



# Epistle



S T . J O H N L U T H E R A N C H U R C H

“ A H O S T O F W I T N E S S E S ”

*Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight and sin which clings so closely and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, looking to Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God.*

*-Hebrews 12:1-2*

We are surrounded! And it's a good thing. This passage from Hebrews shows that God has given us many witnesses that testify to God's goodness and show us the Christian life. That Christian life isn't defined by their lives or their actions, but is firmly focused on Jesus. He is the source of our faith, and He is the completion of our faith. Jesus' cross and grave is central in our lives as Christians. Jesus' words to "take up your cross and follow Me" rings in our ears as we look to Him as the center of our faith. Then again, we're not afraid to acknowledge that others also live out their faith, and their faith is an encouragement to us.

There were a couple big days on the calendar in August, and there are a couple others coming up in September. Maybe these didn't come up on your schedule, but these are "cloud of witnesses" days. August 15<sup>th</sup>, the Church remembered Mary, the mother of our Lord; August 24<sup>th</sup>, we remembered Jesus' disciple Bartholomew; and August 29<sup>th</sup>, we remembered the martyrdom of John the Baptist. In September, we will remember another disciple, Matthew, on September 21 and we will remember the archangel Michael and all angels on September 29. But why? Why should we take time in our prayer and Scripture to remember Mary and Bartholomew and John the Baptist and Matthew and the angels? In fact, you might even be reading this article and crossing your arms and saying, "But we're supposed to fix our eyes on Jesus! Not on holy people or saints or angels, but on Jesus!" And you're absolutely right. But that doesn't mean that the faith that God has worked in these people isn't something worth seeing in our lives. Along with these saints, we have a common faith in Christ. These disciples had the privilege of speaking and interacting with Jesus. Mary was His mother. John the Baptist was His cousin, and even baptized Him! God's work in these people is something worth celebrating, not because of who they are, but because of who He is!

And this faith called these disciples to fix their eyes on Jesus in a big way! Scripture tells us that Herod had John the Baptist executed for his preaching and his devotion to Jesus Christ. Tradition says that Bartholomew went to Armenia, northwest of Palestine, and was brutally martyred there, enduring great pain as he testified to the founder and perfecter of his faith. Tradition says that Matthew was testifying to his faith in Ethiopia when he was martyred by beheading. They walked on the same road with Jesus, they heard His voice, they knew Him, and their eyes were fixed on Him, even as they died for the faith. Mary gave birth to Jesus. When the angel Gabriel came, Mary, in faith, said, "Let it be to me as you have said." What a great testimony to her faith! That statement even serves as an example of faithfulness to God that we can follow.

And that brings us to thinking about Michael and the angels. Scripture does tell us about angels, and Michael is mentioned in Daniel 12:1, Jude 9, and Revelation 12:7. The angels are protectors and messengers of God. They also worship God around His throne, celebrating in His glory. That's the reason that when we celebrate communion, we pray "with the angels and the archangels and the whole company of heaven" to our God, singing the song of the angels, recorded for us in Isaiah 6. We gather together with the angels and with those who have fixed their eyes on Jesus before us, singing His praise and celebrating His gifts.

Even as we gather together around God's Word and Sacraments, we remember that this Church gathering happens not just here, but throughout the world and throughout time. The next time you come to communion, look up. See there the Trinity insignia, surrounded by the seals (or coats of arms) of the twelve apostles.

Together, with the angels and the archangels and the cloud of witnesses that have gone before us, we are united in faith in Christ. The Church is gathered together around our Savior, celebrating His gifts, with our eyes fixed firmly on Him.

So why remember the saints? These people have been touched by the good news of Jesus Christ! They have fixed their eyes on Him. We have the same call to take up our cross and follow Jesus and fix our eyes on Him. We have the opportunity to follow Jesus and to testify to the faith that He has given us. This isn't, then, about Jesus' disciples or John or Mary or the angels – it's about Jesus! It's about Jesus who comes and brings faith to them and to you. It's about the Jesus who changes your life and forgives your sins.

Fixing my eyes on Jesus with you,

Pastor III

## **BOOSTER CLUB DANCE**

All fifth through eighth graders are invited to a dance on September 16 from 7:00 – 9:30. The dance is sponsored by the St. John Booster Club and will be chaperoned by them. This is a great opportunity for middle school students to socialize in a safe setting.

## **TEACHER CONFERENCE**



On September 29 and 30 school will not be in session so teachers can attend the SID/CID Teachers' Conference in Springfield, Illinois. This is a conference for Lutheran school teachers with worship and communion as well as training. This year's conference theme is "Strength for the Journey" and includes a presentation by Mike Riddle from the Creation Museum. There is also a half-day session just for early childhood teachers and staff. We look forward to this learning opportunity and will bring back ideas that will benefit the students of St. John.

