

# NEWS FROM ST. JOHN'S LUTHERAN

## JULY 2026

---

### FROM THE PASTOR

Election season? In the summer? That's right.

Last month on June 9, the ballot for President of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod was set and voting was opened. Each congregation in our church body has been given opportunity to vote, a change that came into effect with the restructuring of our synod back in 2010. It was also that year that our current president, the Rev. Dr. Matthew Harrison was elected. He has served well since that time, which has covered all but one year of my own service as an LCMS pastor.

Some of you saw him preach here at St. John's at the Bugenhagen Conference in 2022. It was an honor to have him with us! Looking back, it is clear that President Harrison was elected into an interesting scenario, where the restructuring proposed by his predecessor was passed and then given to him to enact. Though he was not in favor of the changes, in my view, he has done well with them and has put the authority they granted to good use.

The switch from electing our president at the triennial convention greatly increased the number of eligible voters in this process. What was once decided by one pastoral and one lay delegate at the Synod Convention is now given to each congregation that registers properly. Another recent change has led to a further drawing out of the election process, as our synod voted to return to five candidates on the presidential ballot rather than three. While the first votes for the first ballot were cast back on June 9, at the time of this writing we still do not have an elected president! A majority is required for an election, and with each new ballot the name receiving the fewest votes is eliminated. Scott Schweitzer and I have participated in each of the three rounds of online voting thus far.

The three candidates at this time are our incumbent, President Harrison, along with the Rev. Dr. Joel Biermann, a professor at Concordia Seminary in St. Louis, and the Rev. Benjamin Ball, who serves at St. Paul Lutheran Church and School in Hamel, Illinois as well as our synod's 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President. Some members here might remember Rev. Ball from his time with us at past conferences as well. It seems likely that by the end of June we will have an election, and I'm certain that the Lord will remain over His Church

regardless of the outcome. Please continue to pray for our church and school, our circuit, our district, and our synod and those who go about the work God has given in these spheres. Also, pray for the Lord's protection and wisdom to Pastor DeYoung as he represents our circuit at the Synod Convention (July 18-23) in Phoenix.

If you have any questions about this election, be sure to reach out to Pastor DeYoung or me!

In Christ,  
Pastor Gilbert

---

### OFFICIAL ACTS

#### **Baptism:**

Jacob Garity  
5-31-2026

#### **Confirmation:**

Jacob Garity  
5-31-2026

#### **Funeral:**

Pamela Sorenson  
6-27-2026

---

### 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

Join us on Friday, July 17 from 5:30-7:30pm for Fellowship Friday. Pizza will be served as the main meal. Everyone connected to St. John's is invited to attend. Please come as individuals or families, and if you do, please bring side, dessert, or drink to share. Please consider bringing a game of some kind to perhaps play with others. The gym will also be open for part of the evening. If you plan to attend, email Kimberly ([chapman@stjohnsracine.org](mailto:chapman@stjohnsracine.org)) or Sharon ([adel@stjohnsracine.org](mailto:adel@stjohnsracine.org)).

## **"NEW" 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 the following dates:

July 20 (6-7 pm)

August 10 (6-7 pm)

There will be other events as well, but this will get us started!

---

## **SJLC MEN'S GATHERING**

Our next SJLC Men's Gathering will be held on Saturday, July 25 at 5pm at Clint Olley's house, 7 Cedarwood Court, Racine. Save the date! More details to come!

---

## **THE BUGENHAGEN CONFERENCE**

Please consider volunteering to help out at the Bugenhagen Conference again this year! The conference will be held here at St. John's from July 27-29. At this time, there are over 100 pastors signed up and planning to attend with more anticipated to register in the next couple of weeks. This is something many members of St. John's have helped with and more will be appreciated this year! Sign-up sheets can be found outside the pastors' offices and in the narthex.

---

## **CHURCH PICNIC – SAVE THE DATE!**

Please join us for our Annual Church Picnic on Sunday August 23rd from 12-3pm at Smolenski Park in Mt. Pleasant. Watch for sign up information in August. Hope to see you there!

---

## **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](mailto: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](http://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.

