

NEWS FROM ST. JOHN'S LUTHERAN

AUGUST 2026

FROM THE PASTOR

The Deep Roots of the Old Hymns

There is something about the wisdom of the past that, when tested by the passage of time, is ineffably beautiful.

Consider an old tree whose roots grow deep and whose branches reach far into the sky. It has rings that tell stories of long, cold winters and hot summers from ages past, while the depth of its roots and the strength of its trunk enable it to withstand even the harshest winds.

So it is with the time-tested hymns of the Lutheran confession. We truly have the greatest hymnody in Christendom. As a Lutheran preacher, I am certainly not without bias, but I still believe it is true. This is especially so of those hymns that have withstood the test of time and brought comfort to generations of Lutherans through many a trial and hardship.

While I hesitate to dismiss the value of newer hymns, I believe the old ones deserve special consideration. Part of what makes these older hymns so beautiful and meaningful is the time in which they were written.

I am reminded of the opening paragraph of *The Waning of the Middle Ages* [by Johan Huizinga](#), who beautifully and succinctly describes a world altogether foreign to us modern people.

"To the world when it was half a thousand years younger, the outlines of all things seemed more clearly marked than to us. The contrast between suffering and joy, between adversity and happiness, appeared more striking. All experience had yet to the minds of men the directness and absoluteness of the pleasure and pain of child-life. Every event, every action, was still embodied in expressive and solemn forms, which raised them to the dignity of a ritual."

This contrast between suffering and joy, adversity and happiness, is readily apparent when singing the hymns of old. There is a blunt honesty to them that comes only when the hardships of life are fully considered and faithfully articulated.

"Calamities and indigence were more afflicting than at present; it was more difficult to guard against them, to find solace. Illness and health presented a more striking contrast; the cold and darkness of winter were more real evils. Honors and riches were relished with greater avidity and contrasted more vividly with surrounding misery. We, at the present day, can hardly understand the keenness with which a fur coat, a good fire on the hearth, a soft bed, a glass of wine, were formerly enjoyed."

We certainly live in very different times. Yet the reality of the human condition has not changed. There is still much we can learn from—and find comfort in—the old hymns. They may not be as catchy or as emotionally immediate, and their solemnity may even make them uncomfortable to sing. Yet, like an old tree, their roots run deep, and their wisdom reaches far into the sky.

The following is my personal favorite by the greatest Lutheran hymn writer ever to live, Paul Gerhardt. Notice how Gerhardt expresses the pain and sorrow of this life in light of the faith and hope we have in Christ, and of the joy and peace that await all who bear the mark of faith in the life to come.

"Why Should Cross and Trial Grieve Me" —
LSB 756 [With added stanzas from Walther's Hymnal"]

"Why should cross and trial grieve me? Christ is near, with his cheer; Never will He leave me. Who can rob me of the heaven that God's Son, for my own to my faith hath given?"

"Naked was I, nothing owning, when on earth, at my birth, my breath came with groaning, naked hence shall I betake me, when I go, from earth's woe, and my breath forsake me."

"Naught — not e'en the life I'm living, is my own, God alone, all to me is giving. Must I then His own restore Him? Though bereft, of each gift, still shall I adore Him."

"Though a heavy cross I'm bearing, and my heart, feels the smart, shall I be despairing? God, my Helper, who doth send it, well doth know, all my woe and how best to end it."

"God of gives me days of gladness; shall I grieve, if he give, seasons, too, of sadness? God is good, and tempers ever, all my ill, and He will wholly leave me never."

"Though united world and devil, all their pow'r, can no more, do than mock and cavil. Let derision now employ them, Christ e'en here, will appear, and in full destroy them."

"Hopeful, cheerful, and undaunted, everywhere, they appear, who in Christ are planted. Death itself cannot appall them, they rejoice, when the voice, of their Lord doth call them."

"Death cannot destroy forever; from our fears, cares and tears, it will us deliver. It will close life's mournful story, make a way, that we may, enter heav'nly glory."

"There I'll reap enduring pleasure, after woe, here below, suffered in large measure. Lasting good we find here never, all the earth, deemeth worth, vanisheth forever."

"What is all this life possesses? But a hand, full of sand, that the heart distresses. Noble gifts that pall me never, Christ our Lord, will accord, to His saints forever."

"Lord, my Shepherd, take me to Thee. Thou art mine; I was Thine, even ere I knew Thee. I am Thine, for Thou hast bought me; Lost I stood, but Thy blood, free salvation bought me."