## **TEN REASONS WHY PEOPLE MISS BALLGAMES**

10. I was taken to too many games by my parents when I was kid.
9. I suspect that I was sitting next to some hypocrites because instead of paying attention to the game, they came to see their friends and talked the whole time.
8. It seems the games are always scheduled when I want to do other things, like go to church.
7. The band played numbers I'd never heard before and not the good ol' fight songs.
6. I went to a lot of games but the coach never bothered to thank me.
5. The referees made decisions I couldn't agree with.
4. Often the game goes into overtime or extra innings and I would be late getting home.
3. The seats were too hard and uncomfortable.
2. The people I sat next to didn't seem friendly.
1. Every time I went, they asked for money.



Did you laugh at any of these reasons? I did! It's fun to switch one thing for another and see how a whole lot changes.

Oh, and one more observation:

I have held off on taking my son to sporting events. I don't know whether he will want to appreciate the sports or teams that I do. I think it is not right for me to force my beliefs on him. He should make up his own mind whether he likes sports; or even physical activity.

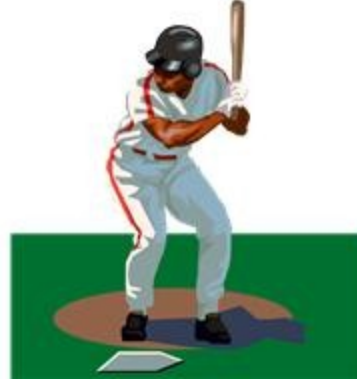
I've noticed that he spends a lot of time in front of the TV playing video games and eating chips, but that's his business. As parents we have to respect our children's choices. They should be free to do what they want and know that we will always give them unconditional support and approval.

## BASEBALL & SOFTBALL SCHEDULES

"If you haven't checked out the new walking track at the Cohen Complex, take a stroll and enjoy watching our St. John athletes in action."

### Baseball

September 1 4:15 p.m. St. John vs Evansville Home  
September 8 4:15 p.m. St. John vs Coulterville Away  
September 13 4:15 p.m. St. John vs Red Bud Lutheran Away  
September 15 4:15 p.m. St. John vs Red Bud Catholic Away  
September 19 4:15 p.m. St. John vs Evansville Away  
September 21 Regional Tournament begins



### Softball

September 1 4:15 p.m. St. John vs Evansville Home  
September 8 4:15 p.m. St. John vs Coulterville Away  
September 13 4:15 p.m. St. John vs Red Bud Lutheran Away  
September 15 4:15 p.m. St. John vs Red Bud Catholic Away  
September 19 4:15 p.m. St. John vs Evansville Away  
September 21 Regional Tournament begins

## WIMPY'S HAMBURGER STAND



Workers are still needed for the Popeye Picnic (Wimpy's Hamburger Stand). Out of 94 slots for the hamburger stand, only 43 have been filled. Only 4 have volunteered for peeling and slicing onions on the day before (Thursday) the picnic weekend. Still need 2 more volunteers for setting up the stand on that Friday morning. We will need 4-6 to help take down the stand on Sunday evening. This includes moving equipment back to the garage and the Parish Hall along with clean up. Call or email Ron Sheely at 826-2720 or [rpsheely@hotmail.com](mailto:rpsheely@hotmail.com) or leave word with Kelly in the Church Office.

The onion peeling and slicing will be held on Thursday, Sept. 8 at 9:00 a.m. in the Parish Hall. Helpers should bring along their paring knives, aprons, and bowls.

## PTSD, TBI & SUICIDE RISKS WORKSHOP

A workshop for U.S. Veterans, their families, & friends desiring information on Post Traumatic Stress Disorder, Traumatic Brain Injury, and related suicide risks is going to be held on September 23 from 1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. at the Kaskaskia VFW Post 3553, 939 State St, Chester, IL 62233. Speakers courtesy of Marion VA Medical Center. For more information contact Tim Scarbrough 618-687-2341 ext 687.

## FROM THE PRINCIPAL

We're off to a great start at school! I believe I'm the one with the most to learn! I have learned that we have amazing students. They are kind, fun-loving, anxious to learn and caring. Thank you, parents, for providing us with some wonderful students. We are so happy that so many of you took advantage of the Back to School Block Party to meet teachers, see classrooms and visit as a St. John family. (We'll buy more food next year!)

## PTL ICE CREAM SOCIAL & BOOK FAIR

It's not too early to put September 19 on your calendar for the PTL's (Parent/Teacher League's) kick-off Ice Cream Social and Book Fair. Come find out about PTL activities and how you can help support our school. Enjoy a refreshing sundae bar and expand your child's personal library. PTL begins at 7:00 P.M., but feel free to come any time after 6:30 to check out the Book Fair.