## JULY BIRTHDAYS

<b>1-July</b>	Lily Rossman	<b>16-July</b>	Rebecca Krewal
<b>2-July</b>	Michael Christofferson	<b>17-July</b>	Harrison Duchac
<b>2-July</b>	Allan Storm	<b>18-July</b>	Scarlett Hysell
<b>3-July</b>	Steven Rosborough	<b>18-July</b>	Dodi Sollman
<b>4-July</b>	Michael Heusdens	<b>19-July</b>	Cheryl Witek
<b>6-July</b>	Joel Grant	<b>20-July</b>	Douglas Cole
<b>6-July</b>	Karon Morse	<b>20-July</b>	Logan Liebenow
<b>6-July</b>	Kassidy Widmar	<b>20-July</b>	Lincoln Spranger
<b>7-July</b>	Christian Olley	<b>21-July</b>	Sarah Seils
<b>7-July</b>	Audrey Schielie	<b>21-July</b>	Carter Stein
<b>8-July</b>	Kerry Jacquet	<b>22-July</b>	Josiah Hasseldahl
<b>9-July</b>	Anna Zanotti	<b>24-July</b>	Isaiah Davis
<b>10-July</b>	Lauren Chiappetta	<b>26-July</b>	Peggy Hysell
<b>10-July</b>	Landon Spranger	<b>28-July</b>	Tenley Beier
<b>11-July</b>	Tracy Houdek	<b>28-July</b>	Kyle Marweg
<b>12-July</b>	Joshua DeYoung	<b>28-July</b>	Clint Olley
<b>12-July</b>	Mila Iruegas	<b>28-July</b>	David Sjostrom
<b>12-July</b>	Izzi Smith	<b>29-July</b>	Liam Grant
<b>14-July</b>	Nico Brown	<b>30-July</b>	Ana Douglas
<b>14-July</b>	Amanda Chaudoir	<b>30-July</b>	Amy Lesnjak
<b>14-July</b>	Diana Meier	<b>31-July</b>	Colin Allexandro
<b>15-July</b>	Reid Palenik	<b>31-July</b>	Kaitlyn DeYoung
<b>15-July</b>	Greta Peterson	<b>31-July</b>	John Naegeli
<b>16-July</b>	Randall Borgardt	<b>31-July</b>	Gabriel Phillips
<b>16-July</b>	Cindy Konecny		



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](mailto: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 – JULY 2026

### July 5 – Fifth Sunday after Trinity

**Luke 5:5 – “And Simon answered, ‘Master, we toiled all night and took nothing! But at your word I will let down the nets.’”** All our toil, all our work, all our efforts mean nothing without the Lord's guidance. But if we walk in the Word of Jesus...well, look what happened to Simon Peter! The Lord gives grace, and He promises to bless our efforts and bring forth further blessings that we never expected.

### July 12 – Sixth Sunday after Trinity

**Matthew 5:24 – “First be reconciled to your brother, and then come and offer your gift.”** Our giving to the Lord's work is part of our Christian life. The Lord wants us to walk in His ways in all we do. He wants our hearts united to His. It's not our gift the Lord wants — it is our very selves, in all we think, say and do.

### July 19 – Seventh Sunday after Trinity

**Romans 6:19 – “For just as you once presented your members as slaves to impurity and to lawlessness leading to more lawlessness, so now present your members as slaves to righteousness leading to sanctification.”** To be sanctified means to be set aside for God's purposes in all that we do, whether in the home, church or society at large. St. Paul encourages us to see ourselves, our bodies, our souls and all that we are as set aside for God's work.

### July 26 – Eighth Sunday after Trinity

**Jeremiah 23:17 – “They say continually to those who despise the word of the LORD, ‘It shall be well with you’; and to everyone who stubbornly follows his own heart, they say, ‘No disaster shall come upon you.’”** Jeremiah's day sounds a lot like our own, with self-appointed prophets in the popular media telling people exactly what they want to hear. But preachers of the true Word of the Lord do us the sometimes-difficult favor of telling us *what is actually true*. And that often challenges us, shows us our sins and calls us to repentance.

## FROM YOUR DIRECTOR OR MUSIC – JULY 2026 NEWSLETTER

### Save the Date – Music and More Concert

**Series:** On Thursday, July 23, 2026 beginning 12:00 pm, join me as I play in concert at First Presbyterian Church, 716 College Avenue, Racine. This year, I will play music of Bach, Behnke and Buxtehude. Joining me will be Kimberly Chapman, soloist. I have been blessed to be a part of this summer music concert series now over 25 years! The concert is free and open to the public. We look forward to seeing you there!

### Choral/Handbell Kickoff Event: Tuesday, September 8, 2026.

At this event, I welcome Gregory 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 vocal and handbell musician in the Racine area who will lead the Handbell Workshop.

Music is one of the most amazing gifts that keeps on giving. There is always something new to learn, experience and share. It is an important human endeavor in which powerful, lifelong connections can be made. Have you been thinking about joining our Senior Choir or Handbell Choir? Over the summer months, consider it!

