St. John Lutheran Church

September 2025 Newsletter

As a community of believers in Jesus Christ, inspired by the grace of God and the power of the Holy Spirit, the mission of St. John Lutheran Church is to:
WORSHIP, WITNESS, LEARN, SERVE and SUPPORT.

On Sunday, September 14, our newly elected Bishop Donna Simon will be out to visit with the members of the Western Kansas Conference. She will share greetings and talk about some of her plans, but she is mainly coming to listen to us and hear any questions or concerns we might have as she begins her time in office. Bishop Donna will be at Trinity Lutheran in Hays (2703 Fort Street) at 2:30 pm, and at First Presbyterian in Colby (515 W. 4th Street) at 6:30 pm. All are welcome and encouraged to attend either gathering.

It's never too early to mark your calendars for BINGO!!

425 Youth Group FUN-draiser Bingo Night

Wednesday, October 22, 2025
6:30 – 8:00 pm

Play $1.00 per card, per game and you can play multiple cards!!

Snacks and finger foods and fellowship and fun!!

Watch the weekly bulletins and the October Newsletter for more details.

The **2025 Back-to-School Giveaway** was a huge success, and I want to thank all of the volunteers that played a part in getting accomplished. Thanks to all the people that gave donations of clothes, person care items, or money. Thanks to the volunteers that worked tirelessly in sorting the clothing prior to the Giveaway. Also a big thank you to those that help during set up, the actual Giveaway and on Friday to pack up the remaining items. Also thanks for the lunch for the workers on Giveaway days. You all played an important part, whether it was big or small. It could not have been accomplished without everyone's help.

We were able to serve 118 students as well as numerous adults. We also gave school supplies to 24 students. The remaining items on Friday were sorted and distributed to several non-profit organizations including: Orphan Grain Train (serving across the US and around the world), ARC of Central Plains Thrift Store in Hays, Salina Rescue Mission, Jana's Closet in Hays, Options Domestic & Sexual Violence Service (serving 18 counties in Northwest Kansas), Embrace services in Wichita, Operation Christmas Child, the Schwaller Center in Hays (part of High Plains Mental Health), Russell County Food Pantry, Russell County Health Department, and USD 407 Russell.

Once again THANKS to all. Looking forward to doing this again in 2026. – Carol Fritz

THANKS AGAIN AND AGAIN for supporting the Back-to-School Giveaway with donations of clothing and shoes! However, we are NOT accepting donations at this time (we just don't have room to store them until next year). Donations for the 2025 Back-to-School Giveaway will be accepted starting next spring. Your gifts are a blessing for others – Pastor Teri

ODDS AND ENDS

- St. John offices will be **closed Monday, September 1 in observance of Labor Day**.
- The **St. John Ringers Bell Choir** resumes practice Wednesday, September 4 at 6:30 pm and will present music to the glory of God at the 10:30 am service on Sunday, September 28.
- The **Agape Choir** resumes practice Wednesday, September 4 at 7:30 pm and will raise their voices to heaven at the 10:30 am service on Sunday, September 21.
- The **Executive Committee** of the Church Council will meet Tuesday, September 9 at 5:30 pm. The **Church Council** will meet Thursday, September 18 at 6:30 pm.
- The **St. John Women's Bible Study** will be held Thursday, September 11 at 10:00 am. Large print materials are available upon request.
- To be included in the **October Newsletter**, information must be submitted no later than Friday, September 19.
- If you left serving bowls or pans or utensils in the kitchen after recent luncheons and events in the Parish Hall, please check the kitchen counters for any items that may be yours and take them home with you. The **"Unclaimed Container Corner"** is currently overflowing.