## CONCORDIA SEMINARY ANNOUNCES FALL LAY BIBLE INSTITUTE

ST. LOUIS—Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, will host its fall 2011 Lay Bible Institute from 7:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. on Wednesday evenings, Oct. 5, 12, 19, and 26 in Sieck Hall 202 on the Seminary campus. “From Sea to Shining Sea: A Christian’s Perspective on America and Its Politics” will be presented by Dr. Joel Biermann, associate professor of systematic theology at Concordia Seminary.

While polite conversation carefully avoids discussions of religion or politics, both will be center stage as we explore the complexities of being Christian in America. There is much to consider: What’s the proper relation and separation of “church and state?” Can any political party (Democrat, Republican, or Tea) claim a Christian mantle? How involved should a Christian be in the political system? Is America God’s chosen nation? What does God really think of politics?

These and many more pertinent questions will be answered using the dynamic and ever-relevant insights of Martin Luther and his heirs. Exploiting the great reformer’s legacy, the distinction between the two realms will provide a powerful tool for simplifying what often seems quite complicated, and for unraveling what can become unnecessarily confused. Participants are urged to come with questions, and will return to their lives better equipped for the work of living faithfully as Christian citizens of America.

To register for the Lay Bible Institute, please call 314-505-7486 between 7:30 a.m. and 4:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, or email [ce@cs.edu](mailto:ce@cs.edu). The cost is \$30 per person and includes all handouts and refreshments. Registration deadline is Sept. 26. Concordia Seminary is located at 801 Seminary Place, in Clayton, Mo.

## LUTHER HOSTEL 2011

ST. LOUIS—LutherHostel 2011 will be held Oct. 1-4 on the campus of Concordia Seminary. LutherHostel is an event designed to provide growth in biblical knowledge and understanding, fun, and fellowship, and a chance to gain helpful insights for daily living. It is offered for adults age 55 and older.

The theme for the event will be “Public Service and My Lutheran Faith.” The main presenter will be Congressman John M. Shimkus (R, Illinois-19).

Congressman Shimkus is serving his 14th year in Congress and represents the 19th District of Illinois. He serves on the House Energy and Commerce Committee, as well as the Subcommittees on Communications, Technology, and the Internet; Energy and Environment; and Health. He retired from the Army Reserves with the rank of lieutenant colonel as of June 1, 2008, closing out 28 years of military service. In 2007 he was presented the *Christus Vivit* award by Concordia Seminary, St. Louis. Rep. Shimkus, his wife, Karen, and their three sons maintain their residence in Collinsville, Ill. They are active members of Holy Cross Lutheran Church in Collinsville.

Scheduled activities for LutherHostel 2011 will feature a reception and dinner with President and Mrs. Dale A. Meyer. Other activities include presentations, class visitation, student-led evening devotions, opportunities for informal interaction with faculty, a private demonstration of the organ in the Chapel of St. Timothy and St. Titus, and a tour of selected St. Louis area sites. An optional tour of Lutheran historical sites in Perry County, Mo., also is available on Oct. 5, immediately following LutherHostel.

The LutherHostel fee is \$325 per person, which includes all meals and refreshments for the event. Housing is available on campus (on a limited basis for an additional cost) or in nearby hotels. The registration deadline is Sept. 15.

## POPEYE PICNIC

Plans are underway for a float for the Popeye Picnic. We have a wagon, some props, some ideas, and a few willing workers. We will need children to ride on the float and sing VBS and Sunday School songs similar to how the Christmas float works. Some Youth Group members and adults are needed to walk along handing out magnets and other items with St. John and Christian messages. Notes will be coming home to the school children soon. If you want to help, volunteer your children, or have any suggestions, call Jill Arbeiter at 826-2578 or the church office.



## News From Haiti

*We recently received a letter from Haiti Lutheran Ministry and Mission Fund reporting on their latest visit to Haiti, July 20-27, 2011. God linked St. John with the mission work in Haiti back in 1993. Then vicar Revenel Benoit, on his way back to his native Gonaives, visited and preached at all church services. St. John sent a team of members there in 1999. The following is Paul Klenner's description of the trip, written to friends and supporters:*

"The purpose of our trip was to meet with Haitian pastors and encourage them to plant churches in villages where there are presently no churches, and to conduct evening evangelical crusades in certain villages they targeted.

Our first crusade was in a neighborhood of Gonaives known as Marotte. It is heavily under the influence of voodoo. Around dusk, musicians from Pastor Revenel Benoit's church set up their instruments and sound system in an open area alongside a street that runs through the neighborhood. They began playing Christian music to attract the locals. Soon a crowd was gathering. Asline Volcy, a very talented singer and worship leader from Pastor Benoit's church sang song after song. She has a unique gift for working a crowd! Soon a hundred or more people were dancing and praising God with uplifted hands. The Gospel message was preached, followed by an altar call. About 30 came forward to receive Jesus as Lord and Savior.