"Thou art mine; I love and own Thee. Light of Joy, ne'er shall I, from my heart dethrone Thee. Savior, let me soon behold Thee, face to face, may Thy grace evermore enfold me!"

SUMMER SERVICE SCHEDULE

Our summer worship schedule is in full swing. There is one service on Sundays at 9am and one service on Wednesday at 6pm. The Wednesday service will be the full Divine service which mirrors the previous Sunday service. This schedule will run through Labor Day.

FELLOWSHIP FRIDAY

We will not hold a Fellowship Friday in August. Please join us for the Church Picnic on Sunday, August 23!

HIGH SCHOOL YOUTH FELLOWSHIP OPPORTUNITY

Jenny Gilbert and Sofie Kading are organizing some gatherings for our female high school students over the coming months. Pastor Gilbert is doing the same for the male high school students. **We will meet at St. John's from 6:00-7:00 pm.** This is open to all graduating 8th grade students through graduating 12th grade students. Please join us on August 10 from 6-7 pm.

SJLC MEN'S GATHERING

Our next SJLC Men's Gathering will be held on Friday, August 21 at 5pm at Daniel Widmar's house, 450 South Creek Road, Racine. Save the date! More details to come!

CHURCH PICNIC – SAVE THE DATE!

Please join us for St. John's Annual Church Picnic on Sunday, August 23, 2026, from 12-3pm at Smolenski Park 438 Stuart Rd, Mt. Pleasant. We are looking forward to spending the afternoon with you!

If you plan to attend, please use the link below or call the church office to RSVP.

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/60B0E49ACAA28ABF58-64125677-stjohns>

USHERS NEEDED

The Board of Elders is in need of individuals interested in ushering during worship services. Thank you for your prayerful consideration in helping out as an usher. If you would be interested in ushering, contact an elder or Kimberly in the church office; chapman@stjohnsracine.org; (262) 637-7011.

CALLING ALL MEN OF ST. JOHN'S

Join Pastor DeYoung and hundreds of men across our Synod in the Memento 70 challenge. This is a call to bodily and spiritual discipline, devotion in the Word of God, and brotherly encouragement. You can find out more about Memento by visiting their website [memento70.com] or by scanning the QR code attached to the church emails, and on flyers posted in the narthex.

SERMONS ON YOUTUBE

We are now streaming live content through YouTube. The easiest way to watch the sermons live is to subscribe to the channel and turn the notifications on. Our channel can be found by searching "St. John's Lutheran Church and School Racine, WI." Every time a live video is being broadcast, you will get an update and will be able to watch it. The sermons are also archived on the channel, but are now accessible through the tab that says "Live" rather than the "Videos" tab.

TACKLING TOUGH TOPICS

We have an online educational opportunity for you! It is called "Tackling Tough Topics" and will be focused primarily on addressing issues related to the Christian morality, parenting, and marriage from a scriptural perspective. You can find my new page on Substack and on YouTube by searching "Tackling Tough Topics" and following the link or scanning the QR code found on the attached flyer. (A flyer can also be picked up at the back of the sanctuary.) I encourage anyone who is interested to subscribe. If you have any suggestions on topics that you would like to be tackled, please reach out to Pastor DeYoung. This is different way to address relevant topics that I pray will be a blessing to St. John's and the wider church.

LARGE LIBRARY TABLE FOR SALE

The large wood library table in the chapel is for sale. It is approximately 96 inches by 48 inches. We are asking \$600 for the table. The money will go towards the Bugenhagen Conference. Please contact the church office if you are interested in taking a look at the table.

DIRECTOR OF MUSIC, AUGUST 2026

PRAY, FELLOWSHIP AND BOND. Our handbell and senior choirs are naturally close because we regularly come together to make music that adds to the beauty of each Divine Service. Each week during rehearsals, we *pray* together. This brings us closer to God and to one another. Through our *fellowship* and prayer, we encourage one another. Encouraging one another and nurturing one another is our *bond* which naturally transforms our rehearsals into a somewhat sacred space as believers. The Bible says: *Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.* 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18.