2025 SEPTEMBER Pastor's Calendar

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
31 *NO 8:15 or 10:30 AM Worship; First Communion Class 10:00 AM - 2:00 PM*	01 Pastor's Day Off - day of rest & renewal	02 Sewing Group 1:30-4:00 PM	03 425 Youth 6:30 PM; Agape Choir 7:30 PM	04 Bible Study 1:30 PM	05 Pastor's Sermon Writing Day	06 Worship 6:00 PM
07 Worship with Communion 8:15 & 10:30 AM; Care Home Worship 2:00- 4:00 PM	08 Pastor's Day Off - day of rest & renewal (appointment 10:30 AM)	09 Sewing Group 1:30-4:00 PM; Council Executive Committee 5:30 PM	10 Pastoral Care/Home Visitation Day; 425 Youth 6:30 PM; Agape Choir 7:30 PM	11 St. John Women's Bible Study 10:00 AM; Bible Study 1:30 PM	12 Pastor's Sermon Writing Day	13 Worship with Communion 6:00 PM
14 Worship 8:15 & 10:30 AM; First Day of Sunday School 9:15 AM; Blessing of Backpacks & Keys at 10:30 Service	15 Pastor's Day Off - day of rest & renewal	16 Sewing Group 1:30-4:00 PM; City Council Prayer 4:30 PM	17 Pastoral Care/Home Visitation Day; 425 Youth 6:30 PM; Agape Choir 7:30 PM	18 Bible Study 1:30 PM; Church Council 6:30 PM	19 Pastor's Sermon Writing Day	20 Worship 6:00 PM
21 Worship with Communion 8:15 & 10:30 AM	22 Pastor's Day Off - day of rest & renewal	23 Sewing Group 1:30-4:00 PM; Clergy Comments	24 Pastoral Care/Home Visitation Day; 425 Youth 6:30 PM; Agape Choir 7:30 PM	25 Bible Study 1:30 PM	26 Pastor's Sermon Writing Day	27 Worship with Communion 6:00 PM
28 Worship 8:15 AM & 10:30 AM; 2nd Grade Bible Presentation at 10:30 Service	29 Pastor's Day Off - day of rest & renewal	30 Sewing Group 1:30-4:00 PM	01 *Pastoral Care/Home Visitation Day; 425 Youth 6:30 PM; Agape Choir 7:30 PM*	02 *Bible Study 1:30 PM*	03 *Pastor's Sermon Writing Day (appointment 1:00 PM)*	04 *Worship 6:00 PM*

Altar Guild Works Behind the Scenes

Altar Guild members faithfully serve St. John, even if they aren't always visible. Every weekend, members prepare the elements for and assist in serving the Eucharist. Banners are being cleaned and repaired, paraments are being readied as seasons of the church change, baptismal napkins are being embroidered, and hymnals are being cleaned and repaired.

Altar Guild members are approved by the congregation at the Annual Meeting in January. Altar Guild members serve three-year terms and traditionally assist for three months of the year (and on special occasions as needed). Serving on Altar Guild is not for women only – men are welcome to serve on the Altar Guild.

If you are interested in serving on the Altar Guild, or would like to learn more, please contact Deb Karst or the church office.

- *If you get a text or email from Pastor Teri asking for money, gift cards or "a favor" – IT IS A SCAM – DO NOT RESPOND!!*
- *The Sanctuary Balcony is closed until further notice.*
- *To help reduce costs, we do not mail monthly newsletters to those who regularly attend services - please pick up your printed copy when you are at the church. Thank you for your understanding and assistance in being good stewards of our resources. Monthly newsletters are also available on stjohnrussell.com or via email. If you need a hard copy mailed to you, would like to be removed from the mailing list, or added to the email list, please contact the office.*

OUR CHURCH RECORDS

Worship Attendance

Date	Sat	Early	Late	Total
Aug 3	23	28	43	94
Aug 10	23	19	51	93
Aug 17	19	22	57	98
Aug 24	21	32	41	94
Aug 30 *				

Offering

Aug 3	$5,341.00
Aug 10	2,030.00
Aug 17	3,155.00
Aug 24	2,477.00
Aug 30 *	

* The 5th Saturday in August the We Gather As One service was held at 6:00 pm, Saturday, August 30. No services were held on Sunday, August 31. (Data not available at time of publication.)

September PMA Notes - WOW! What a VBS!

Where are we going? Well, we know that parents are getting ready to send their kids back to school. I thought about the last time I had a semblance of control with my children. It was in their Junior year of high school – they were completing applications (with *some* guidance from Deb), filling out scholarship forms applications (with *some* guidance from Deb), and on and on.

At that time I was concerned with things other than applications and scholarships. I was concerned with things like: Did I prepare John and Meghan for the world? Did we what we could to prepare them? As I look back at the natural feelings of parental panic, I realized we did what we could, and it was now their journey.

As I was attending a back-to-school program, handing out supplies and blessings, I was reminiscing on the times we tried to stress to our "Babies" how overwhelming going to "College" could (and would) be. Then I thought of all they did during their journey at St. John – Sunday School, Vacation Bible School, youth group, confirmation, and more. I looked back at what we as parents proclaimed, and hopefully passed on - our beliefs, our doctrines of faith, our paths taken. I hoped they "stuck!". I realize now that this was the best we could do. I know what I believe and what Deb believes, but our children… not so much.

Then I realized that God does the same with each of us – God lets us make the wrong choice or take the wrong turn. As we see our children go off to college, universities, grade school, employment in other cities, or the like, we have to do the same as God does. We have to believe in them as God believes in us.

