



Galatians 5:22-26 - The Fruit of the Spirit

"By contrast, the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. There is no law against such things. And those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. If we live by the Spirit, let us also be guided by the Spirit. Let us not become conceited, competing against one another, envying one another."

I traveled to Guyana, South America, in January of 2019. The Guyanese people called their country a 3rd-world country because they are very poor. I was told that the suicide rate was one of the highest in the world. More Guyanese are living in North America than in Guyana. About 75% of the population is Afro-Guyanese or Indo-Guyanese. Guyana was first a Dutch colony in the late 16th century, and then became an English colony in the early 19th century. Plantations were established, and slaves were brought in for labor. When slavery was abolished by England in 1833, indentured servants were brought from British and Portuguese colonies in India. During the Cold War, the U.S. meddled in Guyanese politics for fear of a communist takeover. As an independent country since the late 1960s, Guyana has struggled. Oil was recently discovered off the coast, and drilling has begun. China and Russia are now interested in Guyana and are trying to influence events in Guyana. Venezuela is a neighbor to Guyana, and they have laid claim to the oil fields Guyana is drilling in the Atlantic. This is the historical baggage for many Guyanese people.

It didn't seem like there was much hope for the people of Guyana until you actually talked to people in their homes, on the streets, or at church. Typical greetings I experienced from a variety of people sounded like this: "A blessed good morning, dear brother!" Another greeting was repeated in this fashion: "Good evening, dear brother, I hope the blessings of your day follow you into the night!" It was easy to feel hopeful when greeted in that fashion. These greetings went beyond hope; they spoke to the faithfulness of the Guyanese people.

I attended a Men's Bible study at Transfiguration Lutheran Church, which was held monthly in a small village, except none of

the men who regularly came to the study belonged to Transfiguration Lutheran Church. Men from three other Lutheran Churches met monthly at Transfiguration, hoping to draw attention from men in the neighborhood. Most of the Lutheran Churches were neighborhood churches in New Amsterdam, Guyana. The strategy worked that January. A man from the neighborhood joined us for a game of Dominoes after the study. Driving away afterwards, the men were very excited; they saw hope, and they had faith.

On another day, as Pastor Shirley and I were walking through a neighborhood, we were invited by a Hindu couple to stop in and visit. This Hindu couple lived next to Bethel Lutheran Church, which was one of Pastor Shirley's four churches she served. Pastor Shirley knew them well. The couple brought us gifts of water and bread. We went to the Hindu temple in their yard. The wife explained that they believed that the Christian God was the same as theirs. I admit I don't know much about the Hindu religion. The husband explained that he loved living next door to the Lutheran Church. He held the spare key for the church and helped out if they needed assistance. He told me that he and his wife had left the country for a while but came back. The couple wanted to give back to their neighborhood and their country. They had hope, and they had faith.

On another day, I met a man named John. John owned some land, and he rented it to local rice farmers. He and his family would come to the U.S. for 7 months a year. Through a connection, he had a job driving a delivery truck in the U.S. The family came back home for 5 months over the winter in the U.S., and repeated the pattern again the next year. I met John at his 50th birthday party. Except this was a different kind of party. There must have been 75 people in attendance when my co-religious attendee, Deacon Ackloo, and I arrived. Soon after we arrived, we led choruses of Christian songs. The last one went on for some time as we sang, "This is the day that the Lord has made, I will rejoice, and be glad in it!" We then read scriptures, and there was a short sermon, about a ½ hour. More music, and then food. While we were eating, John told me that he would never leave Guyana permanently. He had hope and faith in the future. His faith was centered on God's mercy.

I am thankful for all I learned from the good people of Guyana. God is faithful to each of us every minute of every day. Our faithfulness is a gift from God, even when it sometimes falters. It gives us faith and hope in our futures, even when there seems to be no hope. May God's faithful love and mercy be alive in you this day and every day! Have hope in tomorrow. Amen.

Tom



Parish Planning Council Members:

Executive Director	Nancy Passehl	(608) 219-1936
Assistant Exec Director	Marv Hupp	(608) 370-2657
Secretary	Cathy Yanke	(608) 434-4869
Treasurer	John Brennan	(608) 469-8786
Evangelism Board	Gwen Ringelstetter	(608) 643-6922
Fellowship Board	Cathy McAlexander	(402) 689-5196
Lay Ministry Board	Gina Varley	(608) 963-0325
Member-at-Large	Roger Seymour	(608) 588-3198
Parish Education Board	James Newman	(608) 512-7623
Properties Board	John Ballweg	(608) 220-3894
PR and Social Concerns	Melani Wheeler	(608) 963-9540
Stewardship Board	Todd Wyttenbach	(608) 513-9797
Women of ELCA	Eunice Yanke	(608) 643-8289
Youth Board	Tracy Pape	(608) 574-0577
Youth Member-at-Large	Sean Jager	(608) 643-2439

The Staff:

Please call the church office first when possible **(608) 643-2439**

Pastor: Tom Kreis tom@stjohnssaukprairie.org

Pastor: Sally Williams sally@stjohnssaukprairie.org

608-643-7810 **(home)**

Director of Music: Ruellene Seymour

ruellene@stjohnssaukprairie.org

Youth Director: Penny Johnson penny@stjohnssaukprairie.org

Custodian: John Hines john@stjohnssaukprairie.org

Office Administrator: Aletha Ballweg aletha@stjohnssaukprairie.org

Financial Secretary: Bruce Fritsch bruce@stjohnssaukprairie.org

Sunday School Superintendent: Dale Clason

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www.stjohnssaukprairie.org

Like us on Facebook at St Johns Lutheran Sauk Prairie

*Mission Statement: Christ, our strength and refuge,
calling us to serve*

St. John's Lutheran Church
100 Oak Street
Prairie du Sac, Wisconsin 53578



Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

God's work. Our hands.

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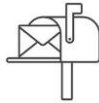


Sauk Prairie Area Food Pantry

Food, paper products and cleaning supplies may be brought to the table in the gathering area at any time. These items are distributed to many families in the Sauk Prairie community. The food pantry always needs:

- Toilet paper
- Condiments (especially ketchup and mayonnaise, jelly)
- Baking mixes (such as muffins and pancakes)
- Box meals (e.g., Hamburger Helper)
- Canned meals (e.g., spaghetti, ravioli, etc.)
- Baking supplies (white and brown sugar, flour, oil)
- Diapers – sizes 4, 5 and 6

Thank you for helping others in our community.



Birthday Greetings

We hope you take a moment to send greetings to the following people who have birthdays in October. The day is in parentheses.

Norma Newman (4)
11020 Thousand Oaks Dr
Huntersville, NC 28078

Jim Sauer (10)
N750 Golf Rd #66
Prairie du Sac, WI 53578

Dorothy Halverson (18)
9456 County Road Y
Sauk City, WI 53583

Karen Bader (27)
N2388 Trails End Rd
Lodi, WI 53555



90th plus Birthday Celebration

Join us on October 26th as we rejoice with our St. John's family members who have celebrated 90 or more birthdays. We will have warm wishes cards to sign in our gathering area, along with special treats at coffee hour.

	Women of the Church News	
	<u>Lydia Circle</u> Thursday, October 9, at Carol Benson's home 713 Madison St., Sauk City	1:00pm
	<u>Martha Circle</u> Thursday, October 2, at St. John's library, Diane Effinger, Hostess	9:30am
	<u>Ruth Circle</u> Monday, October 13, at St. John's library, Marian DeGiovanni, Hostess	9:00am
	<u>Sarah/Mary Circle</u> Tuesday, October 7, at St John's library	9:30am

We are now on our second lesson on money, stewardship, and generosity. Darlene Holl, Mary Weeks, Marian DeGiovanni, and Kathy Lester will be leading the Bible Study. Many of us have been packing up our Lutheran World Relief kits and there were a lot of big boxes piled up in the Fellowship Room AND those boxes have now been loaded up in a truck and have been taken to Madison where they will be loaded in a boxcar to be taken to Minneapolis. We are grateful to Roger Maynard, Kris Frey, Jackie Frosch, and Doug Nelson for doing all the loading and to Hank Elsing for hauling them to Madison. Of course, we can't forget the faithful people who did all the purchasing, assembling and getting everything ready to go. Quilters have been working hard all year! The numbers are as follows: 414 Quilts (438 total made), 32 Sewing kits, 77 Baby kits, 116 Personal Care kits, and 200 School kits. We are all very grateful to Thrivent who donated \$250 for each group of kits and also for the quilts. This was a tremendous lift for all of us.

Five ladies (Kathy Lester, Darlene Holl, Gloria Moles, Marian DeGiovanni and Ruth Dresser) have registered for the Synodical Biennial convention on Saturday, October 4th, at New Heights Church at the Grove: Regional Community Center in Mazomanie. WE STAND WITH YOU IN LOVE is the theme of the day. If anyone else decides to go, they still can but will have to pay \$50 for registration instead of the \$30 fee that "early-bird" people paid before August 17th.

In-kind donations will go to Heights Unlimited Community Resource Center (Food Pantry at New Heights Lutheran). Items we can donate: Condiments (catsup, mustard, BBQ sauce); Progresso soups and chunky style soups (not tomato or chicken noodle), salad dressings, pasta (not spaghetti), flour, sugar (white, brown, powdered), fruit juices, canned pineapple, canned tuna/chicken, pancake mix and syrup, cereals, flavored rice, potato, pasta packets/boxes, cake mixes, crackers (saltines, graham, snack),

toilet paper, paper towels, tissue, shampoo and conditioner, feminine hygiene products, and body soaps. Anyone can donate and we will take these items with us to the meeting on October 4th. Aletha has placed a basket for these items on the name tag table. The offering will be collected in a basket/collection container at the back of the worship space. We are taking a check for \$125. The offering plate will not be passed. We will be carpooling and anyone who is going should let Aletha know and we will tell you when to be at the church to be included in the carpool.