Workshop Tuesday, September 8, 2026, we begin the season with a handbell and choral workshop led by Greg Berg, Minister of Music at Holy Communion Lutheran Church/Associate Professor of Music at Carthage College who will lead the Senior Choir workshop. I also welcome Kate Potter-Barrow, active vocalist and handbell musician in the Racine area who will lead the Handbell Workshop. We will begin preparing music for Sunday services and special festivals throughout the church year, including our traditional Christmas Concert. Our Choral Workshop is a wonderful way to try out Handbell Choir, Senior Choir, or both! *Join us and be prepared to be welcomed and loved by our members!*

"Through the Church Year" Hymn Festival Sunday, November 22, 2026 – 1:00 pm

I am so excited about our second annual Hymn Festival. This year, with voices raised, we will sing through the church year from hymns out of our Lutheran Service Book. I know you will enjoy this time together. Please join me after the festival for light refreshments in Fellowship Hall. I look forward to sharing this annual event with you all.

NEW date for Christmas Concert Sunday, December 20, 2026, Please mark your calendar now for this date change. The concert will begin with pre-concert music at 5:45 pm with the concert beginning at 6:00 pm

Remember to pause and rest in God's Word each day. This is restorative! My prayer is that you have and are continuing to restore throughout the summer. God Bless you all! Sharon Adel (262) 822-1338.

Soli Deo Gloria – To God Alone be the Glory!

AUGUST BIRTHDAYS

1-Aug	Connie Bernhardt	18-Aug	Spencer Knoell
1-Aug	Ashley Gasau	19-Aug	Mary Lee Anderson
2-Aug	Aidan Henslin	19-Aug	Valerie Garcia
2-Aug	Amelia Salinas	20-Aug	Eric Reisdorf
3-Aug	Brandon Bernal	20-Aug	John Smith
3-Aug	Benjamin Holewinski	21-Aug	Silas Gasau
3-Aug	Cheri Petkus	22-Aug	Emily Heins
4-Aug	Kathleen Enstrom	22-Aug	Amalia Morales
4-Aug	Robert Pallamolla	24-Aug	Kyle Schulz
4-Aug	Wren Paulson	25-Aug	Shane Beecraft
5-Aug	Jennifer Baylon	25-Aug	Jayden Cummings
5-Aug	Kari Rosborough	25-Aug	Lauren Mandli
6-Aug	Amberlyn Yohn	25-Aug	Hunter McCluskey
7-Aug	Charles Fernandez	25-Aug	Ricky Polack
7-Aug	Melanie Knoell	25-Aug	Steven Riegelman
7-Aug	Carol Zanotti	26-Aug	William Jorgensen
8-Aug	Glenn Blaesing	27-Aug	Aaron Block
8-Aug	Melissa Mang	27-Aug	Jennifer Dyess
8-Aug	Kenneth Paulick	27-Aug	Samuel Nolte
9-Aug	Bryson Davis	27-Aug	Kathy Riegelman
10-Aug	Grace Allesxandro	27-Aug	Ryleigh Wiesner
11-Aug	Susan Prough	27-Aug	Cody Winiarski
12-Aug	Roger Lofquist	28-Aug	Carl Benecke
13-Aug	Miles Klees	28-Aug	Randolph Cole
13-Aug	Chrystal Waterfield	28-Aug	Lyla Martin
14-Aug	Allen Albright	28-Aug	Jackson Williams-Cannon
15-Aug	Oliver Douglas	29-Aug	Robert Smith
16-Aug	Jelaine Douglas	31-Aug	Henry Gall
16-Aug	Paula Winiarski	31-Aug	Theodore Krewal
17-Aug	Wendy Struebing	31-Aug	Mara Widmar
17-Aug	Wesley van Sliedrecht		



We apologize if we have forgotten anyone.
Please contact the church office at 637-7011 to correct.
Thank You!

VANCO MOBILE AND ONLINE GIVING

Giving is easier than ever through St. John's Vanco online or the Vanco Faith mobile app. You can access **Vanco online giving** by going to the St. John's Church and School website; stjohnsracine.org.

Under the church heading, click online giving. This page allows you to give to different church funds. You can choose a one-time contribution or set up recurring contributions through this site. Giving is also available through the **Vanco mobile app**. Vanco, our eGiving provider, has launched an updated mobile app called Vanco Mobile Faith. Downloading the new Vanco Mobile is easy! Head over to the App Store or Google Play to download Vanco Mobile for free.

To use Vanco Mobile, follow these easy steps:

1. Search for our church by entering St Johns Lutheran. Do not use any punctuation, and it is case sensitive
2. Create a new account or login
3. Select your gift amount, fund, and frequency
4. Enter your payment method and click submit to complete your donation.