We invited them all to come back the next day to sign up for a Bible study and told them we would give them a free Bible if they did so. As we closed, one of the ladies who received Jesus Christ, a voodoo priestess, asked us to go with her to her house and get rid of her voodoo paraphernalia. It felt like something out of a movie, a mob of us, including her neighbors, marching down the streets in the dark with flashlights. Dragging this woman's voodoo junk and a couple of small pieces of furniture from the little room where she had an altar set up, piling up the stuff at the side of the road in front of her house and setting fire to it!

Then a second woman, also a voodoo priestess, asked us to do the same for her. Believe me, we were more than happy to oblige, and left a second fire burning at the street in front of her home.

A couple of days later we stopped back, unannounced, to visit these two women and to pray with them. Both were happy to see us and told us that old "friends" had stopped by to mock them and tell them how foolish they were. The son of one of these ladies stopped us and told us he wanted to receive Jesus also, so we prayed with him on the spot. Then the woman's adult daughter, her baby in her lap, also told us she wanted to be saved. We led her in a sinner's prayer and she too received salvation. Then her husband said he wanted to be saved too, so we did the same with him. What a wonderful time we had being the hands and feet and voice of our Lord!!!

The following Sunday, we had a church service in Marotte, in a building offered to Pastor Benoit for regular worship services. The new pastor for the area was present, as were 45 neighbors who came to hear God's word and to worship. Score another victory for the Lord!

Two other evening crusades were conducted in remote villages where we had helped plant churches on a previous visit. There were good turn-outs at both, and about 20 individuals at each location were added to the existing churches. Praise God!

So, if you were keeping track, that's about 88 souls we know we touched for the Lord, plus many more seeds were planted that hopefully someone else will water and eventually harvest in the future.

Thank you for your prayers and your financial gifts that enable us to continue the work of the church in Haiti. God bless you."

### A P P L E B U T T E R

Once again a group from St. John is planning on making apple butter in time for the Popeye Picnic festivities. Plans are to prepare the apples for cooking on Tuesday, September 6th in the parish hall beginning around 1:00 p.m. (Please bring your own favorite paring knife.) Weather permitting, we will start the open air fire at 6:00 a.m. on Wednesday, September 7th in the lower church parking lot. (Rain date is set for Thursday, September 8th.) Please consider helping. This is a huge undertaking for only a few but for many helping hands, it can be an enjoyable experience to share good fellowship. We will teach you everything you need to know about this process. Proceeds raised in this endeavor go to our congregation. Once again please consider helping!!



# **It's That Time of Year, Again! We Need YOUR Help!**

One of the most discouraging things about going to a voters' meeting is learning that we, as a congregation, are in financial trouble. Unfortunately, only about thirty members ever show up for a meeting to hear this information (but that is a topic for another time). For the past 8 years a nucleus of about 25 people have been working hard to raise money through the annual Fall Dinner Auction. Over that period of time the auction has raised over a quarter of a million dollars averaging \$30,000+ each year. Doesn't seem too bad, right? Not until you begin to compare them to some of the other area auctions held in our area. This past year St. John Catholic in Red Bud, St. Mary in Chester, and St. John Lutheran in Red Bud all made in excess of \$50,000. One made over \$60,000 !!!! Why can't we do this? We should be able to, it is a matter of commitment - to make the auction a success, people must make a commitment to doing so. We need our members to step up! Step up by donating some great items and step up by attending the auction and spending money as well.

## *Donate - Donate - Donate*

Tickets are now on sale for the auction on November 5 for \$25 each.

We have two raffles this year - One features a 46in HD flat screen television (thank you Michael and Betty Welge), a beautiful quilt, and four tickets to next year's auction.

The other raffle is a parent raffle. The winner of that raffle could win as much as \$500 toward their tuition.

We have a lucky square drawing. For the price of a ticket, the winner of that drawing will get to pick anything from the auction (certain items are excluded). BUT....



# **WE NEED YOU!!**

Get your tickets now and please consider making a generous donation.

**O V E R C O M I N G   F E A R :  
N O T   K N O W I N G   W H A T   T O   S A Y**

The number one reason we, as Christians, avoid sharing our faith is fear. When asked the number one fear that hinders them from witnessing, time and time again **Equipping to Share** participants replied, "not knowing the right thing to say."

The first step to overcoming a fear is to address it. If not having the right thing to say is one of the fears serving as an obstacle to your personal faith sharing, consider the below two points as you begin to address and conquer it.

· Try to recall the time in your life when you were unable to multiply. I'm sure the very thought of being asked to do so terrified you. However, after studying and learning your timetables, you became comfortable spouting the answer to "What's 5 times 5?" without blinking an eye. In fact, at this point, you likely can't remember such a time when adding was your only mathematical capability.

Practice is the key to being prepared. The same rings true with confidently sharing the Gospel. Christians are directed to "always be prepared to give an account for the hope that is within you" (1 Peter 3:15b). Therefore, by having your story prepared and practiced, you will know what to say at any point in the event a mission moment occurs. After awhile, you will be so comfortable and confident in sharing your faith that you will likely forget the time you weren't.