The Pennies for Poverty Jar that we have on the name tag table is in connection with this meeting. We have chosen to give this money to 6:8 here in our own community. We are hoping that everyone will be generous in giving coins, dollars, and checks to the worthy cause of helping to support the wonderful things done by 6:8. We are hoping to surpass last year's \$503! When you are making out your name tag...take notice of the PENNIES FOR POVERTY JAR and give if you can! It all adds up and we really want to help support 6:8! The jar will be on the name tag table for the rest of the year.

The Thankoffering service will be on Sunday, November 23rd. This is a special opportunity to honor God by donating, thanking Him for all He has done for us. Put your donation in an envelope marked THANKOFFERING. There will be a marked basket outside the sanctuary for this purpose. There will be another reminder in the November issue of the Visitor.

St. John's will be hosting the Sauk/Columbia Conference meeting on April 26, 2026. We have many decisions to make between now and then.

Lydia Circle has been visiting Special Friends during August and September. Ruth Circle will be visiting them during October and November.

The Bible Study leaders m meeting for November will be on Tuesday, October 28th at 9:00 a.m.

Remember to read the Special Prayer found in this Visitor on October 20th.

WELCA Pennies for Poverty Jar

We remind you to look for the Penny Jar on the name tag table each Sunday and donate! Little coins can add up to big amounts! The offering will be given to 6:8 in conjunction with the WELCA 2025 Biennial Synodical Convention and will be out for the remainder of the year.





Fellowship Committee

Thank you to everyone who has contributed goodies for our Sunday coffee time. If you want to add to what is being served, feel free to bring your item and add it to what is being served. If you would like to donate all of the treats for a Sunday(whether homemade or purchased) please contact Cathy McAlexander (402-689-5196) so that we can plan accordingly.

Please continue to volunteer and sign up to serve coffee to your church family. It's fun, it's easy and we are here to help. You can find the sign-up sheet posted on the kiosk in the foyer.

The Fellowship Committee honored Pastor Sally at a "Thank You" reception during coffee time to commend her for the work she has done as our "sole" pastor for the prior two years.

We celebrated with Dennis Fisher and Kim Watson as they were married in the church sanctuary. They provided cakes for us to enjoy which highlighted their wedding, Dennis's birthday and Pastor Tom and Karen's first day as our new pastor. Congratulations!



The **Evangelism Board** is looking for a new member to be our photographer. This person will mainly be responsible for new member photos after installation in February and at the Pet Blessing in early October. Please contact Board Chair Gwen Ringelstetter or the church office if you are interested in serving in this capacity.



CHOIR NOTE

Just a reminder that folks can join choirs at any time. The Senior Choir could use another tenor and bass. If you like to sing, please come give us a try! Kids of the Kingdom is open to new singers as well! Handbells are set for now, but will regroup at the end of October.

- Senior Choir rehearsals are every Wednesday from 7-8pm. Senior Choir typically sings 3 times each month.
- Kids of the Kingdom, children's choir for grades 1 through 6, meets weekly from 5:00-5:45pm and typically sings for services twice a month.
- Handbell Choir rehearsals are every Thursday from 6-7pm.

Questions? Contact Ruellene Seymour, Director of Music,
ruellene@stjohnssaukprairie.org c. 608-459-5074

Dear Friends in Christ,



The season of fall is upon us! The mornings are a little crisper, the leaves begin to turn, and the sunlight fades a bit earlier each day. For many of us, autumn is a favorite season. It's a time of beauty, of harvest, of gathering. In the church year, fall is often a time of re-gathering.

After the slower pace of summer, Bible studies resume, choirs practice again, and ministries come alive with fresh energy. Just as the earth yields its harvest, so God's Spirit produces a harvest among us—growth in faith, deeper relationships, and renewed callings to serve.

Fall also gives us the gift of reflection. As we watch the leaves fall to the ground, we are reminded that some things must fade so that new life can emerge. In our own lives, there may be habits, worries, or burdens that God is inviting us to lay down, trusting that Christ will bring something new in their place.

Most of all, autumn is a season that points us back to gratitude. We give thanks for the abundance of the land, for the people God places around us, and for the steadfast love that never withers. As the psalmist says, *"The earth is the Lord's and everything in it"* (Psalm 24:1).

So, as we step into this fall season together, may you see God's hand in the beauty of creation, may you feel God's Spirit stirring new life in you, and may you rest in the promise that in every season, Christ is with us.

In Christ's peace,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Sally".

Thank You

Thank you to everyone for the wonderful cards and caring thoughts! It is always great to see the colorful envelopes in the mailbox. I greatly appreciate you all. St. John's members are truly family and your loving and caring ways continue to touch my heart. God bless you all. ~ Linda Hines

With Sincere Sympathy



We offer our condolences to:

- Marilyn Herschleb, Brett and Rhonda Herschleb & family, Kris Helms & family, Tiffany and Matthew Katzman & family, Taylor and Kyle Goodwin & family on the death of Glenn's sister Ruth Paskey.
- John and Aletha Ballweg & family on the death of their sister-in-law Vicki Ballweg.
- Bob Nelson, Doug and Donna Nelson, Patti Kippley and their families on the death of Bob's wife, Almay Nelson.

