



This Month at St. John:

- March 4—Cornerstone Preschool Sings for St. John
- March 6—Cornerstone Preschool Open House
- March 7—Soup Supper and Lenten Worship Continues
- March 11—Daylight Savings
- March 13—CCP Board and Call Committee Meetings
- March 14—Soup Supper and Lenten Worship
- March 15—Community dinner
- March 18—First Communion Class (session 1)
- March 20—Red Hatter's luncheon, Executive, Music and Worship, Council
- March 21—Soup Supper and Lenten Worship
- March 22—Friends in GRACE Spring Brunch
- March 25—**Palm Sunday**, First Communion Class (session 2)
- March 27—Call Committee Meeting
- March 28—NO WEDNESDAY WORSHIP
- March 29—**Maundy Thursday**/First Communion (session 3)
- March 30—**Good Friday**





“Looking Up Again!”

Who’d of thunk... Looking Up takes us deeper!

Since before I arrived in mid July, the Transition/Call Committee has been working deliberately, faithfully, and diligently to lead St. J through the preliminaries. We have been Looking Up all along, entrusting St. J and potential next pastoral leaders to the Lord in prayer. {Have you been able to practice participating in that prayer.?. Thanks!}

We have Looked Back, processing St. J’s history, assessing and harvesting, celebrating and moving on from our past. {Are you informed on St. J’s history and aware of the impacts it has had on who we have become.?. Wow!}

We have Looked In, taking stock of our current status, identifying and confessing our growth areas, ministries on which we need to work and improve. And, we have proclaimed and celebrated our strengths, practices and ministries where we excel and bear good fruit. {Have you become aware and informed of our growing edges and core successes.?. Promising!}

We have Looked Around and Looked Out, identifying our ministry and mission context. With the help of the Mpls Area Synod staff and tools resourced from the ELCA we have come to know some of the needs of our congregation, our community, and the world in which we serve. {Are the conditions of our community and the world clear to you and calling you to partner and participate in the caring ministries to which St. J is called by the Spirit of God.?. Compelling!}

Three congregational events and a lot of hard work by the team has brought us a harvest of information which the team has now processed summarized. Over the coming weeks the committee will prepare a Congregational Profile based on all the homework. This profile will be sent to the Mpls Synod Bishop’s office for evaluation and approval. It will describe for potential shepherd candidates who St. John is and a bit of what God intends to do through us.

Look Again, we still have some homework to do on clarifying how St. John is organized and structured. Assessing how we operate and who if involved with and charged with leading and influencing decision-making. We need to look honestly and faithfully at the “mindsets” we allow to influence how we “think of and see” ourselves, how we “feel” about ourselves and our congregation and its future. Does are organizational structure assist us in bearing good fruit? Is it functional, fruitful, and faithful? Are we serving in a “culture of abundance or scarcity?” Do we trust that God has, and is, and will give us “all and more than we need” to accomplish His will for us in this place? Are we led by the Spirit, cultivating and living forward courageously with a spirit of “power and of love and of self-discipline.” 2 Timothy 2:7 If we are “humming along” effectively, what can we do that will shift us into the next higher gear? If we are “stuck,” what is holding us back and what will we do about it? Are we built and are we utilizing best practices that will serve us and God well in this new millennium? If so, Hallelujah! If not, are we willing to risk and endure changes{s}? This next step may be the hardest yet, but in stepping out with willingness to pursue effectiveness and excellence, we will find ourselves in the center of God’s will, the safest and most exciting place to be.

We need to be Looking Up Again/Still... Our task and yoke with Christ Jesus is all about prayer; communication with God, conversation with The Almighty, a dialog with the Divine One. Prayer certainly invites our SPEAKING from our hearts, sharing, verbalizing our thoughts and hopes and needs and wants, even if not out loud... with God. God even invites us to SPEAK openly... early and often to the Lord, regularly, in any and every situation in which we find ourselves. But, we do well to remember, prayer is not just all TALK, TALK, TALK. Real and fruitful, faithful and productive mature prayer invites, begs and commands our LISTENING! So, in the coming months let us practice LISTENING together... What is God saying to us, to you?

