ringers will be ringing on Sunday, October 2 – 8:00 service and Prelude at 10:45 – 7:15 warm-up.

Saturday, September 24 St. John Lutheran will be hosting the 2<sup>nd</sup> annual Music and Worship Workshop, sponsored by the Central Illinois District. Details are as follows:

**Schedule – “Music: The Eternal Art”**

9:00- 9:30 a.m.	Registration and Coffee	
9:30- 9:40 a.m.	Welcome and Opening Devotion	
9:40-10:05 a.m.	Plenary Session #1 – <i>Music and Theology: What Do the Reformers and the Bible Say About Music?</i> (Dr. Martin Dicke, Cantor, Trinity Lutheran Church, Peoria, Illinois)	
10:15-11:10 a.m.	Workshop #1 Choir Rehearsal #1 – Dr. Chester Alwes Some Practical Ideas and Useful Music for the Organ: Session #1 – Keith Williams Using <i>Lutheran Service Builder</i> to Create Worship Services: Introduction – Dr. Martin Dicke	
11:20-12:15 p.m.	Workshop #2 Choir Rehearsal #2 – Dr. Chester Alwes Some Practical Ideas and Useful Music for the Organ: Session #2 – Keith Williams Using <i>Lutheran Service Builder</i> to Create Worship Services: Intermediate – Dr. Martin Dicke	
12:15-1:20 p.m.	Lunch	
12:40-1:10 p.m.	Rehearsal for Closing Worship Service	
1:20-1:45 p.m.	Plenary Session #2 – <i>“Music: The Eternal Art”</i> (Dr. Chester Alwes, Conductor, Lecturer, Composer, Clinician, Choral Conductor)	
2:00-2:30 p.m.	Closing Worship Service – Keith Williams, organist	

Looking ahead:

At 4:00 pm on Sunday, October 2, University of Notre Dame organ professor Craig Cramer will be performing an organ concert at the Episcopal Chapel of St. John the Divine, Armory & Wright Streets.

Soli Deo Gloria!

Keith

# September Youth Events

**September 11**  
4:00—6:00 pm

**LYF Kick-off**  
*All youth grades 6—12 and their parents should attend!*



**Sunday, September 25**  
(watch for times)

**LYF Fest: Food Scavenger Hunt**

## COME TO LYF!

**LYF Kick-off: September 11, 4:00 - 6:00 pm**  
**Living the LYF!**

**"I have been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me. And the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me. Galatians 2:20**

- Who:** ALL YOUTH GRADES 6 - 12 AND THEIR PARENTS!
- What:** FAITH (skit and devotion based on this year's theme)  
FUN (activity for youth and parents)  
FOOD (yummy)  
FACTS (meet your leaders and group, learn & plan the schedule, sign up for activities)
- Where:** Fellowship Hall & Gymnasium
- What to Bring:** Calendar  
Insurance Information  
Driver's License

## Sunday School: for youth and adults alike!

The Sunday School hour allows the opportunity to take an active role in our understanding of God's Word as we discuss with our peers and teacher. Sunday School is beneficial for everyone: whether teacher or student, child or adult, we all learn and grow together in our faith through the study of God's Word. What better way to encourage your children to participate in Sunday School, than teaching them by example. Show them what a joy and how important it is to learn God's Word by going to Bible Class yourself! We recently kicked off a new year of classes. Come join us!

*Mark Your Calendar*  
*December 18 4:00 p.m.*  
*Christmas program*

*December 3, 10, 17*  
*Christmas Program*  
*Practice*

## September Birthdays

- |    |  |    |                            |
|----|--|----|----------------------------|
| 1  | Hannah, Chris, Danielle, Terry, Melissa Jean, Vicki, Jaime, Judy | 25 | Alice, David               |
| 2  | Rachael, Carol   | 26 | Blake, Cindy               |
| 5  | Susan, Jim   | 27 | David                      |
| 8  | Stephanie  | 28 | Kim, Paul, Jessica, Jeremy |
| 9  | John, Terry, Rebekah, Leona                                      | 29 | John, Ron, Haleigh, Helen  |
| 10 | Esther, LuAnn, Norm, Stuart, Alexander, Vi, Keith                |    |                            |
| 11 | Delaney, Matt, Lori  |    |                            |
| 12 | Joan   |    |                            |
| 13 | Rachel, Dan, Donna, Phyllis                                      |    |                            |
| 14 | Rochelle, Karen, Stephen   |    |                            |
| 15 | Barbara, LaMae, Zakary   |    |                            |
| 16 | Mimi, Sarah, Christina, Robert                                   |    |                            |
| 17 | Terry, Daniel, Tim, Damyran, Doug                                |    |                            |
| 18 | Sierra   |    |                            |
| 19 | Christy, Norma, Peggy  |    |                            |
| 20 | Beth, Warren   |    |                            |
| 21 | Amanda, Annette, Jordan, Lyle, Kyleigh                           |    |                            |
| 22 | Elmer, Todd, Adam, Kiley, Jim, Sara                              |    |                            |