Please keep these families in your prayers.



Wedding Congratulations

We celebrate the wedding of Dennis Fisher and Kim Watson on September 7.

Please pray for this couple as they begin this new life milestone together.



JUST BAKERY

A JustDane Initiative

Just Bakery will be back on Sunday, October 19 between our worship services. Stop in the fellowship hall to check them out!

First Communion Instruction

A First Communion class will be held on Tuesday, October 21st from 6-7pm. If you would like to explore the possibilities of first communion for your children, no matter what their age, please sign up by calling the church office. Taking the class does not obligate anyone to begin communing nor is it a requirement for communion. The class is simply a time to explore what this gift of God might mean for you. A second class will be offered in the spring.

We will celebrate those receiving their First Communion as a group on Sunday, October 26th at either service, but if it does not work for your family on that day we can make other arrangements to celebrate your student! Please contact Pastor Sally with any questions or concerns.



Pet Blessing Service

On Sunday, October 12th, we will hold a Pet Blessing Service outdoors at Noon. Pets hold a special place in our hearts, and this service is one way to remind us that God loves and cares for all of God's creatures, even the furry ones! You are welcome to bring your well-behaved and social pet. If your pet doesn't enjoy being around other animals or people, or has passed away, consider bringing a favorite photo.

To create a safe and stress-free environment, it is important that everyone follow these guidelines for participation in the Pet Blessing:

- *Keep pets on a short leash or kenneled at all times.*
- *Bring domestic animals only; no "exotic" pets.*
- *Pets are to stay outdoors while on church grounds.*
- *Parents must be present to assist small children with their pets. We ask that parents tend to the pet during the service.*
- *Be respectful of other pets. Since pets can be nervous in group situations, respect a pet's "space" by not crowding around them. If you wish to approach a pet, ask the owner first.*
- *Do not bring pet food or treats with you to the service.*
- *You are responsible for your pet at all times. Please have clean-up bags with you (just in case...).*

We hope to see you and your pet at this fun event! Share a favorite photo of your pet with us on the St. John's Facebook page!



Illustration.com 22470793

Dear Friends, Karen and I would like to extend our deepest thanks for the incredibly warm welcome we've received at St. John's Lutheran Church. Your kindness has made this instantly feel like home for us. We are deeply grateful for all that you have done, from the amazing work on the parsonage that has made our new house so warm and comfortable, to all those who were able to drop off welcome cards, gift cards, and many other thoughtful gifts. Your generosity is humbling, helping us to explore the Sauk Prairie area and get to know our new community. We thank God for each of you and are truly blessed to be on this journey together. God's blessings to you all, and thank you again. ~ **Tom**

Outgoing Parish Planning Council (PPC) Members

We are grateful for the wonderful work all our PPC members have done this past year. Some of those leaders will be leaving the council this year. Gina Varley, Todd Wyttenbach, Roger Seymour, Cathy Yanke and Tracy Pape have all finished their terms on the Council and will step aside.

October is Mental Illness Awareness Month

October 7th is a National Day of Prayer for Mental Illness. We encourage you to read this Prayer of Confession (from NAMI) on the 7th:

We confess that we are still uninformed about mental illness and how it impacts persons and their families. At times, because of our lack of knowledge and understanding we find ourselves separated from our neighbors with mental illness, their families and ourselves. There are lines drawn between us because we may define wholeness and normality with different words, but not a different spirit. Because of our lack of knowledge we live cut off from sources of strength and power that would help us be present to people with mental illness. This lack often makes us feel that we cannot act. So many events, meetings and needs call to us, grabbing our attention, that we find ourselves stretched to a fine, thin line. In the face of all this, we continue to seek knowledge and understanding of mental illness that will bring liberation and shalom to us and those we serve and unite us to action. O God, our liberation and shalom, we seek the power of your Spirit, that we may live in fuller union with you, ourselves and our neighbors with mental illness. Also grant that we may gain courage to love and understand each other. Amen.

October 10th is World Mental Health Day, which aims to raise awareness about mental health issues globally and mobilize efforts to support mental health initiatives. The day serves as a platform to break the stigma surrounding mental health and promote understanding and support for those affected by mental illness. Throughout the month of October, look for informational posters about mental illness/health topics on the kiosk in the Narthex. If you or someone you know is in need of mental health support, feel free to contact one of the Pastors for guidance, or check out NAMI.org.



MEETING

Congregational Meeting

On November 9, after the first service, we will have a congregational meeting to approve our 2026 budget, elect members to our Parish Planning Council (PPC), elect three voting members to attend the Synod Assembly in 2026 and to elect three congregational members to serve on our Nomination Committee for 2026.