²⁸Have you not known? Have you not heard?

The LORD is the everlasting God, the Creator of the ends of the earth. He does not faint or grow weary; his understanding is unsearchable. ²⁹He gives power to the faint, and strengthens the powerless. ³⁰Even youths will faint and be weary, and the young will fall exhausted; ³¹but those who wait for the LORD shall renew their strength, they shall mount up with wings like eagles, they shall run and not be weary, they shall walk and not faint. Isaiah 40

Looking Up Again, Praying us forward, united and empowered in the Spirit. Interim Pastor Bob Rusert

Cornerstone's Church Corner



Hello to families, friends, and Students!

Cornerstone will sing for St. John on March 4th! We look forward to sharing the songs we have learned.

There is an Open House on Tuesday March 6th. All families with preschool aged children encouraged to come and check us out!

Check out our website: www.cornerstonechristianpreschool.org
Contact the Preschool for more info; zimmermanccp@yahoo.com or
763-856-4561 ex 14.

CRADLE ROLL HOW TO EXPLAIN LENT TO CHILDREN

Lent is the 40 days leading up to the celebration of Easter. The idea of Lent and the principles behind it can be difficult for children to understand. Use this time to explain to your child why Lent is important to our faith.

Read passages from the bible about Easter to your child, to remind them what your family is about to celebrate during the Lenten season.

Talk to your child about the sacrifices you have agreed to make this season. Tell them this a way we can give back to Jesus for the ultimate sacrifice he made for all of us.

Pray with your child every night. Remind them that Lent is about becoming closer to God and building our relationship with him.

Bring them to Sunday and Wednesday Lenten worship services so they can participate in the rituals leading up to Holy Week and ending with Easter Sunday.



Confirmation News:

9th Grade Confirmation Students, Faith mentors and Parents

March 28th

Faith Mentor Wrap up, 6:00 PM

There is no regular confirmation class on this Wednesday. Instead, those who are being confirmed, 9th graders and 3rd year students, will be meeting at 6:00 PM in Fellowship Hall for our Faith Mentor wrap up! All Students, parents and mentors please attend!



Wednesday night Soup Suppers (5:15-6:45pm)

during Lent will continue through March! We would love to see you there! We enjoy sharing supper together before **Wednesday Worship Services at 7pm.** (Each night is a different drama....you don't want to miss it!)

February 28, March 7, March 4, March 21



Transition/Call Committee Updates:

Our committee is finishing up the "transition" phase of our work. We have compiled everyone's feedback from the surveys and the congregational events (thank you!), and we will be presenting this information to the church council. We hope that this will help direct our church's growth as we prepare for our new pastor. We will now turn our attention to calling a pastor. We plan to complete our "Ministry Site Profile" in the month of March and submit it to the synod. Once this is completed, potential pastors can review our Ministry Site Profile and indicate their interest in our congregation. We hope to be interviewing candidates in April and May!

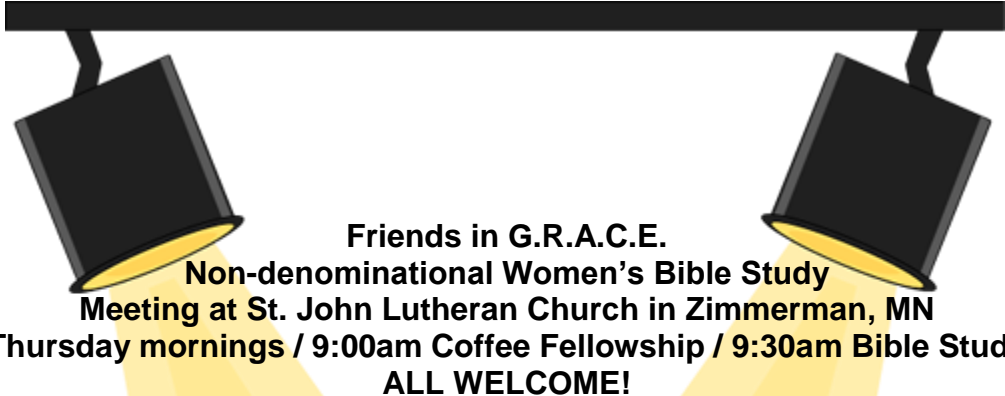
Sunday Evening Women's Bible Study: We will be starting a bible study called Whisper, by Mark Batterson on Feb 25th and you are welcomed to attend! We will meet every other Sunday evening for 8 weeks. 6:00-7:30pm at the church. February 25, March 11, March 25 and April 8th. Cost is 5.00. Contact Church office for more details!