Please contact Kimberly in the church office if you have any questions about or need assistance with the Vanco online or mobile app giving. chapman@stjohnsracine.org or (262) 637-7011

You can also scan the QR code below to set up electronic giving or make a one-time gift through our church/school website giving page.



ONLINE GIVING CARDS

Giving a tithe or offering online has been available here at St. John's for a number of years. If you participate in this and would like to place something in the offering as it is passed during the service, please pick up one of the laminated cards in the back as you walk in. This is a simple way of showing, especially to children who are watching and learning, the importance of giving to the work of the Lord here at St. John's.

STEWARDSHIP CORNER – AUGUST 2026

August 2 – Ninth Sunday After Trinity

Luke 16:8 – “For the sons of this world are more shrewd in dealing with their own generation than the sons of light.” Money is a tool that can be used for good or wicked purposes. Oftentimes unbelievers show more shrewdness in this than us Christians. If we really believe all that stuff we say in the Creed every Sunday...won't that affect how we use our money?

August 9 – Tenth Sunday After Trinity

Luke 19:45–46 – “And he entered the temple and began to drive out those who sold, saying to them, ‘It is written, ‘My house shall be a house of prayer,’ but you have made it a den of robbers.’” The sellers in the temple were doing the right thing in the wrong place. Being a merchant is a fine occupation that is pleasing to God. But using the Lord's house for your personal gain? That makes a mockery of what the church is for. This is God's house, where we come to hear His Word and worship Him in word and deed. We're not looking for a profit here — we're looking to give back and support the preaching of God's Word and the church's care for the poor and needy.

August 16 – Eleventh Sunday After Trinity

Luke 18:11–12 – “The Pharisee, standing by himself, prayed thus: ‘God, I thank you that I am not like other men, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even like this tax collector. I fast twice a week; I give tithes of all that I get.’” The Pharisees got so much right, and so much wrong. It's a good thing for this Pharisee to be faithful to his wife and faithful in his giving to the Lord's work, but these things are worthless if they proceed from a prideful heart! After all, what do we have to be proud of? If we have followed the Lord's ways, we have only done our duty. Better to be thankful (and amazed!) that the Lord has blessed us by making our giving part of His work!

August 23 – Twelfth Sunday After Trinity

2 Corinthians 3:5 – “Not that we are sufficient in ourselves to claim anything as coming from us, but our sufficiency is from God.” We are not sufficient, not enough, not capable in and of ourselves. But God gives us what is enough and makes us capable. This is the beginning of wisdom: we are utterly dependent on God's mercy. Our whole Christian life flows forth from this dependence, for if we are dependent upon the Lord, how can we not follow His commandments and walk in His way?

August 30 – Thirteenth Sunday after Trinity

Luke 10:25 – “And behold, a lawyer stood up to put him to the test, saying, ‘Teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?’” That's just not a good question! Doing and inheriting just don't go together. What can you do to inherit the Rockefeller fortune? Nothing. Inheriting is about birthright; doing is about merit. We receive eternal life by birthright in our Baptism into Christ. All of our doing in the kingdom of God flows from this, from who we are by our new birth. It can never be the other way around.



SCHOOL NEWS CORNER

FROM THE PRINCIPAL

Summer is always so fast- hard to believe that it is August already, and the start of school is right around the corner. Thank you to everyone who helped raise money for our PTL by coming out for the 4th of July Parade Parking fundraiser- we had our most successful one yet. If you stop by the school over the next few weeks, you will no doubt see the teachers hard at work, getting their classrooms ready for that first day- make sure you stop in and say hello. You may even be able to give a proper St. John's welcome to our newer staff members! Our Back to School night is August 17th, and our school officially begins on August 19th. Keep our students and their families in your prayers as they prepare for the upcoming year.

EXPANSION/RENOVATION UPDATE

Thank you to everyone who attended an informational session, filled out a survey, and/or interviewed with James Company as we examined the possibility of a renovation and expansion project. We have attached the preliminary report from James Company with the main feedback we received. Over the next few weeks, our committee will be using this feedback to prepare a recommendation to the congregation at our September voters meeting. If you have any questions on this process or on the findings in the report, please do not hesitate to reach out to Rod Adel or Emily Heins. Thank you for your continued prayers and support.