We will be voting to fill the open positions on our PPC. Our nominees are: Stewardship Board – Anne Klinkner, Member-at-Large – Mary Weeks, Secretary – Audrey Luetscher, Lay Ministry Board - **Open**, and Youth Board – **Open**. Current PPC members who are eligible and interested in a second two-year term include: Evangelism Board – Gwen Ringelstetter, Fellowship Board – Cathy McAlexander, Parish Education – James Newman, and Youth Member-at-Large – Sean Jager.

We will also vote on congregational members to attend our Synod Assembly next spring/summer. We need three adults and can have one youth member. Our nominees for Synod Assembly Voting Members and nominees for the Nomination Committee will be taken from the floor on the day of the meeting.

If you are interested in filling any of our open positions or would like to attend the Synod Assembly as a voting member representing St. John's, please see one of the pastors, Nancy Passehl or Nancy Kaufman. All active members of St. John's are invited to attend this important meeting (the ELCA defines "active members" as those who have both given and communed at least one time in the previous year.)

Reading of the Congregational Meeting Minutes

In lieu of the reading of the minutes from the November 17, 2024 Congregational Meeting, the minutes are listed here. Please take the time to read through them before attending the meeting on November 9, 2025. You will have an opportunity to ask questions and/or make corrections at that meeting.

CONGREGATIONAL MEETING November 17, 2024

(In building and via Zoom platform)

PPC Executive Director, Nancy Kaufman, confirmed at least 50 members were present and called the meeting to order 8:58 am. The purpose of the meeting is to approve the 2025 budget, vote on

nominees for the Parish Planning Council, approve nominating committee members for PPC recruiting, and approve Synod Assembly volunteers.

The minutes of the October 2023, Congregational meeting were published in the November Visitor as well as in the November 3 and 10, 2024 Sunday bulletins in lieu of reading them at the meeting. Motion to approve the minutes as provided was made by Donna Nelson and 2nd by Brian Weeks. Motion was approved by unanimous vote.

Nancy described the 2025 budget changes that were printed and available for review in the bulletin. She pointed out those most significant changes including the administration budget that include salary expectations for a new senior pastor. The salary budgeted follows the synod's guidelines for salary which is based on years of experience. Health insurance premiums increase each year, and the youth trip was in 2024, so there will not be that expense in 2025. A motion to approve the budget was made by Janelle Hupp and 2nd by Tracy Pape. Motion was approved by unanimous vote.

Nancy thanked our outgoing board chairs (Lon Kaderavek, Ellen Jorgenson, Anne Klinkner, Donna Nelson and Nancy Kaufman) for their years of service. She then moved on to list nominees of Nancy Passehl to Executive Director, Marv Hupp as Assistant Director, John Brennan as Treasurer, John Ballweg for Properties, Melanie Wheeler for PR and Social Concerns. There is an opening for the Stewardship Board Chair. A motion to approve the nominees was made by Jayne Carlson and 2nd by Marilyn Herschleb. Motion was approved by unanimous vote.

Third, we approved the nominating committee to recruit members for additional PPC members that includes the Lead Pastor, Nancy Kaufman as the outgoing PPC Director, three congregational members (self-nominated) that include Mary Weeks, Dale Haroldson, and Donna Nelson. Three PPC members will be determined. A motion to approve the nominees was made by Marv Hupp and 2nd by Melanie Wheeler. Motion was approved by unanimous vote.

Our final topic was to accept nominations for attendees to the Synod Assembly in May 2025. We can send 3 adults (either 2 males and 1 female or 2 females and 1 male), 1 young adult (under 30 years old) and 1 high school youth. Our Lead Pastor and Pastor Sally are both voting members. Alice Chenowith self-nominated and nominated her husband, Joe. Jordan Small self-nominated for the under 30 category. Nancy Kaufman will find an additional person to attend. A motion to approve the nominees was made by Megan Tarnutzer and 2nd by Alexi Suchla. If any adult over 30 or a high

school youth is interested, please contact Linda Hines in the church office.

An update on the call committee progress by Nancy included Interim Pastor Jason will be with us through the end of January. The last two years have been busy and included building issues including heat and AC, new roof, carpeting, and intern/not an intern/intern again, hired a financial secretary, and Pastor Fred retired. We look forward to the next years that will include a new pastor as well as our future and changes that will happen in the transition. Jerry Kaufman made the motion to adjourn the meeting and was 2nd by Donna Nelson. Director Nancy Kaufman asked if there were any objections and after receiving none, she adjourned the meeting at 9:11 am.

Respectfully submitted, Cathy Yanke

St. John's Budget for 2026 We will be voting on the 2026 Budget at our Congregational meeting on November 9. A more itemized listing of the various board budgets is available in the church office.