Attention parents of 5th graders! First Communion Class info:

The class will be 3 sessions. First Session is Sunday March 18th at 9:15am in the Sunday School Classroom. Second Session is Sunday March 25th at 9:15am in the Sunday School classroom. The Third session will be Maundy Thursday, March 29th at 5:30pm to 6:45pm. This last session will include a pre-first communion meal prior to practicing to receive Holy Communion at the 7:00 pm Worship Service. During the worship service the students can come up with their families for communion.

If you cannot be at the Maundy Thursday ceremony and service, let Pastor Bob know when you would like first communion. A special announcement can be made for that Sunday when first communion is received. If you have question's contact Pastor Bob Rusert at the church (763-856-4561).

Interested in joining a choir? Ever wanted to sing a solo? Want to join the worship team? Please contact the music Director to get started! Jessica.gensmer@yahoo.com Young adults welcome!



**Friends in G.R.A.C.E.
Non-denominational Women's Bible Study
Meeting at St. John Lutheran Church in Zimmerman, MN
Thursday mornings / 9:00am Coffee Fellowship / 9:30am Bible Study
ALL WELCOME!**

This Bible study has a rich heritage, and was originally started by 5 women in September 1997. Attendance has really grown, and now as many as 40 women gather on Thursday mornings to study and share the original mission of this group, to bring honor, glory and praise to God. We want to live out Mark 12:30-31; *“Love the Lord with all our hearts and all our souls and all our minds and love our neighbors as ourselves!”* We want to share the joy and peace and good news that God loves us like crazy!

A little history -

The study originally met at St. John, and St. John has always been a partner in this study with many of its women attending and always being available as a host location, willingly offering the study use of all its facilities and technical equipment to show our DVD and online studies.

Non-Denominational Statement—

The study adopted a new name around 2015, calling ourselves “Friends in G.R.A.C.E.” God’s Redemption At Christ’s Expense. Our Bible study is non-denominational and committed to avoiding the doctrines of any established denomination. We respect all faiths by giving freedom to our participants to continue in their own faith. This does not indicate that we embrace all religions and teach that all religions are biblical. Instead, we believe in one God. We believe in the one God of the bible. We believe that the God of the bible loves us and has provided his Son as our redemption. We believe that He is the only source of salvation and the Holy Spirit. We believe that He is the only source of peace and joy in life and we feel privileged to share this good news and God’s love to the people around us, not in a dogmatic, forceful way – but by our actions. Romans 8:39 *“Nothing in all creation will ever be able to separate us from the love of God this is revealed in Christ Jesus our Lord.”*

Purpose –

Celebrate our faith! **Find** God’s answers for His purpose and plan for our lives! **Discover** God’s gifts of *“peace that passes all understanding”* Philippians 4:6-7 and *“joy beyond all measure”* (joy in spite of our circumstances) Matthew 2:10! **Meet** new friends and old! **Enjoy** the love and fellowship we share together!