Sitting here listening to prayers, blessings, hopes and desires, I realize that our only hope is an unwavering belief in our proclamation and that when we pass it on to our children, it STICKS. It is through Jesus Christ we gain Heaven with God! We need to reflect upon what Communion is all about - remembering his promise, understanding what we receive for free by just believing, celebrating we are God's children - *we are sisters and brothers in Christ*!

As Martin Luther said we have the bible and the commandments laid in front of us. As parents, we have made every effort to ensure our children understand and believe God's love is *infinite*! God's mercy is *great*! God's forgiveness is *limitless*! As parents, we have helped lay a foundation that will allow our children to remain grateful for the gifts of God and grown in faith. We have taught our children they may make wrong choice now and again, or take the wrong turns at time, but God is always with us! We are all blessed by God's forgiveness and acceptance no matter what.

Soon we will start our Sunday School curriculum, gathering to learn about God's love. What a great and glorious road we travel – and a very special thank you to all of our teachers, parents, students, and other volunteers. We will all strive to learn about God's love! Amen and amen!

Thank you God!

John Dumler- PMA

Celebrations and Blessings

We welcome new members Rick and Laura Biles by transfer of membership. We pray you find warmth, fellowship and a true spiritual home within the St. John family. Your presence blesses us, and allows us to grow in faith together!

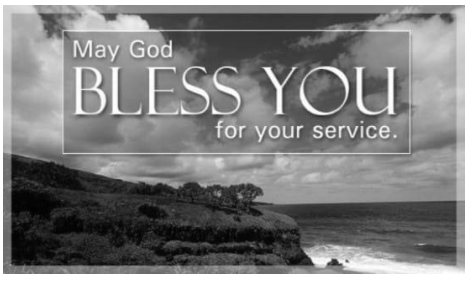
Recently, St. John Lutheran Church recognized the service and ministry of Sandra "Sandy" Krug. Sandy has shared her gifts of music with the St. John congregation her entire life. The countless lives touched by her joyous heart and outstanding talents are truly grateful for her willingness to serve not only the St. John congregation, but also the surrounding communities. We extend our greatest thanks to Sandy and ask God to provide her with countless blessings!

Pastor Teri celebrated her 4th Anniversary with the St. John Family on August 25!!

Traditional gifts for the 4th Anniversary include fruit and flowers in the United States, and linen and silk in the United Kingdom.

Modern gifts for the 4th Anniversary include appliances.

Pastor Teri may not need of any of the gifts suggested above, but we may certainly lift her in prayer:



Dear God,

may you give Pastor Teri the courage to proclaim God's truth, the wisdom to lead our congregation, the strength to endure challenges, and protection from discouragement and spiritual attacks. May Pastor Teri continue to speak God's Word with clarity and love, maintain the ability to be steadfast and patient in the face of opposition, and to find hope of the renewal of pastoral well-being, both spiritual and emotional. May Pastor Teri be truly blessed.

Amen.

On **Tuesday, October 28th at 5:30 PM**, St. John Lutheran Church's Finance Committee will be hosting a **Smart Financial Giving** presentation in the Parish Hall. Light refreshments will be provided.

We are pleased to welcome Alex Lofland, Financial Advisor with Edward Jones, as our presenter. He will share practical ways to tithe wisely, maximize tax benefits, and stretch your dollars to make the greatest impact — both for the Kingdom and your financial health. You'll discover strategies to align your giving with your values and learn how the money you already give can go even further through smart planning and available tax advantages.

No matter your stage in life — whether you are just beginning to save, navigating the new season of being an empty nester, or well into your retirement years — there are always fresh approaches to giving thoughtfully and purposefully.

Join us for this opportunity to grow in both faith and financial wisdom, and to be inspired about how your generosity can do the most good.

The search continues… do you have the ***drive*** to serve?
Help establish the St. John Transportation Service!

St. John Lutheran Church is searching for a Volunteer Coordinator and Volunteer Team Members to establish the St. John Transportation Service. The Coordinator would recruit and work with Team Members to schedule drivers for St. John members needing transportation to and from church services and activities; appointments (local and area); local errands, and more. If you are interested in serving as the St. John Transportation Service Coordinator or you are able to serve as a driver, please contact the church office.

Meals on Wheels Volunteers ~ Together, We Deliver

St. John volunteers have served the Russell Community for countless years by delivering Meals on Wheels every day in the months of March and December. Volunteers pick up meals at the hospital kitchen west entrance (loading dock entrance) between 11:20 and 11:30 am. In the recent past, there have been no more than ten meals to deliver, which takes approximately 45 minutes to an hour total.