PROGRAM	APPROVED 2025	BUDGETED 2026	% CHANGE
Administration	\$481,750.00	\$428,666.00	-11.02%
Lay Ministry	12,200.00	9,350.00	-23.36%
Evangelism	600.00	500.00	-16.67%
Stewardship	2,700.00	2,400.00	-11.11%
PR & Social Concerns	3,350.00	3,000.00	-10.45%
Parish Education	13,710.00	12,070.00	-11.96%
Youth Board	5,700.00	4,800.00	-15.79%
Fellowship	3,000.00	2,400.00	-20.00%
Properties	49,450.00	63,800.00	29.02%
Lutheran Church Women	2,500.00	2,250.00	-10.00%
Benevolence	52,250.00	45,400.00	-13.11%
Total	\$627,210.00	\$574,636.00	-8.38%

ADULT EDUCATION

Please join Janelle Hupp on Sunday, October 5 at 9:15 in the church library as she shares again her class from last Spring on Gun Violence and Mental Health.

Sunday, October 19 and 26 we will meet to discuss the Sauk Prairie Community Read book, Eleanor Oliphant is Completely Fine by Gail Honeyman. You are encouraged to attend the community discussions on September 23 or October 6. We will talk about this book through the lens of faith. Books can be picked up at the local libraries or in bookstores and on Amazon. We will not meet on Sunday, October 12 so we can all celebrate Pastor Tom's installation reception.



Sunday School News

Hayride

We will gather at the Keller Farm on Sunday, October 5th at 1:30-3:30pm for a fun hayride, sweet treat, and free pumpkins for each person who attends. A link went out via email, but if you didn't receive it please rsvp to sundayschool@stjohnssaukprairie.org. The address is W13769 Wisconsin 60, Prairie du Sac. It is the first farm/house on the right after you pass the 188 intersection. Please look for the parking guides to avoid parking on their lawn. The wagons leave shortly at 1pm. Please be sure to be on time so we don't leave anyone behind! 😊

Sunday School Offering Project

Our offering for the 2025-2026 Sunday School year is being designated for Sauk Prairie Area Food Pantry. A nutritious diet is important to a child's health. Foods high in protein and vitamins help keep tummies full and immune systems strong.

Offering and items will be collected every Sunday we have Sunday School. Students are welcome to give each week or as they are able. EVERY gift counts. It's not the amount we give, but the reason we give we are God's Helping Hands. There will be a basket to put donations in by the Children's Library.

3-Year-Old & 3rd Grade Bible Presentation

On Sunday, October 5, at the 8am & 10:30 services we will present Bibles to our 3-year-olds and 3rd grade youth. In our Baptismal liturgy we promise to place the Holy Scriptures in the hands of our candidates. A letter was sent at the end of August with details. If you did not receive a letter and would like your child (grandchild, neighbor, and friends!) to receive a Bible, please contact Pastor Sally – sally@stjohnssaukprairie.org

Middle and High School News

Confirmation Classes

The St. John's Confirmation program has begun! All are welcome to join us for a Fellowship Meal at 5:30pm on nights when we have confirmation class. We ask for a \$2 contribution per person. Confirmation classes start at 6:00pm. If you know a student in 7th, 8th or 9th grade who would like to join confirmation, they are welcome to contact Penny at any time. You can find the full confirmation calendar at <https://tinyurl.com/ConfirmCal>

Worship Job Sign-Up

Each student needs to complete three Worship Jobs from October through January. Your student may complete multiple jobs on any one Sunday or spread them across several Sundays. Students are welcome to complete more than three! This is the time for our youth to learn the gift of serving others. If your student is struggling to complete their worship jobs, please contact Penny for help. Register at <https://signup.com/go/bDoFUzp>

Trip to the Corn Maze

St. John's Middle and High School students and friends (chaperones needed too!) will travel to the Treinen Farm Corn Maze on Wednesday, October 15. We'll leave the St. John's parking lot at 4:45pm – and take the bus to the Corn Maze. We'll return approximately 7:15pm. Must sign up before October 10, 2025 at <https://signup.com/go/RTYDrFS>

Food Pantry

St. John's day to help at the Sauk Prairie Food Pantry on Saturday, October 18, 2025, from 9:00-10:45am. We are looking for confirmation students and a few chaperones to fill these spots. Volunteers help load groceries into bags, other volunteers help to load bags into vehicles, and at least one youth/adult pair will help direct traffic. A Food Pantry Board Member is there to help direct the work during the entire shift. Please register your confirmation student today: <https://signup.com/go/AcLgQbd>

Sauk Prairie Pack Event

The 2025 Pack Event is October 30 - November 1 at Grand Avenue Elementary School. This event contributes to the work of Feed My Starving Children (FMSC) a Christian non-profit feeding God's starving children hungry in body and spirit. Nutrition allows children to grow, thrive and develop to their full potential. Volunteers will hand-pack the meals which are donated to FMSC food partners around the world, so that kids are fed and lives are saved! If you are

called to donate, please drop off any amount to the church office with a "Pack Event" note.



Coats for Kids

St. John's is working with Concordia United Methodist Church to collect winter wear for children in need in the Sauk Prairie School District. Please keep this in mind as you clean out your closets this fall. Bring your gently used coats, boots, hats, mittens, scarves and gloves to the back area of the coat room. We need all sizes. Items will be picked up on November 16th. Thank you.