· Does this mean you will become so prepared you will never be stumped again? No. You will likely encounter a time when someone asks you a question to which you do not have an answer. Do not feel inferior for not knowing. This is not a bad thing. In fact, this may create an opportunity to later connect with that person because you now have a reason to do so. Ultimately, it may establish a healthy camaraderie in that you are now learning together as a team.

Simply respond this way: "That's a good question. I don't know the answer, but I am certainly interested in learning that as well. Can I do a little research and get back to you?" Then, pick up the conversation where you left off before that point. Be sure not to forget to find an answer to the person's question and get back to them later.

Next time you feel hindered from sharing your faith out of fear that you will become tongue-tied, consider the two above points; but, most of all, realize that the best help you can receive is at the cross. Ask God for His help in conquering this fear. He has help waiting.

In His Word, God tells us, "make up your mind not to worry beforehand how you will defend yourselves. For I will give you words and wisdom that none of your adversaries will be able to resist or contradict" (Luke 21:14-15). Through full reliance on Him and preparation, we can overcome this fear and share our faith actively with boldness.

Provided by Sarah Guldalian, Editor  
Coordinator, **Equipping to Share**, September 2, 2009 edition

**P I C N I C   I M M A C U L A T E   C O N C E P T I O N  
K A S K A S K I A   C H U R C H**

Immaculate Conception Kaskaskia Church in Historic Kaskaskia Illinois will hold its picnic on Sunday, September 4. There will be a picnic raffle drawing at 7:00 p.m., Cash prizes, Cash & Quilt bingo starts at 1:00 p.m., Great skills games, Plants & crafts, Country store, T-shirts, food (Brats, Sausage, Bar-B-Q, Kabobs, Hamburgers), Drinks, Ice Cream Bars, Kettle Corn and much more. Horseshoe Tournament sign up deadline is 11:45 a.m. and Truck and Tractor Pull weigh in time 9:00 a.m. Starting time 11:00 a.m.

## STEPPING OUT IN FAITH

The New Facility Fund was established in May 2007 with a kick off dinner in the Parish Hall. The goal is to raise \$2,000,000 in pledges and cash before beginning any building project.

The Pledge Drive Committee meets regularly to evaluate current pledges and report cash investments on hand. Currently, there is over \$364,000 in the bank.

St. John Lutheran School provides a quality Christian education for children of the community. Many of the honor students at Chester High School and Christ Our Savior Lutheran High School are from St. John's. We have a history of competitive athletic programs as evidenced by the banners in the gym and the crowded trophy case. We graduate students who become homecoming queens, talented musicians, all-conference athletes, science award winners, valedictorians, student council officers, and members of the National Honor Society. Many of them go on to college and to graduate school.



Anyone can make a tax-deductible donation to The New Facility Fund.

This is a meaningful way to honor a birthday, anniversary, graduation, or as a memorial to a departed loved one. If your children went to school at St. John but now live away, your donation will help assure that present and future students can receive the same quality education that your children enjoyed.

## MUSLIM OUTREACH LAY BIBLE INSTITUTE SET FOR OCTOBER

ST. LOUIS—Concordia Seminary has scheduled a Lay Bible Institute for Saturday, October 22, from 9:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. on the topic of Muslim outreach.

Muslims, like Christians, are told to convert non-Muslims to their faith. Unlike Christians, who are taught to “Love one another,” and that Christ died for all, Muslims reject the divinity of Jesus and have a deceptive and forceful approach to conversion. Because of their vigorous efforts, each year countless Christians in America are embracing Islam. This fact has serious implications for Christians and their work in proclaiming the Gospel. This Lay Bible Institute will address the present milieu and offer those attending the workshop information on various topics with regard to Islam, including what Christians need to know about the beliefs and practices of their Muslim neighbors or co-workers. All denominations are welcome to this workshop.

This workshop is being led by Rev. John Loum, who has had more than 20 years of work among Muslims in Europe, Africa, and the U.S.; Dr. Allan Buckman, who has served as a missionary in Africa and is the chairman of the Peace Center for New Americans; and Rev. Mark Weisner, pastor of Signal Hill Lutheran Church in Belleville, Ill.

The cost for the Lay Bible Institute is \$20. The registration deadline is October 14. To register or for more information, contact continuing education and parish services at 314-505-7486 or [ce@csi.edu](mailto:ce@csi.edu).

## ‘GREEN AND GOLD DAYS’ COMING UP AT CONCORDIA SEMINARY

ST. LOUIS—The first of three Green and Gold Days will take place on Friday, October 14, 2011 at Concordia Seminary, St. Louis. A visitation day for college students thinking about the pastoral or deaconess ministry, Green and Gold Days are one-day events with opportunities to explore what Concordia Seminary has to offer.