## September Anniversaries

- 1 Elton & Lea (32); Brandon & Jennifer (4)
- 2 Kevin & Cissy (32)
- 3 Dan & Rita (28)
- 4 Ken & Karen (29); Keith & Judith (35)
- 5 Jeremy & Lana (2)
- 6 Dean & Karla (25)
- 7 Kwame & Amanda (3)
- 9 John & Linda (37); Robert & Glenda (50)
- 11 Steve & Peggy (29); Terry & Robin (29)
- 14 Jim & Stephanie (9); Walter & Anita (43)
- 15 Shane & Sara (10); John & Kathy (27)
- 16 Bud & Barb (58)
- 18 George & Karen (35); Steve & Susie (40)
- 19 Bob & Joan (57)
- 20 Jim & Jackie (53); Kyle & Edna (25)
- 21 Chris & Linda (26)
- 22 Jeffrey & Jessica (4)
- 24 Mark & Diane (17)
- 25 Doug & Janet (29); Mark & Letha (30)

PLEASE notify the church office (359-1123 ) if your birthday or anniversary is missing or incorrect. Unfortunately, we don't have 100% of our members' birthdays & anniversaries on file. Please help us complete our records by notifying us of any corrections or omissions. Thank you!

## ATTENDANCE FIGURES FOR AUGUST



Sundays	8:00 Comm	10:45 Comm		
Aug 7	176	130	185	145
Aug 14	206	157	178	133
Aug 21	205	150	206	137
Aug 28	251	176	180	124
Wednesdays	7:15	Comm		
Aug 3	36	27		
Aug 10	21	16		
Aug 17	21	15		
Aug 24	30	22		

# SEPTEMBER 2011

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat																																																																																																									
<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th colspan="7">August 2011</th> </tr> <tr> <th>S</th> <th>M</th> <th>T</th> <th>W</th> <th>T</th> <th>F</th> <th>S</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>1</td> <td>2</td> <td>3</td> <td>4</td> <td>5</td> <td>6</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>7</td> <td>8</td> <td>9</td> <td>10</td> <td>11</td> <td>12</td> <td>13</td> </tr> <tr> <td>14</td> <td>15</td> <td>16</td> <td>17</td> <td>18</td> <td>19</td> <td>20</td> </tr> <tr> <td>21</td> <td>22</td> <td>23</td> <td>24</td> <td>25</td> <td>26</td> <td>27</td> </tr> <tr> <td>28</td> <td>29</td> <td>30</td> <td>31</td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	August 2011							S	M	T	W	T	F	S	1	2	3	4	5	6		7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31				<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th colspan="7">October 2011</th> </tr> <tr> <th>S</th> <th>M</th> <th>T</th> <th>W</th> <th>T</th> <th>F</th> <th>S</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td>1</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2</td> <td>3</td> <td>4</td> <td>5</td> <td>6</td> <td>7</td> <td>8</td> </tr> <tr> <td>9</td> <td>10</td> <td>11</td> <td>12</td> <td>13</td> <td>14</td> <td>15</td> </tr> <tr> <td>16</td> <td>17</td> <td>18</td> <td>19</td> <td>20</td> <td>21</td> <td>22</td> </tr> <tr> <td>23</td> <td>24</td> <td>25</td> <td>26</td> <td>27</td> <td>28</td> <td>29</td> </tr> <tr> <td>30</td> <td>31</td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	October 2011							S	M	T	W	T	F	S							1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31						<i>Devotions &amp; Hymn-sing at Amber Glen at 2:30 on the 11th and 25th</i>	<i>Pastors' Day Off: Fridays</i>	<b>1</b> 12:30 Widows' Group 6:00 Men's Choir 6:45 Mixed Choir	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>
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<b>4</b> 8:00 Holy Communion 9:30 Adult Bible Class 10:45 Holy Communion	<b>5</b> Labor Day  <i>Church and School offices closed</i>	<b>6</b> 6:30 School Board 7:00 Trustees 7:00 Fellowship Board  <i>Ram Rebate orders due</i>	<b>7</b> 8:25 Chapel 5:45 Midweek School 6:00 Handbells 7:15 Holy Communion	<b>8</b> 6:30 Men's Prayer Breakfast 1:30 Mary Martha	<b>9</b> 5:30 Back to School Picnic/Open House  <i>Ram Rebate pick up</i>	<b>10</b> 8:00 Handymen																																																																																																									
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<b>25</b> 8:00 Holy Communion (Mixed Choir) 9:30 Sunday School, Adult Bible Class 10:45 Holy Communion TBA LYF Fest	<b>26</b> 1:00 First Grade Reading Buddies  <i>Newsletter Deadline</i>	<b>27</b> 10:30 Adult Bible Class 6:00 Evangelism 6:30 PTF	<b>28</b> 8:25 Chapel 5:45 Midweek School 5:45 Lifelight 6:00 Handbells 7:15 Holy Communion	<b>29</b> <i>No School</i> 8:30 Lifelight 6:00 Men's Choir 6:30 Lifelight 6:45 Mixed Choir	<b>30</b> <i>No School</i>	<i>Church Office 359-1123  School Office 359-1714</i>																																																																																																									