St. John's is scheduled to deliver Mobile Meals from the Sauk Prairie Hospital two weeks of October.

The dates are October 13 – 17 and October 20 – 24. Delivery time is usually one hour with pick up time 11:20-11:30am. For more details and to volunteer, please see the kiosk in the front gathering area of the church. If you are interested and have questions, please contact Melani Wheeler at wheelermelani6@gmail.com.

SPECIAL PRAYER

We invite you to repeat the following prayer on October 20th:

Father, you have given all peoples one common origin.

It is your will that they be gathered together
as one family in yourself.

Fill the hearts of mankind with the fire of your love
and with the desire to ensure justice for all.

By sharing the good things you give us,
may we secure an equality for all

our brothers and sisters throughout the world.

May there be an end to division, strife and war.

May there be a dawning of a truly human society
built on love and peace.

We ask this in the name of Jesus, our Lord.

Amen.

PARISH PLANNING COUNCIL MINUTES

DATE: September 2, 2025

Present: Nancy Passehl, Tom Kreis, Sally Williams, Gwen Ringelstetter, Marv Hupp, Eunice Yanke, John Ballweg, Gina Varley, James Newman, John Brennan, Cathy McAlexander, Todd Wytenbach, Sean Jager, Roger Seymour, Cathy Yanke, Melani Wheeler

Absent: Tracy Pape

Call to Order/Opening Remarks:

Meeting was called to order at 6:00 p.m. by Nancy Passehl. Nancy P asked for approval of the agenda. Motion to approve was made by Eunice and 2nd by Melani. Motion carried. A devotion/prayer was then given by Melani.

Secretary Minutes:

The August minutes were submitted online by Tracy on Cathy Yanke's behalf. A motion to approve minutes was made by Gina and 2nd by John Ballweg. Motion carried.

Treasurer report:

The committee reviewed and discussed the August 2025, Treasurer Report submitted by John Brennan.

August report numbers

Current Month Income	Current Month Expenses	Current Month Balance	Year-to-Date Income	Year-to-Date Expenses	Year-to-Date Budget
\$36,318	\$37,973	\$(1,655)	\$380,738	(\$363,247)	\$416,806

A motion to approve the financial report was made by Melani and 2nd by Marv. Motion carried.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Evangelism:

Gwen Ringelstetter reported:

- No report provided

Fellowship:

Cathy McAlexander reported:

- We recognized Ruth Dresser's birthday with a cake provided by her family on August 17.
- On August 31 we held a "surprise" "Thank You" reception to honor Pastor Sally for the service she has provided singlehanded to St John's for the two years between Pastor Fred's retirement and the hiring of Pastor Tom.
- We have received a Thrivent grant to fund an upcoming event.

Lay Ministry:

Gina Varley reported:

- Welcomed to new board members, Patty Barritt (communion assistants) and Linda Michaels (communion set up/clean up)
- Pastor Sally & Gina W. gave a summary of the Safety and Risk Management walk thru with Travis Hilliard
- Discussed deteriorating condition of some of the hymnals
- Christmas candles have been ordered and delivered
- Reviewed 2025-2026 Lay Ministry task sheet

Parish Education:

James Newman reported:

- Sunday school rally day (when students get registered for Sunday school) is September 21st in between services. There will be an electronic sign up for both rally day and the hayride. James Newman will be sitting up front with some paper copies for those who cannot register electronically.
- First day of Sunday school is September 28th
- Bible Sunday (where 3-year-olds and 3rd graders are given bibles during church service) is October 5th.
- The Sunday school hayride is also October 5th at 1:30.
- Confirmation welcome back night is September 24th
- Robin and Ken Lueck are teaching 7th grade
- Emily Rennie teaching 8th grade.
- Penny Johnsen and tentatively Pastor Tom teaching 9th grade.
- October 15th confirmation students going to the corn maze
- October 18th confirmation student volunteering at the food pantry

Properties:

John Ballweg reported:

- The Properties Board did not have a meeting in August. Our efforts were spent throughout the first part of August to prepare the parsonage for Pastor Tom and Karen to move

in. Many thanks to all who contributed financially and/or donated their time and talents to refresh the parsonage.

- Our focus will now shift to several projects at the church. We are tentatively scheduled to meet with Hellenbrand Glass on September 3rd to discuss the broken window in the youth room. When we meet with Hellenbrand's, we'll also have them take a look at several exterior doors that are in need of some adjustments. That includes the door between the parsonage and the pastor's hallway, and two of the front doors facing Oak Street.
- Additionally, we are waiting for Badger Plumbing to finish repairing one of the urinals in the educational wing restroom. And we'll be considering replacement of the two light fixtures in the sacristy

PR & Social Concerns:

Melani Wheeler reported:

- Connie Henry has detailed outline for the Safe Gun Surrender and Education (I have book for committee to read) GUN VIOLENCE 101
- Just Bakery starting in September(21st) Kristin Ryan will go and get items for that date
- Patty Barrett and her husband continue to get Food Pantry items to where they need to go (HUGE Thanks)
- Banner still in work mode
- Aletha has info to post about what DRESS FOR SUCCESS expectations
- OCT Meals on Wheels posted

Stewardship Board:

Anne Klinkner/Todd Wyttenbach reported:

- Welcome to our new member, Tom O'Brien. We are glad you joined our board!
- John Brennan and Todd Wyttenbach presented the budget to the Stewardship Board. The budget represents an 8.09% decrease from the 2025 budget. The numbers in the Properties Committee budget reflect increases in expenses for the parsonage as well as insurance. The board approved the budget. Todd will forward it to Aletha for publication in the Visitor.