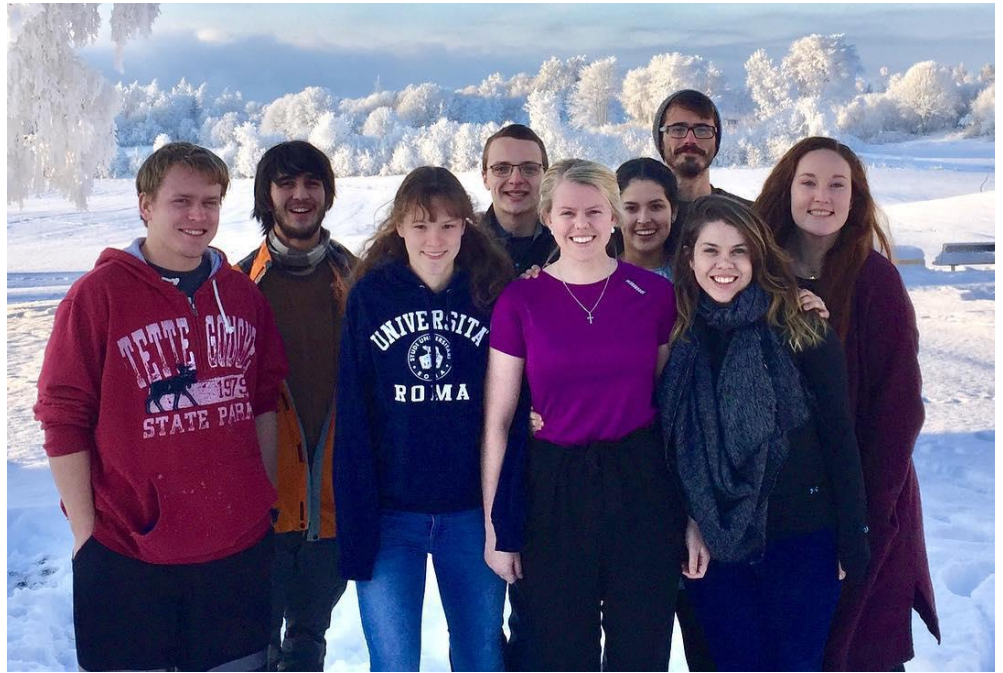
We are currently studying the DVD series “Having a Mary Heart in a Martha World” by Joanna Weaver. We try to make each week a great experience so join us as you can, whenever you are able. We also try to bring in special speakers a couple times a year and enjoy great pot-luck brunches around Thanksgiving and Easter. In recent years we have also enjoyed a Tea Party as our send off in the spring!



Dear St. John Family,

It's been a while. I left for Norway a little over four and a half months ago. A lot has happened since then, for both me and you. I just wanted to check in and let you know that all of my limbs are still attached.

Here in Norway at the school I am going to there are people 10 students, 13 staff, and the base leader and his family. We are from ten different countries that span four continents. It is quite the mix of cultures here. It has been a learning experience for everyone involved. I am part of the outdoor track at the school and in being part of that track, we go camping and exploring and we learn how to find God out in nature and how to connect with him in more ways in the class room or at the church.



We have had nine teaching weeks so far with topics ranging from Spiritual Warfare to Missions. The teaching week that has had the most impact at me was probably our second teaching week that was on Identity in God. The teacher we had was a lady from Australia and she was a very gifted speaker. She had us do this activity where we had to write down lies we believed about ourselves and then we had to make a list of all the true things about our life based off the list. It was an exercise to get us to start seeing each other and ourselves as how God created us. After making our lists, we did an activity tailored toward each person and their insecurities and how to overcome them. It was a very emotional day. I never thought I would say I had prayed for 12 plus hours in a day. I can now say that I have.

When we go on our track weeks, we do a little bit of everything. The best week by far was a week in early December when we went caving as an outdoor track. Nine of us piled into a van and we drove to a cabin, that was our base for the days and from there we would drive to the caves. It was a week of pushing our comfort zones and learning how deal with new things and things that were uncomfortable. We have caves back in Minnesota and in other states but nothing like these. They hadn't been modernized like most of the well-known ones in the states so there were tight spaces to squeeze through and raging underground rivers and even waterfalls. For everything being illuminated by a head lamp, it was crazy how much of the beauty were able to see.

