

The Richland Word

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Sunday School January 2021

We prayed for a New Year with a new beginning, but what we are faced with is a New Year, but a repeat of our Sunday School being taught as virtual learning until we are available to resume in person on February 14th. So, parents keep your eyes peeled for our virtual lesson being sent out weekly.

If you know of anyone else that would like to receive our Sunday School lesson link, please text Shannon Patrone at 505-328-6224.

Also, the Sunday School Department would like to say "Thank You" to everyone that supported our Advent Food Drive! We delivered 1,309 lbs of food to Circle of Hope Food Pantry in Pflugerville.

God's blessings now
and always,
John and Shannon Patrone



2021 Joint Team and Outreach Committee

Starting in March 2021, meetings of the Joint Planning and Vision Team will resume, as will meetings of the Outreach Committee (an outgrowth of Joint Team initiatives). Committee members will be contacted about proposed meeting dates soon.

Joint Team projects have involved planning and implementing changes for St. John to enhance our current worship services, update audio equipment and electrical support, move pews to increase space in between rows, introduce a new church logo, and adopt a program to support online giving (donations).

Also, the Outreach Committee worked with the Sunday School and Circle of Hope to refine plans for a 2020 food drive, considered what could be

accomplished with a youth leader (funding exists),

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searched for potential candidates, and proposed hosting a January 6 open house in honor of the founding of the church (cancelled because of Covid 19 constraints).

For more information about upcoming projects and proposed meeting dates, watch this newsletter.

Lois ShROUT, Joint Team,
chair

Loyd ShROUT, Outreach
Committee, chair



A Minister's Musings: Back Together...Almost

On Sunday, February 14th, St. John will "re-open" its campus for a second time in 12 months, as our community, our nation, and much of the world continues to wrestle with Covid 19 and its variants.

This "re-opening," however, will not affect those who are at risk, due to either age or physiology, have yet to be able to get vaccinated against the virus, or, simply, continue to be rightly concerned about the power of the virus and the effectiveness of treatments.

When will these be returning to our fellowship? It's hard to say. It may not happen until either they, or a large majority of the population, is vaccinated against the virus, or other aspects of community life (for example, our hospitals) experience conditions similar to those that were common before Covid was a household word.

This situation is prompting all churches to scramble to provide *virtual* ministry resources in increasing engaging and effective ways.

Although only an appendage in some churches, yet an important outreach tool in others, virtual ministry resources are quickly becoming a center piece for Christian ministry and outreach, because of the numbers of people it is able to reach. Literally global ministry to family and friends spread out throughout the world is now connecting people with churches that they never would have connected with before!

I remember years ago some Christians in the English speaking world considered the words "to and fro" found in Daniel 12:4 as prophetically describing the advent and impact of public air travel and airlines, linking and connecting people around

the world. Could this prophecy possibly be alluding to how the church would reach throughout the world in still new, unanticipated ways, reaching many with the Gospel of Jesus Christ that otherwise might not have been reached? Only time will tell, of course.

How will St. John respond to this change in vision for ministry that has been revealed due to the pandemic is hard to say at this point. *Seizing the moment* requires the emotional investment of individuals who both *see* this potential and opportunity, *and* have a *sense of urgency* that a love for those who don't have a personal relationship with Jesus Christ often brings.

Could this be yet another Isaiah 6:8 moment for followers of Christ today?

We will see. - Pastor T

Lent 2021

This year the opportunities to celebrate Lent will be limited a bit compared to previous years (no fellowship meals), but will still afford individuals the opportunity to gather together to experience the wonders of God's love for us in Christ, and the gift of salvation purchased for us on the Cross of Calvary.

Following a service format somewhat similar to our current online worship service, Lent 2021 will begin on Wednesday, Febru-

ary 17th, at 6:45pm, and will include the availability of both Holy Communion and the traditional imposition of ashes.

The next 5 midweek services (Feb. 24, Mar. 3, 10, 17, & 24) will also be in the sanctuary, and will similarly begin at 6:45pm, lasting 30-35 minutes, with plans right now to hopefully include our traditional Maundy Thursday worship service on April 1st of Holy Week.