Over these summer months, we are filling our days and nights with extra rest, family time and trying to get extra projects completed. Let us remember that whatever we do, do it all to the Glory of God. Sharon Adel

**Soli Deo Gloria – To God Alone be the Glory!**

**SCHOOL NEWS CORNER**  
**FROM THE PRINCIPAL**

The summer hallways are a little quieter this time of year, but it is always a blessing to see our Trustees hard at work, fixing, replacing, painting, assembling- making our school shine so that it is ready for our students to return in August. We thank God for their dedication and hard work! We are also thankful to all of the congregation members who attended the informational sessions and filled out a survey for our feasibility study. Please keep St. John's in your prayers as we look to the future and pray for God's guidance on how best to continue to serve Him. Have a great summer!

---

**LIFE THOUGHTS FOR LUTHERANS – JULY 2026**

**July 2 – The Visitation** – Today we journey with Mary to the hill country of Judah to visit her relative, Elizabeth. Both women were blessed by God with miraculous pregnancies. Even in the womb, a child can be filled with God's Spirit and recognize the Savior's presence (Luke 1:39-45)! The pregnancies in our midst may not be as miraculous, but every new human life is a cause for rejoicing. And every child in the womb is, in fact, a blessing from God.

**July 5 – Trinity 5** – We labor night and day in the monotonous—in the diapers, in the dishes, in the routine of our day-to-day lives—and it can often seem to be in vain (Luke 5:1). We wear ourselves out and despair with Elijah that we alone are left to overcome the challenges (1 Kings 19:14). But even when it seems foolish or absurd, we take God at His Word, knowing that He brings the catch (Luke 5:5-7). The cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but for us it is the power of God (1 Corinthians 1:18). The cross redeems our work and gives us hope, even when our works feel vain or when despair takes over (1 Kings 19:14).

**July 12 – Trinity 6** – Jesus, who did not come to destroy the Law, but to keep it (Matthew 5:17), teaches us that we are all guilty of breaking the 5<sup>th</sup> Commandment (Exodus 20:13). Even though we may not have had an abortion or ended someone else's life, we have been angry with those who have. Therefore, we are all equally in need of His salvation (Matthew 5:20). Thankfully, Jesus has reconciled us to Himself (Matthew 5:23-24) by uniting us to His death and resurrection through Baptism, and He empowers us

to live a new life of love toward each of our neighbors (Romans 6:1-4).

**July 19 – Trinity 7** – God fashioned and formed Adam from the dust of the ground (Genesis 2:7). He knits us together in our mother's wombs, and He provides for us in all the needs of life, both in body and in soul (Mark 8:2-3). Precious in His sight are all the children of men because He has formed and created each of us and continues to sustain our earthly lives. Additionally, He also offers us the free gift of everlasting life in His own blood (Romans 6:23), thus declaring each person worthy of our love and protection.

**July 26 – Trinity 8** – The world tells us that we should follow our own hearts, changing or forsaking God's Word about life and sexuality, and promising that it will be well with us when we do (Jeremiah 23:16-17). Beware of these false prophets who are ravenous wolves, seeking to draw you away from Christ (Matthew 7:15; Acts 20:30). Instead, as God's children and heirs of His kingdom in Christ (Romans 8:17), pay attention to the whole counsel of God (Acts 20:27), and you will stand on level ground (Psalm 26:12).

---



## CARING FOR OUR SHUT-INS THIS JULY

As we celebrate the 250<sup>th</sup> year of the birth of our nation, may we reflect on Psalm 3:12 “Blessed is the nation whose God is Lord, the people whom He has chosen as His heritage.”

How many times do we truly think about the 4<sup>th</sup> of July from a Christian perspective? Do we thank God for our freedoms here in America? Do we thank God for the freedoms He has given us through His Son, Jesus Christ? Do we thank Him for the ability to worship and serve Him?

Galatians 5:13: **“For you were called to freedom, brothers. Only do not use your freedom as an opportunity for the flesh, but through love, SERVE ONE ANOTHER!”** Now, I ask you to please consider serving our Shut-Ins, who have lost their physical freedom to worship with us every Sunday. Please read the list below and consider making a phone call, a visit, sending a card and kneeling in prayer over these names. God has given us ALL the freedom to serve these special members. If you would like some direction on how to begin this **service of love**, please feel free to email me at [Julie\\_hagen@hotmail.com](mailto:Julie_hagen@hotmail.com).

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	<b>Marion House</b> 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	