We also had a week where we got to go out into the local community and help them in some way. I went to a small island called Traena which is off the coast of Northern Norway. While there with two of my classmates, we helped at the school and learned a little about the culture. We met some great kids at the school. The three of us were instant celebrities. A person from Sweden, Germany, and The United States. For kids who didn't have a whole lot, they sure knew how to have fun.

I was lucky enough to have Christmas with my family in Norway. They were more excited about it that I was. I will admit. I guess traveling to a place loses its luster after you have lived there for a few months. I was able to show them how to eat like a Scandinavian and we got out and did a few things. The two biggest highlights, for me it was skiing and for a majority the family, they thought that the fjord tour that we went on was pretty cool. After an action-packed week together, they took off back to Minnesota where they could go through jetlag again.

I spent two more weeks in Norway before heading out with my outreach team to Chile. Outreach team is a fancy way of saying mission trip team. Shelly, Linnea, Michelle, Rhema, Luisa, Noah, Tanner, Chris, and I are currently working in a neighborhood in Santiago. We are putting on a short vacation bible school and working on fixing up houses while we are here. We are not sure where we are headed next, but God is watching over us and I can't wait to see what he has planned next.

I will be back in the early summer some time. I will see you then.

Sincerely,
Nate Hackbarth

P.S. If you want to know more, ask my mother or father questions (Maren and Dan Hackbarth) or find me on Facebook. I post updates regularly.

Festivals of Holy Week 2018 Our Loving Lord Provides!

March 25 Festival of Palm Sunday 8 & 10:30 am

"Our Loving Lord... Knows Our Temptation to Triumphalism!"

Child's Portion: "Our Loving Lord... Teaches the Winning Way!"

The world loves a winner and we are drawn to follow the ways of the world. The world glorifies, honors, celebrates and values winners only. We too... all love winning, coming in first, and celebrating with a victory parade! We love it when WE triumph before the whole world, or at least our little part of it. But Jesus marches to a different drummer, a different tune, and shows us the life-giving way to go.

March 29, 2018 Maundy Thursday 7pm

Text: PSALM (ELW): Psalm 104 {Selected Verses}

GOSPEL: Matthew 26:26-29

"Our Loving Lord... Provides an Empowering Feast!"

Child's Portion: "Our Loving Lord... Provides Powerade for the Race!"

God does not ask us to serve or labor without providing sustenance. God does not ask us to carry the burden of our sin without providing for relief and release. God is powerfully here for us in the Feast of Eternal Life-giving Presence, Power, and Promise.

March 30, 2018 Good Friday Dramatic Service of Shadows 7pm

Text: ISAIAH 53 {Selected Verses}

GOSPEL: Mark 14:33-42 & John 18:1-19:42

"Our Loving Lord... Provides the Sacrifice for Us!"

God, in Divine grace and wisdom knows we are no match for the darkness, no match for the adversaries, no match for the forces of evil. God, in Divine mercy sacrifices Divinity, becoming fully human in the person of Jesus Christ. We are eternally blessed in the Lamb of God Who sacrificed Himself for us on the cross, living, suffering, and dying in our place that we might live anew in the Kingdom of God.

April 1, 2018 Easter Sunday Festival of the Resurrection 6:30, 8, 9:15, & 10:30am

GOSPEL: Matthew 28:1-10

"Our Loving Lord... Provides the Best Surprise Ending Ever!"

Child's Portion: "SURPRISE!!! Whhhhhhat.!. Whhhhhhoah!!!"

We thrill to surprises, especially surprise endings that work out unexpectedly in our favor after suffering the sadness of apparent bleak and devastating defeat. God provides the greatest, the best surprise ending ever in the Resurrection of Jesus, the Crucified Messiah. SURPRISE!!! New life is ours. All is not lost, we are free to celebrate a glorious victory snatched from the jaws of defeat!