We hope you can join us

Wednesday evenings beginning February 17th, and that, coupled with special times of prayer and fasting, this year's season of Lent becomes an unforgettable season of faith transformation, growth and renewal...for you.



Crafting w/ Friends

As church will be reopening on Feb. 14th, let us meet on Feb. 20th at the usual time, 10:00a.m.!

Put your thinking caps on, bring your ideas and maybe some projects with you. It is fun to share ideas!

If you know of anyone that may be interested in working with us, please invite them.

There are some thank you notes on the back of the February calendar, please read them.

Peace and love, Sandy



New Date for Winter Congregational Mtg.

Due to the spike in the virus and the respective closure of our campus, the date for St. John's annual winter Congregational Meeting is being moved to March this year: Sunday, March 14th, following worship. Members are asked, if possible, to attend.

All ministry, committee, and organizational leaders: please turn in your articles and/or reports for St. John's 2020 Annual Report no later than Sunday, February 28th.

Please talk to Sandy in the church office if you need more time. *(Be assured: no penalty will be incurred, but the courtesy will be much appreciated!)*

Women's Guild

St. John Women's Guild is ready for the new year. It has been too long and it is important to get together and plan our year. We can wear our masks and sit far apart and discuss what we want to do; whether it will be for ourselves, for the church, or the community. Put this date on your calendar: **Feb. 21st** following worship in the parish hall. I am looking forward to seeing what the new year will bring for us in addition to the love we have for our Lord.

We have some things to deal with such as paying bills and electing a President and a Secretary and more, and we need a quorum to do this. We promise to move along as quickly as possible.

If you have any questions or concerns, please call me

Sandy Brunton
Vice-President



Cookbooks

The Women's Guild sold cookbooks last year and we still have some left. They are \$15. There are some on the table in the parish hall for you to see. The recipes are from our members.

Questions? Ask Sandy.

2021 Flower & Bulletin Charts



New 2021 flower and bulletin charts are posted on the bulletin board in the back of the sanctuary. Feel free to sign up on either or both. The flowers can be cut flowers or potted plants.

If you have any questions, ask Mary Martinka or Sandy Brunton.

Thank You

Thank you to everyone that helped me celebrate my 88th birthday by attending the drive thru party or mailing me cards. I had the best birthday possible staying socially distanced. Seeing so many of my friends that I have not seen in almost a year was so enjoyable. I have enjoyed reading all the memories shared and all the lovely cards received. Thanks also for the goodies, yes I have a sweet tooth. Thanks again,

Kermit Hees

Dear Crafting with Friends,

Thank you for the thoughtful stocking filled with goodies at Christmas. I snack a lot, so those are perfect stuffers for me. Such a great treat as Santa has not filled a stocking for me in years. Merry Christmas!

Kermit Hees



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Lutheran Congregations in Mission for Christ

St. John Evangelical Lutheran Church is associated with Lutheran Congregations in Mission for Christ (LCMC). For more information about LCMC, visit their website at www.lcmc.net

Annual Winter Congregational Mtg. - March 14th

It will be the last Sunday of the winter season this year only...that St. John will host its annual winter congregational meeting! This meeting includes the distribution of St. John's largest annual publication, the annual report, and the highlighting of key events from the previous year, including the recognition of past leaders.

All members are invited to attend this meeting, following worship, on the 14th.

Due to virus concerns, there will be no meal or lunch this year.

Music Opportunities

As St. John re-opens for in-person ministry this month, St. John's hand bell choir plans to be back in "full swing" beginning in March.

If you would like to try "swinging" (or ringing) the hand bells, please talk to Louise Dunklin, St. John's Music Director. She will be happy to answer any question you might have, and give you the opportunity to explore being a part of this ministry at our church.



Offering Envelopes

For those who use offering envelopes, 2021 envelopes are still available in the back of the sanctuary in alpha order. For those not currently using offering envelopes but would like to try them, unlabeled boxes are also available. Just follow the instructions on the table for new users.

Don't forget that online and electronic giving is now available!

(Statements of annual giving to St. John were sent out the end of January.)

If you want one, or have not received yours, or have any questions about your statement, please contact the church office.)