LIFE THOUGHTS FOR LUTHERANS – AUGUST

2026

August 2 – Trinity 9 – It's easy for us to sit and point our fingers at those who commit sins against life. But we must all remember that we were "brought forth in iniquity" and "conceived in sin" (Psalm 51:5). We have each committed our own sins against life and must "take heed" lest we fall into the same sins of sexual immorality and grumbling (1 Corinthians 10:10-12). Thankfully, God is faithful to "cleanse us from our sins" (Psalm 51:2) and "provide the way of escape" (1 Corinthians 10:13).

August 9 – Trinity 10 – As in Jeremiah's day, it may seem to us that in this culture of death, "everyone turns to his own course" and that many around us "have rejected the Word of the Lord" (Jeremiah 8:6, 9). However, recognizing that every person is created, redeemed, and called by God, we do not see them as our enemies. Instead, we weep over them and pray, along with Jesus and St. Paul, that their eyes would be opened to "know the things that make for peace" (Luke 19:42) that "they may be saved" (Romans 10:1).

August 16 – Trinity 11 – As Cain and the Pharisee prove, when we place our trust in our own righteousness, the result is that we "treat others with contempt" (Luke 18:9), including sometimes our own flesh and blood. But Jesus has died for all the children of wrath, and we are saved by God's grace through faith (Ephesians 2:3-8). Therefore, we need not trust in our own righteousness, and we walk in the good works created for us in Christ (Ephesians 2:10), treating each of our neighbors—regardless of their size, age, or condition—as gifts for whom Christ died.

August 23 – Trinity 12 – Jesus never saw those with disabilities as burdens to be dealt with or impediments to His own life. Instead, He, who makes "no distinction" between people (Romans 10:12), treated the sick and disabled in the same way He treats every other person: as one affected by sin and in need of His love and redemption. As we await the day of the resurrection, at which time all the deaf will hear and the blind will see (Isaiah 29:18), let us sanctify the name of God (Isaiah 29:23) by following Jesus' example in loving each one of our neighbors.

August 30 – Trinity 13 – Jesus exemplifies the Good Samaritan, bearing the burden of sin and pouring out the healing balm of His blood for all people, even those who sought His death (Luke 10:33-34). Through His Gospel, which forgives all transgressions and covers all sins (Psalm 32:1), we learn that our mercy is to extend to every neighbor whom God places in our path, regardless of how doing so might affect our way, and we are empowered to "go and do likewise" (Luke 10:37)



THINKING OF THOSE WHO CANNOT BE WITH US FOR WORSHIP (our Shut-Ins)

2 Corinthians 9:8 says, "God is able to provide you with every blessing in abundance, so that by always having enough of everything, YOU MAY SHARE abundantly in every good work." And so, I am asking you to SHARE for the sake of some of our most very special members of the St. John's family.

Can you share 10 minutes to write out a card this week? You can, because if God asks of your time, then you can assume that He has given you enough time.

Can you spend some money on stamps and notecards? You can because if Elijah could ask a widow to use her last flour to feed him (and she did) Elijah and the widow knew God would make it abundant! What we often forget when God ask us to give of ourselves, is that He has already supplied the means!

Consider blessing one or more of our shut-ins with a call, a note, or even a visit. If you struggle with what to say, just tell them their church family says "hello". Let them know we are thinking of them. Tell them "God bless you"! Remind them, their church family is praying for them.

Be blessed by blessing some of our church family.

May God bless you!

Julie

Julie Hagen 262-331-0052

Julie_hagen@hotmail.com

SHUT INS

Name	Address	Phone Number
Pat Cole	6551 Mariner Drive, Unit 6, Racine, WI 53406	
Sue Erickson	2262 Loni Lane, Racine, WI 53406 – Please add "In Care of Tracy Wasik"	
Gary & Shirley Filicetti	4710 N Main St, Racine, WI 53402	
Janet Fisa	Marion House 4105 Spring Street, #212, Mt. Pleasant, WI 53405	
Marcella Geyer	3139 Conrad Drive, Racine, WI 53404	
Gail Gotch	1916 Wisconsin Avenue, Apt. 359, Racine, WI 53403	
Susan Monson	418 Shoreland Drive, Racine, WI 53402	
Kathy Patzman	5404 Idlewood Drive, Racine, WI 53402	
Joanne Ruble	1108 N. Sunnyslope #104, Racine, WI 53406	
John Smith	1636 Raintree Lane, Racine, WI 53406	