Each Green and Gold Day will provide a quick opportunity for college men and women to come and see all the Seminary offers. Each guest will attend classes, worship in chapel, and speak with members of the faculty. To end the day, all participants are invited to join the Seminary community for Oktoberfest (October 14 date only).

The next two Green and Gold Days during the 2011-2012 academic year will take place on Friday, January 6, 2012 and Friday, March 16, 2012. There is no registration fee to attend Green and Gold Days. Housing will be available on campus for all dates. All meals are also provided free of charge. Transportation to and from Lambert-St. Louis International Airport will be provided if needed. The registration deadline is two weeks prior to each event (September 30 is the first registration deadline).

For questions or to register by phone, please call 1-800-822-9545.

## “I Will Never Leave You”

When I imagine Him saying it, I can hear the strength, love, and resolve in His voice. “I will **never** leave you.” Jesus said it this way, “I will be **with** you **always**.” It’s God’s promise to us, a firm statement of fact, a safe and solid place to lean.

We leaned hard on that promise during Verna’s last months with us. She was my mother-in-law, Randall’s mom. She died a year ago in July. I would like to share with you some of the ways we could see God’s faithfulness to His promise during her last days.

She had had increasing stomach aches and back pain for several months before she got the diagnosis on October 26, 2009. It was pancreatic cancer, inoperable. Chemo therapy was recommended and treatments began, but the doctor was straightforward: there is no cure. We cried and prayed that God would heal her, as any believing family would. Eventually we would learn that it was God’s plan to take her home. Her last month, June 2010, was the hardest. It was also the month that God’s presence was the most obvious.

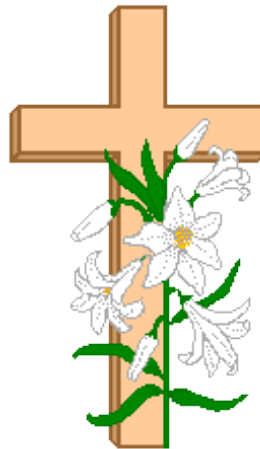
She had a regularly scheduled visit with her oncologist and we asked lots of questions which were kindly and thoroughly answered. Then came what we did not want to hear: there’s nothing else we can do, it’s time to call Hospice. Though Verna was still staying in her own home and functioning well by herself, she accepted the doctor’s offer to set up the appointment. It wouldn’t hurt to have the initial appointment before we needed them. It was set for the following Thursday.

On Wednesday morning, the day before the Hospice meeting, I went to see Verna. When she started to talk, her speech was slurred. She was having trouble with the buttons on her shirt. Apparently she had had a stroke. Her health deteriorated quickly and by late afternoon that day she was no longer able to walk. I couldn’t help her negotiate around the house. We needed a wheelchair, fast. “Oh, Lord, please help us!” I thought of someone who might know where to find one and made a phone call. She did know where I could get one; but I couldn’t leave Verna, and I hadn’t been able to reach Randall. When I tried again he answered his cell phone right away. He was already on his way into town. Fifteen minutes after asking God for help, we had a wheelchair in the house!

Verna, well aware of her condition, told us all that she wanted to go to a nursing home. I wondered whether a room would be available.

“Father, please, we’re going to need a room; and could it be because someone got to go home, rather than because someone died?” The next day, Thursday, St. Ann’s returned our call. They would have a room ready by Friday morning. The caller volunteered that the temporary resident was going home.

By Thursday afternoon we were grateful to see the women from Hospice. Thank God for His gracious provision! Of course *He knew* we would need them *that* day. CD, Randall’s brother, wasn’t going to be able to make it to the meeting. He had to work. Thinking the Hospice representatives would have a lot to tell us, I was concerned. I asked God, would He please work it out for CD to come too, if that would be beneficial? As it turned out, it rained hard that day and the heavy equipment couldn’t run, so CD was sent home from work. He arrived at Verna’s house at the same time as Hospice. By God’s grace, all four of Verna’s children were there.



*Those who  
believe in me,  
Even though  
they die, will live.*

*John 11:25*

There were more ways we each recognized and felt God’s presence during that time. Along with the sorrow, there were more blessings of quality time shared. God’s love surrounded us and carried us through. For his funeral text, the pastor chose Psalm 23. “Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil for thou art with me.”

It is my prayer that you will be strengthened in your faith through Verna’s story; that you will know that God hears and cares when you pray. We can always lean on His promises, “I will **never** leave you. I am with you always.”