Serving more than 2.4 million seniors annually across the country, Meals on Wheels feeds both the body and soul, creating a profound effect on lowering healthcare costs. Not only is meals on Wheels the most effective and caring way to support seniors needing extra help, but it saves billions of dollars in Medicaid, health and long-term care expenses. Meals on Wheels can serve a senior for entire year for about the same cost as one day in a hospital or a week in a care center.

If you are interested in volunteering for one or more days this December, please contact the church office.

YOUTH NEWS

Sunday School for the 2025-2026 school year will begin September 14 at 9:15 am. All students will meet as one in the chapel at the beginning of each Sunday School hour. Parents are welcome to attend opening Sunday to discover how Sunday School will operate this year and learn about opportunities to volunteer.

Confirmation classes will also begin Sunday, September 14. There will be a mandatory confirmation meeting for students and parents in the Parish Hall during the Sunday School hour.

The Blessing of Backpacks and Keys will be during the 10:30 Service on Sunday, September 14. Remember to bring both to the worship service!

Acolyte training for 6th graders will be held during the Sunday School hour on Sunday, September 21. Please make every effort to have your student in attendance.

The 2nd graders will receive their Bibles during the 10:30 Service on Sunday, September 28. Please plan to have your 2nd grader n attendance. If you have a student who didn't receive their Bible in 2nd grade, please let the office know so thy may be included.

SHARE THE HOLIDAYS WITH YOUR NEIGHBORS

The Russell County Food Pantry will be preparing Thanksgiving Food Boxes and Christmas Food Boxes for families who would otherwise not be able to afford these special meals.

The Food Pantry Board estimates the average cost of each box is $40.00 and will provide all the basics for a ham dinner. Last year the Russell County Food Pantry provided holiday boxes to over 125 families.

If you would like to donate, drop your donation in the offering plate at any service (please indicate Russell County Holiday Meals), or mail a check to the Russell County Food Pantry, 15 N. Front Street, Russell KS 67665.

Those who need help with holiday meals may pick up the forms from any church in Russell County, the Russell County Health Department, or the Department for Children and Families. If the sign-up sheet is completed and submitted by November 1, they do not have to register again for Christmas. No list is kept from year to year. NO ONE is automatically signed up.

September 2025 Worship Assistants

6:00 Sat

	Greeter/Usher	Reader
Sept 6	Glenn Gideon	Susy Krug
Sept 13	Ramona Luebbers	Elaine Voos
Sept 20	Galen & Ruden Niedenthal	Galen Niedenthal
Sept 27	Brad & Cheryl Prester	Jeremy Ulrich
Oct 4	Bob & Elaine Voos	Elaine Voos

8:15 Sun

	Greeter/Usher	Lector	Acolytes
Sept 7	Gordon & Cheryl Kraich	Cheryl Kraich	n/a
Sept 14	Dick & Georganna McCrary	Georganna McCrary	n/a
Sept 21	Connie Schinkus	Connie Schinkus	n/a
Sept 28	Katrin Kolder	Katrin Kolder	n/a
Oct 5	Kurt & Lois DeWald	Lois DeWald	Wesley Johnson, Karrsyn Ross

10:30 Sun

	Greeter	Usher
Sept 7	Ron & Ginger Tittel (N); Deloris Janne (S)	Ron & Ginger Tittel
Sept 14	Brad & Sherri Stoppel (N); Dick & Georganna McCrary (S)	Brad & Sherri Stoppel
Sept 21	Morris & Barbara Krug (N); Margaret Finkbeiner (S)	Morris Krug
Sept 28	Tentatively a YOUTH led service	
Oct 5	Mike & Diane Waymaster (N), Don F. Krug (S)	Mike & Diane Waymaster

10:30 Sun	Lector	Acolytes
Sept 7	Cindy Ross	Maggie Olson, Maybelle Olson
Sept 14	Carol Fritz	Hadlee Brown, Harper Ryan
Sept 21	Gina Langhofer	Rogan Dumler, Karrsyn Ross
Sept 28	Tentatively a YOUTH led service	Layken Eck, Campbell Lofland
Oct 5	Susy Krug	Alex Krug, Noah Krug

September Bulletin Delivery

September 5: Georganna McCrary
September 12: Olson Family
September 19: Carol Fritz
September 26: Bob Albrecht
October 3: John Boxberger

September Altar Guild

Gina Langhofer – Chair; Katrina Woelk – Saturday

Carol Fritz, Tiffinie Mai, Shayla Peck, Alison Ryan