Women of ELCA:

Eunice Yanke reported:

- In September, we will begin a Bible Study "Money, Stewardship and Generosity" by Rev. Christa Von Sychin.

- Lutheran World Relief kits will be shipped on September 13th.
- The WELCA Biennial Convention will be held on Saturday October 4th at The Grove in Mazomanie – Kathy Lester will be our voting member.
- Pennies for Poverty offering will be collected in connection with the convention but sent to 6:8
- Lydia Circle is visiting Special Friends during August and September.
- The Bible Study leaders meeting for September will be on Tuesday, August 26th at 9:00 a.m. The leaders' meeting for October will be on Tuesday, September 30th at 9:00 a.m.
- Please see full meeting minutes in the September Visitor.

Youth Committee:

Tracy Pape reported:

- 6:8 Hunger Pack Event – Volunteer registration deadline: September 15
- Welcome Back Confirmation Students – Scheduled for September 24
- October Corn Maze Visit – Planned for October 15
- 6:8 Hunger Pack Event - Planned for October 18
- Sun Prairie Thanksgiving Dinner – November 26 at 12:00 p.m.
- Christmas Caroling at Maplewood and The Pines – December 10, starting at 6:00 p.m. (All members are welcome)
- Winter Youth Night – January 8, starting at 6:00 p.m.

Member at Large:

Roger Seymour reported:

- No report provided.

Youth member at Large:

Sean Jager reported:

- School started today, and people are continuing in the fall after school activities of marching band, football, cross country, volleyball, boys' soccer, girls' swimming, and girls' tennis.

Pastor Reports

Lead Pastor's Report:

No report provided. Coming next month!

Sally's Report:

- The synod is offering a keynote speaker on Sunday, September 14th that is open and free to all. Dr. Du Mez will speak about the intersection of faith, culture, and identity in today's polarized world. It begins at 6pm at Bethel Lutheran

Church in Madison. I am unable to attend. If you are interested see me and I can give you more information.

- Some of our Adult Education opportunities will address the theme of safety as we continue to do a risk assessment for our property and think more about holding a safe surrender event. Some of the topics include school safety, gun safety, mental health issues, racism and violence, and others TBD. These will be spread out throughout the year.
- Thank you to all of our staff, board members, and volunteers who have worked very hard to get the parsonage ready for Pastor Tom and Karen. We're excited to see our parsonage getting some much needed TLC and are very delighted to welcome the Kreis family to this community!
- Please note the dates of our SS and Confirmation kick off and other activities...we'd love to see our PPC getting engaged and meeting our parents and students. See Penny Johnson or email her penny@stjohnssaukprairie.org with your availability to help with Wednesday night meals once or twice (or 15 times!).

Old Business:

New Business:

- Approve budget and set congregational meeting date. Budget was presented with an 8% decrease. A motion to approve the financial report was made by James and 2nd by Eunice. Motion carried.
- Meet Pastor Tom and get to know him. Committee members spent time visiting and getting to know our new pastor and him us.

Next meeting is Tuesday, October 7, 2025, at 6:00 pm. Devotion will be given by Roger.

James made a motion to adjourn our meeting, and the motion was 2nd by Marv. Motion carried.

Meeting Adjourned at 7:20 pm. with The Lord's Prayer lead by Pastor Tom.

Respectfully submitted by Cathy Yanke.



Happy October Birthday!

The day is in parenthesis

Our Youngest:

Braelyn Treffert (7)

Chloe Johnson (7)

Briggs Katzman (10)

Presley Katzman (16)

Asher Herschleb (20)

Our Sunday School Students:

Vada Steinmetz (2)

Layla Kelley (4)

June Lochner (5)

Vivianne Herbrand (8)

Beckett Suchla (8)

Kane Schwartz (13)

Elsie Kinney (13)

Leonard Pickett (15)

Declan Leith (19)

Della Kaderavek (25)

Milo Lueck (25)

Ella Herbrand (26)

Matthew Peterson (31)

Our Youth:

Sam Philo (2)

Kaitlynn Lins (3)

Emelia Greene (4)

Joslyn Schultz (7)

Weston Smith (12)

Ella Paul (14)

Simon Homp (19)

Jason King (23)

Khloe Walker (29)

Kellen Ryan (29)

Jake Buckles (29)

College and Career-age Young People:

Boden Frosch (1)

Thea Harpold (16)

Logan Buchanan (17)

Ava Sandeman (23)

Randy Trudell (25)