Myrna Campbell

Ephesians 3:16-19

**O U R 2 0 1 1 Y E A R - T O - D A T E F I N A N C I A L S T A T U S A S O F  
8 / 2 2 / 1 1**

	<u>Budget</u>	<u>Actual</u>	<u>Difference</u>
Income	\$725,641.73	\$620,320.46	(\$105,321.27)
Expense	\$725,641.73	\$681,429.78	\$44,211.95
2011 (Income - Expense)		(\$61,109.32)	
2010 (Income - Expense)		(\$20,146.34)	
2010/2011 Total (Income - Expense)		(\$81,255.66)	
Debt	\$119,846.49	<b>Mortgage</b>	\$45,186.36

Average 2011 Attendance per Week: 284

**Your church needs your help.** Please prayerfully consider what you can do to help this situation.

**. . . . T I P S F O R S H A R I N G**

Fear will force you to act in ways you are not called and keep you from moving forward in the direction you are called.

- Don't allow fear to drive you or hinder you when decision-making.
- Instead of operating out of fear, operate in faith. Allow reliance on God to order your steps. "For God did not give us a spirit of fear and timidity, but a spirit of power, of love and of self-discipline" (2 Timothy 1:7).

Overcome fear

- by the Holy Spirit's power. Read Acts 1:8.
- through prayer. Read Philippians 4:6.
- with the Word of God. Read Ephesians 6:17.
- through preparation. Read 1 Peter 3:15.
- with wisdom in communicating with others. Read James 1:19.

Provided by Sarah Guldalian, Editor  
Coordinator, **Equipping to Share**, September 2, 2009 edition

**W A N T E D : O N E S P E C I A L P E R S O N**

If you are looking for an easy way to serve St. John with an investment of 30-60 minutes a month, here is your chance. The Christian Library has over 600 items on its shelves. There are videos and story books for little children, longer books and family movies for older children and adults, devotionals, self-help guides, marriage enrichment books, parenting tips, grief resources, seasonal selections, and much, much more.

This library needs a keeper, a dedicated individual who will keep things in order, purchase new items, and promote its use. Please consider serving your church through this wonderful program. Contact or Jill Arbeiter at 826-2578 or the church office if you are interested or even if you just have a question or suggestion.

**O L D E R A D U L T P R O G R A M :  
W I T N E S S W H E R E V E R Y O U A R E !**

Featuring Dr. Paul A Maier October 19-20 Lutheran Older Adult Retreat Pere Marquette Lodge, Grafton, Il. Sponsored by Lutheran Senior Services and Southern IL District. Information and Registration forms available at [www.sidlcms.org](http://www.sidlcms.org).

## L U T H E R A N C O L L E G E F A I R

You are invited to a Lutheran College Fair on Sunday, September 11, in St. Louis at the LCMS International Center or Monday, September 12 in Omaha, NE at Concordia Jr.-Sr. High School in Omaha. Both nights registrations will begin at 6:45 p.m., 7:00 p.m. Financial Aid Seminar, and 7:30 p.m. College fair. Admissions representatives will be available to answer questions regarding admission, academic programs, student life, housing, and financial aid. A workshop on financial aid and financial planning will be conducted to assist families with the college search process. Please visit the website for more details on the workshop. ([www.lutherancolleges.org](http://www.lutherancolleges.org)) All families attending a Lutheran College Fair event will receive four APPLICATION FEE WAIVERS (up to a \$60 value each) applicable for any Lutheran College/University listed on the fee waiver.

### ACOLYTES



Sat September 3 6:30 p.m. Austin Welge & Derek Mott  
 Sun September 4 7:45 a.m. Christopher Lang & Rachel Walker  
 10:00 a.m. Matt Smith (Mead) & Sarah Hecht  
 Sat September 10 6:30 p.m. Autumn Rowold & Mason Westerman  
 Sun September 11 7:45 a.m. Ellen Blechle & Jaclyn Colvis  
 10:00 a.m. Matthew Smith & Emily Atchison  
 Sat September 17 6:30 p.m. Tyler Redeker & Ashley Wagner  
 Sun September 18 7:45 a.m. Sydney Korando & Miranda Mueller  
 10:00 a.m. Shleby Kueker & Taylor Dunning  
 Sat September 24 6:30 p.m. Gwendolyn Sterrett & Alyse Bollman  
 Sun September 25 7:45 a.m. Katleyn Rader & Stormie Zweigart  
 10:00 a.m. Anastasia Valleroy & Christian Gray

### GREETERS

Sat September 3 6:30 p.m. Barb Tindall  
 Sun September 4 7:45 a.m. Connie Gaertner  
 10:00 a.m. June Campbell  
 Sat September 10 6:30 p.m. Tammy Crawford  
 Sun September 11 7:45 a.m. Dorothy Rinne  
 10:00 a.m. Marion Knop  
 Sat September 17 6:30 p.m. Mary Webster  
 Sun September 18 7:45 a.m. Evelyn Sickmeyer  
 10:00 a.m. Donna Young  
 Sat September 24 6:30 p.m. Karen Miller  
 Sun September 25 7:45 a.m. Sue Klindworth  
 10:00 a.m. Louise Liefer

### USHERS TEAMS

Sat September 3 6:30 p.m. Volunteer  
 Sun September 4 7:45 a.m. Gary Duensing  
 10:00 a.m. Don Stallman  
 Sat September 10 6:30 a.m. Volunteer  
 Sun September 11 7:45 a.m. Roger Kattenbraker  
 10:00 a.m. Gary Eggemeyer  
 Sat September 17 6:30 p.m. Volunteer  
 Sun September 18 7:45 a.m. Don Gentsch  
 10:00 a.m. Rick Casten  
 Sat September 24 6:30 p.m. Volunteer  
 Sun September 25 7:45 a.m. Ron Rathert  
 10:00 a.m. Randy Campbell

### ALTAR GUILD

Tammy Crawford  
 Nancy Kollmeyer  
 Myra Rubach  
 Lori Holcomb  
 Sandy Colvis  
 Teri Franklin  
 Steve & Donna Young

### WEEKEND JANITORS

September 3/4 Larry McDonough  
 September 10/11 Duke Snider  
 September 17/18 Chris Urquhart  
 September 24/25 Randy Capmbell/ Ron Rathert

### ALUMINUM CANS

August 29–September 3 Fred Fricke  
 September 5-10 Ron Sheely  
 September 12-17 Larry McDonough  
 September 19-24 Larry McDonough  
 September 26-October 1 Steven Egge



### RADIO ANNOUNCER / TECHNICIANS

September 4 Steve Egge/Lynn Rickenberg  
 September 11 Tim Lochhead/Bob Platt  
 September 18 Mike Welge/ Tony Young  
 September 25 Dallas Redeker/ Charlie Mattingly



### WORSHIP SERVICES

Saturday 6:30 p.m., Sunday 7:45 a.m. and 10:00 a.m.  
 Sunday School and Bible Class at 9:00 a.m.  
 Sunday Worship Broadcast on KBDZ 93.1 FM and KSGM 980 AM

### CONTACT INFORMATION

Church Office, 302 W. Holmes, Chester, IL 62233  
 Phone 618-826-3545 Phone Meditation 618-826-2135  
 Internet Address [www.stjohnchester.com](http://www.stjohnchester.com)

### CHURCH E-MAIL

Pastor Willig— [pastorwillig@stjohnchester.com](mailto:pastorwillig@stjohnchester.com)  
 Pastor III— [pastorIII@stjohnchester.com](mailto:pastorIII@stjohnchester.com)  
 Kelly Walls— [secretary@stjohnchester.com](mailto:secretary@stjohnchester.com)



**B I B L E T R E A S U R E H U N T :**



Unscramble the letters in each word to discover the passage.

Answer will be in next months Epistle. ROF EY WONK EHT RGECA FO URO ROLD USSJE TSRIHC, TTHA, UTOHHG EH WSA RIHC, YTE ROF YURO SSKEA EH MEECBA RPOO, TTHA EY UTROHHG SIH YVTRPOE TMIHG EB RIHC.

**A N S W E R T O L A S T M O N T H S B I B L E T R E A S U R E H U N T :**

*The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge: but fools despise wisdom and instruction. My son, hear the instruction of thy father, and forsake not the law of thy mother: for they shall be an ornament of grace unto thy head, and chains about thy neck. Proverbs 1:7-9*

**C A P P E R S**

CAPPERS (Christian Adults Playing Pinochle Eating Refreshments on Sunday) will meet on Sunday, September 18 at 2:00 p.m. to play cards and have a light meal in the Parish Hall.



**T R A V E L I N E U R O P E W I T H C H R I S T I A N C O M P A N I O N S**

A twelve day all inclusive river cruise in Holland and Belgium during the peak of the tulip season (April 13-April 25) will be hosted by Pastor and Kathy Byers of Zion Lutheran Church, Belleville. Canal cruises, windmill exploration, art museums and the famous Keukenhof Gardens are some of the 11 included tours. The most relaxing feature of this cruise is that you only have to unpack once. For more information, see Vantagetravrl.com or contact the Byers at 235-0612 or KMBPastels@AOL.com. This cruise will fill rapidly.

**U S S L S T 3 2 5**

USS LST 325 will be visiting the Chester Riverfront September 16 to September 18. Daily tours will be given from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Adults \$10.00, Ages 6-17 \$5.00 Under age 5 free, Families \$20.00 (Parents & minor children). Take the time to walk through the WWII living camp along the riverfront and experience what life was like for our Greatest Generation as they helped defend our Nation. For more information call 618-826-2326 or visit [www.LST325ChesterIL.org](http://www.LST325ChesterIL.org).

St. John Ev. Lutheran Church  
302 W. Holmes Street  
Chester, Illinois 62233

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Chester, Illinois 62233  
Permit #76  
Car. R. T. Presort

Return Service Requested

JESUS LOVES:



*September*